

Review

Traditional Conflict Resolution Mechanisms and Implications to Peace Education: the Case of Qallu Woreda (South Wollo, Amhara Regional State, Ethiopia)

Ali Yassin

Assistant Professor, Institution of Behavioral Science and Teacher Education, Wollo University, Dessie, Ethiopia

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The major purpose of this article was to investigate the traditional conflict resolution mechanisms in Qallu Woreda (South Wollo) and its uniqueness from other Woredas on the issue. To achieve this objective, interview and observation were used in qualitative approach. A total of eighteen participants were involved in the interview using purposive sampling. The researcher concluded that: (1) the Sheikhs and Abagars in Qallu Woreda (and other Woredas in the region like Wore Babbo, Albuko, Tehule Dere, Ambasel, Dessie Zuria Woredas) can stop blood feuds completely without any revenge. No one breaks the reconciliation promise; (2) the foundation of the reconciliation practice is religion. They think that to forgive your enemy is a major sign of righteousness (tsidk); (3) killers/those who revenge are not considered heroes but as Satanic and those who forgive their enemies are considered as heroes, not as cowardice; (4) the families of the victim are respected, by the community. They are neither insulted nor marginalized in different social occasions. They are models of tolerance, forgiveness, peace, politeness, trust and righteousness; (5) the Sheikhs and the shrines work hand-in-hand with the modern court. If anyone rejects the reconciliation, they immediately report to the modern court and the court orders special police forces to hunt him willy-nilly; the one who refused will either forcefully accept the peace making process or detained; (6) the families never teach children any violence and revenge to the enemy; (7) the reconciliation process does not exclude people based on religion, ethnicity, gender or language; (8) other than blood feuds, the Sheiks and Abbagars manage and chair abduction, theft and lost properties. I would like to recommend peace education to be given separated from Political education starting from Grade One to the tertiary level before genocide erupts in the country as hate-mongers and war-mongers are increasing in the country. Moreover, there shall be experiential sharing among peoples of the region on developing peace culture by learning patience, forgiveness, tolerance and co-existence from each other.

Key terns: blood feuds, red blood, black blood, conflict resolution

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INTRODUCTION

Any form of education is the key to raise inner self of the individuals. It is uniting nations and bringing human beings closely together. Nowadays we are living in the digital era and many parts of the world, civil society suffers because of situations of violent conflicts and war. It is important to inculcate and recognize the crucial role of education in contributing to building a culture of peace. A culture of peace and non-violence goes to the substance of fundamental human rights of the present era. According to Rajaguru (2015), the highest form of objective for any education is inculcating peace and it is an essential value to be cherished by every individual. The father and mother is the first teacher to their children and peace is nurtured in the family. The peace nurtured at home again shall be enhanced at school. How do people educate peace and conflict resolution mechanism in the contemporary Wollo? Such issues and other related ones were investigated in this article.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Ever since the beginning of the third millennium in Ethiopia, mainstream media propagate problems of violence related to religious extremism formerly and now political extremists. The presence of international terrorist groups like Al-Qaeda, Al-Ithihad, and Al-Shebab in the Horn of Africa aggravated the problem. There could be fundamentalists in some social groups though the degree varies. Injunctions that focus on contrary to co-existence are as such non-existent in Islamic and Christian scriptures. The radical group arrived at such conclusions simply by twisting the interpretation of the religious books following its own whims. The Ethiopian Government and the people worked hand-in-hand to control such dangerous groups. However, because of our poor understanding of our culture in general, we sometimes fail how to make peace in case violence erupted as what happened in Shashe Menie, Woldiya and Gondar recently.

One of the grand mistakes of the 19th and 20th century scientists is that they neglected the influence of culture in general and religion in society in particular. They imagined that as modernization spread, traditions including African cultures and religions could be disappeared. That is not the case. Due to that, we faced lack of intercultural communication competence. This is true especially to the young who passed through modern education. Consequently, violent groups who think salvation and power through the bloodshed of innocent non-combatant civilians began to emerge in the name of religion and politics. Such problems are partly associated with the <<erosion of spirituality, prevalence of individualism and objectification>> (Palmer, 2007) and

absence of rule of law.

