

Original Research Paper

Revitalizing the Roles and Relevance of Traditional Morality of Sidaama People of Ethiopia in Sustaining Peace: The Case of "Halaale" Principle

Basha Bekele Barako¹

¹ Department of Civics and Ethical Studies, Hawassa University, Hawassa, Ethiopia.

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*Corresponding Author:

Basha Bekele

Email:
bashabekelebarako@yahoo.com

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Abstract: It is widely accepted that employing armed forces will successfully accomplish the objective of maintaining peace. However, these solutions are not always effective in bringing lasting peace. In order for peace to become deeply ingrained in societal lives, it is frequently necessary to look deeply into the social and moral foundations of a society. This particular study was designed to investigate the functions and applicability of conventional moral values and practices in upholding peace. Specifically, the paper was intended to study the practical and potential benefits of Sidaama moral ideals and principles for maintaining peace focusing on Halaale principle. To achieve this objective several key informants were interviewed as primary data sources besides a compressive literature review on the matters of peace maintenance, conflict resolution, ethics and moral principles and practices of Sidaama people. Accordingly, the analysis was made on the data collected from the informants and contents of the references. Finally, it was found that "Halaale" principle of Sidaama People has both a preventative role in conflicts and maintaining harmony by binding the members of the community to the communitarian good. Based on this, it was recommended that, the diligent attention should be paid both at policy and society levels to make use of the fruits of traditional moral principles rather than lessening them as obsolescent practices.

Keywords: Halaale, Moral, Peace.



1. Introduction

In present years, the issue of peace has become a concern of humankind than any time before. Mankind all over the world is suffering from multidimensional crisis such as terrorism, population-explosion, denial of human rights, economic inequality, racial discrimination, vanity of cultural superiority, ideological extremism, religious intolerance, nationalism, social injustice, poverty, starvation exploitation of nature, oppression of weaker section by powerful and rich, ecological imbalance, natural calamities, consumerism and so on. In each corners of the world, it has become usual to hear the news of bad consequences such incidences. Awkwardly, national arrogance and competitive weaponization is making the sustainability of mankind indeterminate. The growing globalization with [increased global transactions, mobility, and communication], reduced distance, and proposed homogenization] hasn't successfully reduced the feeling of competition, domination, fear, and uncertainty. Thus, it seems time to rediscover possible philosophical and realistic approaches which can practically bring peaceful life for the human beings. It also needs to search an appropriate peace making option which best suits to the historical, philosophical, religious, ethical and cultural settings of each community than authoritatively proposing one size fits all solution to all peace desires.

Particularly, in African world views, where the desire of peace is highly coalesced with their ethical constructions and believed that peace will be affected as their moral norms of the society are breached, it seems difficult to address the issue in any depth just by suggesting west oriented clever international arrangements. It further needs to understand that, in each society there is social, cultural and ethical capabilities of settling conflicts and sustaining peace. Denying this and having unlimited faith in the market economy and liberal democracy excluding African moral values [infrastructures of peace] haven't ever brought a desired change than confusion.

Unexaggeratedly, in Africa, living in peace and harmony is a part of their moral obligation ordained by God. These moral principles can play both inhibitive and rehabilitative role in promoting peace by indicating directions for the members of society about what they should or shouldn't do and setting up comprehensible conflict settlement alternatives. Thus, any mechanism of searching solutions for the turmoil of peace cannot eloquently bring peace out of this setting.

Despite of their tremendous contributions in keeping peace and settling conflicts, the relevance of moral principles has been little recommended and seems largely alien to the Western intellectual elites. Troublesomely they tended to presume that persons, societies, and civilizations should give up their traditional distinctiveness rather than using the advantages of specificity.

Opposite to this, this article paper wants argue that the contributions of moral principles in sustaining peace should be diligently assessed and utilized in the peace process. Hence, the purpose of the paper is to review the roles and relevancies of traditional morality of Sidaama people of Ethiopia giving special focus to Halaale principle.

2. Literature Review

Living in peace, where the likelihood of disputes occurring and recurring is demonstrably avoided, is in the best interests of all people. In a world where war appears to be inevitable and is indeed a reality of human society, this seems like simply another unrealistic hope held by everyone. Uncertainty is said to be directly related to man since conflicts may be found at every stage of life, from the individual to the global levels, as a result of these ongoing conflicts [1].

Though acknowledging conflict as common doesn't ensure the prosperity of humankind, it helps us to understand that it is inevitable. In light of this [2] makes the case that human societies can flourish in environments with effective conflict resolution. In response to persistent conflicts, international socio-political and economic discourses now prioritize the need to create a more practical frameworks for managing and resolving conflicts particularly in Africa [3].

