

TRADITIONAL LIFE AND PROSPECTS FOR
SOCIO-ECONNOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE HAMAR
ADMISTRATIVE DISTRICT OF
SOUTHERN GAMU GOFA

A Report to the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission
of the Provisional Military Government
of Ethiopia

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April 1976

1. Introduction
2. Ethnographic Description
 - 2.1 The History of the Hamar
 - 2.1.1 Origin and Primary Location of the Hamar and their Neighbours
 - 2.1.1.1 The Gao
 - 2.1.1.2 The Borana
 - 2.1.1.3 The Korre
 - 2.1.1.4 The Arbore
 - 2.1.1.5 The Galeba
 - 2.1.1.6 The Bume
 - 2.1.1.7 The Murle
 - 2.1.1.8 The Bogudo
 - 2.1.1.9 The Kara
 - 2.1.1.10 The Gomba
 - 2.1.1.11 The Mogudji
 - 2.1.1.12 The Mursi
 - 2.1.1.13 The Tsamai
 - 2.1.1.14 The Banna-Hamar-Bashada Group
 - 2.1.2. The Ethiopian Conquest
 - 2.1.3. The Italian Occupation
 - 2.1.4. The Rule of Haile Selassie
 - 2.2. The Social Organisation of the Hamar
 - 2.2.1. Roles
 - 2.2.1.1. Role I The ‘Donza’
 - 2.2.1.2. Role II The ‘Zarsi’
 - 2.2.1.3. Role III The ‘Ayo’
 - 2.2.1.4. Role IV The ‘Gudili’
 - 2.2.1.5. Role V The ‘Moara’
 - 2.2.1.6. Role VI The ‘Bitta’
 - 2.2.2. Groups
 - 2.2.2.1. Group I The ‘Dele’
 - 2.2.2.2. Group II The ‘Mulda’
 - 2.2.2.3. Group III The ‘Gir’
 - 2.2.2.4. Group IV The ‘Gurda’
 - 2.2.2.5. Group V The ‘Alaza’
 - 2.2.2.6. Group VI The ‘Liti’
 - 2.2.2.7. Group VII The ‘Pe’
 - 2.2.2.8. Group VIII The ‘Anamo’
 - 2.2.3. Transcendental Notions
 - 2.2.3.1. Transcendental Notion I
 - 2.2.3.2. Transcendental Notions II
 - 2.2.4. Social Process

- 2.2.4.1. Social Process I The 'Barjo Ala'
- 2.2.4.2. Social Process II The 'Osh'
- 2.2.4.3. Social Process III The 'Dunguri Kana'
- 2.2.4.4. Social Process IV The 'Rukunti Masha'
- 2.2.4.5. Social Process V The 'Maersha'
- 2.2.4.6. Social Process VI The 'Kash'
- 2.2.4.7. Social Process VII The 'Duki'
- 2.2.4.8. Social Process VIII The 'Ukuli'

2.2.5. The Status of Women

2.3. The Economy of the Hamar

- 2.3.1. Cultivation
- 2.3.2. Division of Labour
- 2.3.3. Seasons and Crops
- 2.3.2. Herding
 - 2.3.2.1. Types of Herds
 - 2.3.2.2. Seasonal Grazing Patters
 - 2.3.2.3. Division of Labours
 - 2.3.2.4. Mechanisms of Acquisitions and Distribution

Y Topics not Treated in the Ethnographic Description

3. Evaluation and Recommendation

3.1. Region I: The Woito Valley

- 3.1.1. River Diversion and Irrigation at Arbore
- 3.1.2. River Diversion and Irrigation at Roko
- 3.1.3. River Diversion and Irrigation at Silbo
- 3.1.4. Well Drilling
- 3.1.5. Town at Arbore
- 3.1.6. Town at Roko
- 3.1.7. Town at Duma
- 3.1.8. Artificial Lakes
- 3.1.9. Roads
- 3.1.10. Lake Stephanie Game Reserve
- 3.1.11. Water Storage and Hydro-electric Power
- 3.1.12. The Sagan River
- 3.1.13. Cattle Management

3.2. Region II: The Valley of the Lower Omo

- 3.2.1. Rate and the Omo Delta
- 3.2.2. River Diversion and Irrigation at the Mursizi Channel
- 3.2.3. Flood Irrigation in the Meander Belts of Norok and Shungura
- 3.2.4. Irrigation Project at Lake Diba
- 3.2.5. Improvement of Pastoralism
- 3.2.6. Game Reserve at the Mago River
- 3.2.7. Roads
- 3.2.8. Town at Diba

3.3. Region III: The Hamar-Tsamai Range

- 3.3.1. Town at Hamar-Koke
- 3.3.2. Terracing and Agriculture

3.3.3. The Hamar Natural Park

4. Concluding Remark

Appendix (not available as file)

Map I	Tribal Location in Southern Gamu Gofa 1850
Map II	Inter-tribal Raiding in Southern Gamu-Gofa 1970-74
Map III	Regional Development Plan for Southern Gamu Gofa
Map IV	Distribution of Hamar Settlements 1974
Diagram I	Inter-tribal War and Peace in Southern Gamu Gofa
Diagram II	Hamar Territorial Segments
Diagram III	The Cattle Alliances of Berinas

1. Introduction

This report aims at assisting the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission in its attempt to prepare and execute regional long-term development plans in Southern Gamu Gofa. Some individual projects have already been launched, for example the irrigation projects at the Omo and the Woito deltas, but comprehensive planning has been hampered by the fact that too little has been known about the populations, their history, social traditions, interests and aspirations and the natural resources of the area, Southern Gamu Gofa has the highest diversity of ethnically different groups in the whole of Ethiopia and possibly even in Africa. Linguistically this is most readily visible: in the sub-province of Galeb and Hamar-Bako within an area of less than 15,000 square kilometres more than ten different languages are spoken (excluding dialects!).

Therefore, as long as the program planner is not equipped with at least a rough outline of the basic facts concerning these groups, his planning can hardly become meaningful. How can these urgently needed background information be acquired? Special 'fact finding missions' and individual studies initiated by the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission would be time consuming and expensive. Because of this reason I have proposed to the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission that anthropologists who, like myself, have academically studied the societies in question, should be asked to make their research results available. This should be done as quickly as possible and the reports should aim not at solving academical puzzles but practical problems.

If in this way the knowledge of such researchers as N. Sobenia, C. Carr, U. Almagor, S. Tornay, J.R. Strecker, D. Turton, M. Fukui, D. Donham, D. Todd, H. Amborn, Hallapike, D. Sperber, J. Olmstedt, J. Bureau, M. Abeles and others (who all have done field-research in Gamu Gofa during the past decade) was made available, the program planning would have a better empirical basis than today.

This report is a first attempt at such an 'applied anthropology'. If the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission finds their kind of anthropological information useful I suggest that the scholars whom I have mentioned above should be contacted and asked to write similar reports.

2. Ethnographic Description

2.1. The History of the Hamar

2.1.1. Origin and Primary Location of the Hamar and Their Neighbours

The past of Southern Gamu Gofa lies in the dark of prehistory, so why should one bother with mythology, and unverifiable oral tradition in an essay that wants to be of practical use and arrive at some realistic recommendations for economic and social program planning? My answer to this question

is that the historical theories (myths, traditions) of the societies concerned are realities per se, they are in the language of anthropology – ‘charters for action’ and as such influence and direct social behaviour. If we want to understand and work with the peoples of Southern Gamu Gofa, it is not as important to know the objective history (although of course we ultimately want to include everything in our picture) as it is to know the subjective history in the light of which the different groups view their own identity, and that of others.

I, therefore, want to begin by introducing the Hamar and their neighbours from the perspective of the subjective history of the Hamar. As this paper is not a place for academic purism my accounts don’t reproduce the verbal utterances of the people, neither do I try to put the theories into any critical context, not do I analyse them. My only aim is to give the reader a generalized and commented description of how I think the Hamar historically see themselves and other tribes that surround them. Only when we have a number of such subjective histories, say of the Hamar, Arbore, Dasanech, Nyangatom and Mursi, can we meaningfully embark on analysis which will then be both a study of politics (evaluating the politically motivated distortions in the traditions) and a study of objective history (evaluating the parallels and congruence in the traditions).

As the Hamar view themselves as being the last groups that moved into Southern Gamu Gofa, or, rather, as they presuppose the existence of a host of neighbours as a factor in the development of their own cultural identity, I begin with these neighbours and historical predecessors.

2.1.1.1. The Boa

The Boa are a purely mythical people. When the Hamar talk about them, they stress that they really don’t know, and can only relate, what vaguely they have heard from their fathers: The Boa were in southern Gamu Gofa, long before the Hamar arrived. They were mainly cattle people, and they preferred to herd their cattle, neither in the low lands (500-600m) nor in the highlands (1500-2000m), but rather in areas like the Hamar plains (900-1400m), especially in the southern part towards the present Kenya border. The area is said to have been free of bush then, and rich on grass. Rainfall was also abundant (see below). Today some rather weathered graves, in the area south of Turmi, are said to belong to the Boa, and near a dry riverbed called ‘Blacksmith River’ (gito kana) N.E. of Fadjedji, there are traces of ancient blacksmithing activity, which the Hamar also attribute to the Boa. There is a further piece of oral tradition, which might puzzle the historian: The Boa are said to have come from the north and later to have vanished to the south.

2.1.1.2. The Borana

The Hamar say that at the time when they established themselves in their mountains (at this moment it is impossible to say when this was, but, considering the complex individuality of their culture, Hamar must have become a functioning society at the latest by the middle of the 18th century) the Borana used to herd their cattle all over the Woito Valley, (except in the area of the Arbore in the delta of the river, see below). They were pure pastoralists and did not use the river for cultivation. It was one of the first big dramatic deeds of the ritual leader of the Hamar use his magical power to drive the Borana across to the east of the river, and make the valley accessible to the Tsamai and Hamar. Ever since that time the Hamar and Tsamai on the one side and the Borana on the other have remained deadly enemies between whom no peace could ever be established.

2.1.1.3. The Korre

From the same direction towards which the Boa left -(the south) came later a tribe which the Hamar call the Korre. They were people who like the Borana were pure pastoralists. Like the Boa they made use of the southern Hamar plateau, and also grazed their cattle on the rich, healthy pastures at the southern shores of Lake Stephanie, and the northeast shores of Lake Rudolph. Countless graves and sites of old cattle camps testify to a long occupation of these areas by the Korre. They were never on good terms with the Hamar who themselves wanted to extend their territory towards the south. No living Hamar has ever seen a Korre, but from their fore-father accounts, and from songs and stories, they know how they looked and what their particular features were: they were organized in age-groups, and it was the young age-groups that at certain intervals would drive their herds towards the Hamar and provoke them to fight. Their weapons were bundles of light spears (they would each carry five or six while the Hamar were using bows and arrows, which are not in use anymore in Hamar today). The fights between the Hamar and the Korre were so persistent and hard that still today the Hamar call any enemy a 'Korre', and the south has been the equivalent for fighting and raiding and being raided ever since. The looks of the Korre were very particular to the Hamar because their men wore their hair like Hamar women do in long, orderly ringlets, falling down to the shoulders and covered with red ochre and butter. They had big holes in their earlobes to which were fastened decorations. On their legs they wore bells of tortoise shells. From this description and also from the reference to strong war- like age groups I infer that the Korre may have been a northern branch of the Samburu or a northwest branch of the Rendille. Hamar oral tradition tells us that eventually the Hamar were relieved of the permanent conflict with the Korre by the Turkana: "For several days countless numbers of game arrived from the south, elephants, giraffes, gazelles, lions...They all were on a flight from something unknown, - and then the Turkana arrived with their armies. In a few days they wiped out all the Korre and then they turned back again to the south..." Only a few Korre survived and they sought refuge with the Galeb.

The Hamar say the Korre are the ancestors of the clan 'Koro' of present day Galeb which reminds one of the Rendille, and which also possibly might have been the 'Korre'. For a closer look at this problem, seen from the perspective of an anthropologist of the Galeb, consult Almagor 1972.

2.1.1.4. The Arbore

When the Hamar arrived in their mountains, down below in the delta of the Woito River the Arbore were already well established. They were a rich agriculturalist and pastoralist people with a comparatively large population and a strong and influential ritual leadership. Contrary to his attitude to the Borana (whom he 'magically' drove away) the first ritual leader of the Hamar made peace with the Arbore and asked their most powerful ritual leader to bless him, which he did he also gave him some special beads which became a part of the insignia of the Hamar 'bitta', as the Hamar ritual leader is called of the origin of the Arbore the Hamar say the following: the contemporary Arbore are composed of two segments; the Ulde and the Marle. The Ulde originally came from Borana and the Marle came from Galeba (sic! see Galeba and Kara below). Now they have become one tribe, yet curiously there doesn't exist a single name that embraces them both. The term Arbore is only applied by the Ethiopian Government and other more distant foreigners. The Marle or Ulde never call or refer to themselves as Arbore, nor do such close neighbours as the Hamar or Galeb. Their use of the terms Marle and Ulde is contextual. In one situation the terms may refer to one of the segments specifically, in another situation any one of the names may stand for the tribe as a whole. So the Hamar call the Arbore 'Marle' in a negative and 'Ulde' in a positive context (they kill the 'Marle' and trade with the 'Ulde'). The 'myth' of the double origin of the Arbore has, of course in the eyes of the Hamar, immense political function: it enables them to have permanent peace, at one and the same time, with the Borana and Galeba, who themselves are each the deadly enemy of the other. Speaking to the Arbore, I picked up some more information which, like the myth about the Boa, may puzzle the historian: Like the Tsamai the ancestor of the Arbore came originally from Shoa, and he arrived in Arbore as a fish that came swimming down the river.

No Hamar or Arbore told me of the historical myth, which Jensen mentions: In olden times two brothers, Marle and Arbore had a quarrel and separated, one went south, and one went north, then the people were divided into two groups (Jensen 1959, page 385). Do we have two different myths here with two different functions, one for internal the other for external politics?

2.1.1.5. The Galeba

The Hamar say that the Dasanech or 'Galeba', as they call them, already lived in the delta of the Lower Omo when they began to occupy their territory in the mountains of the Hamar range. Their oral tradition tells of messages and courtesies passed between the ritual leaders of both countries. But as the 'Korre' occupied the territory in between them there were at first hardly any contacts among them. Later, when the Korre had been defeated by the Turkana, there followed a period of peaceful contacts and economic exchanges between the Hamar and the Galeba, and around the turn of the century when draught ruined the crops in the Hamar mountains the Hamar went down to the Omo delta and made fields alongside those of the Galeba. And again later, when the Hamar were defeated by Menelik's troops, large numbers of the population fled to Galeba country where they were allowed to farm, and even keep herds of cattle and goats, and were able to survive. The warfare between the Hamar and Galeba only started and became endemic after the Hamar had returned back to the southern parts of their country (i.e. from about 1920 onwards, see below).

2.1.1.6. The Bume

Hamar oral tradition doesn't say anything about when the Bume established themselves at the Omo, but it mentions them as early, fierce, enemies who would come and make unpredictable attacks on the Hamar, when for the first time they tried to graze their herds westward across the Kaeske River.

There are several place names in western Hamar (in the Turmi area) which still recall the battles that were fought.

The Bume are said to have had their stronghold then in the area of Shungura just north of the Galeba. The initially warlike situation developed later into peace. Special peace treaties were made, and economic cooperation developed. The Hamar supplied mainly honey and cloth which they had brought from Konso traders and the Bume reciprocated with grain (sorghum grown at the banks of the Omo), and iron implements (bells, spears), which they themselves had bought from far away Toposa blacksmiths. Then, later, when the Hamar fled from Menelik's troops, the peace with the Bume allowed them to survive as refugees in the inaccessible forests of the Omo River as guests of the Bume. From that time onwards, the Hamar have had a great admiration for Bume culture. For example, when they returned from exile, they brought with them the songs and dances of the Bume, and up till today in the Hamar speaking tribes (Hamar, Banna, Bashada, Kara) the young men compose their songs in this language and dance in the style of the Bume (rather like in continental western Europe since the war Anglo-Saxon music has become very popular).

Although there has been a strong desire between the Hamar and the Bume to keep the peace the peace has occasionally, especially in 1973, been broken. This was mainly due to the complicated situation of political alliances, and warfare among the many tribes in the area (see below).

2.1.1.7. The Murle

North of Shungura and south of Lake Diba at the east bank of the river, there used to live a people called the Murle. The Hamar say that the Murle were once a strong and independent group, but at about the middle of the 19th century, sleeping sickness wiped out most of them, and destroyed the political standing of the group. Having become few in number, they could not resist the Hamar who at that time were pushing powerfully westward and eventually they left their ancient territory east of the river.

It is important to know that, according to the Hamar, there never occurred any fighting over the territory. On the contrary, the Murle are said to have blessed the Hamar and sanctioned their taking over of their country!

The Murle established themselves in a village called Aiba at the west bank of the river. There they lived under the protection of the Bume with whom they had always been in close and peaceful contact. In time they were integrated into Bume society, and although they have continued to speak their own language among themselves and have several customs which are peculiar to themselves (like burying their dead on the east bank of the river, i.e. in their ancient territory), they have become indistinguishable from other Bume.

The most recent blow that threatened the survival of this old group was a raid by the Kara in June 1975. In this raid possibly up to 60 Murle and Bume were killed (see below).

There is at the moment some academic speculation going on as to whether the Omo Murle are really related to the Didinga-Murle in the Sudan. The Murle whom I have asked about this told me that certainly there is a relationship: the Didinga-Murle are a segment of the Omo-Murle which once, after a quarrel, broke away and migrated westward. If this 'myth' has some truth in it (which I am inclined to think) then this would put the advent of the Murle in the Lower Omo into the beginning of the 18th century, and possibly earlier (for further information on the Murle migrations see Lewis 1972, and for the sociological problem, of the integration of the Murle, into Bume society, consult Serge Tornay who has been studying these groups since 1970).