Because of the works of certain radical groups (e.g. OLF), the trust among different groups might have been reduced into fear and suspicion to the other. It seems to me that due to the fear and for the sake of defending the nation and the people from violence, checkpoints are imminent at the entrance of most institutions: from schools and universities to banks and airports. That is admirable as a protective measure.

By the same token, there is high level of corruption, theft, alcoholism, prostitution, rape and business fraud compared to previous records. All these social-ills contradict the very Ethiopian values in particular: hospitability, truthfulness, honesty, courage, love, generosity and compassion. One Ethiopian observer concluded:

In the contemporary Ethiopia, the schooled are characterized by high level of corruption, poor commitment, disengagement, poor self-confidence and negative way of looking at others (viewing others as threats). The youth spend more of their spare time in socially less useful places such as video, drugs such as 'chat' and alcohol (Amare, 2009:435).

At the community level, how do people of different groups live here in South Wollo? Are they living in a state of fear and mistrust in case murders happened? How do they solve blood feuds? Such issues were explored in this article.

Research Objective

The prime purpose of this study was to understand conflict resolution mechanisms and processes in the region by taking the case of Qallu Woreda (South Wollo).

Research Questions

The research questions were (1) How do people resolve conflicts in Qalu Woreda? How do the conflict resolution mechanisms differ from and resemble to other woredas in the region?

Research Paradigm

I used the constructivist paradigm considering reality to be multiple and subjective according to the meanings given to different issues by the research participants themselves and that of mine.

Research Design

The research design is Case-study type bounded by place Qalu Woreda (South Wollo) and time limited from

September 1/2018 to January 30/2019. I also study my own cultural group that also resembles ethnography.

Research Analysis

I used three different analytical strategies: structured analysis (developing codes and themes); interpretative analysis (using the voice and meaning of the research participants and that of mine given to an issue); and finally reflective analysis (giving my own imagination and insight).

Research Methods

To achieve the objective of the study, data were collected from Qallu Woreda (South Wallo administrative Zone) through field observation and interview techniques to decipher how conflicts are resolved peacefully. The interview participants were five Sheiks, three Priests, five community elders (from both faiths, Christians and Muslims), three historians and two teachers. That adds up to a total of eighteen participants in the interview for the study other than three people who declined to participate in the study. The participants were purposely selected using snowball sampling technique based on their knowledge, roles, concern, responsibility, willingness, and cooperativeness for the study.

Significances of the study

It is hoped that the study would contribute to develop the intercultural competence of readers. It is also hoped that it could serve as an input to political leaders in matters of handling peace education in this conflict torn world.

Definition of Technical Terms

- Blood Feud: A Feud in which members of the opposing parties murder each other.
- Red Blood (qey dem): A Killing that is not intentionally done.
- Black Blood (tiqur dem): A killing that is intentionally done.

Research Setting: Wollo

In both North and South Wallo, a total population of over 4 million lives in the area, the majority of which is rural residents (Amhara Regional State Statistical Year Book, 2006: 2). "Wallo" is formerly called "Beta Amhara" which means the "house of Amhara". During the period of Imam Ahmad, the Oromo expansion reached the "beta Amhara" and thereby the region started to be called "Wallo", probably in memory of the son of Karayoo (Kebede, 2007:14). In this regard, the people of beta

Amhara has been integrated with Oromo people through marriage and by now people from this area are labeled "Walloyye" irrespective of ethnic and religious origin. Due to the peaceful co-existence of different ethnic and linguistic groups in Wallo (e.g. Amhara, Oromo, Tigre, Agew, Argoba, and even Afar), one of the informants called Wallo as "the archetypical of Mercator" (Ato Kebede, April, 20th 2011).

