

# The Struggle against Social Discrimination: Petitions by the Manjo in the Kafa and Sheka Zones of Southwest Ethiopia

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The drastic changes in Ethiopia during the twentieth century have altered the ways in which minority groups, including hunters and craft workers, earn their livelihood. Although the gap between the standards of living of minorities and majority groups has narrowed, minorities are still excluded from the mainstream of social life and are discriminated against by majority groups. Some minority groups have attempted to oppose this discrimination. Although the Constitution grants rights to ethnic groups, these minorities have not been regarded as ethnic groups and have become even more marginalized and deprived of access to economic and political resources. This article discusses the petitions sponsored by the Manjo in the Kafa and Sheka zones of the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and People's Regional State of Ethiopia. The Manjo are former hunters who suffer discrimination at the hands of the Kafa. The petitions requested improvement in the social status of the Manjo in the form of official recognition as an ethnic group and an end to the discrimination perpetrated by the Kafa. This article examines how the Manjo developed these petitions, claiming a distinct ethnic identity, by describing the social and historical background of the Manjo.

**Key words:** Kafa, Manjo, minority, social discrimination, petition

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Ethiopia contains many minority groups, consisting of hunters and craft workers, including the Wayto among the Amhara, the Waata among the Oromo, the Manjo among the Kafa, and so on. Although these minorities play important roles in their societies, they have low status and are excluded by the majority. The drastic changes that occurred in Ethiopia during the twentieth century have changed the livelihoods of minority groups consisting of hunters and craft workers. Some have given up their conventional subsistence activities, hunting or making crafts, and have begun farming. The relationships of these minorities with neighboring majority groups are also changing (e.g., Gamst 1979).

Studies of these minority groups have been conducted from various perspectives, including approaches that focus on social structures such as castes and hierarchies, symbolic approaches that focus on pollution and fertility, approaches that focus on patron-client relationships, and so on (cf. Pankhurst 1999). Most of these studies are based on the dominant perspective of the majority group, the farmers, and disregard the viewpoint of the minorities. Freeman and Pankhurst (2003) published a book focused on the perspectives of the minorities. This book consists of case studies of the minority groups in contemporary southwest Ethiopia. Each article presents basic information and discusses

changes in the situations of different minorities using an ethnographic approach. These studies are valuable for developing a general view of these minorities. However, the book does not address how minorities have reacted to, and whether they have accepted, the changes in their lifestyles and their relationships with neighboring majority groups that occurred during the twentieth century.

Recently, the relationships between these minorities and neighboring majorities have been considered a discrimination or human rights issue. Several NGOs have initiated various campaigns to abolish discrimination. Although "ethnic minorities" and "indigenous people" have started movements to secure their indigenous rights, there are only a few movements of minority groups who do not even have indigenous rights, such as hunters and craft workers (e.g., Aneesa 2000, Aneesa & Ali 2004).

This article examines the kinds of changes experienced by minority groups and discusses their reactions using a case-study approach focused on the petition drives organized by one minority group, the Manjo, who are former hunters living in the Kafa and Sheka zones of the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and People's Regional State (SNNPRS). Since the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) came to power, the federal government has followed a policy of ethnic federalism. The new Constitution, enacted in 1994, acknowledges that all nations, nationalities, and peoples have an unconditional right to self-determination, including a right to secession. Article 39 defines the complex concept of nation, nationality and people as a group of people who have, or share in large measure, a common culture or similar customs, a mutually intelligible language, a belief in a common or related identity and a common psychological make-up, and who inhabit an identifiable, predominantly contiguous territory. Based on this definition, affirmative measures for minority nationalities and peoples are introduced. Recently, zonal and regional governments have given these groups priority in education and employment. As a result, some members of these groups have completed their education and secured jobs with their local administration. The purpose of this affirmative action is to correct imbalance among the ethnic groups in the local administration.