As a result, under the watchful guidance of the UN, the concept of peace-building has started to gain international prominence from the beginning of the 1990s. In international politics, this served as the conceptual cornerstone of peace-building. According to Boutros Ghali [4], the process of establishing a lasting peace involves addressing the basic economic, social, cultural, and humanitarian issues that contributed to the conflict in order to prevent its recurrence. The measures that will be taken by local and/or international players with the goal of defining the structure that will strengthen and solidify the recurrence of conflicts and consolidate the peace are referred to as peace-building, he emphasizes further. This has served as the foundation for the liberal approach to peace-building,

which is a top-down approach and in which international organizations play directing roles in addressing the roots of the conflicts and in demanding external roles to stabilize the conflicts [5].

Additionally, it was believed that international organizations had the scientific understanding and practical experience necessary to "construct" peace [6]. With this belief, liberal and neoliberal state practices have been proposed and tried in states located in illiberal, weak and failing states in the global south where conflicts are frequent. These practices include democratic politics, free-market policies, and rights-based approaches to the rule of law [5].

Even though peace building was once thought of as a comprehensive strategy, it has come to be viewed more narrowly as short-term, external interferences that occur after the gun has been silenced in war-prone and unstable societies [7]. As a result, there has been a paradigm shift away from managing the conflicts' root causes and toward managing their repercussions, as acknowledged by Chandler [6]. With this new emphasis, the discussion is moving away from a liberal strategy that favors bolstering the ability of regional social institutions that sustain peace rather than resolving disputes as they arise. Accordingly, United Nations [7] argues that sustaining peace pursues to restore peace on its own rather than intervening after the conflicts as cited in [8].

Accordingly, sustaining peace is a larger goal where preventative actions are intended to create peace by fostering the institutions, attitudes, and structures that support it. As a result, it commits to accepting the idea that every society has qualities that support peace, whether these qualities are found in its institutions, culture, policies, and implicit social norms. It then urges people to start by identifying the qualities and resources that have maintained social cohesion and the qualities that support a peaceful society [8].

For the reason that peace must be built in from the inside of the society by nurturing the interconnections and chains to endure it; the roles of moral values and principles as endogenous infrastructures of sustainable peace should be upheld and be in front of others. Linking to this, [9] asserts that African societies have undoubtedly evolved ethical systems-ethical values, principles and rules intended to guide social and moral behavior that are considered by the members of the society to bring about social harmony and cooperative living, justice, and fairness. Therefore, the role that the traditional moral values can have in sustaining peace is significant.

In view of this, Paris [10] enthusiastically tended to conclude that the indigenous African approaches to sustaining peace have been more successful than the western approach in many respects and should be given careful consideration. Similarly as Okrah [11] describes it, African societies have indigenous traditions for peace building that can offer the continent's natives peaceful ways of healing and bringing each of the parties involved in a post-conflict reconciliation together. Therefore, it is impossible to emphasize the efficacy of the process and the sustainability of the results of traditional peace building in Africa [12], as noted in Arthur [13].

Referring to Sidaama people, they are an African society with deeply ingrained moral standards by which its members are expected to govern themselves. In Sidaama, morality, or the social standards and values that rule people's interactions with one another, their communities, and their environment, play a crucial role in upholding peace. They have a moral code known as "Halaale," which can be translated as "truthful /virtuous way of life" "commanding them to act in harmony with other people, with Magano (the monolithic God), and with all other living and non-living things. It plays a key role in sustaining peace either by constraining the individuals not to commit harm against the fellow individuals, nature and the creator (Magano/God) or facilitating the consensual mechanisms to settle the experienced conflicts. As affirmed by Hameso [16] that, it regulated the social order and ensured the peaceful coexistences of the community for centuries.

3. Methodology

It is profoundly disappointing that moral principles are less valued in establishing peace on the African continent than simply calling for the bolstering of military infrastructure. As a result, this particular study was conducted to reassess the relevance and roles of traditional moral ideals and beliefs of Sidaama people in upholding peace. Being commissioned to this purpose, the qualitative research method was employed by accompanying both primary and secondary data collection mechanism. During this procedure, a focus group discussion was held as primary data collection method. The key informants were seen as relevant sources of data because of their referable cultural knowledge within the society.

According to Hameso [16], in every community, there are individuals who are both more eloquent and knowledgeable about the culture and history of their group than others. Accordingly, key

informants are commonly very knowledgeable people who are also great providers of information. They may offer extensive knowledge about a group's past, about transient incidents and relationships, as well as the typical nuances—the mundane details—that others might miss. Thus, they give the researchers perspectives that are frequently priceless.