The central location of historical and contemporary Wallo as a point of contact and interaction between the Semitic-speaking north and northwest plateau, and the largely Kushitic southern and eastern plains, and its ecological, climatic and topographical diversity comprising the scorching wastes of the eastern lowlands and the cool highlands and fertile river valleys of its central massif, have had indelible and durable influence upon the ethnic configuration of its people and the historical evolution of their culture. Since the region commanded a pivotal strategic position in the north-south geographical axis, it has served throughout the mediaeval and early modern periods as a natural route for population movements and military conquests as well as a line of retreat for regional and imperial troops (Hussein, 2001: 1-2). Wallo was also an attractive land for migration and settlement for both the sedentary population from the north and the pastoral communities from the east and the south east, beginning from the late Axumite period until the seventeenth century. Wallo has been a cultural melting pot where a process of constant intermingling and fusion of heterogeneous elements has been going on for quite a long time.

According to Hussein (2001), until the end of the 19th century, five historical currents or cultural layers have contributed to the diversity of the cultural heritage and geopolitical configuration of Wallo. The first of these waves was the early Christian Amhara as a territorial base for the rise to power of the legendarily "restored" Solomonic dynasty, which supplanted the Agaw Zagwe ruling house in 1270, was the political manifestation of the Christian predominance in the region. The second stratum was the military conquest and occupation of Wallo by the Muslim forces of Imam Ahmad bin Ibrahim who was killed in 1543. Besides that, Wallo embraces part of the Argoba areas from which Islam was disseminated starting from the second half of the 7th century in Ethiopia (Al-Islam, July, 2010: 25). The third current was the population movement and the permanent settlement of several clans of the Oromo in the eastern, central and western parts of the region beginning from the second half of the sixteenth century. The fourth element was the consolidation of Islam and the emergence of Muslim chiefdoms and principalities of varying territorial extent, resources and super structural complexity. Fifthly, the uneasy and precarious nature of the relationships and the resurgence of imperial power in the second half of the nineteenth century tended to upset

the internal balance of power in Wallo and to undermine the process of political and cultural integration of its Muslim communities (Hussein, 2001: 2-3). The significance of the area for trade was also considerable as it was the gateway to the Red Sea via Assab and Djibuti. There are also prominent monasteries and churches in the area including Haik-Istifanos, Gishemariam, Lalibela, Tedbabe Mariyam and many others.

The most influential rural Islamic centers in Wallo were Geta, Jema Negus, Turu-Sina, Aneyy, Aman Amba, Dana, Debat, Deger and many others (Hussein, 2001). Most of these Islamic school centers were assumed to be established during the 18th and 19th centuries. Prominent Sheiks such as "Talaha Ja'far, Mufti Dawd, Muhammad Shafi", Hajji Said Bushira, and Ahmad Yassin, were a few of the renowned scholars that contributed for the establishment of Islamic education in the region (Informant, Ahmadin, June, 16th 2011).

South Wallo is selected purposely as the research site. The purposes are (1) to understand how the Christians and Muslims co-exist peacefully; (2) to explore the blood feud conflict resolution mechanisms. as there are both non-revenging and revengeful communities in the region. Other justifications for selecting Wallo for my research site includes: the existence of Islamic scholars renowned at national and even international level in the region; availability of many Sheiks from Oromo, Tigray, and Afar and, of course Amhara ethnic groups; existence of modern madrasa that teach Qur'anic memorization and my familiarity with the language and customs of the area since I have been a resident there since I was born. Religious students and scholars also come to Wallo and go to other parts of Ethiopia. There is hardly any place in Ethiopia where religious people from Wallo were not found. All these facilitated my access to the research sites.

Types of conflicts and resolution descriptions in Qallu Woreda (South Wallo)

There could be different conflict types and resolution mechanism in the region. For example, there could be Duberti issues (women affairs) where in only elderly women are involved. There might also be wodaja (a kind of group supplication) to facilitate the peace processes. But in this article, I discussed only three types of conflicts and their resolution mechanism briefly. These are blood feuds, Abduction and stolen property.