2.1.1.8. The Bogudo

North of Murle, in the hills east of Lake Diba, there used to live a group called the Bogudo. They farmed around Lake Diba, and grazed their herds towards the Bashada Mountains. The same sleeping sickness that decimated the Murle, wiped out the Bogudo. Only very few survived. They were absorbed by the Kara and have lived among them as low-clans and lineage until now. The Hamar do not remember the Bogudo anymore. It was the Kara who told me about them.

2.1.1.9. The Kara

Although the Kara belong culturally and historically to the Hamar-Banna-Bashada-group I deal already here with them for two reasons: firstly, I want to keep the special continuity of my presentation of the different tribes (moving from south to north, up the Omo Valley) and secondly, I want to emphasize that historically the Kara don't view themselves as being related to the Hamar but rather to the Arbore, Galeba and some ancient 'Kara' living far away in the southern Sudan.

Of all the histories of origin and migration of the tribes in the south, I find the one of the Kara the most amazing.

They told me that the Kara originally lived somewhere near Toposa. One day a segment split away from the main group, rather in a similar way as once the Murle split. They came to the delta of the Omo and stayed there. After a while they moved on, but one part stayed behind and they became the Galeba of today. This is why warfare between the Kara and the Galeba has been taboo, and economic and social relationships between both tribes have existed from olden times until today. From Galeba the Kara moved on into the delta of the Woito. Here the same thing happened as in Galeba: the main group continued on its way but one segment stayed behind and became the 'Marle'. Since then the Kara and Arbore have always upheld a relationship of esteem and mystical interconnectedness. As their territories are rather far apart, and as there is no direct economic relation between them, their common meeting ground has always been Galeba country. These meetings usually had an important impact on war and peace in the area. (see below).

From Arbore the Kara continued northwards and then somewhere they began heading west, until they arrived in the country of the Bodi whom they call Bo.

As far as I understand, no segment of the tribe stayed behind there. They only shared the country with the Bo for some time and then they moved south down the Mago River (Usno) until they came into their present territory. In this way they had completed an their migration almost a complete circle.

The area of the Mago and the Omo was at the time of their arrival free of tsetse fly and this allowed the Kara to herd their cattle here. The Hamar stress that in olden times (i.e. at least until the middle of the 19th century) the Kara were extremely rich. Not only had they large herds of cattle, goats, and sheep, but also they got an easy and rich harvest on the banks of the Omo. In addition to this they were able to control the deposits of salt in the area which was (and is) highly valued by the Ari population to the north who brought (and bring) coffee and iron tools in exchange for the salt. With this easily achieved surplus the Kara used to live in luxury which still, today, is remembered in Hamar with envy. They built large and solid houses in which there were always pots of coffee on the fire, and the Hamar say that it was the Kara who taught the Hamar, the Galeba, the Bume, and everyone in the area, the value of coffee. Kara mythology explains the decline of the group by saying that the Kara became too proud and ruthless after having been rich for a long while. They started to fight among each other and when the first blood was spilt this was the cause for the ensuing disaster. The arrival of the tsetse fly, and with it the sleeping sickness, (neither the Hamar nor the Kara mention the rinderpest of 1890 as cause for the dying off of the cattle). The Kara were reduced to a small group struggling for its survival, a survival which became possible mainly by the absorption of the surviving members of other groups that had been decimated like the Bogudo, Gomba and Mogudji (see below). They lost their cattle and with them their wealth and the economic means to continue building their old, magnificent houses. Instead they began to build the much lighter beehive huts of the Bume. Only mountains of cattle dung, now turned into white dung, testify today to the past wealth of the Kara. Having lost their herds, and having become dependent solely on farming, the Kara were one of the groups in southern Gamu Gofa which was hit most by the lack of rain from 1970 to 1975. The shortage of food was so great, and permanent, that the Kara were not able to perform any of the main rituals that are crucial for the proper functioning of their society (for example marriage ritual), and they had, in the end, (1974) even to remove the ancient eating taboo on warthog and ostrich. Originally the proud and rich Kara would not eat any game, the eating of which was taboo. But then, as gradually their economy declined, they declared one wild species after an other as edible, first those which had most in common with cattle, like the buffalo, then they included the antelopes and the giraffe, etc. and when, finally, they even began to eat elephant, donkey, pig and ostrich the Hamar declared that the Kara were 'finished'.

Although bloodshed between Hamar and Kara is taboo, historically fights between Kara and Hamar have by no means been rare. Especially in the more distant past (before the second half of the 19th century) the Kara used to be easily roused into a fighting mood whenever there occurred a

'misunderstanding' between them and the Hamar. The killings that happened could however never be used by any of the parties involved to establish themselves as 'manly killers'. Neither were they allowed to cut off the genitals of a man killed, nor were they allowed to shave their foreheads and paint them red or scarify their chests as they may do when they have killed a man of a group classified as a real enemy.

2.1.1.9. The Gomba

North of the Kara, along the banks of the Mago River, there used to live a people called the Gomba. Like the Boguda they were almost totally wiped out by sleeping sickness, and the few survivors were absorbed by the Kara as low-status lineages. As with the Boguda, the cultural linguistic heritage of the Gomba has been lost. Perhaps more detailed studies of the low-status lineages of the Kara and also archaeological work on the old settlement sites could shed some more light on these groups. Like the Boguda the Gomba are totally unknown to the contemporary Hamar, only the Kara still have some vague memory of them.

2.1.1.10. The Mogudji

North of the Kara, and partly intermingled with them, live the Mogudji. They are the southern branch of the Kwegu, or Yidinit, who, further upstream, live intermingled with the Mursi (see Turton 1973). Although both the Kwegu and the Mogudji had long been living by the Omo when the Kara and the Mursi arrived, both of them ended up in subordination, the newcomers establishing themselves as their patrons. Still, there seems to have been a difference: as far as I know, the Kara have never fought with the Mogudji for territory, as Turton says the Mursi and Kwegu have done (see below). Indeed, they mainly do not share the same territory, the Mogudji having their own independent stronghold at the confluence of the Mago and the Omo River. I think, therefore, that the present relations of patronage, and the low status of the Mogudji in Kara, dates back to the times when the Kara were rich in cattle and had great political power. Then the Mogudji established -probably under (more or less) pressure- the relationships of patronage which (sanctioned metaphorically as they are) still persist today.

Hidden away in the inaccessible forests of the Omo and the Mago the Mogudji have been living a secluded life for most of the past decade. Never have I heard that they ever went raiding nor that they had ever been raided.

They are closely familiar with the life in the river (they are good fishermen, and hunters of hippopotamus) and in the forest (they hunt with traps and guns, they collect many varieties of wild

fruits and above all, harvest the honey of the bees in their beehives). They also grow sorghum on the banks of the river.

No one has as yet studied the Mogudji and the little I know I collected in the few encounters I have had with them. The Hamar themselves also don't know the Mogudji well, they view them rather as some odd wizards of the river who can swim and dive and are not afraid of crocodiles. The low status which is attributed to them by the Kara probably contributes much to the lack of contacts and reciprocal interests when both Hamar and Mogudji meet in Kara every year at the time of the harvest. (see below).

2.1.1.11. The Mursi

The Hamar say that in olden days they had no contacts with the Mursi at all. They would see their fires far away on the Mursi mountains but that was all. It was the Kara, and the Banna only who were then engaged in war and peace with the Mursi. The Hamar kept to their mountains, and only when they went on their trading expeditions to Banna and Kara did they hear news about the Mursi that the ritual leader of the western Banna had taken a Mursi woman as his second wife: that the Kara had attacked and wiped out the southern most settlement of the Mursi, etc. This picture changed at about 1925-30.

The Hamar say that they had then returned to their country, arid as they had lost most of their herds they were extremely eager for cattle (see below). Then, therefore, the governor of Bako (who himself had gone to Mursi to collect cattle, for taxes, and had been driven out of their country by force) told the Hamar to go and raid the Mursi, they did not let themselves be asked twice, and the relationship between the two tribes has been bad ever since.

The Kara gave some more interesting historical information: Originally the Mursi used to populate not the bush belt of the Omo but the mountains towards the east and parts of the then tsetse-free valley of the Mago north of the legendary Gomba. There was, furthermore, one group of them which lived even further away from their present territory. There exist only vague stories, but even the Hamar insist that somewhere in the southeastern Omo Valley close to the Murle and Bogudo there used to live a group of Mursi. They fled when the sleeping sickness arrived and joined their relatives in the north. Later the move of the Mursi towards the west and into the cover of the Omo bush belt happened. Turton, relates the following migratory theories of the Mursi: "Although the cultural and linguistic affinities of the Mursi, are predominantly with people lying to the west and north of them, they place their traditional homeland, Thalab, to the south-east in present Borana country. They say they migrated in a 'circular', anti-clockwise direction, crossing the Omo from east to west, north of present Bodi country and then

back from west to east, south of the Omo's junction with the Mursi. I cannot estimate the date of this final crossing to the left bank of the Omo, with which their migration came to an end, and can only say that it took place before the last quarter of the 19th century. Both the Mursi and Kwegu agree that the latter were in occupation of the Omo at the time, and that many Kwegu were killed by the Mursi.” (1973, Page 27)

2.1.1.12. The Tsamai

The central and southern Hamar have little knowledge of the Tsamai. Their sympathies and interests lie with the southern, southeastern and western peoples. They consider the Tsamai as 'kin' and warfare with them is inconceivable. Yet despite of being kin they don't like the Tsamai, they have a special awe of them, thinking they are magically dangerous and that any slight argument with them might lead to one's own destruction. In the historical view of the Hamar, the Tsamai arrived in their present country before the Hamar did, and later some of them emigrated and became Hamar.

The Hamar place the origin of the Tsamai in the east (Konso and Borana). This is substantiated by Jensen's account, which adds, however, the interesting story, that one segment of the Tsamai (just like the Arbore) says that originally it came from Shoa (1959, p. 367).

The North-eastern Hamar of the territorial segments of Kufire, Bonkale arid Lala have, probably, a much better knowledge of, and an interest in, the Tsamai than the southern and western Hamar. Jensen's account, from 1959 suggests that the Tsamai had a lively history, and as a result of it, today they live in a complex social configuration (Jensen 1959, p. 359 - 388).

2.1.1.13. The Birale

The last remnants of the Birale, whom Donaldson Smith once encountered as a thriving group north of the Tsamai live today at the point where the Woito leaves the rugged terrain west of the Gauada mountains and enters the lake Stephanie rift plain.

The Hamar know of them only vaguely and indirectly in connection with trade expeditions and migrations at times of drought in their ancient history. When they went to Lake Birale (in modern maps often Lake Woito) in search for grain.

They also have a faint memory of the Birale being one of the populations from which some of their ancestors came. A constant reminder of this is their popular clan 'ba', the ritually most important sub-section of which is called 'ba-birale'.

2.1.1.14. The Banna- Hamar- Bashada- group

The Banna, Hamar and Bashada feed from the same linguistic and cultural stock, the differences between them are variations of a single theme. I focus here mainly on the Hamar, but what I say about them is also basically true for the other two groups. The main feature of Hamar subjective history which distinguishes it from that of the Kara, Mursi, Murle, etc. is that the Hamar say they originally did not arrive as a whole group travelling in search of a territory but rather developed into a composite society which originated from single individuals and families who arrived from many different directions. The linguistic, cultural and political backbone of these initially heterogeneous groups was their ritual leader (bitta) who is said to have been first who arrived in the Hamar mountains, and took possession of all the land. To any newcomer he granted habitation only on condition that he gave up his original language and customs, and would from now on talk the language of his new leader and accept the customs he dictated to him. The people came from several directions, from the Ari country in the north, from Male in the northeast, from Konso in the east, and some are said to have come, from Kara and Bume in the west. No one ever came from the southeast, south, or southwest, which have always been, for the Hamar, the direction of warfare, disease, drought and any other hardship.

The 'bitta' (ritual leader) himself came from the land of plenty, from the 'rain-country' of the Ari. First he moved to Banna, where he established himself and attracted a population that came from many different directions, rallied around him and became the Banna tribe of today. Later his 'younger brother' moved on southwards, and became the 'bitta' of the Hamar. There are other myths of origin which are historically less interesting like the myth which says that the ancestors were cow-like beings that used to live in the sky, until they descended down to earth where at first they lived in the rivers of Hamar country and which were then rich in water. Later they stepped ashore and became people.

Another myth says that the first ritual leader of the Hamar did not come from Ari but from Male and he was not the first to arrive, for there were already people of clan Woela living in the mountains. The attributes many of the typical features of a cultural hero to the man who became the ritual leader (strange looks, performance of several extraordinary magical feats, etc.) and it is not the ritual leader who accepts the people, but the people who accept the ritual leader.

For a final sociological analysis of Hamar society, all the variations of these myths of origin are important, but in the context of this paper, I think that the myth first mentioned the most significant, for it corresponds most closely to what 'objectively', we know about the cultural affinities of the Hamar, which lie to the north, to Ari country (note that the Hamar-Banna-Bashada-Kara group belongs to the Omotic language family, which extends via Ari, to the north, and that all the western, southern and eastern neighbours of the Hamar are linguistically drastically different).

The Bashada similarly have different myths of origin some of which stress an independent origin from the sky, and others telling of an early breakaway from the Hamar. The Hamar view the Bashada as a branch of their own population, they do so especially today, as nowadays there is a great deal of inter-marriage and co-residence among them. A hundred years ago, however, this was not so. Then the Bashada lived on their settlements which now abandoned area is still visible. The Hamar say, that then, the Bashada were, like the Kara, a proud rich group and that they, in fact, would raid the northern and southern Banna. After one of such raids (in which youngsters stole honey from the Hamar, and raped some of their girls) the Hamar 'bitta' cursed the Bashada and this caused sleeping sickness which first decimated the Bashada and spread down to the Omo Valley to take its disastrous toll there. Later the 'bitta' of the Bashada asked the 'bitta' of the Hamar forgiveness, was blessed and his group recovered again. From then on the Hamar and Bashada have been the close 'kin' which they are today. As I have said above, we are for the time being mainly interested in the subjective history of these different tribal groups, because these subjective histories are the 'social charters' which govern and express the socio-political relationships between the groups, and as such constitute factors which any future program planning in the area must take into account and may in fact, use for the advantage of everyone concerned.

Ultimately questions of objective history are of course of great interest not only today for an academic outsider but especially in future for educated members of the tribes themselves. It is they who more than anyone else will want to arrive at a historic identity which fits into the categories of our 'scientific' age, and which will establish and back their political claims of citizenship within the wider nation.

2.1.2. The Ethiopian Conquest

There are no written local sources about the time with which we are concerned here, and I continue writing the history of the Hamar as they see it themselves.

The first foreigners who arrived in Hamar were Europeans. Because of their strange appearance, and especially because of the diseases they, and their men, brought with them (small pox, dysentery) they are remembered until today in stories and songs of funiculars rites.

Whereas the very first Europeans seem to have been hunters who came in search of ivory, those who later arrived were travellers and explorers like Bottego, von Höhnel, Captain Wellby, Donaldson Smith, etc. None of these early visitors made any strong impact on the life of the Hamar. After the Europeans the troops of Emperor Menelik II arrived. They came from the east, from Konso. First they sent a group of men to negotiate with the Tsamai and the Hamar, but they refused to surrender and accept the authority of the intruders. The group of negotiators were killed and fierce fighting between the Tsamai and Hamar and Menelik's troops developed.

At first, when trying to conquer Hamar and Tsamai from the east (i.e. from the Woito Valley), Menelik's troops made little progress, because the steep slopes of the Hamar range gave the Hamar and Tsamai an advantage in the fighting, and made the transport of ammunition and provisions very difficult.

The picture changed drastically when the troops started their second offensive, this time moving north up the Woito valley to Lake Birale, and from there to the 'Wururi' Plains, which, lying several hundred meters higher than the Woito Valley, allowed them an easy access into northern Tsamai, southern Banna and Hamar.

The troops moved rapidly, and after defeating the Tsamai and Hamar, they went on to Bashada, and from there they sent several expeditions into the Omo valley, to Kara, Murle and Galeba. These expeditions seem to have been of an exploratory nature, and they may have been intended also to establish a nominal claim, on the political control over this area, vis á vie the English who were approaching this region from the south (Kenya) and the (Sudan).

After having reached these southern most points, the troops drew back and chose the pleasant highlands of Hamar as the most convenient place for a permanent settlement which was to accommodate troops, administrators, merchants and some settlers who had come with the troops in search for land.

The Hamar had by then vanished almost totally from their country. Their resistance had infuriated the troops, and many of them were killed or enslaved. Those who escaped fled towards the south, to Galeba, Bume, Kara, Arbore, for these low lying and malaria infested territories remained free from any permanent control of the new imperial powers.

Still, it is important to note that a handful of families stayed on in the Hamar Mountains in areas that were least accessible. Among them were members of the family of the ritual leader of the country (bitta) and several other persons ritually important, to certain clans. With their continued presence these few people kept the historical continuity of the Hamar intact, above all, they assured the right to their land, and later became vitally important for the return of the Hamar from exile.