In addition pertinent literatures such as books, journal articles, conference presentations and websites were reviewed as secondary sources of data. Subsequently, the data acquired through aforementioned means were analyzed verbally and descriptively.

4. Finding and Discussion

4.1. Halaale as a Guiding Moral Principle among the Sidaama People

Every community has distinctive moral principles that direct the behavior of its members. According to [17], as stated in [18] morality develops as a set of guidelines for influencing individuals to work together in predictable and beneficial ways. Moral principles encourage cooperation and forbid us from hurting members of our communities therefore it gets sound that the members' perceptions of moral principles and expectations have a significant impact on how well the society will operate.

As [19] claims for Sidamas, morality retains a holistic perspective: relationships with others, God, and the environment (land, animals, plants, trees,). More specifically, [20] stipulated that the moral code, called halaale, continues to provide the basis for distinguishing 'good' and 'evil' to the present. Thus materialize it; it requires examining the proverbial and philosophical underpinnings of the principle.

4.1.1. Proverbs on Halaale

Proverbs as wise sayings are crafted from a people's experiences and values over a long period of time, they are meant to inculcate moral lessons and instruction to young people and those who show interest in the survival of the community. As Pufendorf [21] notes, the language, metaphors, and proverbs people use to describe their reality can be an especially rich source of insight into implicit knowledge, and can provide a basis for surfacing local models of peacemaking [22] The proverbs as they are developed through the continuous learning of the life occurrences over the generations can demonstrate their ties with the belief system that particular society. They associate the both positive and negative consequences accompanied with doing or not doing something, instruct the right way of doing something and appreciate the positive beliefs and deeds based on the moral construction of a given society. Accordingly, halaale as a guiding principle of life of the member of the community, it is inscribed in their proverbs and undeniably plays significant roles in promoting peace.

1. Mitu Ayiddi Halaale gudanno kayinni mito ayidde Halaalu gudanno.

This literally represents the statement, "some groups live up to Halaale but some others will be ruined by it." According to the informants, this proverb stands to instruct that; it is everyone's duty to live according to halaale. Even if somebody is the victim, he/she shouldn't take revenge and must refer it to those who could settle the case peacefully. This in one side obligates everyone to say affini. He/she brings the case saying konne halaale affini, Halaale gudammoraatina; meaning "Do you see that X has said/done ...to me, it is just to respect/for the sake of/ halaale?"

Affini is a cultural practice that the Sidama exercise in order to avoid confrontations by harmonizing relations between individuals, groups and communities. Affini means letting others know the issues that concern them before reacting to them. This is a very important tool that restricts unnecessary responses by restraining them from being susceptible to provocations before letting others know the issue at hand and intercede and contribute to means and ways of addressing it [23]. Therefore, the principle of affini which is the aspect of halaale guda (making others to know the case, seeking all peaceful lotions than taking the case to one's hand) is essential traditional practice which refreshes the tranquility with in the society.

On another hand, when they say *mito ayidde halaalu gudanno*, it is to mean that violating halaale will consequently destruct the violator. It is believed that if an individual deliberately acts against Halaale it punishes an individual by retarding him, denying the heir and bringing the loss of property. Therefore, it is unconditionally required to live virtuously. This corroborates with Hamer [24] finding that Sidama believe they will flourish so long as they are obedient in conforming to the rules of the agreement with Magdno, who told them that survival is contingent on following the code of halaale.