However, the combination of the federal system and the right to self-determination has created new political units, with their own political and cultural autonomy, which have caused problems and conflicts regarding the language used for education and administration in border areas.<sup>(1)</sup> Moreover, one nation, nationality and people has led movements to establish special *wärādas*.<sup>(2)</sup> Some researchers have identified the policy of self-determination deriving from the "Nations, Nationalities and Peoples" provision as the problem. Abbink has argued that the Constitution has tried to reify something that is, by nature, fluid and shifting: ethnic identity. Intentionally or not, this provision further strengthens ethnicity as a political identity and as a vessel for "democratic rights" (Abbink 1997: 172–173). Pankhurst and Freeman insisted that the concerns of marginalized minorities such as hunters and craft workers have been little considered in "ethnic politics" since most of them are dispersed social categories rather than localized ethnic groups. In recent years, some of the minority groups have begun to fight for political representation (Pankhurst & Freeman 2003: 340, 354). Although the Constitution guarantees the rights of nations, nationalities and peoples, the minorities under examination have become even more marginalized and increasingly deprived of access to economic and political resources.

The Manjo have long been discriminated against by the Kafa and Sheka. In 1997, several Manjo individuals gathered to create a petition to the zonal, regional, and federal governments asking for the abolition of social discrimination in the Kafa and Sheka zones and requesting recognition under the "Nation, Nationality and People" provision. In 2002, the Manjo attacked the Kafa in an attempt to end discrimination. In 2008, the regional government tried to settle the Manjo issue through a resolution. The government admitted the existence of social discrimination against the Manjo, but rejected the idea that the Manjo are covered under the "Nation, Nationality and People" provision.

This article focuses on the Manjo living within Kafa society, because most of the Manjo involved in the petition drives migrated from the Kafa zone, from the middle of the twentieth century. First the Manjo are described, and then an overview of their historical situation within Kafa society is presented, focusing primarily on their social roles and status during the period of prosperity experienced by the Kafa Kingdom up until 1897. Changes that occurred during this period will also be

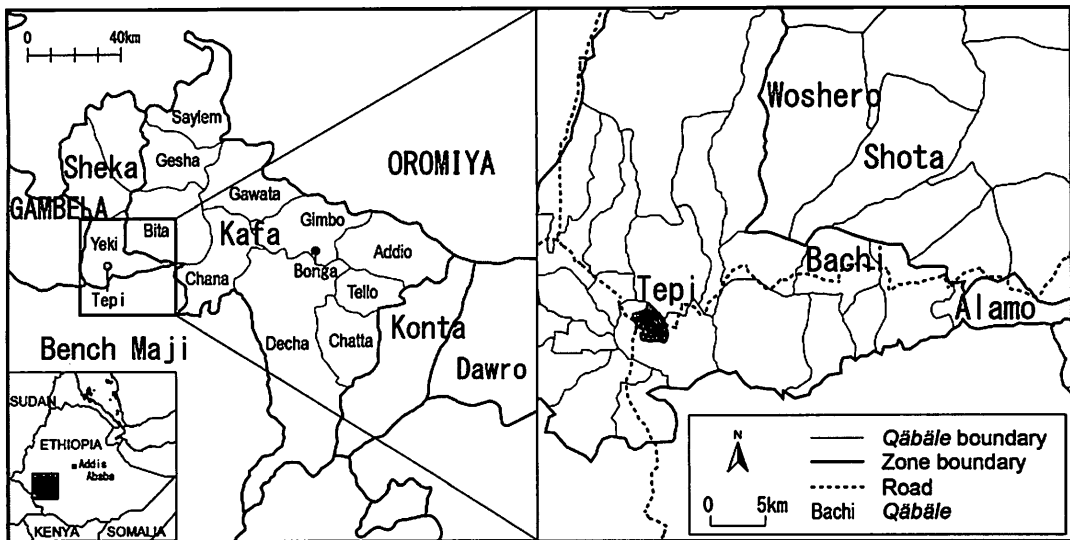


Fig. 1. Location of Bachi *qābāle*. Map made by the author based on the map prepared by the Zonal Finance and Economic Development Desk and Sustainable Poverty Alleviation Project in Kafa.

described, and explanations of contemporary social relationships between the Manjo and the Kafa will be offered. Following this, details of the Manjo in Bachi *qābāle* will be outlined and their petitions discussed. There follows an examination of the geographical, social, and historical background, and the logic underpinning their petitions and claims to ethnic identity. Finally, I will argue that the Manjo's claim to ethnic identity is based on the use of various resources that could also be employed in politics.