The Hamar say that many of them vanished in exile, especially those who could not keep or rebuild their herds like the ones who sought refuge in the Tsetse infected areas of the Omo, (Kara, Bume) and these who became the 'slaves' of the Arbore. The people who fared best in exile, and who later were to repopulate Hamar from the south, were the ones who had fled to Galeba, on the shores of Lake Rudolph. There they were not only able to grow crops, but also could keep some small herds. How long did the Hamar stay in exile? One decade? Two decades? No one can tell exactly. But at some point the Hamar flourished so well among the Galeba, that rivalry and antagonism developed among them. Before, they had been good friends and had successfully made several raids into Kenya together from which they returned with cattle and small stock. These animals now became the basis of a new self-assurance of the Hamar, and at the same time they led to a number of disputes and fights which eventually caused the Hamar to leave their host country and return to their own territory. The Hamar point out that there was no one-way causation: As much as they were driven away by the Galeba they were called home by these families who had stayed on in the Hamar Mountains. There exist several oral traditions about that time that there were meetings among these families in which they decided which would be the best rituals, that would bring back the Hamar to their mountains. The ritual of this kind which is still best remembered today was that performed by a man called 'hanshernas'. After having made countless heaps of sand, which symbolically represented the stacks of a rich harvest of sorghum, in the dry river bed of Zaldakatta, he prayed together with a few old men for the return of his people, - and soon after that, the Hamar began to repopulate the country. They didn't, however, move into their old mountain homes yet. These were too close to the dangerous intruders who had settled at Buska (Hamar Koke). They settled in the lower and southern area instead, from the province of Kadja south towards the Kenya border and the Lower Omo. In fact, they did not really settle at first but were semi-nomadic, relying predominantly on their herds in order to be mobile, and remain inaccessible to the Ethiopian troops.

Only slowly, as the policy of the Ethiopian Government turned from subjugation by force to a more constructive administration, and as slavery became forbidden, did the Hamar move gradually back into their mountains. This movement has, in fact, not yet come to an end, and it should certainly be taken into account by any future program planning (see below).

2.1.3. The Italian Occupation

After that, among the Hamar that had returned to their country, there emerged a powerful leader whose name was Berinas. First he acted as an informal go-between for the Hamar and the Ethiopian administrators, and later he became the 'balabat' of the Hamar. Berinas played a very important role before, during, and after the Italian occupation.

His first contribution, for which he later was to receive the title of Kegnazmach, was that he mobilized the Hamar to help and not to harass the Ethiopian groups of refugees that, after the advent of the Italians were heading south towards Kenya. Unlike other groups who had attacked and plundered the refugees the Hamar provided food for them, and led them safely to Kenyan territory at Illeret. When shortly afterwards the Italians arrived, Berinas almost met his death, because the 'banda' (Ethiopians fighting for the Italians) knew the loyalty of Berinas to Haile Sellassie and did not trust him.

The Italian commander, however, realized the exceptional ability and knowledge of Berinas and spared him, at the same time, he had several of the traditional and ritual leaders of the Hamar executed.

From then onwards throughout the Italian occupation Berinas played a double game: On the one side he helped and advised the Italians in the administration of the country, and on the other side he remained loyal to the Ethiopians by allowing resistance fighters to stay in, and pass through, his territory without the Italians knowing of this.

For the Hamar the biggest menace during the occupation were not the Italians (who were few in number anyway), but the 'banda'. The 'banda' were a mixed lot of Somali, Borana and individuals of many other, far away, tribes, for whom the life of a Hamar counted little, and many a Hamar is said to have suffered his death at their hands.

Throughout the occupation the Hamar were, of course, forced into labour. First they had to carry the supplies for the troops, and later they had to help build the roads to Kalam and Kara, and to construct the palisades and houses for the Italian strongholds at Mt. Bala, Atana, Maco and Murle (see map). As southern Gamu Gofa was then almost inaccessible, and no exceptional natural resources were tempting any investment, the Italians seem to have been only concerned to establish their military presence in the area (building roads and fortresses). Their civil administration remained, therefore, almost negligible. When English and Ethiopian forces began their offensive from the south, there was no serious fighting in Hamar nor anywhere else in southern Gamu Gofa. The Italians moved north to Male territory.

There they sent away their 'banda', buried their guns and ammunition at a secret place (which is said not to have been discovered to the present day) and set fire to their lorries.

2.1.4. The Rule of Haile Sellassie

After the withdrawal of the Italians, southern Gamu Gofa remained in a vacuum. The English on one side only sent a few expeditions to such places as Arbore, Hamar Koke and Kelem, which, as the Hamar see it, were to expedite peace (the English officers seem to have been experts in the stimulation the organization of dances) and- above all- to urge the tribes to stop raiding towards the south into Kenya. After their short visits the expeditions returned to Illeret.

The Ethiopian Government, on the other side, needed some time to re-establish itself in the centre of the empire, and systematic administration developed only several years later. Meanwhile only individual Ethiopians, and groups of former resistance fighters who had their base of power in the south and in exile influenced the tribal politics.

As can be easily guessed, this was not wholly beneficial. During the Italian occupation an unprecedented amount of arms (carbines) and ammunition reached the hands of the tribes. Especially these who had become 'banda' like the Bume, Arbore and Galeba, were well armed, but also the Hamar, Bashada, Kara and Banna, who, as they say, refused to carry arms for the Italians, managed to acquire enough arms to make them feel strong and ready to fight. The first tribal neighbour whom they attacked were the Male. The initiators of the raid were members of the group of Ethiopian refugees and resistance fighters who were attacked and plundered by the Male on their way into exile.

The raid was their revenge, and the Hamar and Banna, who helped in the fight, were well paid by the cattle they were able to drive home. After the Male the Arbore were the second group to be attacked. Together with the Borana the Arbore had been 'banda' during the occupation, and the Hamar had suffered unbearable humiliation by them. Their first impulse, therefore, was to take revenge after the Italians left.

Under the leadership of Berinas they organised a big war party. Their attack, however, was betrayed and the Arbore had their guns ready and successfully defended themselves. This betrayal is typical for the relationship between Hamar and Arbore. Both groups are friends at some time, and enemies at another time. During periods of peace, very close personal friendships develop between single individuals and it is these individuals, who, disturbed by the danger that is threatening their friends, defy the solidarity of

their own group, and do everything to save the lives of their personal friends (other examples of similar processes see below).

A third raid of this category of 'revenge' was made from Banna into Mursi country. Again the initiators seem to have been a group of former resistance fighters and the Banna, Hamar and Bashada were their allies. The Hamar say that the Mursi were badly beaten and many cattle were taken.

After the Male, Arbore and Mursi raids the 'debts' of the Italian occupation were 'paid', and the raids that then followed were predominantly of an economic nature. I intend to describe the pattern of raiding that developed in some detail, because it was the most important factor stifling indigenous social and economic development in the area, and a factor which throughout the rule of Haile Sellassie the Ethiopian Government was never to get in its grip.

From time immemorial the Hamar have occasionally fought with their neighbours, but they stress that they only took to systematic raiding after their defeat by Emperor Menelik's troops. Then not only were many of them enslaved and forced into exile, they also lost all their herds of cattle, goats and sheep.

When, therefore, the surviving Hamar returned from exile and began to repopulate their territory, their first and foremost aim was to rebuild their herds - and one of their means of doing this was by 'forced exchange'. This is how the Hamar became the fierce and daring raiders for which they are so well known all over southern Gamu Gofa and deep into Kenya. That, which in the eyes of the Ethiopian and the Kenyan Governments looked like criminal behaviour, was in the eyes of the Hamar a heroic attempt at survival, and a highly valued contribution to the economic and social re-establishment of the group. Many songs and rituals document this social value attributed to raiding.

It is, however, interesting to note that this strain of violence was a new development in Hamar culture. Originally the main Hamar values were protective and defensive, rather than destructive and aggressive. The Hamar themselves pointed this out to me by drawing my attention to the fact that most of their rituals and customs related to raiding are not of their old cultural stock but are recent borrowings from the Galeba and Bume, and outright new inventions.

For example: the scarification of the chest as a sign that one has killed an enemy was forbidden in olden times!

The first successful raids were those which the Hamar launched from Galeba, (see below) and they were directed towards tribes that lived outside Ethiopian territory, in Kenya. However, the Hamar soon realized that there exist animosities between the main Ethiopian administrative provinces (Gidole in the east, Bako in the west, their border running along the centre of present day Hamar, i.e. along the Kaeske river) and that those animosities allowed them a certain amount of raiding from province to province without being held responsible in the long run.

The main target of the Hamar was then the Boran. The Hamar say that most of their cattle of today originally came from Borana (i.e. the Hamar remember the ancestry of their cattle in the same way they remember genealogies, see below). The Italian interlude drastically reduced raiding for several years. During this time the Hamar had a series of exceptionally rich harvests, and despite the blood-letting by the 'banda' the population increased and generally strengthened (this is verified by my genealogical data), and became ready and eager for new raids to fill the still miserably empty kraals. The guns and ammunition were also there, and lacking any strong internal and any strong external social control the Hamar men had to go raiding. The Hamar themselves are unable to remember all of their many raids into Kenya (Borana, Gabre) and into Sidame, (Borana, Karmit), but they say that almost all of them were successful. For an almost metaphorically reason these tribes were unable to fight them back, they had become their 'wives'.

This was different with the Galeba and the Arbore. The conflicts with the Galeba which developed and became endemic resulted from a combination of raiding for cattle and an attempt on both sides to have access to, and control over, the grazing areas and water holes, or the land that used once to be occupied by the Korre (see above and see also below), i.e. the land south and west and north-west of Fudjedji (see map). In the innumerable raids and counter raids between the two groups from the mid-forties until 1974 none of them seem to have gained any substantial amount of cattle from the other. The cattle (and small stock) just moved back from one side to the other. Yet, the mortality losses, affecting everybody alike, were immense.

I estimate that from 1944 to 1974 on each side at least a hundred people were killed. But not only this, large stretches of valuable grazing areas remained permanently unused, which, if they had been accessible, would have helped both groups to prosper. There seems to have been a direct correlation between ecological factors and the frequency of raiding between these two groups: during the mid sixties (1963-1968), when southern Gamu Gofa had rather good rains, there was a certain relaxation of tension, to the degree that even Hamar and Galeba visited each other in their respective territories, but when from 1969 to 1974 the drought was developing, the raiding increased again and reached its peak in the years 1972-1974.

The rich harvests of both groups in 1975 possibly in connection with the impact of the new government and the operations of the Relief Commission led immediately to a reduction of conflicts and even a number of peace ceremonies.

Whereas the Hamar call the Galeba their 'age-mates', meaning that they both are equal in strength, they call the Arbore their 'older brothers', for although the Arbore are only a small group they have always defeated the Hamar when they attacked. In their own territory, the Hamar successfully have driven back Arbore raiders often enough and also small parties that went to raid or just to kill in Arbore country, usually could boast of some achievement after their return, but any attack on a large scale was always a disaster for the Hamar. The last example of this kind was their attack in January 20th, 1974 when more than a thousand Hamar went to wipe out the 'snake by the water'. In the fierce fighting which occurred at the south-eastern side of the Woito delta close to the Borana Mountains and which lasted only for several hours about twenty Hamar men were killed, 'bulls' as the Hamar say, i.e. men in the best years of their lives. Also the Arbore lost several of their most valuable fighters, but still, they were able to send home the Hamar in a panic.

As the pattern of war and peace between the Hamar and the Arbore is the most salient factor affecting all program planning and especially the irrigation project recently begun at Arbore (see below) it is important that the facts of this pattern and its objective basis are properly understood.

I would like, therefore, to point out here that although the Hamar are a real threat to the security of the Arbore because the Arbore are numerically much weaker than the Hamar the Arbore have not kept on the defensive, but on the contrary have often raided and attacked the Hamar. A short outline of the main attacks from 1945-1973 by the Arbore may make this rather surprising fact more convincing.

1. Between 1945 - 1950 at Arral, south of Assile a mixed group of Arbore and Galeba tried to raid Hamar. In the evening fight one Hamar, and about 5 of the raiders died, several of them Galeba. No cattle were driven away.
2. Some time after 1950 a big war party of the Arbore raided successfully the Hamar cattle camps at Zagaino. One Hamar, but no Arbore, died and about 10 gateway (about 500 - 800) cattle are said to have been driven away.
3. In the mid to late fifties, the Arbore attacked the Hamar when they were watering their cattle at Tula. In the fighting the 'balabat' of the Arbore (Gino) and two more Arbore, and one Hamar were killed.

The fight was explicitly about rights to water, and at some stage the Ethiopian Police was involved and the rights of both group were negotiated.

4. In the early sixties, the Arbore attacked the Hamar at Assileabaino. They lost two men and were not able to drive away any cattle.

5. In 1968 they launched a big raid at Marda. The Hamar who were taken by surprise lost as many as 500 head of cattle.

The then acting Governor of Hamar, Ato Getachew Bekele, took several young Arbore men prisoner, and most of the cattle were returned to the Hamar.

6. 1970 (?) the Arbore raided Labala which lies almost on their doorstep. They killed one Hamar and drove away about 100-150 of the cattle, which Ato Getachew had returned.

7. The latest and very provoking raid occurred on the 3rd of May 1973, directly after Captain Jonas had taken 2000 cattle of Surra, from the Hamar by force in order to pay back the Hamar's debts to the Borana. Once again the Arbore were backed by the Galeba. They attacked the Hamar who thought they were safe having made their camps close to the newly established police post of Karabaino at the southern west corner of the Lake Stephanie rift.

But one morning the Arbore attacked, and before the police could intervene, they had driven away six 'gateways' of goats (500-700) and one 'gateway' of cattle (50-80). In the fighting, four Hamar and two of the raiders died (one of them a Galeba). As the Arbore were driving away the herds, they called out: "Sulla, this is only to stimulate our taste, we will come back for more". For Sulla and the other men of Assile and Wungabaino (the herds belonged to families of these two territorial segments) this was a great provocation, and it became one of the facts that was widely exploited to mobilize the Hamar for the big 1974 raid. During the very days in which the raid was planned and executed Grazmatch Surra, Balamberas Aike Berinas and I had our first decisive meeting about the irrigation project!

As I have said above, originally the Hamar and Arbore were on peaceful terms with one another and close economic ties existed between them. The serious fighting dates back only to the Italian Occupation.

Although the fighting may have been sparked off by some consequences of the occupation (humiliation of the Hamar and their need for revenge) the continuation of the conflict must have had a more basic reason.

The Hamar were quick to point this basic reason out to me: access to water. They told me that at about the turn of the century, and even until later, the Woito took a different course than it takes now. Then, when there was peace between Hamar and Arbore, one course of the river passed close by the foot of the Hamar Range, and while the Arbore had their fields and kept their herds east of this watercourse, the Hamar had their fields and kept their herds west of it.

This allowed both parties permanent access to water, and at the same time, as it drew them into close contact with each other, it still kept them separate (a fact which is extremely important in the light of the different social organisation of both groups and the problems of inter-tribal social control that result from it). Unfortunately, however, the waters of the Woito at some point in time began to recede and the watercourse that had been reaching Hamar finally dried up. The only watercourse that remained passed east of Arbore. This meant that the Hamar had to cross the territory of the Arbore when they wanted to reach the water which especially in the dry season was vitally important for their herds. Also, the fields that once were separate now became intermingled. This new situation was, of course, bound to lead to conflict. The Arbore felt the pressure of the Hamar as a threat to their own land and general sovereignty in the area, and the Hamar said to each other, that the Arbore had diverted the river by magic in order to make the Hamar dependent on them and enslave them. When then thievery, rape and other incidents occurred, the conflict came to the surface, and the only answer to it was open war, and a separation of both groups by force. After a while, however, the Hamar would again return to the plains and drive their cattle towards the Woito in search of water and for pasture. Then a peace ceremony would be held, some Hamar would begin to make their fields close to those of the Arbore, and more and more Hamar would turn up, until again the point would be reached where the Arbore felt threatened by the Hamar, and the Hamar resented the position of the Arbore - and new conflicts would develop. In this way throughout the past 30 years this vicious circle has never been broken (note the Kara-Bume parallel below!).

When therefore, Balambaras Aike Berinas of the Hamar, Grazmatch Surra of the Arbore and I began to plan the irrigation project at Arbore, our first and foremost aim was to redirect some of the water into the old river courses of Muli and Tula so that the water would again permanently reach the Hamar Mountains. This would re-establish the old situation in which, once, peace had been possible.

The war and peace between the Hamar and the Bume, has been always closely linked to the political relationship between the Bume and the Kara. The Bume-Kara relationship in turn was affected by the Bume-Galeba relationship, which again was influenced by the Hamar-Galeba relationship.

The picture is complicated yet logical and as these intertribal relationships are partly based on economic factors, and as they will influence future economic cooperation in the lower Omo Valley, I will have to discuss the situation here in some detail. For this purpose I take the situation which prevailed in 1972-1973.

From 1970 onwards the effects of the drought made itself felt in southern Gamu Gofa, and, as I have said above, the conflicts between the Hamar and Galeba increased. They were fighting for the control over the grazing areas and water holes of southwestern Hamar, and northeastern Galeba. A similar situation seems to have existed on the western side of the Omo between the Galeba and the Bume. I do not know the details of this situation, but from the Hamar, and from talks with the Bume, I understand that there was an important additional factor involved: ammunition.

To fight the Hamar the Galeba needed ammunition badly. One of their traditional sources of ammunition was in Madji. They would drive their herds of oxen to Madji, and would return with new guns and belts full of bullets. For this they always had to pass through Bume territory, and the peace with the Bume was, therefore, very dear to them.

Yet, at the height of the drought in 1972 the Bume felt that it would be to their disadvantage if the Galeba were well armed. They therefore decided that they would cut off the Galeba from their main supply of bullets, and by doing so they would not only weaken the Galeba but also open up the doors for a new peace with the Hamar which would allow them to share the wet season harvests in the mountains of Bashada and Hamar. At first the developments were favourable: they barred the Galeba from crossing their country to buy bullets, and they went in large numbers across the Omo to survive on the sorghum that had ripened in the mountains. However, soon the Galeba were able to utilise their good relationship with the Arbore to find access to supplies of arms and ammunition that came from Konso and Tertele, and as they were enraged and provoked by the refusal of the Bume to let them pass, they began to plan a raid into Bume country. When, at last, the attack happened, it was the most horrifying one that had occurred since the Hamar raid on Ado in 1935. More than 300 Bume and 150 Galeba are said to have died. A raiding and counter-raiding between the Bume and Galeba followed that has not come to an end even now (March 1976). Cattle were driven away by both sides, and if the Bume lost more cattle than the Galeba, this was certainly not as bad for them as the fact that from now

on, they could no longer make fields along the Omo, at the Narok meander belt and at Shungura; the area had become too unsafe for them.