2. Halaalu keeshshannollana diba'anno
This proverb represents that 'halaale will never decay overtime.' Among the Sidaams, halaale has eternity. Any constructive or perverted acts against halaale will be paid over time. As they equate it with God, any jeopardy taken for not distorting halaale will productively returned during the years of coming generations and its wrong will cause unexpected danger over the generations of transgressors. It seems therefore that [24] said that "the influence of halaale has not become obsolete."
3. Halaalu maganoho maganu halaaleho; Halaale (Truth) is God, God is halaale (Truth).
Adhering to truth (halaale) is seen as obeying God. Thus, the men's obedience to God is manifested as they do what He orders them to do and being good hearted, tolerant, peace-loving, righteous in every sides of life.
4. Halaalunni intiro hanshaqqichu maali duushshanno "the chicken satisfies many people if is eaten with truth." This proverb advocates the qualities like generosity, fairness, sharing and mutuality. It maintains that, the scarce resource can serve all if it is fairly distributed.
5. Halaali woxi diba'anno means your sincere property will not be owned by others. This proverb encourages genuineness, industriousness, not to be corrupt, not stealing, not exploiting and using others for ones ends, and safeguarding others property. They believe that even the thief steals someone's property halaale will expose/reveal him as a guardian of virtuous life.
6. Halaale coy'ne hashshiwa galanni means "If you are sincere and speak the truth, you'll always have a host who will provide you a place to sleep at night." According to this, saying truth (halaale) promotes friendship, generates and it instructs not to speak deceits.
7. Halaale gorsitooti/moortooti/meexxooti: The expression Halaale gorsitooti [don't abuse or diminish truth] carries with it a deep respect for truth. Maybe this is because truth is also associated with Magano. According to this proverb, it is against halaale to twist the words, to take the side of relatives and friends to win deviously. Understating this [25] affirms that Wansamo Thus honesty is stressed in settling disputes between neighbors and kin, the principle of mutuality should exist in all social exchange, greed must be avoided, and generosity should be shown to other [23].
8. Halaalu annasi dihawanno the people believe that a person who takes offence against truth will certainly suffer the consequence. This is manifested in the expression, Halaalu annasi dihawao. The exact translation of the expression into English is difficult, but it implies that truth itself will take revenge against the offender and bring justice to the offended. It also means that the one who walks in the truth will win. This is a principal reason for respecting the property of others and refraining oneself from speaking false things. There exist, however, some dishonest people and thieves, who falter this value within the Sidama people.
Besides its proverbial entrenchment, it is necessary to look into how the "Halaale" code influences the conducts of society's inhabitants. In this regard, one of the informants made a lengthy recitation, which I have divided into the following categories for easier understanding.

4.1.2. Maganu Halaale (Duty towards God or Divine Command Dimension of Halaale)

The Halaale concept is viewed by the Sidaama as a covenant between men and God. It is widely acknowledged that when people act morally in every area of their lives, they are carrying out God's will. The man's integrity is not just justified by maintaining peaceful relations with other people. Thus, a man needs to have a good heart toward the Creator God (Magano). In this respect, the Sidaamas have a saying that reads, "Truth (Halaale) is God and God is truth (Halaale)," or "Halaalu maganoho maganu halaaleho."

According to popular belief, living by the Halaale principle brings one closer to a godly way of life that draws earthly blessings. Additionally, it is believed that God (Magano) will punish the recalcitrant by destroying his health, bringing illness to his children and cattle, causing the loss of material wealth, and failing to produce more descendants in his own or his children's generation if he consciously chooses not to follow the principle of Halaale. The ultimate curse can also be invoked by a person who wants to prove his honesty by saying, "Let Magano (God) be the judge if I lie."

This supports Zewde [26] assertion that, the Sidaama obey Magano (God) through upholding the principle of Halaale. In this regard, the Halaale concept is analogous to Pufendorf's claim regarding

the obligation of man to God, according to which this obligation can be identified "so far as it can be drawn out on the basis of conforming our activities to His will." [27]

As a result, Halaale has the moral authority to influence the behaviors and motivations of society's participants by requiring them to submit to God's will. In doing so, Halaale can compel people to refrain from acting violently in a way that might interrupt their relationship with God or provoke God's wrath.

4.1.3. Danqu Daimu Halaale (Duty towards Incapables)

"...The Sidaama are aware that groups of living creatures that are unable to defend themselves should be protected by those who can. To this group, they put kids, animals, and plants. It is presumable that these creatures cannot reflect upon or ensure their own need for survival and as a result, depend on the kind consideration of others. Additionally, those with specific disabilities, such as those who are deaf or hard of hearing, are referred to as "danqa". As a result, violating the rights of who are unable to care for themselves is immoral or violates the Halaale principle."

According to John Hamer [28], "among the Sidaamas, even mistreating animals is considered an offense: "Hitting animals forcefully and angrily is regarded a sin." In addition, uprooting plants in border disputes or in an effort to exact revenge on the plant's owner by chopping them down or deracinating them is prohibited by the Halaale. Furthermore, it is true that it is morally unacceptable to use domesticated animals or plants in a way that compromises their sustainability [16].

In this regard, [29] adds that

"....The phrase "gafo ikkawohe" is used when nature is exploited (it will bring you deprivation). Gafo is a type of deprivation brought on by abuse (caused by selfishness and avarice) and an aggressive attitude (resulting from pride). These are considered to be primarily caused by a lack of "fear of God." The people say "gafo ikkawohe" even when someone wastes food since they have too much of it. It is believed that such a wasteful individual will eventually be hungry as a kind of divine vengeance.

Though these entities are not in a position of defending their sustainability, they (Sidaama) believe that it is perverting the principle of Halaale to maltreat them.