I conducted fieldwork in the Kafa zone on several occasions between 2005 and 2010. The total length of my stay in Ethiopia was 28 months.<sup>(3)</sup> The people involved in the petitions are identified by their real names as they requested, which clearly shows that the Ethiopian government is aware of both the petitions and the names of their representatives.

## 2. THE MANJO

The Manjo are a minority group living in pockets of the Kafa, Sheka, Bench Maji, and Dawro zones, and the Konta special *wārāda* in the SNNPRS. Some Manjo also live in the Oromiya and Gambela Regional States. There are no census data on the Manjo population because they live within the majority culture and are considered members of the majority ethnic group. Nevertheless, the Manjo do have a separate identity. They are sometimes given different names according to the area in which they reside: the Manjo in the Kafa and Sheka zones, the Manja among the Amhara and the Dawro, the Bandu among the Bench, and the Manji among the Majangir. Furthermore, the Manjo are considered Wayto around Lake Tana, Waata among the Oromo, Fuga among the Gurage, and Geemi among the Dizi, or are considered craft workers (e.g., blacksmiths, tanners, and potters).

Previous studies held that the Manjo, Wayto, and Waata shared a common ancestor (Massaja 1888: 56, 59, Bieber 1908a: 12, Cerulli 1922) and were "remnants" of the "original inhabitants" of Ethiopia (Grühl 1932: 185). Bieber (1909: 235) insisted that the Manjo were indigenous inhabitants conquered by the Kafa immigrants from northern Ethiopia. Several oral traditions assert that the Manjo migrated from the Kafa zone to other areas. Gezahegn (2003: 94) noted that a local oral tradition suggests that the original inhabitants of Kafa were the Manjo, Nao, She, Bench, and Majangir, and that these groups were apparently displaced by the immigrant royal clan of the *Minjo*. Lange (1982:

77) indicated that the Manjo in Bosha are of Kafa origin and are known in Garo as “Fuga,” “Faki,” and “Wata”. According to Behailu and Data (2003: 124), in Dawro, the Manja were outsiders who came from the Manjo area of Kafa. One of my Manjo informants living in the Konta special *wārāda* mentioned an oral tradition, according to which the Manjo migrated to Konta after having been directed to do so by an *alamo*, or a medium of *eqqo*, spirits.<sup>(4)</sup>

The Manjo in the Kafa and Sheka zones, the Manja in the Dawro zone and the Konta special *wārāda* and the Bandu in the Bench have similar characteristics and the same social situation (e.g., Miyawaki 1988, Mengistu 2003, Behailu & Data 2003). The Manjo, Manja, and Bandu are hunters; most of their subsistence is derived from hunting wild animals such as colobus monkeys, porcupines, and wild boar, and from gathering and selling forest products such as firewood, charcoal, and honey. Farmers, who represent the majority of the society, consider them ‘dirty’ because of their different dietary habits, i.e., eating wild animals and those not ritually slaughtered. Indeed, the Manjo, Manja, and Bandu are disdained and discriminated against by the majority groups (Mengistu 2003: 102, Behailu & Data 2003: 126–127).

It is said that the Manjo physically differ from farmers and other minorities in that they are darker and shorter in stature and have curly hair, flat noses, and smaller foreheads. The Manjo usually speak the language of the place in which they live. Additionally, some Manjo also speak the Omotic Kafa language, *Kafi-noono*. For example, the Manja in Dawro speak both the Dawro and Kafa languages (Behailu & Data 2003: 107). However, it is not appropriate to equate the Manjo, Manja, and Bandu, although it is important to carefully investigate their similarities in terms of their social and historical backgrounds and relationships. Until recently, the Manjo have not been the main focus of studies, and little substantive ethnographic data have been compiled about them. I will describe the reasons for this in the next section.

### 3. THE MANJO AND Kafa SOCIETY

#### 3.1. *The Manjo in Kafa Society*

The population of the Kafa zone is 874,716, the majority of whom were Kafa in 2007. In 1991, the area was divided into four zones: Kafa, Sheka, Bench, and Maji. In 1996, these four zones were organized into the Kaficho Shekacho zone and the Bench Maji zone. In 2000, the Kaficho Shekacho zone was subdivided into the Kafa zone and the Sheka zone.