As a result of this they had for their dry season survival to rely more than before on the few sites further north, the old Marle settlement of Aiba and- this is important- the fields at Kara.

To complete the picture before I turn to the Bume-Kara Hamar relationship, I have to point out that the relationship between the Bume and the Mursi worsened at the same time as the Bume-Galeba, conflict developed. Both groups having their fields at the banks of the Omo, north and northeast of Kibish, and being short of food are said to have begun stealing each other's stores. This led to fights in which several people (among them the 'balabat' of the Mursi) were killed. The result of the fighting was again a loss that affected both parties alike: the area became so unsafe that no one dared to work on his cultivation properly, and the harvests were accordingly very meagre.

The Bume then having war to the south, war to the north and no opportunities to the west (the international border) they were extremely interested in an alliance with the three related groups to the east, the Hamar, Bashada and Kara. As I have said above, they reached Hamar and Bashada in great numbers during and after the rainy season (April-August 1972), and as they had hardly had any crops in their own territory, it is fair to say that the harvest of the mountains contributed much to their survival.

There were, however, not only the Bume who came to live on the crops of the Hamar and Bashada, also the Kara arrived in considerable numbers.

Like the Bume they had run out of food, and the rainy season which had brought (relative) abundance to the mountains had only brought scarcity to the lowlands. So both groups were competing for the surplus food of the Hamar and Bashada.

The Kara soon came to regret the presence of the Bume, for the Bume, pressed by very serious starvation, offered high prices for any amount of grain: spears, cow bells, beads and female goats. This barred the Kara from grain which, if the Bume had not been present, they would not only have received in abundance but also, as they were 'kin' of the groups, would have got without (or hardly any) payment.

The antagonism that developed soon turned into open conflict. To understand fully what happened one has again to take two more inter-tribal relationships into account that of Kara and Galeba and that of the Kara and Banna. As I have said above, the Kara are mythologically related to the Galeba and

between them always a strong alliance, (supported by economic exchange) has prevailed. The war between the Bume and the Galeba, therefore, posed for the Kara the question, whether they should keep quiet, or whether they should openly side with their 'brothers', the Galeba. They chose an alternative which, as the Hamar say, is typical for the Kara: they invited their close friends, the Banna, for an easy kill on the border between Hamar and Bume territory, down by the Omo. A war party of mainly Banna (but also some Kara) attacked a group of Bume who were returning from an expedition to Hamar and Bashada. Several Bume (mainly women) died and the grain that was spilt on the ground was symbolic of the result of the attack: the journey across the eastern Omo plains had become unsafe and the Bume stopped their trading expedition to the east.

Although everyone knew that the Kara had been the instigators, both the Hamar and the Bume said it was the Banna who had spoilt the peace, and when four months later a comparatively rich harvest was ripening at Kara, the starving Bume arrived from Nakua and asked the Kara for a share of the food. At first the Kara were able to absorb and feed them, but when after several weeks the Bume had increased to such numbers that the Kara felt threatened by them, and feared for their own supplies, they tried to send the Bume away. The Bume, however, refused to go, saying they preferred a violent death to slow starvation in their own country.

For a short time the situation was extremely tense, and when, after several minor quarrels, some visiting Banna killed several Bume guests, uncontrollable fighting developed in which more than 30 Bume died.

The full extent of the complications involved in the situation may be judged from the fact that a number of Kara families defended their Bume guests against their own people. These survivors were led across the Omo into safety on the day after the massacre (note the similarity between the situation of the Arbore and the Kara).

Three days later, the Bume retaliated with a large-scale raid in which they killed more than a hundred Kara at the southern most cultivated area of Kunama and took almost all their grain stores. This defeat of their Kara 'kin' automatically affected the relationship between the Hamar and the Bume. For some time they would still occasionally share the meat of a successful hunt at the Omo together and some starved Bume would still come to visit their bond friends at the Hamar cattle camps in search of some substantial food. But soon those Hamar who felt a strong solidarity with the Kara, realized that they could betray their Bume guests, without running the risk of being ostracised by their fellow Hamar, and they began to kill them whenever they found an opportunity.

The starved and desperate Bume would at first not believe this but finally they had to face the truth that their alliance with the Hamar had broken down.

As the reader may have realised, I have slowly moved from a historic account of particular conflicts, to a less historic description of a more general pattern of conflicts, and I, also, have tried to point out the economic factors that lie at the roots of it. I therefore cut short my description of further relationships of conflict, (Hamar-Mursi, Hamar-Male) by simply stating that the picture is similar to that outlined above. To summarise the inter-tribal relationships of war and peace, I have listed them on a chart, a graphic representation and a map (see appendix).

As I have said above, the Ethiopian Government never managed to control this situation of intertribal warfare. In fact, the government contributed to an increase of conflict in the area. This was not the fault of individual leaders of the police or civil administrators (who, as I understand, have often done their very best under hard and trying conditions), but rather the natural consequence of the political system of Emperor Haile Selassie. Southern Gamu Gofa as a part of the Ethiopian Empire was ruled by Haile Selassie in the same way it had been ruled by the Italians: Road tracks were kept and police posts were built (at Hamar Koke, at Turmi, Fadjedji, Mino-Galti, Karabaino, Arbore, Kalem, Kibish, etc.) to keep this border area under military control. District administrators were responsible for the collection of taxes and the judicial affairs of the local population.

The people themselves had no place in this form of government. There existed a number of 'balabats' and 'chikashums' who 'de jure' were representatives of the people, but 'de facto' were nothing else but the mouth piece (and, often enough, the institutionalised hostages) of the government.

I think it is fair to say, that during the rule of Haile Selassie, the population of southern Gamu Gofa had not a single institution, that allowed them to actively participate in politics that affected themselves.

The Ethiopian Government had eradicated some of the old political institutions of the people, and had weakened others, and now it was monopolising all the privileges of official government. Yet, this very monopolisation led to its ineffectiveness, and to the absence of the promised 'pax amharica', Had there been democratic institutions developed to allow for an expression of the interests of each of the tribes, and if a regional council of representatives had been institutionalised to deal with intertribal conflicts, I think that southern Gamu Gofa would have seen more prosperity and less warfare in the past. The rule of Haile Selassie, then, was marked by the absence of constructive socio-economic policy and a stifling of local political activity. As a result the tribes suffered from political disorientation and economic depression which in turn became the cause for permanent inter-tribal conflicts.

2.2. The Social Organisation of the Hamar.

There are many ways of looking at a system of social organisation. As I am concerned here not with academic problems, but with the need for information, that might be able to assist urgent program planning, I have chosen to outline the social system of the Hamar with the use of only four basic categories of social description:

1. Social roles.
2. Social groups.
3. Transcendental notions.
4. Social process.

I hope that these four categories may not only be employed by me to sketch the sociology of the Hamar, but that other anthropologists who write similar reports, for the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission, may also use these categories, and by doing so we might arrive at a data which allows for true comparison and generalization in the end.

2.2.1. Roles

2.2.1.1. Role I: The 'Donza'

The basic unit and source of the power of social life in Hamar is the competent married man (donza). This may sound a truism, as in most societies the 'competent married man' is the 'atom' of social organisation, but there are differences in degree. Hamar society, which has had a history that has weakened and extinguished most of its ancient corporate groups (see above), today is highly individualistic, and the importance of the head of a nuclear or extended family, as some one who can make his own independent decisions, can hardly be overemphasised.

There is no social stratification in Hamar (although there are offices, see below) and this egalitarian element finds its expression in the ethos of the role of the 'donza' during the course of his life. 'Donza' means to have become a man, to have married and begotten children, to have shown oneself competently in everyday life, to be responsible, to be learned, to deserve respect and- above all- to have the right to participate in all the politics and decision making that are of public concern.

2.2.1.2. Role II: The 'Zarsi'

'Zarsi' is both, an individual term (role) and a collective term (group) and its exact meaning depends on the context. The name is metaphoric, 'zarsi' being a certain grass that covers the ground like a web. Anyone who tries to pull out a single root of the grass finds that it is interconnected with all the other grass around it.

In exactly the same way as this grass, the individual married man (donza) who shares a common residence (the same soil) are interconnected. To be more specific: the individual 'donza' of a settlement area become 'zarsi' and act towards each other as 'zarsi', when jointly they work to achieve a common goal. This goal, directed action, is the essential part of the definition of the 'zarsi'. For example, whenever in a neighbourhood there is a quarrel, or any other problem of public concern, the 'zarsi' are called for, and any 'donza' who is present will then turn into a 'zarsi' and together with his fellow 'zarsi' he has the authority to speak, and influence the decisions that affect the situation. Whenever an issue is settled, and the matter of common concern has disappeared, the men immediately cease to be 'zarsi' and become individual 'donza' again.

2.2.1.3. Role III: The 'Ayo'

The 'ayo' is a man who 'does' something ('ai'a = do). He is in the widest sense, any kind of leader, but more specifically he is a spokesman. In olden times the hereditary ritual chiefs, ('bitta', see below) and the age-group, were the main individuals and groups, that used to choose specific persons as leaders and spokesmen. Today, predominantly, the men of a territorial segment and the 'zarsi' of a locality choose their 'ayo'.

There are approximately, 45 'ayo' today in Hamar, about one for every two settlement areas. The social symbol of an 'ayo' is his specific spear (always one of the Bume or the Galeba) which signifies his right and duty to speak at a public meeting.

This spear was, once, handed to him at the occasion of a public meeting. On behalf of the 'zarsi' and the 'yellow land' (the whole population) he was then blessed by the most senior 'ayo' present, and was told to 'speak' from now on, for his age-mates'. The office of 'ayo' is not inherited, and only competent men who have shown political skills already are selected. 'De jure' all 'ayo' are equal, but 'de facto' they are very different. Their political standing is always shifting, and their never-ending struggle for influence lies at the very heart of Hamar politics.

The main function of the 'ayo' relate to social conflict, either conflicts between different segments, (local or genealogical) within the tribe or conflicts concerning outsiders. The social situation in which a man exercises his function as 'ayo', is the public meeting (osh) which I will describe more closely below. It is interesting to note, that the 'ayo' generally are not wealthier than other Hamar, indeed, they may well be less well off than others. The 'zarsi' may, at least, at times bring their 'ayo' a sheep or goat, as a compensation for the time and energy he has to spend for the public good, but these gifts hardly balance the many expenses an 'ayo' has, as long as he aspires to some political influence.

This influence, like all influences in Hamar, is subtle. An 'ayo' does not command, he may not even make decisions on his own. He is a leader, who, after having mobilized the people, or having been mobilized by them, directs the complex procession of public decision-making, and then, when a general consensus has been reached, it is his task to summarize and articulate this consensus in a public speech.

2.2.1.4. Role IV: The 'Gudili'

The 'gudili' is the ritual leader of a locality, especially of its fields. The office may be inherited, but often, especially in newly populated areas, the 'gudili' is chosen by his fellow 'zarsi'. His main tasks are to lead (together with his assistant), the seasonal rituals of fertility and protection, that ensure the well being of the locality, its fields, pastures and forests, and that of its human and animal population. He also performs a ritual of reconciliation whenever some serious conflict has disrupted the social group (see below). The 'gudili' receives occasional gifts, and the 'zarsi' help him prepare his field, yet, like the 'ayo' he is not significantly richer than anyone else.

When lack of rain in the area of a 'gudili' occurs, or any other menace threatens the area permanently, and when in addition to this, for some reason, the 'gudili' has offended his people, he may well find that the people reject him and chose a new 'gudili' who they hope, will bring them better 'luck' (see below).

2.2.1.5. Role V: The 'Moara'

There are several forms of divination in Hamar, but any one who has become expert in any kind of divination is called a 'moara'. The most important form of divination is that of consulting the intestines of a goat, sheep or cow, slaughtered as a sacrifice for the ancestors. This divination, though understood in general by everybody, is only done by a very small number of experts, usually by men who are quite old. Another form of divination which plays a big role in sickness, herding and raiding is the sandal oracle. The sandals are thrown by many men, in many different situations and there is a kind of informal hierarchy of expertise. A man who is not a great expert, may well consult the sandals, for

someone in his own domestic context, but he would never act as 'moara' in matters that concern the wider public. The reverse is not true for the real expert, who will always consult his sandals for anyone, even if the matter is small and personal and insignificant. The 'moara' is paid for his services with small gifts of tobacco, coffee, salt, etc. and usually he is well fed by his host.

I think there is a tendency of the 'moara' to belong either to the very poor (those who don't own livestock) or to the richer and more influential people. The poor seem to take to divination especially when they have grown old, then their clientele, with their occasional gifts, help them over the hardships of the worst parts of the year. The influential men on the other side, especially those who already hold the office of 'ayo' or 'gudili', or possibly both, tend to usurp also the knowledge of a 'moara'. If they successfully do so, this adds to their political power and makes them independent in sudden social crisis when they have to arrive at decision-making. There is not room here, for an outline, of the many other forms of divination that exist, like body massage, reading the contents a coffee bowl, dreaming, watching the clouds and the sky, watching the herds, etc.

For a description of divination as a social process see below!

2.2.1.6. Role VI: The 'Bitta'

'Bitta' literally means 'the first', the first ancestor of the Hamar who came to settle in the area (see below). It also means 'the first' in authority and 'the first' in transcendental, and ritual power.

Outsiders have tended to call the 'bitta' a 'chief' or 'king', but I could never agree fully with such a terminology. The 'bitta' is a kind of 'gudili' for the whole tribe, or, rather, for one half of the tribe. Like the Banna, the Hamar traditionally have two 'bitta', each one of them being ritually responsible for the health, security and general well-being of his part of the country and its people.

The Ethiopian conquest and the Italian occupation both have negatively affected the office of the 'bitta', and have taken away much of its original mystical power. The Hamar in exile learned to live without the direct ritual contact of their 'bitta', and when they returned to their country this estrangement was still enhanced, by the fact that they chose one man among themselves, (Kegnazmatch Berinas) who was to be their main leader and spokesman 'balabat' towards the Ethiopian Government. Such a single spokesman, who as a kind of worldly 'bitta' represented the whole tribe had never existed before, and I think there can be no question that the office of 'balabat' has pushed the office of 'bitta' off the stage today. There is, furthermore, another very simple reason for the fact that the office of 'bitta' doesn't make itself felt strongly in Hamar today: one 'bitta' is dead (he died young) and his oldest

son, who alone will inherit his office, is still a little boy and the other is still a very young and inexperienced man. The rituals surrounding the 'bitta' and the rituals he performs himself, and the magic powers that he applies are all manifold, but this is not the place to describe them. For the moment it may suffice to say that the office of the 'bitta', which lies at the apex of the society, is still valued very highly in theory, but that in practice it is of rather limited influence today.

2.2.2. Groups

2.2.2.1. Group I: The 'Dele'

In terms of groups, the nuclear and the extended families (dele) are the 'atoms' of Hamar society, just as, in terms of roles the 'donza', are.

'Dele' may be translated as 'house' or 'homestead', but in its wider social sense it means 'family', 'the people of one homestead', 'lineage'. The term has witnessed the same extension like the English 'house' or German 'Haus', which (especially when applied to the aristocracy) may mean 'members and descendants of one family'. The 'dele' typically changes its composition in the course of time. There are long-term cycles, which are measured in the span of generations, and there are short-term cycles, which are measured by the life cycle of the individual. Also, many external and historical hazards constantly, have an influence on the composition of any 'dele'. The general trend is rather like the one often witnessed in other societies: the 'dele' moves from being a simple nuclear family, to an extended family, under the authority of the male head of the initial nuclear family. Then, as the 'father' dies, the sibling group under the authority of the oldest brother (primogeniture is axiomatic) still holds together for some time (especially if some 'mothers' are still alive) until the brothers slowly begin to separate, and again the nuclear families prevail. The objective manifestations of a 'dele' are the houses of the wives and mothers, a goat enclosure and a cattle kraal.

History has forced the Hamar to move a lot in the past, yet; ideally a 'dele' does not move but stays in a specific locality.

2.2.2.2. Group II: The 'Mulda'

The term 'mulda' may be translated as 'lineage' or 'close kin' or 'kin of limited range'. Only sometimes, especially in matters concerning marriage payment and at ritual occasions, the 'mulda' may act as a corporate group.

In every-day-life the people of a 'mulda' do not regularly interact for practical purposes. Emotionally they are close interact for practical purposes. Emotionally they are close to each other, and I have the impression that there is a slight tendency of residing in the same or adjacent localities, but for the purpose of this report, which is concerned with social facts, that might have an effect on practical matters, the 'mulda' is only of secondary importance.

2.2.2.3. Group III: The 'Gir'

The 'gir' is the clan which may, but mostly does not, recognise a common genealogical origin.

All clans of the Hamar are patrilineal and they are divided into two segments, A (binnas) and B (galabu) which are each other's wife-givers and wife-receivers. While A is strictly exogamous, B is not, and several of its clans marry among each other. The clans vary considerably in size, and like lineages (mulda) they show a tendency towards co-residence.

Although the clans are of great importance for ritual, and although they play a certain hidden part in politics, I think that like the 'mulda' they have little bearing on the practical problems of socio-economic every-day-life.

2.2.2.4. Group IV: The 'Gurda'

The term 'gurda' may be translated as 'village', 'hamlet', 'settlement', 'people of common residence'.