4.1.4. Mannu Halaale (Duty towards the Fellow People)

The ultimate goal any moral principle is to make the interactions between the people to be based on communitarian logic. As in many African societies, in Sidaama the value of collectivity is highly appreciated.

"...In every engagement, people are expected to be kind to one another. As was already said, the Halaale Principle strongly disapproves of any form of human interaction that includes lying, cheating, exploitation, bias, or acts of greed, mercilessness, unkindness, or cruelty. It always tells everyone how they should behave. It is ethically commended to adhere to the Halaale concept in all situations, including marriage, business, leadership, negotiation, communication, verdict and court, and friendship. Everyone is equally subject to adhering to the Halaale ethic, regardless of the privileges they may have based on their age. In all of your relationships, especially those with your adversaries, you should be truthful. They constantly give each other advice by saying, "Halaale gortooti," which translates to, "don't defy Halaale" to remind to be kind-hearted even to the enemies."

This maintains that Halaale is a person-to-person obligation for which everyone is accountable in this particular sense. Halaale can therefore be a determinant in this particular setting for inhibiting corruption, leadership functioning, promoting equality and trust, supporting repentance and forgiveness, tying the family together, and encouraging hospitality through directing how to act toward strangers. Because of this, it is undeniable that societies with strong moral infrastructures are better able to maintain peace by limiting socially unacceptable behavior and having the tools necessary to restore law and order through sanctions.

Accordingly, Printz [17] noted that "Halaale" serves as the foundation for categorizing "good" and "evil" in modern society. The code serves as the basis for the "Halaale" worldview, which is described as the moral norms guiding inter-human connections [30] as cited in [16]

In view of that, as Hameso [16] asserts, it entails particular values such as the significance of generosity, dedication to the truth in conflict mediation, fairness in assigning blame and punishment, avoiding disruptive gossip, responsible financial management, respect for property boundaries, and avoidance of adultery and sexual promiscuity. The "Halaale" moral code holds that avarice and arrogance should be avoided since they foster feelings of envy and fear [30].

Halaale, then, is a principle that outlines the various aspects of conduct and social interactions that are permitted while also outlining those that are forbidden. Therefore, "Halaale" is the instrument used to "gauge the social ethos and manage the values of the society from one generation to the next. Halaale's role extends beyond only regulating the actions and behaviors of society's members; it also involves transforming each person into a moral being. The person will develop the quality known as "halaalaanchimma," which implies truthfulness/justness, by internalizing the principle and becoming a man of truth (Halaalu mancho).

It is recommended that every member of society be a man with this personality. This is on the belief that a person of good character does not act immorally unless it is unavoidable and that preventing immoral acts promotes the community's ability to function well. Undeniably, the peace will be sustained.

4.2. How Halaale Sustains Peace

For the question that how do you believe that Halaale could sustain peace, one of the informants argues that,

"...According to my understanding, there would be no conflict at all if every member of society could follow and practice Halaale. In spite of the fact that it is hard to be true in every element of life, everyone, regardless of age or gender, is expected to uphold this standard. Halaale, which is constantly referred to as the Supreme, is above everyone. According to the principle, it is forbidden to commit crimes such as theft, fornication, murder, lying, and discrimination, destruction of the environment, animal abuse, and demoralization of the underprivileged, boundary pushing, refusing to acknowledge mistakes, and failing to compensate victims. Additionally, Halaale guda, which literally translates to "Finishing Halaale" and means "never descend into fighting even if you are a victim," is a practice in Sidaama culture.

Before reacting to the transgressor, you must refer (say affini) what has been done against you to his/her relatives, the villagers, and the elders. Accordingly, I believe that these increase peace and reduce the likelihood that disputes will arise. Even if the offender or victim is a relative, when it comes to resolving disagreements, an elder must put all of their party knowledge aside and concentrate on the matter at hand. There is a Sidaama saying that says, "You may take side with your enemy despite being invited by your kin."

Because God is watching, whether you follow Halaale or not, you cannot defend someone you know by distorting the facts. Furthermore, it is urged that even in the absence of a witness, the defendant and plaintiff state the truth and disclose everything that occurred. You must adhere to the righteous option (Halaale) in all interactions with people, that doesn't bring you unjustified advantage at the expense of others."

This suggests that morality has the potential to promote peace by regulating human actions and conduct. Using the example of Halaale, it can be deduced that the principle has the ability to prevent people from being involved in a dispute by instructing them on what to do to appease the God (Magano) and giving them the right direction when it comes to conflict resolution. Halaale should be kept in mind by all parties during conflict resolution, including the defendant, the victim, and the mediators. Given that there is no witness, the defendant is not obligated to contest what they did or why they did it. The denier will suffer the curse if he/she refuses to acknowledge everything.