In general, people who speak the Kafa language, *Kafi-noono*, are known as *Kafa*. However, within Kafa society, people differentiate themselves as *Gomoro*, *Manno*, or *Manjo*.<sup>(5)</sup> The majority call themselves *Gomoro* (hereafter referred to as Kafa). The Manno are tanners. The Manjo were formerly hunters and are known as *aaddoo*. The Manjo and the Manno reside in all 11 *wārādas* that constitute the Kafa zone. An estimated 10,000–12,000 Manjo live in the Kafa zone,<sup>(6)</sup> inhabiting nearly every *qābāle*. The Manno tend to concentrate in one place. Thus, they do not live in some *qābāles*. The Manjo living in the Kafa zone have their own clans, which number more than 30 and differ from the Kafa clans.<sup>(7)</sup> Although the Manjo in the Kafa zone speak *Kafi-noono*, both groups claim that their languages differ, stressing distinctions in intonation. Most Manjos consider themselves to be an indigenous ethnic group that differs from the Kafa.

The history and society of the Kafa have been studied intensively by Bieber (1908a, 1908b, 1909, 1920), Grühl (1932), Cerulli (1930), Huntingford (1955), Orent (1969, 1970), and Lange (1982). Most previous researchers focused on “traditional” Kafa society by investigating the history and social structure in terms of its origin, religion, ethnicity, hierarchy, and so on. These studies generally suggested that a social hierarchy similar to the caste system existed. For instance, Bieber divided the peoples in the Kafa Kingdom into four groups: the Kafficho (Gonga), Amaro, Nagado, and Manjo. The Manjo were positioned fourth in the hierarchy of the Kafa Kingdom and had the lowest social status, similar to the Wayto and Waata (Bieber 1908a: 12). Orent (1969) and Lange (1982) argued that the Kafa, who were farmers, were at the top of the hierarchy, followed by occupational groups

including blacksmiths, weavers, bards, potters,<sup>(8)</sup> and tanners. In this hierarchy, the Manjo were commonly referred to as hunters and were assigned the lowest status, equal only to slaves. Almost every article and book listed above was written from the perspective of the Kafa, who looked down on the Manjo. Thus, no research has focused specifically on the Manjo.

Since the 1990s, new perspectives, based on the viewpoints of the Manjo themselves and focused primarily on this group, have emerged. For example, Van Halteren (1996) reported that the Manjo have been discriminated against and relegated to a low status by the Kafa since the time of the Kafa Kingdom. Additionally, Gezahegn (2003) discussed recent socioeconomic changes and the current situation of the Manjo in the Kafa zone. Nevertheless, these studies focused less on the social and historical background of the Manjo and devoted relatively little attention to the reactions of the Manjo themselves to various changes.

### 3.2. Historical Figure of the Manjo

The Kafa Kingdom, which existed in the Kafa zone until 1897, was ruled by the *Minjo* clan of the Kafa. However, many of my Kafa and Manjo informants agreed: "When people talk about the history of the Kafa Kingdom, it is necessary to refer to the Manjo." According to oral tradition, the first king of the Kafa Kingdom was a Manjo. The oral tradition concerning the Manjo king has two forms. One deals with the appearance of the Manjo king:

#### —*Earth and the Kafa Kingdom*—

Manjo and Matto came out of a hole in the earth near Shadda. They were both naked as they came out of the earth. They had nothing on them. Matto brought *ənsāt* and a potato, which were given to him by the god to bring him out of the hole. A steer and a cow also came out of the hole with Matto. That was all that came out of the hole. As they came out, they found tanners, potters, and smiths. Manjo came out first and then came Matto. The people on the earth first made Manjo king. But then, Manjo's behavior began to bother the people on the earth since he ate everything; he even ate the meat of colobus. The people began to hate Manjo. Manjo found out that they hated him, so he freely gave up his position as king to Matto. Matto did not ask for the kingship. He was given it by Manjo. Matto and Manjo never fought with each other, and the people on the earth thought that they were brothers.<sup>(9)</sup>