There is a prominent variation of settlement patterns in Hamar:

Towards the north and in the highlands the settlements are dispersed and show a 'hamlet' pattern; towards the south and in the lowlands the settlements are generally more compact. The reason for this variation is apparent: where there is danger of being raided by a hostile neighbour, people move close together to be able to jointly defend themselves.

Settlements are usually built on ridges that offer a good view of the surrounding areas, a cool evening breeze, absence of mosquitoes and a ground that does not get muddy and damp during the rainy season. After a time as the houses fall into ruin, (because of white ants the life expectation of a Hamar house is only about 5-7 years) and the people build new ones, a 'gurda' tends to shift its location, and over several generations it may move up and down the same ridge, several times. Ecological factors (drying up of water holes, exhaustion of pasture and fertile soil, disease, etc.), and social factors (raiding, internal conflicts), also often cause a 'gurda' to move, or may terminate its existence altogether.

A 'gurda' does not have any 'village head', its decision makers are the individual 'donza' in their capacity of 'zarsi' as I have outlined above. There are then, of course, informal hierarchies among the politically active men, and there are the spokesmen and leaders (ayo), but there is no office that could be especially defined as 'leadership of a village'. Either an office is less than this (for example the 'gudili') or it embodies more (like for example the 'ayo'). Membership of a 'gurda' is not restricted, and people may move freely from settlement to settlement.

There are approximately 93 settlements in Hamar today. The smallest consisting of only 3-4 families and the biggest containing more than 20 families. As I have said above, these families may be concentrated in a place as small as one hectare or they may live dispersed over an area of 5 km in diameter (for the location of Hamar Settlements see map 5).

2.2.2.5. Group V: The 'Alaza'

The term 'alaza' does not strictly mean a social group, but 'the field', 'a stretch of fields', 'a cultivated area'. Yet, in an extended sense, it means all the people who, under the ritual leadership of a 'gudili', cultivate closely together in the same area. These people may well come from different 'gurda', because in many parts of the country, the fields lie far away from the settlements, and dispersed at the fertile points in the bush. So 'alaza' 'A' may contain members of the 'gurda' A,B, and C and the members of 'gurda' A disperse during the day to the 'alaza' 'A', 'B' and 'C', the 'gurda' being mainly community of the evening, morning and the night, and the 'alaza' being a community of the day.

This counter position of 'gurda' and 'alaza' leads to a relatively high flow of communication and exchange, and it offers the individual an escape from a domestic life, that otherwise might be too close.

2.2.2.6. Group VI: The 'Liti'

The 'liti' is the cattle camp. Like the 'dele', 'gurda' and 'alaza' the term stands for something which is external, and the social group is only implied.

The members of a cattle camp, or, more often, of an agglomeration of cattle camps, are mainly young unmarried men (men who have not yet brought home their wives). During the dry season, when most of the grain has been used up, large numbers of the population especially the very old, the very young and the sick, join the cattle camps in search of a better diet.

As the bulk of the cattle camps lie on the borders of the country (in the lowlands of the Omo and the Woito valleys and towards the Kenyan border), the cattle camps are also the 'garri Sons' of the Hamar. The imminence of war, the constant alert, and the perpetual scouting gives the 'liti' its special character. Like the 'alaza', the cattle camps have a ritual leader, who is responsible for fertility, the safety of the people and the herds, and again like the 'alaza' the 'liti' provide a realm where people from different 'gurda' mix. However, while people do not regularly make fields together for a long stretch of time. They do cooperate together in herding, continuously, even for generations. As a rule of thumb one could say: if you want to know which families really are friends, look who herds his cattle with whom.

At the border areas the 'liti', for defensive reasons are always an agglomeration of camps. Each camp (kari) consists of a cattle kraal, which includes a small enclosure for the calves. Sometimes several kraals may be combined, yet still constitute only one camp (which is then called 'djula').

A kraal is usually metonymically referred to as 'gateway' (kirri) and the average number of cattle per 'gateway' as counted by me in 1974 at the cattle camps of Dunka, in the plains of the Lower Omo, was 82 (For more information on the cattle camps see below).

2.2.2.7. Group VII: The 'Pe'

The term 'pe' means 'earth', 'land', 'country'. It has a wide semantic field, but 'pe' becomes organisationally only relevant in the more restricted sense of 'territorial segment'.

As I have outlined in my history of the Hamar, the Hamar originally lived only in the high mountains of the Hamar range. There they lived in different localities, and each distinct locality had its own public and sacred meeting-ground (boaka), where each year rituals concerning the whole population of the locality were performed.

Over time as the population increased, and the Hamar began to push east, south and west, each locality extended its territory in a direct line away from its 'boaka'. In this way the territorial segments of today originated. (see graph II). In olden days the territorial segments seem to have been rather exclusive, giving grazing rights, rights to water and rights to make fields, not easily available to members of other segments.

Today these restrictions have ceased to exist, and (as my census data clearly shows) there is a high degree of long term and short term mobility.

As has been shown to exist in other societies, territorial affiliation is highly ambiguous, people often chasing to belong to this or that segment according to the situation and their political plans. Neither membership, nor the borders of the territorial segments are always clearly defined, yet the notion of 'pe' still plays an important role in Hamar politics, especially in matters of raiding, of defence, and in matters concerning the Ethiopian Government. The 'pe' is the political arena 'par excellence', of the 'ayo', whereas the 'gurda' is too small for him, and the tribe as a whole too big, the territorial segment has the right proportions: its people, its problems and the other 'ayo' are all familiar to him, and whenever in Hamar the need for politics develops, solutions are liable to be found (if at all) on the level of the territorial segment 'pe' in connection with Hamar means 'the country of the Hamar'. As with all tribes or nations, the Hamar get their own identity, only in juxtaposition with their neighbours. Their own territory is sacred to them, and in olden days the 'bitta' would bless it by sending his holy ox to encircle the country once every year. Enemies were not allowed to be buried in Hamar soil, while the Hamar themselves always wanted to rest in the earth of their ancestors.

'Hamar pe', then, was a deep moral and sentimental meaning for the individual and, of course, it is the very basis of his every-day-life, yet real political unity and activities concerning the tribe as a whole are conspicuously missing. This lack of unity and lack of matters of common concern, is, as I have tried to show above, largely a result of the external influence that has shaped Hamar history for the past 80 years.

2.2.2.8. Group VIII: The 'Anamo'

The term 'anamo' means 'age-mate' or 'age-group'. In olden times Hamar is said to have had strong age-groups that acted as corporate groups. Were these groups organized into sets? and even into a system of time reckoning and social administration like that of the Borana? One can not even guess at this, for during the Ethiopian conquest whole age-groups were wiped out, and the Hamar say, that the few survivors were not able to reassemble the puzzle of the old institution, and so they dropped it altogether.

Today the 'anamo' exist only in the generalized principle that people of the same age, should stick together and that authority (right to speak first, right to be served first, etc.) follows the line of seniority.

2.2.3. Transcendental Notions

All social actions are governed by same explicit or implicit transcendental notions which give meaning to the actions. Before I, therefore, turn to the description of some of the most important social processes in Hamar, I want to give a short outline of their two important transcendental notions.

2.2.3.1. Transcendental Nation I: 'Barjo'

The term 'barjo' stands at the apex of Hamar social life. It means 'creator', 'good creation', 'fate', 'well-being', 'good-luck', 'creative power' and also 'god'.

While the notion itself is general, it gets its specific meaning in its context.

The most frequent meaning of the term, as it is used in every-day-life, is 'good luck'. Everyone needs good luck all the time, people, therefore, perform certain rituals to 'repair' or 'increase' their personal 'barjo' and when someone suffers heavily or dies he is said to have lost his 'barjo'. (note the strong resemblance to the ancient Germanic term 'Glück')

Another related meaning, is 'well-being'. This meaning is most clearly expressed in the prayers, blessings and invocations at the coffee pot (see below).

For the Christian ear the variant meaning of 'creator' may seem to be the most important. Don't the Hamar say that 'barjo' has created the world? (although they have no traditions of how he did it)

However, I would like to point out that any decision about the dominance of any particular meaning would do violence to the notion.

The Hamar say that 'barjo' has created the world, - but then again they say that they themselves create 'barjo'.

In a sense this is nothing less than a theory of 'continuous creation' which has an odd parallel in the theory of dialectic materialism.

For the Hamar the world was not created at a specific point of time, and then left to itself (life for example in the Christian myth of creation), rather the world evolves, and mankind and nature are perpetually linked together, none changing without the other. 'Barjo' is the general notion that contains within itself this complex dialectic process. Of course, I cannot qualify and substantiate here my understanding of 'barjo', such an attempt would go beyond the scope of this paper.

It must suffice to say that anyone who has to communicate with the Hamar should keep in mind, that at the basis of all their thinking, lies an unorthodox and open-ended notion, with an implicit cosmology, that offers an alternative to, and a way out of the maze of secondary beliefs, that, if they have not hampered the Hamar in the past, will certainly do so in the future. The belief in the spirits of the ancestors is a case in point (see below).

2.2.3.2. Transcendental Notion II: 'Maeshi'

Ancestor worship is a widespread phenomenon, and its function of social control in acephalous societies is well known. The Hamar practice of ancestor worship, and its related transcendental notion of the 'spirits of the dead' (maeshi) are no exception to this.

Whereas the notion of 'barjo' is general, universal, constructive and benevolent and, as such, has a function of positive social control, the notion of 'maeshi' is particular, destructive and malevolent, and its function is that of negative social control. While 'barjo' is related to life 'maeshi' is related to death. Any human being that once had become a fully grown up member of the society, turns into a 'maeshi' after his death, and as a 'maeshi' will be there as an ever ready evil power, that will threaten the living with disease and death, whenever they have seriously displeased him 'maeshi' are displeased whenever the living make mistakes in any ritual performance and, more generally, whenever the living leave their traditional way of life. As such the 'maeshi' are the most important factor in Hamar conservatism.

One can perhaps summarize the contract between the notion of 'barjo' and the notion of 'maeshi' in the formula:

'Barjo' make the Hamar daring and 'maeshi' make them afraid. The implications for program planners and for any personnel that will work with the Hamar in the future are, I think, obvious.

Anyone would be well advised to mobilize the positive elements of 'barjo' that open the road for innovation and to try to counteract the negative elements of 'maeshi' which might paralyse the people without any apparent reason.

The notion of 'maeshi' is, of course, more complex than I have shown here, but I think I have made clear the point which is most relevant for this paper.

2.2.4. Social Process

I now turn to a description of some of the most important social processes in Hamar. These processes show the roles, groups and transcendental notions, which I have outlined above, in the context of action.

2.2.4.1. Social Process I: The 'Barjo Äla'

The highest form of sociability and social solidarity occurs in Hamar when a group of 'zarsi' under the leadership of a 'gudili' or 'ayo' call 'barjo' ('barjo äla').

This 'barjo äla' is a blessing, a prayer, an invocation, a magical chant (no term fully embraces the event) by means of which the Hamar men 'cause' the continued well-being of nature and culture. In the same way as their voices sound in unison, the cosmos is said to remain in harmony. Without the eternally repeated 'barjo äla' of the men, the society and the environment would disintegrate.

The 'barjo äla' happens at all levels of society. First it may be performed in a strictly individualized form in the domestic sphere, by the male head of the homestead, whenever he feels the need for it. Typically it happens when he drinks coffee (coffee is the plant of 'barjo') either in the early morning or in the evening. Then he takes a mouthful of coffee before he begins to drink, and sprays it towards the east, towards the west, towards the ground. After he has done so he quietly begins to 'call well-being':

'May the rain fall,
may the sickness go away,
may the cattle return bleating....'

Another occasion for a 'barjo äla' in the domestic sphere occurs when an honoured guest has arrived. He thanks the host for the good reception by blessing him, his family, his homestead and his herds with a 'barjo äla'. After all the men have sprayed coffee in the way I have described above, and after having also sprayed it on the host's wife, who is serving the coffee, the most senior of the men will begin to 'call well-being' and the others echo him in a chorus:

"May the rain fall - fall,
may the sickness go away - go away..."

on a higher level the 'barjo äla' plays a part in all public meetings (osh) and rituals (see below).

2.2.4.2. Social Process II: The 'Osh'

The most powerful situation of Hamar politics in the public meeting called 'osh'. The outward sign of the importance of the 'osh' is the slaughtering of animals. If an 'osh' is small and local, a goat will do, but if it is help by one or several territorial segments, one or several oxen will be slaughtered. The meat will be laid out on freshly cut branches in a large semi-circle, at which the man sit and feast while the spokesmen (ayo) speak to them. As the informal hierarchy of the different 'ayo' is always open to question, at an 'osh' the 'ayo' decide among themselves beforehand which of them will speak first, and this choice is the ultimate acknowledgement of the outstanding quality of a speaker. Although every 'ayo' owns his special spear which signifies his privilege, during an 'osh' only one spear, the spear of the man who is chosen to speak first, is used.

Before he starts speaking the owner unlashes the leather strap which usually covers the sharp edge of the spear head, and he walks over to the centre of the semi-circle where the ox was slaughtered. He takes some of the contents of its stomach and rubs it an to the spear and on to his legs, his chest and his forehead. Then he begins to walk back and forth in front of the audience and to address them. After he has introduced the meeting, he will then change his speech into a blessing, the 'barjo äla' which I have described above. From the 'barjo äla' the orator will return to his speech and continue until one of his colleagues rises, walks over to where the ox was slaughtered, and rubs himself with the contents of its stomach. With this he announces his intention to speak. He is, however, not allowed to speak until the first speaker has offered him, his spear. After the second speaker follows a third, and few, or many more, depending on the importance of the meeting.

If important issues are at stake, like war or peace with a neighbouring tribe, an 'osh' may continue for many hours. Typically such long public meetings are not isolated events, but links in a series of interrelated meetings.

Before the proper 'osh', during the long hours when the animals are slaughtered and roasted over the fire, the men cluster together in the shade of trees and talk. Here, on an informal level, the political views are articulated and in a 'democratic' way the decisions are made, which later at the 'osh' are expressed publicly. When the 'osh' is over, the men at their different homesteads and cattle camps will repeat, and discuss what was said at the 'osh', and they will begin to formulate their policies for the next meeting. I think that from my description, it must have become clear that the 'osh' is an invaluable asset of Hamar society, and that this institution should be utilised as much as possible, by anyone who has to deal with the Hamar.

2.2.4.3. Social Process III: The 'Dunguri Kana'

I have described above the role of the diviner (moara), and I have said that the medium employed most often in everyday life is that of the sandals, but I have not yet pointed out the process by which the decisions (implicit in the revelations of the diviner) are arrived at.

There are a number of rules of what the different logical combinations, in which a pair of sandals, can fall to the ground, may mean in a certain situation. Take for example the situation when the sandals are consulted by men who intend to go hunting. If the sandals fall parallel, this means 'go!' If they fall in such a way that one points forward and the lies across in front of it this means 'don't go!' etc. I mention these rules of interpretation only to point out that they are not used in any complex situation of divination. Let us take the example of the cattle camps. For several days footprints of scouts of a neighbouring tribe have been seen, and now the question is whether the herds should be withdrawn to a place which is safer or whether they should stay on and wait. In such situation the men call their best 'moara', and during the middle of the day, the 'moara' and a large group of men (they may be as many as 20-30) settle down in the shade of a tree, the men sitting in a circle around their 'moara'. The 'moara' cleans a small spot on the ground and then, slowly, begins to throw his sandals and observe quietly how they fall.

After a while he begins to utter short phrases as he throws his sandals; the phrases may be both, questions and statements, the latter being the most frequent. The statements may be like this: "the enemies are tired", "the enemies will return in large numbers", "there are no bullets", "the grass is good", etc. In this way he produces statements which directly or indirectly relate to the question of whether the herds should be moved. The statements point out possibilities, and the sandals are asked to answer, whether it is likely that these possibilities become true. But not only the sandals are asked. There is a group of men sitting next to the diviner, and these men also begin to state their point of view. If when the diviner has stated "the enemies are tired" and the men disagree with this statement, the sandals are thrown, until they have fallen several times, into a pattern that means a negation of the statement. At such a moment, the men then urge the diviner to stop, and to make the opposite statement: "the enemies are not tired". The diviner now throws his sandals again, until they have indicated several times that "the enemies are not tired". The men around him then nod in agreement.

I have outlined this consultation of the sandals (dunguri kana) at some length because it is an interesting process in which the nature of Hamar politics becomes visible. No single man has any unlimited authority, unilateral decision making and autocratic orders are absent in Hamar politics. Life

is organised rather by numerous subtle democratic processes. As in the case of the 'dunguri kana' which is nothing else, but an institutionalised situation of reflection and common decision making.

2.2.4.4. Social Process IV: the 'Rukunti Masha'

As I have said above, the consultation of the intestines of an animal slaughtered for the ancestors (rukunti masha) is the highest form of divination in Hamar!

But as the 'rukunti masha' is almost exclusively concerned with domestic matters, and the personal fate of the descendants, and as the symbols and metaphors are extremely esoteric, I do not think that an understanding of the 'rukunti masha' is essential for the purpose of any prayer. (paper)

2.2.4.5. Social Process V: The 'Maersha'

There are a number of seasonal rituals that concern the homesteads, herds and fields. All these rituals express some of the most important values of the Hamar.

I have selected one ritual of this kind, the ritual of protection (maersha), which is performed every year shortly after the harvest. I will give here a short narration of this ritual with nothing else in mind but to help the reader visualise a sense of social care and responsibility among the Hamar.