The complainant is advised not to exaggerate the circumstances surrounding the incident and not to demand additional compensation beyond the actual damage. Additionally, the mediators are obligated to avoid siding with either the complainant or the defendant by abstaining from taking sides themselves. It therefore has either preventive or restorative properties.

In line with this, [31] argued that "...Traditionally, this [Halaale] is a moral standard reflecting the truth, by avoidance of any... form of crime, such as stealing, perjury, corruption, injustice, but also a strict adherence to the highest standards of probity, integrity, honesty, and truthfulness." Furthermore, [32], as cited in [24], described the concept of Halaale as unwavering adherence to the greatest standards of probity, integrity, honesty, and truthfulness by opposing any type of crime and wrongdoing.

In addition, according to Hotesso [31], the Sidaama think that an appeal (known as mallaha) made to God by a vulnerable and/or mistreated individual will result in retaliation against the offender in the form of misfortune, illness, or death. According to their belief, anyone who commits a crime against someone who is weak physically or financially is also committing a sin against Halaale, or God, and they will also be unable to have children.

Therefore, it can be stated typically that, if everyone behaves in accordance with the Halaale principle, which can be demonstrated by supporting truth, a life of rectitude, humility, loyalty or obedience, honesty, sincerity/justice, goodness, hospitality, respect for the sanctity of human life, preserving and protecting non-human nature, and abiding by Godly commands, the likelihood of getting into conflict would be minimal as the causes dried out.

This is mainly because of the belief that following the Halaale code is equivalent to abiding by the terms of the contract one entered into with the supreme creator [29] Regarding the question that who is in charge of interpreting the principle, one the informants narrated the myth about the Halaale and God as follows

"In ancient time, God used to be a live, breathing being on this planet, guiding people in how to behave, what to do, and what not to do in their daily interactions. He was serving as a mediator in all interpersonal disputes. But as time went on, God grew uncomfortable coexisting with humanity because of their fall into sin. People questioned him when he made the decision to split up, "Him that; how can we live? Who might treat us during a hostile circumstance? Who might provide justice for us? In response, he said, "I will give elders control over Halaale; I will listen to them; and they will contact me about all of your concerns."

Based on this societal perspective, as John Hamer [28] noted, elders are responsible for preserving and interpreting the moral order and code. As life shifts from one era to the next, elders are forced to translate the specifics of the generalizations in this way. Elders impose a small fee with an accompanying statement of remorse when they determine that someone has violated a code standard through evidence of misconduct or confirmations of culpability. Or, to put it another way, the Halaale code functions successfully through social punishments. The associated administrative and cultural institutions of seera also support the code. Seera can be thought of as an unwritten rule that imposes monetary or social penalties on a member for failing to uphold the community's duties. Among these punishments, the sensation of alienation will be particularly felt because seera's exclusion results in rejection from both the supernatural and social worlds [16].

Referring to the influence of seera Mengesha [29], it is emphasized that...if an individual is punished by the customary law or "seera," it is hard for him to eat with or take part in every social activity with the other members until he obtains permission from the elders. When a group member participates in a social activity with a guilty party, the entire group will be fined.

Though it is not a codified rule, as [33] also notes, "individuals abide by it out of a dread of breaking the Halaale and being therefore referred to God by the elders.

Concerning the purpose of the punishment set by the elders, one of the informants expressed as follows

It is not always required to fine in cash or kind because the goal of punishing Halaale offenders by seera is to control the virtue of persons. Confession of the crime is sufficient, and as the person is lacking the set money or property, he adds, "*Halaale mudhoomona sa'e'e*" which means, "I paid off Halaale and forgive me." However, it is not everyone who is able to pay and claims to pay off Halaale.

Similarly, it was mentioned in [34] that "If the wrongdoer admits his errors and pleads for forgiveness, the elders' council would prefer to mediate the matter than punishment." The elders would attempt to soften their words, especially when he said "Halaale ga'noommo," forgive me for Halaale's sake." The elders might then reduce it or leave it completely.

Otherwise, the elders, who act as a mediator between Magano and the elders, will figuratively refer the case to the Creator or curse the offender if seera does not result in confession and payment of the required social reintegration fine. Given that it is believed that Halaale was conferred upon them by Magano (God), He would watch over people to see that moral principles are observed and punish them when they blatantly or willfully violate them. The legitimacy of Halaale is increased by this additional belief.