Conflict Resolution Practices

Like any other social group, Muslims in the region encounter conflicts between and among individuals. Someone may kill someone else deliberately or

otherwise. Another person may fall in love with a girl and abduct her for fear that he is not able to get her married by any other means. Another person may still steal the property of someone else in kind or cash. During all these cases, conflicts may erupt and the clash may spread from individuals to families and even in rare cases to ethnic groups. Fortunately, Sheiks and elderly people (called abagars) in the region have got their own means of solving the conflict and even violence in peaceful manners. They conduct their own traditional court practice parallel with and sometimes in collaboration with the modern court system established in the country.

I specifically describe my observation and the experience in Qallu sub-province (including towns like Kombolcha and Harbu) on how the Muslims (and the non-Muslim minorities) in such areas cope up with the case of blood feuds, abduction of girls and theft as follows.

Avoiding further blood feuds

Whenever there is a clash between two persons in the region (Harbu, Kombolcha areas), the local Sheiks and elderly people mediate and reconcile the matter. The worst of the conflict is the one that involves the death of a person. Blood feuds are not common as such in the region. But in case a person kills another person, the family of the killer swiftly reports the case to the famous Sheikhs in the region including Geta, Masaal and Adarash shrines. The Sheikhs are famous in resolving blood disputes using the "*rekeobot*" locally, which could mean "Rehoboth", a term that denotes the coffee ceremony. The vow is generally termed as "*belie*".

Once the case is reported to the Sheikhs, orally, they send their Abagars holding beads that serve for dhikr as a message to the family of the deceased in order to facilitate the reconciliation process before the rivals commit another massacre. By this time, the family members of the dead person think of the peace instead of revenge through further bloodshed, a practice unknown in this particular sub-region. In this way, the two rival families are made ready for negotiation and reconciliation despite the fact that the case may be taken to the modern formal court. Elderly people in the neighborhood also advise the two rival families to make peace as soon as possible. "In Islam it is believed that the killing of a person is as if killing the whole of the people in the world" (Informant Sheikh Idris, July 8, 2012) as enshrined in the Muslims' Holy Book. The bible also teaches the same saying <<Do not kill.>>

Through months of negotiation between elderly members of the rivals at the residential area of Sheikhs, all members of close relatives of the two rival families will be invited in the final peace making process that is accompanied by a feast. Members of the two rival

families will report their case and crime done against them separately. But they will be reminded that they are here not for retaliation, nor for opening old wounds but to say “awuf” i. e. “We forgive for the sake of Allah”. The person who committed the crime will be fined up to tens of thousands of Ethiopian birr as blood-money – “diya” (Qur’an, 2:178-179; 4:92; 17:33). The murderer and the family of the deceased never talk and see each other since the mediation is done on separate basis. The two rival families will be made convinced to agree and live peacefully with each other. They will be invited to a meal served in separate tents or houses. Usually the two rival families will sit in a house separated by a sheet spread and hang to screen the scene since the two rival shall not see each other face to face. Then, meals will be served and the murderer will give the members of the family of the deceased person a piece of meat by passing it under the screen and putting it on his hand to eat it. The person in the other side of the screen will also do the same and the murder will eat the meat given to him. That is done as a sign of trust, love, reconciliation and forgiveness instead of further bloodshed in the future. The family members of the two rivals make a vow in the name of Allah never to break the reconciliation and all will be agreed so wholeheartedly. Reconciliation and forgiveness are important values extracted from the Qur’an (42: 37, 90).

Finally, restrictive rules will be imposed distinctively on the person who committed the murder. This restrictions include (a) the murderer is forced to leave the residential area/village of the victim by at least five or ten kilometers; (b) the murderer should never pass a night in his life time in the village of the victim; (c) whenever any member of the victim’s family member encountered the murderer, the murderer should turn his face away or change his direction of movement not to be seen face-to-face.

My own friend, named Hussein Seid, has been living abided by such rules of restriction for the last twenty years after killing a person (who was my neighbor and friend as well) unexpectedly in my home town called Harbu. Hussein and his three colleagues were convicted of killing the person, named Arabu Seid, and they were fined three thousands Ethiopian birr each during the reconciliation after the case was taken to the Geta Sheikh. Surprisingly, no one else was killed from either of the two rival families for the last two decades. There are many cases in the region wherein blood feuds are stopped before further massacres unlike the tradition of other highlanders where the blood feuds extend to even more than three generations killing dozens and even scores of people.