Some day on an evening in the month of 'mingi' (the 'defiled' month) the 'gudili' of a settlement goes into the bush and collects bunches of sacred plants. When he returns to the settlement his assistant ('ukili') helps him to put these plants at the doorways of all the homesteads of the settlement. Then, as the sun is going down, he stands by the gateway of his goat kraal, holding in his left hand a bowl with butter, or the fat of a sheep and in his right hand a black stone. Slowly all the children, women and unmarried men come up to him and with his stone he rubs the butter on to their 'hearts' and their 'stomachs'.

When the night has turned pitch black (there must be no moon) all the population of the village gather at a place in the bush outside the settlement. The people stand closely together in a group and each of them faces the direction from where his clan originally is said to have come. As they stand quietly like this, the 'gudili', carrying a magical plant in both hands, begins to encircle the group from right to left, while his 'ukili' does the same, walking from left to right. After they have both encircled the group four times they step aside, and holding the magical plant they wait for the people to approach them one by one. The people come to them and noisily they 'spit on the plant'. When in this way everyone has freed himself of his 'sickness', the 'gudili' walks deep into the bush, and there he throws the plant 'away with

the sun'. In the evening the 'gudili' told the women to extinguish the fires in the homesteads and to spill all the ashes. When the new morning comes he sits down together with the 'zarsi' by the gateway of his cattle kraal and with a fire stick he drills new fire. As he rubs the fire stick between his hands and as the first sparks of fire appear, the 'zarsi' around him perform a blessing (barjo äla) and call for rain. Soon the fire is kindled, and the young sons, of the owners of the different homesteads, come with torches which they light and bring the new fire to their fathers' homes.

I think this ritual speaks for itself in its sober and quiet determination, which expresses the wish to live a life that is healthy, harmonic and worthwhile.

2.2.4.6. Social Process VI: The 'Kash'

There exists an important ritual of reconciliation (kash), which I want to describe here briefly because of its function in social conflicts. There are no 'courts' or any 'formalised councils' and no 'judges' in Hamar, the only body of decision makers and those who execute decision are the 'zarsi'. In serious cases the 'zarsi' may even decide on a death penalty for a culprit, and the penalty is executed by all the men administering a single blow. In this way no single one may be held responsible for the death of the culprit.

In most cases, however, no sentences are passed. In fact, no sentences are passed at all and even more curious (at least to my western eye) is the fact that the public is often not so much concerned with the wrongdoer, but with the wronged. For the public the wrongdoer, does not constitute any problem. He is admonished and possibly fined (the animal will be slaughtered at the occasion of an 'osh') and that is, for the time being, all. If he does wrong again he will be fined again, and if his offences become too serious, and often repeated he will be driven away, or even killed.

The case of the wronged is more serious. He has been wronged and more often than not, in Hamar, this wrong will not have been properly redressed by the wrongdoer. The wronged, therefore, will almost invariably continue bearing a grudge on the wrongdoer and this in the eye of the Hamar, constitutes a grave social problem. The grudge may turn into malevolent action, at any time, and may well be turned against the innocent, (in the close face-to-face group of acephalous societies there are no 'innocent' anyway)?

There is the powerful weapon of the curse, and the hidden destruction through the evil eye, etc. which all have their source in a deep seated grudge. The situation, therefore, has to be controlled as soon as possible, and the means to this is the ritual called 'kash'.

There is no place here to describe the technical details of the 'kash', it will suffice, if I paint out, that at the end of the ritual, the mouths of the wrongdoer, and the wronged are cleaned, and pacified by the touch of a sacred plant and then a communal blessing follows.

2.2.4.7. Social Process VII: The 'Duki'

As in all societies in Hamar, the social life of a fully grown-up person, doesn't come to an immediate end at the moment of his physical death.

Especially a man who dies in the prime of his life, will socially not cease to exist, when suddenly he dies, the social network of rights and obligations of which he has been a part, does not allow his immediate disappearance. Instead, his social personality is slowly dismantled, bit by bit until in the end the physical and the social death coincide. The most important institution designed for 'dismantling the social personality' in Hamar is the 'ritual in memory of the dead' or the 'memorial rite for the dead' or simply 'the funeral' called 'duki'. There is no room here to describe this important ritual in detail, I, therefore, will only paint out that in Hamar a funeral never terminates with the burial of the body. The body may be disposed of, by putting it into the ground, or by wrapping it in a cowhide, and keeping it inside a house. In this way the least important part of the funeral relating to the physical death of the person is dealt with.

Only much later, perhaps a month, perhaps several years later the rites concerning the social death of the person are performed. On this occasion all the age-mates, friends, bond-friends, neighbours, and the close kin, of the dead gather, and for several days, even weeks a multitude of rites are performed.

During these rites a large number of goats are slaughtered, and beer and honey, wine is needed to feed the many guests. The 'duki' is, therefore, performed mostly after relatively rich seasons. Still, it is fair to say that the 'duki' is an extremely heavy economic burden on the family of the dead.

2.2.4.8. Social Process VIII: The 'Ukuli'

The social process that, more than any other, sets people all over Hamar into motion again and again, is the ritual for which they are most widely known abroad, the 'ukuli'.

This is an initiation rite in which a young man passes through a number of related individual rituals, which after culminating in a leap over a row of cattle, finally lead to his marriage. Every young man has

to perform the 'ukuli' once in his life and each time he leaps across the cattle, all the kinsmen of his father's clan, of his mother's father's clan and his in-law's together with their cattle are mobilized and have to participate in the ritual. As the 'ukuli' just like the 'duki' necessitate the slaughtering of many animals, and needs large quantities of honey, milk, porridge and beer to feed the guests, it usually is performed shortly after the harvest, and each time there is a good harvest a large number of boys will perform the ritual, while bad harvests reduce the numbers of initiates drastically. For the purpose of this paper, I have to point out, one extremely important point: The 'ukuli' ritual lies at the heart of Hamar social organization and of Hamar cultural identity.

It does this for a simple practical reason. Without having past this initiation rite, no Hamar may become a fully functioning member of the tribe (i.e. a 'donza'). But not only this, he cannot marry and have children that continue his line.

The Hamar are strictly endogenous, they don't marry into any of the neighbouring tribes (excluding the Banna and Bashada who, like them, have the 'ukuli' ritual). A man needs, and this is axiomatic in Hamar, a wife with whom he jointly performs certain rituals, long before the actual bringing home of the wife occurs. The details of the rituals can not be described here, but, it is important to note that, because of the 'ukuli' and the belief and values related to it, the Hamar are not, will not, in the near future be able to marry outside their tribe, without seriously disrupting the whole fabric of their culture and social organization. Any program planning should be aware of this.

2.2.5. The Status of Women

Hamar is a patrilineal society, which, I think there is no doubt, must be also called patriarchal.

All the initiation of action, and the decision making in the domain of public politics, lie with the men and not with the women. This is why I could give an outline of Hamar social organization above without referring to the women at all. Yet, of course, the women play an important part in Hamar social life. Their influence relates most prominently to the domestic sphere and to the fields. As the Hamar say themselves, the women constitute the static element in their society (fields, home) while the men constitute the dynamic element (herding, travelling); both are complimentary and indispensable.

The reality of the social role and social status of women only emerges from a description of Hamar economic life, I, therefore, refer the reader to the chapter below.

2.3. The Economy of the Hamar

While the history and social organization of the Hamar is unique, their economy largely falls into patterns that are already quite well known in East Africa. I, therefore, can keep my description short and will concentrate on those features which are characteristic for the Hamar only.

2.3.1. Cultivation

There has been a tendency by outside observers to over estimate the pastoralist and under estimate the agriculturalist component of the Hamar economy. Brammeir and Sandner, for example, characterised the Hamar and Banna as follows:

“Both tribes are pastoralists and semi-nomads....in the higher region the rainfall allows some agriculture, which the tribes practise”, (Brammeir and Sandner 1973).

The Hamar should neither be labelled ‘pastoralist’ nor ‘agriculturalist’. The essence of their culture is the combination of both strands and if one wants to insist on a dominance of any of them, it should be the agriculturalist one.

The Hamar themselves are quite explicit about this. They say that at the basis of their economic life lie the cultivation of fields. Competent people will be able to buy goats with the surplus of their harvests, and when the goats have multiplied they will buy cattle with them.

To understand how much agriculture is really a basic element of Hamar culture, one must remember that in the ecology where Hamar culture originated, (i.e. the high altitudes of the northern Hamar mountains of Buska) cultivation was a much more gratifying enterprise, than in the lower areas where it is practiced today. While on the highland soils, which are moist and rich in humus, the same field may be planted for six or more years, the fields on the sun parched dry soils of the lowlands, often have to be abandoned after the second or the third year.

I suggest, therefore, that if one wants to classify Hamar economic culture on a continuum which ranges from 100 per cent agriculturalist to 100 per cent pastoralist, one should - in a genetic and normative sense - locate it towards the agriculturalist pole (60 per cent agriculturalist and 40 per cent pastoralist). This original relation between the two components, was changed after the Ethiopian conquest, when the Hamar shifted towards pastoralism, in order to escape systematic exploitation (see below).

Yet, even if in some parts of Hamar (the south and west) the relationship reversed, turning to 60 per cent pastoralist and 40 per cent agriculturalist, this did not mean that Hamar economic culture had changed, the shift was not normative but statistical. The Hamar are not a 'pastoralist and semi-nomadic' tribe which practices some agriculture (as Brammeir and Sandner suggest) but rather an agriculturalist tribe that has been shifting towards pastoralism because of external reasons. I have tried to elaborate this point, because I think it is very important for the future development planning concerning the Hamar. Neither are they 'semi-nomadic' nor are they only fixed on cattle. They have a deeply determined cultural interest in cultivation, and this interest can, and will be, of the highest importance for the irrigation and other agricultural projects, which I will outline below.

2.3.1.1. Division of Labour in the Fields

The Hamar practice slash and burn cultivation. Although this form of cultivation has devastating effects on the environment, the Hamar stick to it, because of the relative abundance of land and because slash and burn cultivation is, after all the form of agriculture with the lowest input of labour. To clear one hectare of bush for a new field it needs only one to two months of heavy work. This, is usually, done by the husband, who uses two different kinds of light axe and, more recently, some times a bush knife. When he has provided the field with a thorn fence, which is meant to protect the crops against the herds and wild animals, his main share of the work is done, and his wife takes over. Her task is to put a final touch to the field by clearing it of small growth, and to do all the weeding that might be necessary.

Then, when at the beginning of the wet season the first rains fall, husband and wife jointly plant the field together. With the sharpened stick of har-wood he digs the holes into the soil, and she inserts the seeds (millet and/or maize). During the first month when the crop is growing, the wife does the weeding and whenever she finds that some seeds fail to grow, she plants them again. During this time she also builds a small house, at the fringe of the field, where from now on until the harvest of the second crop. The days of herself and her family will be spent.

As the crops blossom and ripen, more and more birds, baboons and other animals, begin to threaten them, and from now on from dawn to dusk, someone has to guard the field. This job is (usually) done by children.

During the harvest, husband and wife again work together. She cuts and collects the millet (and/or maize) and he builds a platform of wood on which he stacks the grain, and covers it with the stalks of dry millet.

Later, when the grain has completely dried, the woman threshes it and fills it into leather sacks, which she carries to her homestead. There she will hide away the grain in a storage basket, which she has constructed from wood and grass, and which she has deposited in a tree, in the bush near by.

The division of labour which I have sketched here is an ideal cultural norm. But the situation of real life, constantly forces the Hamar not to do what they think ideal, but to do what is necessary. So a widow, or the wife of an incompetent man, will clear the bush for her field herself. Both husband and wife will take turns in guarding the field if they have no children, or their children are still too young, etc. Yet, however big the contribution of the husband may be, the main burden of the constant care for the field falls on the wife. Families that are well off, often call their neighbours to help make a new field, to help weed or to help harvest. On such an occasion a goat may be slaughtered, or beer may be given as a payment to the people who have come to the groups as a whole, and unfailingly the communal work.

2.3.1.2. Season and Crops

The time to start the clearing for a new field is at the height of the dry season towards the end of December. When by the beginning of February all the bush has been cut, the people watch the sky closely, and when the first sign of the approaching rain becomes visible, they set fire to their fields which now have reached an optimum of dryness.

March is usually the month of planting and by the end of May the first harvest is ripe. If then during June and July more rain falls, there will be a second crop of millet which will may be even richer than the first one. Maize (which would have to be planted newly again) does not furnish a second harvest.

Sometimes the small rainy season, which lasts from September to October, may even bring enough rain for a third crop. People are, however, so occupied by their many obligations during this 'social season' that only a few make use of the possibility of a third crop. Although I have said above, that March is usually the month of planting, I must point out that there is a wide variation, and the rains may arrive as early as the middle of February, and may keep people waiting until the beginning of April. Also, there is an important difference between the altitude in the north and south of the country. In the lower altitude, in the south, the planting is not only done earlier than in the highlands and to the north, but also the crops ripen more quickly. This leads to a difference in the time of harvest in the different

regions, that in turn leads to a high temporal mobility, and a large amount of exchanges within Hamar. As the end of the wet season, shortly before the harvest, is the hardest time of the year when people have almost, always, run out of all their grain, and live only on wild salad, beans and animal products, the people living in the higher altitudes and towards the north, come and share the fruits of the harvest in the lower altitudes and towards the south. Later, in June and July, in the mountains, when the harvest is ripe, the picture reverses, and the people of the lower altitudes and the south, arrive to take their share.

The main indigenous crop of the Hamar is millet (sorghum). They grow wide varieties of it, according to the altitude and the soil they live on. As I have said above, millet has the advantage of providing (if the rains are sufficient) not only one, but two, or even three harvests. The fact that millet occurs in many varieties is another reason why it is so much used. Some varieties need much rain, some need less, some need much sun, others grow best in a moderate climate. As the season can never be predicted, the Hamar try to plant several different varieties of millet in their fields, at the same time, hoping that at least one of them will flower and ripen well. A third reason why millet is preferred to maize, is its variety of taste, and its superior nutritional value, which the Hamar, especially the southern Hamar, are keenly aware of. They say that one sack of millet lasts them as long as twice the amount of maize.

Millet has, however, the drawback that it is very hard to protect from birds (which sometimes take the largest part of the harvest) and is also rather vulnerable to attacks by parasites. Maize is both, safe from the birds and much less liable to be spoiled by parasites.

Several varieties of beans are an important third crop. The beans have their main function in the provision of food, before millet and maize are ripe, but also later, in combination with sorghum, they constitute a highly valued part of the diet.

After beans, squash ranks forth as a provider of staple food. It is boiled and served in combination with wild salad and/or sorghum.

In some especially moist fields at lower altitudes, occasionally, sweet potatoes are grown, they are, however, not especially appreciated and are never grown in large quantities.

In places that are rich in humus and especially on the soil of old (abandoned) cattle kraals tobacco is grown. No Hamar really likes to grow tobacco because it attracts the evil eye. The reasoning is as follows: When one has a good harvest of tobacco, all one's relatives, neighbours and friends will come and constantly beg for it. As tobacco is basically a commodity categorised as 'social gift', the owner of

tobacco has to give, and gives, without receiving anything in return. This leads to horn feeling frustrated and bearing a grudge, which comes to a head, when people continue to demand gifts from him, when he has already given all he had. Then he will send them angrily away, and ill feeling will prevail on both sides. These ill feelings later lead to accusations of the evil eye, when sickness strikes any of them. For this reason, socially well-integrated Hamar, tend not to grow tobacco, and this activity is mainly a speciality of individuals, who are outsiders, loners and generally not sociable. They typically, sell their tobacco not in their neighbourhood but in far away regions, preferably even to neighbouring tribes. Every family tries to grow a few bushes of red pepper in its fields, as a spice to go with some sorghum and occasionally with meat.

In a similar way a few cotton plants are cultivated grown to provide cotton, for the few threads that are needed for sewing up the cotton wool blankets of the men and to string up beads for the girls.

In the highland areas of Busks, where for many years some Amharah settlers had their fields, the Hamar have taken to the cultivation of barley and 'teff'. These two crops will probably gain in importance, when in the future the mountain areas will be redeveloped (see below).

2.3.2. Herding

As I have said above, pastoralism is not the 'basis' of Hamar 'economic culture'. The basis is the cultivation of millet, and keeping herds, especially cattle these are the 'crown' of the economy. Ownership of cattle is the sign of competence, and cattle are (next to women) the highest goal to which a man can aspire. I think the famous initiation rite, in which a young man leaps over a row of cattle (see above) substantiates this view. If cattle were ordinary, in the sense in which any basic commodity is ordinary, they would not have been singled out for a spectacular ritual. But cattle in the eye of the Hamar are not ordinary, an the contrary, they are the 'crown' of their economy and the symbol of social and economic achievement, and that is why the initiated leaps over the cattle at the moment he socially becomes a grown-up man ('donza').

There is, then, an extremely high value attached to cattle, and I think that any future long-term economic planning should keep this in mind, and encourage an economy where, as in the past, the Hamar would be able to turn wealth acquired through agriculture, into ownership of cattle for which, in turn, good market outlets should be opened up. (see below).

2.3.2.1. Types of Herds

There are two types of herds which I classify here for convenience as 'domestic herds' and 'camp herds'.

'Domestic herds' are herds of cattle and small stock (goats and sheep) that stay at the permanent homestead of the family. The goats and sheep stay in a strongly fortified enclosure over night, which protects them against hyenas and lions. The cattle stay in a less solid enclosure which is surrounded by a thorn fence.

The 'domestic herds' are composed predominantly of females which are kept to provide milk for the members of the family and occasional guests.