The Sidaama world knows no capital punishment; murder is punishable by guma or blood compensation. Neither do the elders and their council possess direct physical forces of coercion at their disposal. Accenting this, Hancock & Solomon [35] as cited in Hameso [16] noted that *...among the Sidaama, the style of behavior and demeanor of everyday life...* is clearly not based on threat of physical force. It is not the cowed subservience based on fear of whips, gallows and dungeons which is displayed, but it clearly demonstrates a concern for public opinion and sensitivity to criticism.

By the same token, Seera does not involve physical punishment, according to Hotesso [31]. The Sidaamas do not support the use of physical force as a form of collective punishment for adult

offenders to keep the peace because they believe that it violates the dignity of the individual and consequently displeases God. As a result, seera is essential to maintaining Halaale because it can repair the relationship for transgression by confession or financial penalties without resorting to physical force. Correspondingly, it has been noted by Dukamo [30] that among the Sidaama, peace, harmony, and serenity can be restored among and between communities, families, and people without turning to retaliation and violence.

This affirms that Sidaama moral principles have the ability to effectively facilitate and create the favorable atmosphere for societal development by discouraging individuals from engaging in immoral behavior. Thus, morality becomes crucial in establishing both peace and a culture of lasting peace in a society if peace is defined as the establishment, maintenance, and promotion of a just order. It is therefore that, Galtung argues [36] that, peace cultures exist in societies that have social, economic, political, and psychological frameworks that enable individuals to decide on mutually acceptable dispute settlement options and maintain peaceful, harmonic coexistence.

Based on these grounds, it can be inferred that the Halaale principle by suiting a day to life of the society to morally correct way, it diminishes the possibility of the occurrence of conflict and sustains peace.

4.3. The Sidaama Concept of "Keere" Peace

The Sidaamas refer to the idea of peace as keere. They use the term "keere" to refer to both social concord and physical/bodily wellness. Sidaamas deeply appreciated the importance of peace 'keere in all of their life's endeavors. They made it part of their exchange of greetings as a result. Everyone greets others by saying "keereho."

They perceive peace as something that every living thing deserves, thus when asked if everyone and everything is at peace, by saying, "mannu keereho, Ooso keereho, saada keereho, qarqaru keereho", saying "Are all the people in peace, Are all the animals in peace? Are the environment and vegetation all peaceful? They check to see whether there is coexistence in these kinds of probes. Here, we can see that the prevalence of peace will ultimately decide how well both humans and non-human animals flourish.

Besides, an immediate contact of individuals, no guest enters another person's home without first asking about their state of peacefulness. Standing outdoors, he or she asks everything. The person inside, who is typically a woman, welcomes the outsider into their home by saying, "keere haari manni mine no," which means that the one who is sending peace is within. Additionally, when the topic of peace is brought up in greetings, there is a philosophical implication that the promotion of peace in one location will reciprocally support peaceful living in another location. Similar to this, the war in a particular region is perceived as a common threat.

Once more, it is the responsibility of the Sidaama persons to ask peace on the roadways whenever they are traveling. Any person who relocates is required share peace with everyone they come into contact with. In addition anyone should ask when he meets with the collected people. He takes a breath as they approach a group inquires as to whether or not they are gathered for a peaceful matter. They might give him an overview of the problem in response to his question, and he continues on his way. They will interrupt him and inquire as to why he is not asking for peace if he continues without speaking.

The Sidaama traditional identity includes peaceful cohabitation as one of its core values. Their methods for preserving tranquility and order in their societies are well-established and institutionalized. The Sidaama people's psychology and the ideology that directs their everyday activities are both dedicated to the pursuit of peace and harmony. The Sidaama culture values and nurtures an integrated and harmonious communal living. The Sidaama society is essentially a collectivist one.

In contrast to peace, the concept of "keere" denotes an all-encompassing worldview that results from one's proximity to Halaale [truth-justice] and fear of Magano [God] in their interactions with other Gods (Magano), people (manna), and nature (kalaqama) [31]. Any abuse of the human person or nature is viewed as an insult to God, the Kalaqa-Kaliqqa (the all-powerful Creator of all), and the ancestors, who serve as the guardians of morality. Insulting God causes Keere, or disruption of the concordance.

There is a proverb among the people that refers to God as the owner and giver of peace, "keeru maganunniho." Thus, having a peaceful relationship with Magano (God) is necessary for leading a harmonious existence. Therefore, keere involves demanding that one's activities to comply with

Halaale and having a fear of God in order to maintain harmony in human existence. When one's existence is governed by these two basic principles, keere develops [33]. Because of their reverence, they command unquestionable respect and imprint the customs and conduct of the Sidaama people and society.