The Sheikhs have got recognition for their peace-making service in the community despite even differences in religion. Astoundingly, Sheikhs like Jamal of Adarash and Geta never accept even a penny for their service. Sheikh Jamal, for instance makes his living on

farming. Whenever, we invite him to join the feast after the reconciliation process, he says, ‘That is for you since I have already drunk a gulp of honey and butter [satisfied] by stopping further bloodshed through the reconciliation ’” (Informant Ato Muhammad, September 11, 2011).

The role the Sheikhs played in solving disputes is very paramount. They commit themselves for serving the community without any material gain. “The peacemaking promise at the ‘rekebot’ of Sheikh Jamal has never ever been broken in the local area” (Informant Girma, September 20, 2011).

The courage and peaceful nature of the people in the region is also amazing. Before thirty years, a resident of Agamsa Kebele named Ato Seid found his brother dead killed by a person. After one or two months, Ato Seid walked to his farm armed with a gun. All of a sudden, he met with the killer of his brother face-to face. The murderer was left at the mercy of his rival. The culprit could not even walk but collapsed as he has no arms at hand and thought that he was going to be killed within seconds. But the courageous Ato Seid said to him “Stand up and go away! I will not kill you today. Come again another day with your gun!” Hardly understanding what he heard, the killer of his brother stumbled and escaped being in a state of nightmare (Informant, Hussien, the son of Ato Seid, January 20, 2010). After six months the two rivals reconciled without any additional bloodshed. This is what is traditionally called *yejegna ber* or *yemaryam menegde*.

Even recently my own cousin was fined by the Sheikh thirteen thousands of Ethiopian birr which is to be given for a person attacked and wounded (but not killed) by my cousin. In this manner, the reconciliation was approved. Contrary to what happens in other regions, no more bloodshed is made since peace is made between rivals as soon as possible in this part of South Wallo (Kombolcha, Harbu and Dagan towns and the surrounding rural areas).

Moreover, Muslims in this sub-region do not teach their children about any sort of revenge. I realized this before ten years when I asked my family to request a family of a girl, named Zahara, for marriage. My family declined to do so and the reason was told to me that the uncle of the girl killed my own uncle before I was born. I have never heard this nearly for the last a quarter of a century since families in the region do not pass revenges and blood feuds to their generation. I was insisting to marry the girl thinking much more peaceful reunification but my family rejected my demand. But we still live with her family members peacefully. All this appear to be the influence of Islamic education in the region. The Qur’an reads: “The believers are nothing else than brothers (in Islamic religion). So make reconciliation between your brothers, and fear Allah, that you may receive mercy” (Qur’an 49:10). I discussed this issue in detail late in this article as it is the gist of my agenda.

Resolving Abduction Disputes

Traditionally, abduction or forced marriage is a rare practice in the Qallu sub-province in South Wallo. However, one may experience abduction of a girl once in two or three years. Nowadays, the frequency of this crime is reduced very much, however. I heard the concept of abduction for the first time when I was a student in Grade 8 when my cousin was abducted by a person in the neighborhood. Abduction in this local area is completely different from abduction in other parts of the country in that it does not involve rape. That is, although the girl is taken by force for marriage, the person abducting a girl or woman never commits forced sex. Rape (like prostitution) is one of the major sins in Islam and it is a taboo within the Muslim community (Qur'an, 24: 3). Instead, the person and his colleagues who forcefully take the girl reports to a Sheikh or community elder and keeps her under the guardianship of the community elder.

Next, elderly women will be selected and sent to the family of the girl for marriage proposal. The girl's family usually becomes furious for the time being since the act negates their pride. However, since abduction does not mean rape, the matter will be settled step by step after weeks of negotiation and wedlock (nika) is arranged if the two families agreed upon it (Informant Ato Seid, February 12, 2012).