The 'camp herds' are those herds, that are kept far away from the homestead, in areas where there is good pasture, good water, no tsetse fly, etc. These herds move with the seasons (see below) and as they move, the young men who herd them, move their camps. The composition of the 'camp herds' is very different from that of the 'domestic herds'. There are only a few females that have calved recently and are, therefore, producing milk. Most of the females are not giving milk (when they have calved they will be driven to the homestead to join the 'domestic herd') and the bulk of the herds consist of, male animals, most of them castrated. The 'camp herds', therefore, may also be called 'surplus herds' or 'storage herds'. The dividing up of the animal population into such 'domestic herds' and 'camp herds' is well known in East Africa as a means to make the best possible use of on ecology. Yet, as the Hamar have told me there is also another, social reason for this division. Let me cite straight from my notebook: 13.10.75 In the evening we sit outside and watch the animals enter the kraals. Old Labuko sits next to me and I hear him saying almost to himself: "These white goats bring misery to the people". I ask him what he means and he explains to me: "It is not good to have too many fat goats at your home. They attract your relatives and in-laws."

"As you are not inclined to hand away all your fat animals, you refuse to give them. But they have seen them, and will come and just take them away, when they are grazing in the bush. Upon this you get angry, take your weapon and in a show of strength you retrieve your animals. This is your ruin, for now your relative and in-laws curse you and you will die."

2.3.2.2. Seasonal Grazing Patterns

There exists a pattern of concentration and dispersion of the animal and human population in Hamar which is directly related to the dry and the wet seasons.

The wet season is the season of concentration and the dry season is the season of dispersion.

When the rains have fallen and the millet has ripened, the herding boys also want to have their share of the harvest, they, therefore, drive their cattle close to the cultivated areas in the higher altitudes. They may do this because after the rains the mountain areas offer a relatively rich pasture, and the water in the water holes of the dry riverbeds is abundant and easily accessible. Later, when the dry season progresses and grass and water become scarce in the mountains, the herds move back to the outlining areas especially in the low-lands of the Omo and the Woito plains. At the height of the dry season they reach the waters (and the pasture) of the Woito with their cattle, and their goats and sheep the waters of the Omo. Although in the higher altitudes water may be a real problem during the dry season, I want to point out that the many water-holes along the Kaske, at Bashada and up in the Buska area have never dried up yet not even in most prolonged dry seasons. A considerable number of cattle and small flocks can, therefore, be kept in the higher altitudes throughout the year, which leads to the 'dispersion' of the herds of which I have spoken above and not to a 'migration'. Although I have said, that generally speaking, the wet season is the time of concentration I must qualify this statement a little. Whereas the cattle tend to return to the mountains during the wet season, a large number of goats are driven away from the mountains (away from wet and moist areas in which they easily fall ill and die) towards the south to Fadjedji and the Kenya border. Here water and pasture are ideal for these herds, and they return fat and healthy, during the dry season when water and grass disappear in the south.

The Hamar have often pointed out to me that the subterranean water, and the salty elements in the pasture of the south act like 'medicine' on their herds, and that without a yearly visit to this area a goat will not stay healthy. I think that any program planning relating to livestock management should look into this matter closely (see below).

2.3.2.3. Division of Labour

The herding of cattle, goats and sheep is predominantly the task of males. The smallest boys herd the calves and the kids near the homestead. When they have grown a little older they graduate to helping their older brothers herd the grown up animals (cattle, goats and sheep alike).

The herding of the goats is the most arduous job, as the goats constantly tend to scatter. They are, therefore, most commonly looked after by boys between the age of 12 to 20, i.e. by boys who are agile and enduring, and are able to follow the goats on their countless excursions into impenetrable spots in the bush. Older boys and grown-up men prefer the more leisurely task of going with the cattle.

During the wet season, when pasture and water is abundant and close at hand, herding is an easy job. The herds rest in the morning until the sun has risen high and has warmed up the country. During the day they may drink from rainwater that has collected in natural basins or they are easily watered at the water holes. In the evening they return again when the sun is still up in the sky.

This changes drastically during the dry season. Then the herds leave very early in the morning, often when it is still night and without having been milked. This is a hard time for the boys and men who go with the herds. Together they may well cover a distance of 10-20 km a day in search of good pasture.

The next day will be a day of rest, drinking at the water hole and a little food and then the day after that the herds again go on their long journey to their pasture. In this way 'days of thirst and days of drink' alternate.

All such work as castrating bulls, cutting ear marks, cleaning the skin of the animals from parasites, burning the skin of sick cows with a hot iron, drawing blood from the jugular vein, slaughtering, etc. and also the construction of the gateways and fences of the enclosures, are almost exclusively done by men. The task of the unmarried girls of a homestead is the milking (in the camps it is mostly done by the young men, but girls may be present and then it is they who preferably do the job). All the girls and all the women of a homestead will at times fulfil the task of sweeping the animal enclosures, an activity which is taboo for men. During the dry season both women and men share the hard work, of cutting branches with fresh leaves, for the kids and calves that are still young, and have to stay at the homestead or the camp throughout the day. Usually a man cuts the branches and a woman carries them home.

As in the case of the fields, this division of labour is not always possible in practice and women may, at times, do work which ideally, only men would do, like going with the goats or watering the cattle. The only thing which grown-up women never do is milking, which has become taboo for them since the day of their marriage.

While the 'domestic herds' are usually composed of animals belonging to one family only, the 'camp herds' are frequently composed of animals belonging to several families.

In my survey of the Dunka and Kizo cattle camps in 1974, 7 camps belonged to a single owner, and 10 were of heterogeneous ownership. This herding together is, as I have said above, an expression of trust and close friendship between individuals and families.

Also, the number of families with which a man jointly manages his herds may, at times, express his general social status within a tribe. A man who is an experienced herdsman, and known for wise decision making, will always attract people, who want to have their animals run with his. In this way the most well liked, and politically influential men, tend to be the informal leaders of rather big and heterogeneous herds that have many owners.

When the leader ages, or his political standing declines, people slowly drop off until he is left with only his closest old friends or even alone.

A simplified sketch of the biography of an important leader in terms of his 'alliances of cattle management' may substantiate this point (see graph III): (The cattle alliances of Berinas)

2.3.2.4. Mechanisms of Acquisition and Distribution

There are several ways to acquire cattle and they are distributed through a variety of channels. The 'forced exchange' of raiding and the buying of cattle with grain, or goats, I have mentioned already above. As in all societies of the type of the Hamar, marriage payment also acts as one of the most important mechanisms of distribution. As problems relating to marriage payment are generally well known, (and specific problems tend to be rather academical, being closely connected with technical details of the 'kinship system') I leave them here and turn to a phenomenon which is as yet, much less well known: the 'chain of bond-friends'. Before I describe the 'chain' let me outline the ethics and the practice of 'bond-friendship' in Hamar.

The Hamar are very proud of their institution of 'bond-friendship'. They say that it distinguishes them from such neighbouring tribes as the Galeba and Bume, who, as the Hamar disgustedly notice, are divided into rich and poor, master and slaves.

This social inequality and stratification they attribute to the fact that these tribes have no strong institution of 'bond-friendship' (I have the impression the Hamar exaggerate the social inequalities within the other tribes).

The moral code of the Hamar says, that anyone who is in need of cattle, may go to anyone who has a surplus of cattle and ask him for a 'cow to feed his children'. If his request is properly made and accompanied by a gift (a gourd of honey, a sack of sorghum, a goat or sheep) people almost invariably feel obliged to provide the cow they are asked for. The man (or woman) who receives the cow does not become its owner, but only has the right to use its products (milk and blood).

Once one has accepted the cow (banne-wak) from one's 'bond-friend' (bel), one will occasionally give him more gifts, especially after the cow has given birth to a calf. This calf will not belong to oneself, but to the original owner of the cow, and he may at any time when he himself needs a cow, come and ask for an offspring of his cow. He even has a right to the offspring, of the offspring of the cow he initially gave.

If a man receives a logically unlimited number of cattle in exchange for a single cow once given, does this not mean exploitation? and a social and economic inequality which the Hamar say does not exist in their country?

It would indeed, turn into 'patronage' and result in a class structure if the 'banne-wak' institution limited itself to binary relationship, but it does not, on the contrary, it extends into a logically infinite chain or, rather, chains. Also, the chains do not necessarily originate from people of unequal wealth. Often people of equal wealth enter a 'bond-friend' relationship and start a 'chain' and this multiplicity of relationship and 'chains' turns the institution not into a means of exploitation, but into a complicated form of insurance against an unforeseeable sudden loss of cattle.

Let me explain this more fully:

A may give a cow to B, and with this, A establishes a claim to any of the offspring of that cow. As I have said above, the relation-ship does not end with this, and B will give, after sometime, a female offspring of the cow of A, to a third man (or woman) C, and C may later hand on an offspring to D and so on. The chain may in this way extend ad infinitum, with the only provision that it stays exogamous, i.e. none of the offspring of the cow of A may be given to any relative (and especially not to any in-law) of A. The logic of this is as follows:

If a chain is long, this is ideal for A. In an emergency he will call on B and ask him for a cow, and if B does not have a cow at hand immediately, he asks A to wait and turns to C. If C also does not have the cow needed he will mobilize D, etc. until eventually a cow is found, and A is helped out of his problem (his 'insurance' has worked).

If, let us say, D is A's in-law, he is for ritual and customary reasons anyway, entitled to A's cattle, and may refuse to give to C the offspring of A's cow. The people within a 'chain' are therefore never related by kin or affinity.

In a good chain of 'bond-friends' no one takes from, or gives anything to anyone not immediately next to him and as a rule only small gifts that acknowledge the 'taste of the milk' should be passed along the chain.

Everyone knows, of course, who all the other parties in the chain are, and there is a considerable amount of social control and pressure operating among all the partners. If one partner misbehaves (asks unduly for offspring, withholds cattle in case of emergency, does not provide gifts, etc.), he may, in fact be pushed out of the chain. A simple way of doing this is through a joint action of his two immediate neighbours, let's say B and D. C has proved to be an unwanted member in the chain, B, therefore, begins to ask C for more than C can provide, and D refuses to give to C. B, after having pressured C for some time, says then that C is incompetent and turns directly to D. Upon this D gives willingly to B and C has dropped out.

I have described this institution of the 'chain of bond-friends' in same detail, because I wanted to show that although from a technological point of view, the economy of the Hamar may be called simple, from a sociological point of view Hamar economy is (in some areas at least) highly complex.

This complexity should encourage everyone who intends to embark an economic and social development programs with the Hamar. He will not only find that they are able to cope with meaningful technological innovation, they will also be competent and inventive when it comes to new forms of social organization, that will be necessary when basic economic changes have occurred.

Y. Topics not Treated in the Ethnographic Description

Lack of time forces me to interrupt my presentation of background information here, and to spend the few days left before my departure to Europe, an evaluations and the recommendations, which I want to offer to the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission. Before, however, I turn to this last part of my report, I want to outline how I would have continued the 'ethnographic description' if time had allowed it.

Continuation of the description of the economy:

2.3.3. Gathering

The importance of wild growing foods (salads, leaves, fruits, roots) not only as substitutes to survive in times of ecological crisis, but also as a valuable extension of the spectrum of diets and an important contribution to the health of the population. (especially the young).

2.3.4. Hunting

The relatively small role which hunting plays in the economy and its high emotional value.

2.3.4. Honey

The Hamar as experts in all matters concerning bees and honey. Honey as food, as medicine and as a commodity for exchange, (honey being one of the main goods for 'export').

2.3.5. The Cuisine of the Hamar

The way in which the Hamar 'make the best' of their products. Typical combinations of food (agricultural products combined with pastoralist products). Techniques of cooking. Seasonal variations. Eating habits. Taboos.

2.3.6. Markets

The economic exchanges at the police post of Turmi, and the administrative center of Dimeka.

2.3.7. Inter-Tribal Exchanges

Seasonal trade expeditions to Banna, Kara, Bume, Arbore and Tsamai. Inter-tribal bond-friendship. Seasonal exchanges as the basis for an inter-tribal 'crisis economy'.

2.4. Technology

Tools, objects, construction work, technical specialization, values relating to manual work.

2.5. Ecological Knowledge

Observational practices, knowledge of seasons, flora, fauna, soils.

2.6. Hygiene

Cultural code of 'cleanliness', positive factor of dispersed settlement pattern and use of water holes, negative factor of communal feasting (beer, honey wine).

2.7. Diseases and Their Treatment

The prevalent diseases: malaria, dysentery, hepatitis, T.B., worms. The 'social causation' of disease. Specific forms of treatment.

3. Evaluations and Recommendations

In my outline of the history, social organization and economy of the Hamar, I have tried to show, some of the hidden social realities, and factors. That are bound to affect in one way, or the other, the development programs that may be started in the area. Or, put differently, my ethnographic account has aimed at establishing a matrix, in respect to which the meaningfulness of any particular development plan can be assessed.

When, therefore, I now turn to evaluations and recommendations, the reader should assess the feasibility of the proposals in the light of my ethnographic account.

As an anthropologist I approach development planning from a regional perspective. Instead of classifying my recommendations under specific items, I have divided the area into three main regions which, I think, should have the highest priority. These regions are the Woito Valley, the valley of the Lower One and the high altitudes of the Hamar-Tsamai Range.

Development planning should concentrate on these three areas, because they are endowed with the most important natural resources in the area, and once these regions have begun to prosper, the largest part of the population will be absorbed by them.

3.1. Region 1: The Woito Valley

Development projects in the Woito Valley should have the highest priority within Southern Gamu Gofa. There are three main reasons for this:

1. The region is the one most easily accessible and it will soon be linked with Arba Minch by an all-weather road.
2. The valley is fertile and has a rich supply of water that can be used for irrigation.

The dimensions of the valley are ideal for the application of 'intermediate technology' and a combination of manual work and light machinery.

Innovation and development work in the Woito Valley could become a model for the whole of Southern Gamu Gofa. Development work in the Woito Valley begun in 1975, when for the Provincial Administration and the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission, I organized and supervised a 'food and tools for work' program in which the Arbore, Hamar, Tsamai and Borana jointly began to reactivate and improve their old irrigation structures at the Woito river.

The program has continued and the German Voluntary Service has provided an engineer (Mr. Frank Thomas) who from now on will direct the project.

3.1.1. River Diversion and Irrigation at Arbore

The development project at Arbore has two basic goals:

1. The project tries to divert and distribute the waters of the Woito Delta in such a way that the Arbore, Hamar and Borana tribes each receive an equal share.

As from Arbore the plains slope slightly towards the Hamar range, (S.W.) and towards the Borana mountains (S.E.), Arbore has an ideal location for the distribution of the water. Old watercourses which can easily be linked with the present main stream, will serve as channels to bring the water into the areas where it is wanted.

2. Whereas river diversion as a means for flood-irrigation, and for water for the cattle, has been an old idea and practice of the people themselves, systematic irrigation will be a true innovation in the area.

The plains that slope to the S.E. and to the S.W. from Arbore, will allow for extensive irrigation along the old watercourses that carry the water to its final destination. A dam at 'malka bera' (the main point of diversion near Arbore) and a series of locks will eventually control the influx of water, No pumps or any other source of power will be needed.

Both, river diversion and irrigation are already in progress under the supervision of Mr. Frank Thomas (see map 6).

3.1.2. River Diversion and Irrigation at Roko

The strategic point of water diversion for the whole Lake Stephanie Rift Valley, lies where the Woito leaves the rugged terrain east of the Birale ridge and enters the flat plains to the south.

This is the very place where the projected road, from Arba Minch to Kelem, is to cross the river and a bridge will have to be built here.

The area is known as 'Roko' by the T'samai, Banna, Hamar, Arbore and Konso and it gets its name, from the fact that here in the past the local population conducted the most successful diversion work of the whole valley: at Roko they blocked the Woito and dug a channel that managed to divert a considerable amount of water, which flooded the Birale basin and filled the Birale Lake to the west. The resulting rich harvests in the Birale basin have become famous all over Southern Gamu Gofa. Because of its natural strategic position Roko, will ultimately, will be the point where the most extensive work will have to be done. Diversion structures, and locks, will have to be built these will have to be of much larger dimensions, and will affect much bigger areas, than the work that is conducted at Arbore at present. I suggest that the building of a bridge across the Woito, and the building of diversion structures at Roko should be coordinated. This would save money, and it would allow for an integrated solution of hydraulic and road construction problems at this decisive point.

From Roko the water should eventually be shared out in three directions:

1. The old course of the Woito would continue getting a portion of the water to provide for the areas to the south.
2. The bulk of the water would be directed in a southeasterly direction towards the T'samai and Hamar Range. It would flow closely along the feet of the mountains, and join the diverted waters of 'malka bera' at Arbore. On its course of more than 50 km across fertile soil, possibly as many as 5,000 ha can

be irrigated. Both, the Tsamai and the Hamar are extremely interested in this diversion for several reasons:

- a) By bringing the water away from the dense forest of the old river course the heavy work of clearing becomes unnecessary and larger areas can be cultivated instead (the people want to employ oxen for ploughing as soon as the project gets under way).
 - b) When the water is diverted away from the bush belt of the river which is infested with tsetse fly, the cattle can be watered without the risk of becoming infested with triposomaiasis
 - c) When the river passes close to the mountains, the people will not be forced to live in the plains anymore, but could have their settlement at the feet of the mountains, just high enough to escape the menace of the malaria mosquitoes by night, and still close enough to the fields to be able to reach them, early in the morning before the monkeys and birds can finish off their crops. (see below)
3. One portion of the water should be shared out to the Birale basin, where it could be used to irrigate up to 2,500 ha of fertile land and keep the Birale lake at a constant level (see map 6)

3.1.3 River Diversion and Irrigation at Silbo

The diversion work at Silbo (5 km north of the point where the old road track crosses the Woito) which was begun in 1975 will become unnecessary, when, at Roko the river is diverted (see map 6)

3.1.4. Well Drilling

When at Roko and Arbore the water is successfully diverted to the West, not only the people who now live in the plains, will move towards the mountains, also many people who live in higher altitudes now will descend and join the project. They will all want to live, as I have said, slightly above the plain on the slopes of the mountains, just beyond the reach of the mosquitoes.