The people believe and agree that any action taken in violation of these norms results in retaliation for the offender and his descendants. The Sidaamas typically regard that each human being as having equal respect and dignity. They view an individual in relation to the put or (domain [nature]), community, and the Maker (Magano [God]), i.e., an individual may be a person-in-communion. As a result, both the individual and the community are held in high regard and given a sense of consecration. Thus, maintaining keere necessitates giving each person, community, and natural environment the respect they deserve.

In Sidaama, keere occupies the first spot on the list of desirable qualities. They express their respect for peace by stating that "...keeru heeriro...meaning if there is peace..." to imply that peace decides the kind of life we want to lead. To ensure this, pupils are taught to act in accordance with the Halaale principle, which takes the form of constructive, non-exploitative activities and behaviors that uphold peaceful relationships with God, other people, and environment.

Their understanding of peace is therefore one that directly corresponds to positive peace. The moral code of Sidaama, which is matched to being motivated by the positive ends of peace, commands all members of the community to respect mutuality, kindness, justice, and truth [not telling lies] and to not value distorting another person's words for one's own benefit, paying debts, refraining from having sex with family members, and pushing one's property boundaries so that they infringe those of neighbors. It is believed that when the essential Halaale values—justice, generosity, forgiveness, mutuality, respect, reconciliation, love, care, trustfulness, serenity, quietness, coordination, friendship, amity, harmony, sociable relation, public order, conciliation, spiritual content, social justice, and bliss—are distorted, a wider range of negative outcomes will result.

According to Brogger [32] every human being has the right to be heard regardless of their social status, ethnicity, or race. Refusing to listen to them would be an offense against Halaale and would cause keere to be disrupted (peace). This is consistent with the idea that not being heard fairly leads individuals to react violently, ruining peace (keere). Additionally, the Sidaama people's moral framework, which is centered toward God intervening in the world of humans, has the potential to lessen exploitation, which is a true component of peaceful coexistence.

Accordingly, the Sidaama's realistic view of peace is related to the necessity for positive peace, which is explained by Hotesso [31], in a social environment where exploitation is reduced to a minimum or eliminated and where there is neither overt nor the more covert phenomenon of underlying structural violence. Additionally, John Galtung's theory of the culture of peace fits well in this type of social setting since it has cultural traits that support direct and structural peace by validating and establishing their legitimacy. According to Mengesha [29] if certain cultural components are prevalent and persist in a culture, it can be characterized as a culture of peace.

5. Conclusion

In present time the attention of international community has been returning to the original African perspective of sustaining peace using the specific capabilities and infrastructures than employing a top down approach of peace-building. Africa is a continent with pertinent cultural and philosophical endowments yet less served by its people due to the ill-oriented western pseudo-modernization. In the favor of the western liberal out looks, the homegrown moral values and principles with ability to sustain peace have been regrettably eroded. However, this is not to mean the whole African approaches to sustain peace have totally doomed. There are some remnants like Halaale principle of Sidaama people that precipitate the light of hope with their invigorating capacity by maintaining harmony and resolving conflicts. Among the Sidaamas, every interpersonal interaction is thought to be guided by this principle in such a way that; no one should act wrongly against his/her fellow to take advantage and revenge. They believe that the lack of peace or conflict is consequentially attached with the extent of adherence to the principle of Halaale. According to them, when the values of Halaale such as justice, generosity, forgiveness, mutuality, respect, reconciliation, love, support, trustfulness, tranquility, calm, repose, quietness, harmony, friendship, amity, concord, peaceful or friendly relation, public order, pacification, spiritual content, reconciliation, serenity, security, social justice, bliss...are distorted there will be a wider possibility for disharmony.

Accordingly, to control their abuse, they have an unwritten law so-called seera which ascribes financial or social punishment inflicted on a member for not fulfilling the obligations of the community. Anyone who found the guilty of the violation of the moral code would face social ousting by the members of society and which will be implemented with the revered authority of elders.

Finally, by binding the members of the community to the communitarian good of the society and diminishing the place of wrong deeds the Halaale principle of Sidaama people cannot be underrated for its capacity of sustaining peace.

Based on these bases, it would be better to recommend to the regional and national governments to advocate the moral principles of the society [through their policies] which indispensably pledge the peaceful functioning of society. It needs to instruct the youths to keep the principle in their ways by all concerned bodies starting from the families. On the side of these, all international organizations and developed states working to support peace processes in the third world should primarily understand their moral constructions and recognize the capabilities of their cultural, religious and moral worldviews to sustain peace.

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