Rape is the worst sin in Islam and so is among the people in the local area. Moreover, a person who raped a girl is unthinkable to live peacefully in wedlock in the future. That is why even the person who abducted a girl rebuffs it. He may just abduct the girl only for catalyzing the marriage proposal whenever he is not sure for the acceptance of his marriage proposal by the girl's family in a normal way. Surprisingly, in a more recent case, the couple also conducts blood test for HIV/AIDS.

After the reconciliation, a kind of wedding ceremony is arranged as a symbol for the beginning of the union of the boy and the girl in formal marriage by the involvement of the elderly women and the Sheikhs. My cousin who was abducted in that manner and married to the person has been living peacefully for the last nearly thirty years. However, even though it is a rare case, the dispute of the abduction of the girl may not end up peacefully. Hence, instead of being married, the girl who is abducted may be forced to come back home. Selected elderly women from the villagers will be assigned to witness checking the virginity of the girl proving the absence of the slightest attempt of rape. In that way, the girl may be married to another person chosen by the family or her.

Getting Back a Stolen Property

Collaboration among the members of Muslim community is high. As a result, one may lend tens of

thousands of birr to a person. One may also lend cattle or any other property even without eyewitnesses. Someone else may still keep his money with a person whom he/she trusted most. Unfortunately, the people trusted may deny and refuse to return the borrowed property taken in kind or cash. In such a case, one may lose his/her property simply by lending it to or keeping it with someone else. Since most of the people trust one another, it is not customary to keep eyewitnesses and in some cases to do so may be misinterpreted as insulting the borrower as untruthful. Due to the absence of proving the ownership of the property lent to or saved with someone, the person cannot take the case to the modern formal courts. But the person living in this part of the region has got another traditional "court" that is called "bale". The Sufi Shrines that resolve blood disputes can also solve such conflicts but one of the most known is a Sufi shrine-like center located at the southern part of South Wallo Administrative Zone opposite to east of Kemissie town, called Masaal.

The person whose property is taken or stolen goes and applies the case to the Sheikh at Masaal telling the case and the person ties a thread on the poles or trees within the compound as a sign of promise to provide a gift if the lost property is found or some misfortunes faced the suspect. Then, the Sheikh sends a message (e.g. incense) to the suspected person symbolizing to come and accept or deny the case. The two families never talk each other since the case is reported to the "bale" unless reconciliation is made. The person suspected of taking or stealing someone's property will be given two alternatives: to return the property to its owner or deny the accusation. If the suspect returns the property, then peace is maintained and the owner of the property will take a gift that he/she promised to the shrine.

If the suspect denies taking the property or cash, he/she will be told to wait the consequence of his/her act. That is, if the suspect is truthful and free from the crime, he/she will remain safe physically, mentally or financially while the person who accused the person will be inflicted with diseases, loss of property or any other misfortunes for committing false accusations. If the suspect is not telling the truth the misfortunes will be reverted to him or her. As the suspect feels the pinch of the loss of health or property, he/she will go running to the Sheikh at Masaal for asking forgiveness and returning the property s/he took in kind or cash. A few people, however, do not get convinced unless a huge calamity such as the death of a relative encountered them (Informant: W/ro Zewdie December 11th 2011).

"If the truth is not found out and the lost property remains undetected, avalanche of bad fortunes will remain inflicting the family of the hidden criminal up to seven generations" (Informant Ato Girma, August 20, 2012). That is the general belief of the community in the region. All the above cases related to blood feuds, abduction and theft or denying someone else's property

or cash show how Muslims resolve conflicts in peaceful manners guided by the community elders and Sheikhs. The community elders and Sheikhs constantly refer to Islamic rulings (and sometimes to mythology) to enforce their peacemaking efforts. I myself witnessed cases that were not solved in the modern formal courts to be resolved through the efforts of the Sheikhs and community elders in the Sufi shrines. Any social or personal crime or violence committed hardly remained hidden without “justice” being made. Theft, violence and any other crimes are abhorred and shunned in the Muslim society contrary to the media reflection. This shows how Islam influences the Muslims’ conflict resolution practices in the region.