The others address how the Manjo King lost the throne:

#### —*The Colobus and the King*—

The king of the Kafa Kingdom was a Manjo. While a meeting was being held, a colobus suddenly appeared. The king saw the colobus and ran after it, eventually leaving the meeting. People reacted against the behavior of the king, and the throne was passed to Matto.<sup>(10)</sup>

#### —*Dooco<sup>(11)</sup> and the King*—

When Manjo was a king, there was a meeting, and the king was on his way to attend the meeting. On his way, there was a bar selling *dooco*. The king's followers said they should drink *dooco*. The king refused, but the followers said, "Your honor, you do not need to drink, only sit." So, the king sat down and his followers started drinking. One of the followers stealthily ran to the meeting place and told a Minjo that the king was drinking *dooco*. People went to the bar and saw the king. They asked, "Why did you stop by this bar to drink *dooco* on your way to the meeting?" Consequently, Manjo lost the throne and the Minjo became the new king.<sup>(12)</sup>

#### —*One-hundred wives*—

During the time Manjo was king, Matto told him, "Your work is no good, you should get a new wife." The Manjo king had 99 wives. The one-hundredth wife had a neck that was one cubit in length, and she was not a Manjo. Because her neck was so long, people asked the king

why he married her. The Kafa asked the king, "Why didn't you marry a Manjo?" They then asked, "Which will you choose, to leave the throne or to die?" The Manjo king gave up the throne to do very minor work.<sup>(13)</sup>

All of the four abovementioned oral traditions state that the first king was a Manjo. These oral traditions are shared not only by the Manjo but also by the Kafa. The Manjo used to refer to these oral traditions to confirm that they were the indigenous people of the Kafa area and that they had their own king. Some of the traditions refer to the *Matto* taking over the throne after the Manjo king was dethroned, and to the *Minjo* ascending the throne after the *Matto*, and holding it until 1897.

The Kafa Kingdom was ruled by *Kafi taatoo*, the Kafa king. The *mikkerecho*, councilors to the king, were the most important court officials. Standing above all *mikkerechos*, *Ketema rasho* was the chief councilor and *de facto* king when the king was elsewhere. *Rasho* means "chief" and is usually used in a manner similar to *Ras*, the title used for nobles in Amharic.

The land of the Kafa Kingdom, *Kafi showo*, was divided into 18 districts called *woräfo*.<sup>(14)</sup> Each *woräfo* had a district head called the *Woräfo rasho* (e.g., *Decba rasho*, *Gesha rasho*, *Garwata rasho*, etc.), whose duties included collecting taxes and maintaining security. The *woräfo* were divided into provinces or clan territories called *guudo*, and *guudo* were further sub-divided into areas called *xuggo* and hamlets called *gafo*.<sup>(15)</sup>

The administrative structure of the Manjo differed from that of the Kafa. The Manjo also had their own king, *Manjo taatoo*,<sup>(16)</sup> who was selected from the *Dallo* clan (identified as *Aache Dallo*)<sup>(17)</sup> by the *Kafi taatoo*. Although the *Manjo taatoo* attended the *Kafi taatoo*, the Manjo could not participate in politics in the Kafa Kingdom. Their authority extended over the Manjo only. Similar to the Kafa king, the *Manjo taatoo* had his *Manjo rashes* in all 18 *woräfos* (Huntingford 1955: 136). Under each *Manjo rasho* were *Manjo guudos*. The *Manjo taatoo*, *Manjo rasho*, and *Manjo guudo* served functions such as collecting taxes, managing conscription, distributing prizes to warriors who contributed to war victories, and administering justice. Although *Manjo taatoo*, *Manjo rasho*, and *Manjo guudo* had social status, they were considered inferior to the Kafa and were not treated as the equals of the latter.

One remarkable example can clarify the *Manjo taatoo's* position and role. The Kafa Kingdom was frequently at war against neighboring kingdoms such as the Kullo, Gera, and Jimma. Whenever a soldier killed an enemy combatant, he cut off the fallen warrior's penis. Soldiers were given credits by the Kafa king according to the number of penises they collected. Rewards varied and sometimes consisted of a *gacha*<sup>(18)</sup> of land, women, slaves, or horses. Kafa and Manjo warriors were given the same amounts and types of rewards.<sup>(19)</sup> However, the manner of receiving the reward differed, with the Kafa receiving their prizes from the *Ketema rasho* and the Manjo receiving their prizes from the *Manjo taatoo*.