I estimate that eventually about 2,000 families will want to live in this optimum zone, and it will be important, therefore, that their water supply, from the water-holes at the foot of the mountains, will have been improved. These waterholes are in the numerous dry river beds, which lead from the mountains down to the valley, and usually they lie about 100 to 200 meter above the level of the plains, at about the same altitude, were in the future the settlements (hamlets of 40-80 families) will be. I think it would be a very useful project, to drill, or dig wells, which would provide the human population of

the settlements with an adequate and permanent supply of clean water. The herds would be watered at the river in the valley. (see map 6)

3.1.5. Town at Arbore

The present settlement and police post is situated on an ancient settlement site, called Gonderoba, and this long history of habitation is in itself, a reason why any trend towards a town, in this area, should be encouraged. Now, as the river diversion and irrigation work is in progress here, as a school is being built, as a clinic is projected, as the bush has been cleared for an airstrip, on which a DC3 can land, Arbore is certainly on its way to become a town.

Yet, I would like to point out that, after all, Arbore lies at a very low altitude and does not have a very agreeable climate. Great heat and dust during the dry season, and mosquitoes during the wet season, can make life at Arbore very unpleasant.

Any large social projects, as for example a hospital, should, therefore, not be planned for Arbore but rather for healthier places like Roko, Hamar Koke, etc. (see below).

3.1.6. Town at Roka

I predict that after a bridge has been built at Roko there will soon flourish a town on the small Birale mountain ridge at the west bank of the river. I predict this for the following reasons:

1. Bridges generally are a focus of communication and tend to provide the nucleus around which larger social units grow.
2. Roko lies on an old trade route from Konso via Tsamai and Banna to Bako. The bridge, therefore, will fulfil not only a function for modern, and long-distance, but also for traditional short distance traffic. This will greatly enhance the trend towards a town at Roko.
3. As there is a bridge, the presence of water (a necessity for any town) has hardly to be mentioned.
4. The climate at Roko is by far more pleasant than that at Arbore, for the fast running river and a breeze from the Gidale and Gauada mountains provide natural 'air conditioning'.
5. The Birale ridge is free of mosquitoes.

6. Whereas, at Arbore and all localities in the centre of the valley, there are no materials at hand, the Birale ridge offers stones for the construction of permanent buildings.

7. Roko is ideally situated as a market centre, especially later on when the agricultural and pastoral productivity of the Woito Valley has increased. Then Roko will be the outlet of the local products and the inlet of 'imported' goods.

I think that at this moment no specific plans for Roko should be made. The bridge should be built, and the diversions should be constructed. If later on the valley begins to flourish, and the first local goods to pass by the bridge, from west to east, then Roko should be considered: when the first enterprising trader has put up his shed, and the first 'inn' offers its honey wine to the traveller, then this will be the sign for a future town. For the time being program planning should only keep Roko in mind, and not execute plans that later would base their value when Roko begins to develop as a town.

3.1.7. Town at Duma

I think that when the irrigation schemes have been successfully put into action, one, or more, of the settlements at the foot of the Hamar-Tsamai Range, will turn into small towns, with markets, traders and probably also some government workers, (of the Ministries of Education, Agriculture, Social Work, etc). One of these social centres will probably be the area of Duma, at the south western side of the Birale basin.

As at Roko, program planning should be content, at this moment, to visualise possibilities, and plan a careful observation of developments in the area before making any decisions. (see map 3).

3.1.8. Artificial Lakes

The Birale and the Tula basins which at their lowest points have often turned into lakes during the past, can be turned into permanent artificial lakes again.

When the water is diverted into these basins for the purpose of irrigation, small lakes will automatically result. Little additional work would be needed, therefore, to turn them into permanent and manageable lakes, which may become valuable reservoirs of fish and a source for wild life.

The level and the expansion of each of the lakes would depend on the over all situation, and the need for, and availability of land for cultivation.

When Lake Birale reaches a certain level, it begins to drain into an old watercourse which leads south from Duma, along the mountains towards Hamar and Arbore. The Tula Lake after reaching a certain level would drain into the Lake Stephanie area (see map 3).

3.1.9. Roads

Like towns, roads should, not be 'planned' but answer existing needs, needs that arise immediately after basic programs (like irrigation projects) have been implemented, or are in the process of implementation.

There is already a supra-regional road in construction, which will (for the first time) connect the Woito Valley with the outside world throughout the year.

Therefore in my view only one new road or track will be necessary; a road that leads around the northern side of Lake Birale and does now follow the projected road up to Kai Affer, but turns to the west, and then south to join the old road from Dimeka to Arbore. Later, when the road from Tertelle (Sidamo) to the valley has been improved, feeder road from Arbore to Matsan and a bridge at 'malkabera' should be built (see map 5).

3.1.10. Lake Stephanie Game Reserve

The southeastern parts of the dry mud plains of Lake Stephanie offer some ideal opportunities for wild life observation. The whole area is unique in southern Ethiopia. The mud plains have the appearance of a desert, and the heat of the sun puts the air in motion so that no clear long distance focusing is possible. Also, the dry mud plains reflect the sun in such a way that water can hardly be distinguished from land. In this way a variety of optical illusions 'mirage' are produced in the human eye and the area appears to be of an unreal quality (animals seen from a distance, for example, seem to walk in the air).

In the middle of this environment, which already is worth seeing for its own sake there are several springs, some of them of hot, some of cold water. There is hardly any vegetation around the springs, only some grass, and the game that comes from far away to drink there, can be seen by any observer who watches from a distance. Of all the springs the southern most one, which is only a few kilometres away from the Kenya border, is the one most suitable for the building of a lodge, for scientific and touristic observation of wild life.

The spring has cold water which can be used to supply the lodge, and close to the spring there is an outcrop of rocks inside of which - in form of a cave carved into the rock - the lodge could be hidden away not only from the animals but-even more important – from the sun which is extremely hot here.

Although only the springs should be equipped with the only the springs should be equipped with opportunities for wild life observation, the whole area of Lake Stephanie should be classified and protected as a game reserve. (see map 3).

3.1.11. Water Storage and Hydro-Electric Power

About 15 km. upstream from Roko, where the Woito River winds its way through rugged terrain, there are several places where a dam for water storage and hydroelectric power could be built.

Further north the valley widens, and will be able to accommodate a considerable amount of water. The local rocks are perhaps not very inviting for large scale dam construction, but if in spite of technical problems a dam should be feasible in this area, the positive usefulness of such a dam for the whole lower Woito would be immense.

I suggest that the feasibility of such a dam should be explored as soon as possible (see rmap 3).

3.1.12. The Sagan River

The Sagan River which enters the lower Woito Valley from the east may offer a number of opportunities for irrigation, but as I am not very familiar with this I have excluded it from my report.

3.1.13. Cattle Management

As the irrigation projects take shape in the Woito Valley, cattle management will automatically be affected by them, and in order to make full use of the new opportunities a variety of projects relating to the use of pasture breeding, veterinary services, marketing, etc. will become necessary.

As these projects are 'derived' and cannot be properly formulated before the 'basic' projects are implemented, I have excluded them from my report (in the same way as I have excluded recommendation concerning 'derived' projects of agriculture).

3.2. Region II: The Valley of the Lower Omo

The dimensions of the Omo Valley make planning that aims at developing the potentialities of the local populations very difficult.

The river is huge, and the valley is vast, and the local tribes have no chance to cope with the waters in the way in which the Arbore, Tsamai, Hamar, Borana, Konso, etc. will be able to systematically control and put into use the waters of the Woito and the Sagan rivers.

In terms of 'intermediate technology' the only thing that can be done is to 'adopt' to the river and use its natural points of 'over-spill' and flooding as intelligently as possible. Such 'improved adoption' should make the best use of traditional knowledge.

3.2.1. Rate and the Omo Delta

For several years there has been an experimental agricultural station at Rate, and further down stream at the entrance to the delta Mr. Swartz of the American Mission has been making experiments for a decade. The ecology and the opportunities of this area are, therefore, quite well known and I do not have to concern myself with them here.

3.2.2. River Diversion and Irrigation at the Murdizi Channel

About 6 km north of Rate an old river course called Murdizi branches off from the Omo, and takes its way to the east, and then turns south and enters the lake at Nagum. (see map).

To my knowledge the Murdizi course has not carried water during the recent past, but two generations ago it probably did. I infer this from the existence of old settlement sites at Reshiat, which in all probability are the same to which the Hamar would emigrate in olden times, when drought ruined their crops in the mountains (see above).

Would it be technically possible to re-open the Murdizi channel again and provide a controlled seasonal influx of water for flood irrigation?

I recommend that an engineer and a survey team should be sent to the area to answer this question.

3.2.3. Flood Irrigation in the Meander Belts at Norok and Shungura

The meander belts at Norok and Shungura have traditionally been important sites, where the Galeba, Bume and occasionally also the Hamar, used to have their cultivations (see map).

Is it possible to improve the use of these meander belts by means of better tools and an additional know-how provided by an engineer? Again I do not want to answer this question myself and suggest that the matter should be explored further (see map).

3.2.4. Irrigation Project at Lake Diba

Diba is a meander belt that has become a permanent lake which is filled very year by the floods from the river.

Lake Diba used to be the source of the livelihood of the ancient and now extinct Bogudo (see above) and in times of ecological crisis the Hamar, Bashada, Kara, Murle and numbers of the Bume populations are said to have jointly made fishing hunts in the lake and planted the fields around its shores.

Today it is mainly the Kara who utilize the lake area, whenever their crops on the embankments of the main river have failed to produce a good harvest. I think that with a certain amount of construction work, and using a combination of flood irrigation, and irrigation by pumping Lake Diba could be turned into a small but very productive agricultural area (see map 3).

The people who would be most engaged in this project would be the Kara, who, are depending at the moment solely on flood irrigation on the banks of the river, and are living a rather precarious existence.

3.2.5. Improvement of Pastoralism

The southeastern part of the lower Omo Valley is rich in valuable pasture, and both the Hamar and the Galeba are very interested in an optional use of the area. Any government program, therefore, which would attempt to improve pastoralism here (and, ideally, provide a solution to raiding) would be welcomed by both groups. The first steps in any program that means to improve pastoralism should be the following:

1. In the very south-west of Hamar (at Dunka and at Warwara) wells should be drilled, to provide the herds with water at the height of the dry season.

2. The spread of the tsetse fly should be prevented by all possible means.
3. The deterioration off the pasture should be checked, possibly by keeping goats out off the area.
4. Rich supplies off grass exist in tsetse-infested areas. I think it would be feasible to utilize this grass, by turning it into hay and transporting it to the areas where the cattle are kept.
5. At Murle, south of Diba, the forest should be cleared, and an access to the river should be made, for the cattle, which is free from tsetse fly.
6. Veterinary services should be supplied.
7. The marketing of cattle should be organized on a cooperative basis, and the main market for cattle would be Jinka.

3.2.6. Game Reserve at the Mago River

North of Kara and Mogudji country in the forests and plains of the Mego River, a wide variety of game is concentrated today: elephants, giraffes, buffalos, zebras, leopards, lions and a wide variety of antelopes.

This area should be made a game reserve. Opportunities for the observation of wild life are here more complex and difficult than at Lake Stephanie, but I think this difficulty could be turned into an asset, if the local population could be employed as guides and game wardens who show the visitors round. I am not aware of any project in which the people who traditionally inhabit an area, which later is declared a game reserve are trained and employed as game wardens. However, I don't see any reason then this should not be done. If the Kara Mogudji, Mursi and Banna could be employed as game wardens and as guides for visitors, they should, be able to do an excellent job, because of their knowledge of the territory, and behaviour of the game. Also if they find a good means of living, by showing visitors the living game, they would become less inclined to poach. The organising problems of such a game reserve, run predominantly by local tribesmen, may be manifold at the beginning, but I think that ultimately the fruits of such a project would be extremely rewarding, and a true example of 'development' for the local people and not against them (see map 3).

3.2.7. Roads

Eventually the Omo Valley should be made accessible by better roads. I would like to make the following recommendations:

The supra-regional all-weather road, which has been projected to reach Dimeka in 1977, should continue to the west from Dimeka to the Omo Valley, south of the Mago game reserve, and west of the present Kara village of Dus. Having descended down the escarpment (which at this place is not too steep for a road) the road should turn south and follow the solid alluvial fans that lead to Lake Diba. Directly south of Diba at a place called Nauamur, by the Bume and the Hamar, a bridge should be built, and the road should continue west to Nakua (Kibish) and continue from there north to Mui and finally to Madji. Feeder roads from Diba, to Reshiat, east of the Murdizi channel, and from Nakua to Kalem, should connect the Omo Delta, with this main road. I suggest Diba as the site for a bridge across the lower Omo for the following reasons:

1. Road construction further north, for example from Jinka directly to Mui, faces the problem of very difficult terrain and extremely heavy rainy seasons.
2. The construction of a solid all-weather road in the southern part of the valley, close to the Omo Delta, has to deal with the problem of large stretches of broken ground.
3. A bridge across the Omo will be a very costly project. As the future of the Omo Delta is by no means a certain matter, and the whole delta, as far north as Kalem and Rate, could again submerge, if the level of Lake Rudolph rose as it did in 1896, the bridge should not be built in such questionable surroundings.
4. Nauamur would be a good compromise: the road from Dimeka to Nauamur, would neither have to pass through areas of heavy rain, nor over any stretches of broken ground, and the site would be just outside the historical level reached by Lake Rudolph (compare Butzer 1972).

Finally a third feeder road should connect Diba and the Mago game reserve with the popular, developing centre of Jinka (see map 3)

3.2.8. Town at Diba

When the Murdizi channel, the Narok and Shungura meander belts, and Lake Diba have been proved feasible for irrigation, when pastoralism is flourishing and a bridge has been built, I think a town will be needed in the area.

I suggest that eventually, such a town should be built on the old settlement site of the Bogudo, on the ridge just east and above Lake Diba.

In its function the town of Diba would be almost identical with the town of Roko (see above).

3.3. Region III: The Hamar-Tsamai Range

The government posts of Fadjedji, Minogalti, Turmi and Dimeka are all located in a rather poor area ecologically. None of these settlements will receive any significant economic function in the future, because the surrounding areas (all of an altitude of 800 -1200 m) allow for only a very low productivity which will hardly go beyond subsistence level.

The sole function of the government posts is administrative, and the population they administer live in the area they inhabit at present, not for economic, but for historic reasons. As I have outlined in my historical account, at the beginning of this report, the Hamar originally lived in the high altitude of the mountains, and they were driven out of this rich ecological area by the Ethiopian conquest. While the Ethiopian conquerors settled on the rich soils of the mountains, the Hamar fled to the lower lands. After peace came to the area, the Hamar remained suspicious and afraid of the foreigners, who had settled in the area of Hamar Koke, and they did not dare to return. I think that now the time has come for an energetic re-development and re-population of the original Hamar homelands, not for sentimental but for practical reasons.

I want to outline below how such a process could be assisted by a comprehensive development project.

3.3.1. Town at Hamar-Koke

In the sixties the district centre of Hamar was moved from Hamar-Koke to Turmi and again in 1971 to Dimeka.

I think that this was a mistake, as there is no place in Hamar which is more suited than Hamar-Koke, for a permanent town, with administrative and social functions. The site is endowed with the following valuable assets:

1. The climate is cool and healthy, lying at an altitude of approximately 1800 meters.

2. There are rich permanent springs, which, when improved by drilling, can provide a medium size town with all the water needed.
3. The surrounding areas are very fertile and receive a regular amount of rain during the rainy seasons, so that intensive agriculture is possible.
4. Hamar-Koke lies at a triangular of three tribes, the Hamar, Tsamai and Banna, and because of this position, has been, it traditionally, a market for inter-tribal exchanges. Because of all these reasons the administrative centre of Hamar should return to Hamar-Koke.

The first step to be taken, would be to build a good feeder road, that would connect the Roko-Dimeka road with Hamar-Koke.

The second step should be the drilling of a well, in the vicinity of the most powerful spring, near the site of the future town, and the installation of a water and drainage system.

After water has been provided, the construction of the town can progress. As a main hospital is urgently needed, which can serve the whole area between the lower Omo and the lower Woito, I suggest that the first large government building of the new town should be such a hospital. The hospital would answer the immediate wants of a large number of Hamar, Tsamai and southern Banna (about 20,000 people), and it would take the serious cases from outlying areas, like Bashada, Kara, Mogudji and Arbore.

Later the main school of the area should also be located here, and the administrator and the government workers should have their offices here. As the surrounding area becomes agriculturally developed, Hamar-Koke will gain economic importance as a market, and traders, and also the Hamar themselves will move into the town (see map 3).

3.3.2. Terracing and Agriculture

When the feeder road and the town (which should have an air strip in its vicinity) have been built, an agricultural project should be started, which should be supervised by a soil conservation specialist, who has experience in terrace construction. The project should eventually cover the whole area of the high altitudes of the Hamar and Tsamai range.

I estimate that eventually up to 5,000 ha can be put under permanent cultivation (see map 3).

3.3.3. The Hamar Natural Park

The mountains of Hamar are covered by forests that have never been touched by an axe since time immemorial.

These forests are sacred to the Hamar and they have, therefore, still their primeval nature.

In order to ensure their continued presence these forests should be declared as Natural Parks, and they should not be touched by the economically motivated agricultural development project (see map 3).

4. Concluding Remark

I would like to conclude my report with a remark that sums up my findings:

Southern Gamu Gofa has not only suffered from a 'natural' drought in the past, but also from a political drought. Rich rivers that can provide water for fertile lands, and unused soils, in altitudes, that receive a regular share of rain every season, should make the area immune against any ordinary ecological crisis. What has been lacking, therefore, was not just rain but initiative and an intelligent use of natural resources.