Conflict Resolution Strategies in Qallu Woreda (South Wollo Ethiopia)

Blood Fued /gidiyaa/

In Qallu Woreda (and some other five woredas in Wollo region), if a person killed another person, usually unintentionally, the criminal hides himself and his family works to stop further bloodshed by applying for the nearby shrine sheikh like Geta, Adarash, Mesal etc.

The Sheikh (Shehochu) usually sends the Abagar to the parents of the victim (yemuwach beteseb) holding some incent and/or musabih /mequteriyaa/. Within a month or six the negotiation begins. Each family discusses with the Abegars separately in order not to create confrontations. Cases of the accident are raised one by one: why and how the killing took place. Finally a curtain /megarejaa/ is put to separate the two rivals for the enforcement and approvals of the reconciliation process. Each family promises never to break the promise in the name of Allah. The process is called **belie** – unbreakable vow.

Then after, blood money /gumaa/ is paid to the family of the dead person as a sign of acceptance of the reconciliation whole heartedly. The amount of the money is determined by the Omma i.e. community representative selected from each villages and towns by the members of the society (Umma is an Arabic word which means community). The amount of the blood money ranges from 45,000.00 to 65, 000.00 Ethiopian Birr. As murder cases increase and as the money value is reduced, the amount of the guma is increased.

Finally rules and principles to be respected by the families of the killer (and the killer himself) are told boldly. These restrictive rules will be imposed distinctively on the

person who committed the murder. This restrictions include (a) the murderer is forced to leave the residential area/village of the victim by at least five or ten kilometers; (b) the murderer should never pass a night in his life time in the village of the victim; (c) whenever any member of the victim’s family member encountered the murderer, the murderer should turn his face away or change his direction of movement not to be seen face-to-face.

In this manner further bloodshed is stopped forever without any attempt of revenge unlike the case in other areas of the Amehara Regional state (and even other wollo region itself).

As you might have heard in other areas, six up to twelve and even forty persons may be killed as a revenge for the death of one person. There is a bad practice that certain community members attached to saying my father or brother who is killed cannot be substituted by even ten persons. << የሱን ደም አይተካውም፡፡ ስለዚህ መርጠህ በእውቀትም በሃብትም የተሸለውን መርጦ መግደል አለብን>> i.e. His blood cannot be replaced by anyone else. Hence, you must kill the members of the rival who is knowledgeable and well to do person economically.

A research participant Western Wollo, Mohammed, reported “A fetus whose father was killed is born and grew up and killed the killer of his further after thirty years>>.

Another person from Qalu woreda, Harbu ketema reported flipping his fingers:

<< ሸሆቹና አብጋሮች ባሉበት እንዴት ደም መመለስ ይቻላል አይቻልም፡፡ እሳትህን ውጠሕ መኖር፤ እየተቃጠልክ፡፡>> This is meant: as long as the Shiekh and Abagars are alive, you cannot kill the killer of your brother or father. You must swallow the burning fire of sorrow and burn with silence>>.

Of course, living with peace by forgiving your enemy who killed your father or brother or both is challenging. But the people in Qallu wereda know that peace is more important than the life of an individual. Forgiveness is the foundation for the development of peace culture.

Comparison of Conflict Resolution Strategies in Wollo Qallu and Other Regions

There are five woredas in South Wollo which have similar peace culture like Qalu. These include Albuko, Dessie Zuriya, Worebabao, Tehuledereand Ambassel Woredas. Hence, Qallu represents all these Woredas except that in Ambassel Woreda the Shiek and the Priest together manage the conflict resolution processes.

Hence, when I say Other Woredas I mean those Woredas and regions in Wollo excluding the formerly mentioned ones and other areas.

Comparison of Conflict Resolution Strategies in Wollo Qallu and Other Regions

No	Wollo Qallu Woreda	Other Woredas (Regions)
1	- Blood feud is unknown	- Blood feud is common.
2	- Relatives of the killer will never be killed. - Females are never killed.	- Relatives, commonly males are killed and it is mandatory. - Even a female may be killed on the spot of the accident.
3	- Mourning and funeral processes are done quickly as they do not have any agenda for revenge.	- In some areas mourning for the killed person is not started swiftly. It is kept hidden so that the relatives will soon kill anyone from the side of the killer
4	- The families of the victim are neither insulted, nor despised, nor marginalized by the community in traditional songs,	- The families of the victim, if he failed to kill, the enemy, will be insulted, despised and marginalized by the community (especially his wife) and his mother.
5	- Children are not preached for hatred and revenge.	- Children are taught how to revenge.
6	- Females are commonly not participating in murder actions.	- Females are catalysts /provoker/ to commit murder. - The women also hire a killer (shifta) to kill the enemy.
7	- The reconciliation is inclusive in that it does not discriminate faith and ethnicity all people are creatures of Allah.	- The revenge does not discriminate ethnicity and faith
8	- The reconciliation promise is never broken.	- May reconcile rarely but surely they will break it one day.
9	- No concept of 50%-50% (teem)	- Sit for reconciliation after killing 50%-50% (one to one) (after teem) and may rarely marry each other.
10	- Killing 12-44 people unknown	- Killing 12 and more is common and considered as heroes at the one not killing the rival it considered cowardice.
11	- Those who make reconciliation without any killing of the rivals but with wholehearted forgiveness are considered as people of paradise	- Those who do not kill their enemy are considered cowardice
12	- The sheikh & Abegars works together with the modern court system.	- Do not work with the modern court. - The sheiks and priests fail to reconcile blood feuds but deal with non-blood feud disagreements. E.g. Debaat
13	- More effective than the modern court in stopping blood feuds since the modern court does not stop further killings.	- Similar to the modern court system since both find it hard to stop blood feuds
14	- Families are abided (governed) by the Sheikhs & Abagars' peace principles.	- Not governed by anybody unless they kill their enemy (and the family)
15	- Religious people and religious values are respected.	- Religion is practiced but Sheiks and Shrines and Priests and Churches are neither invited nor respected in the case of blood feuds.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The Sheikhs and Abagars in Qualu Woreda (and other Woredas in the region like Wore Babbo,

Albuko, Tehule Dere, Ambasel, Dessie Zuria Woredas) can stop blood feuds completely. No one breaks the reconciliation promise.
2. The foundation of the reconciliation practice is

religion. They think that to forgive your enemy is a major sign of righteousness (tsidk).

3. Killers are not considered heroes but as Satanic.
4. The families of the victim are respected, by the community. They are neither insulted nor marginalized. They are models of tolerance, forgiveness, trust, co-existence, peace, and righteousness.
5. The sheikh and the shrines work hand-in-hand with the modern court. If anyone rejects the reconciliation, they immediately report to the court and the court orders special police forces to hunt him willy-nilly accept the reconciliation (in most case) or if he refused, detained (a rare case in Qallu).
6. The families never teach children any violence and revenge.
7. The reconciliation process does not exclude based on religion, ethnicity, gender and language.
8. Other than blood feuds, the sheiks and Abbagars manage and chair abduction, theft and lost properties.

RECOMMENDATION

Unlike other parts of the country, people in Qallu (and its neighboring Woredas) never teach their small children any blood feud issues. What they teach is peacefulness, goodness, generosity, politeness and forgiveness. The world in general and Ethiopia in particular will not remain peaceful so long as those who killed people without any just cause are considered as heroes and those who made reconciliations are considered cowardice. Thus, this kind of peace education shall be included in the curriculum of Ethiopian schools before it is too late separated from Political education (Civics) as part of Moral Education. The use of religious values and modern & court many facilitate the peace building culture. Hence, all traditional and modern institutions shall work cooperatively to control the violence that is being erupted here and there in contemporary Ethiopia. Intra and inter religious institution experiential sharing shall be conducted and facilitated by the political leaders for the sake of peace and security of the people and the political system as well.

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