According to a descendant of *Manjo taatoos*, *Manjo taatoo* carried a ritual leader to lead the *machi taatee dejjjo* (ritual for the queen bee).<sup>(20)</sup> The Kafa king participated in the *machi taatee dejjjo*. The Kafa king and *Manjo taatoo* went to the site of the *machi taatee dejjjo* ceremony, where the *Manjo taatoo* sacrificed an ox and ate the meat. This site of the *machi taatee dejjjo* remains unplowed.

Although the status of *Manjo taatoo* seems to be similar to that of the chief of the Manjo, the appellation on the grave of *Manjo taatoos* contradicts this notion. The burial place of the *Manjo taatoo* is called *moogo* (the grave of the king).<sup>(21)</sup> The grave of the Kafa king is also called *moogo* and is located at Shosha. *Manjo taatoos* were buried at Awasho Olla, near Andracha, the location of the palace of *Kafi taatoo*. Awasho Olla, an area covering three *gacha*, was given by the Kafa king to the Manjo. When both the Manjo and the Kafa passed by the *moogo* of the *Manjo taatoo*, they showed their respect to the *Manjo taatoo*.

The Manjo played important roles in the Kafa Kingdom. The Manjo served as beaters during hunting expeditions including the Kafa king and *rasho*. As payment, they received the meat of whole animals. It was said that they ate any kind of animal (Cerulli 1930: 234). The Manjo customarily guarded the border of the Kafa Kingdom.<sup>(22)</sup> When enemies approached the border, a Manjo guard

struck a drum, *hokko* or *gonno*, producing sounds that spread quickly to alert other Manjo guards. The Manjo were also assigned to guard the grave and the palace of the Kafa king (Bieber 1908b: 186). The royal burial site of Kafa kings was located on a mountaintop in Shosha and was guarded by men from the Manjo and the *Dawusho* of the Kafa. The *Dawusho* guarded the upper part of the grave, and the Manjo guarded the lower part. The Manjo served as guards outside the royal palace of the Kafa king in Shadda, and Kafa men guarded the palace interior.<sup>(23)</sup> The Manjo also guarded the houses of some Kafa *rashos* and *alamos*. However, while Kafa guards patrolled inside the fences surrounding these homes, the Manjo were positioned outside the fences. According to Cerulli, Manjo men served as messengers to the Kafa *rasho*. Because the Kafa language had no established orthography, the Kafa *rasho* customarily had Manjo men carry his messages to another Kafa *rasho* (Cerulli 1930: 234).

Some Manjos owned their own land, which was given to them by Kafa kings in reward for wartime services. Indeed, some patches of land are still known as the “land of the Manjo”, *Manjo guudo*. Land could be obtained not only by participating in war but also by excelling in certain tasks. For example, the *Sheccho* clan of the Manjo living in Decha *wārāda* served the king by defending the kingdom against raids carried out by the *Shuuro* (i.e., the Me'en). In return for their excellent service, the Kafa king gave the *Sheccho* one *gacha* of land, which the *Sheccho* inhabit today.<sup>(24)</sup>

### 3.3. The Transitional Period of Kafa Society

In 1897, Ras Wolde Giorgis conquered the Kafa Kingdom and incorporated it into the Ethiopian Empire. Thereafter, Kafa was governed by the Amhara, who were sent by the central government. Although the last Kafa king was dethroned and some *mikkerechos* were dismissed, *Ketema rasho* was appointed as governor by Ras Wolde Giorgis. Meeting Ras Wolde Giorgis was permitted to pass only through the *Ketema rasho* (Kochito 1979: 19). Governmental districts were reorganized based on the *worāfo* of the Kafa Kingdom. Of the 10 district chiefs, those of Decha, Chatta, and Shoa Gimira were from Kafa; the others were from the Amhara highlands of Gojjam and Gondar (Orent 1969: 110). According to Huntingford, the Manjo who were the most faithful adherents to their overlords were firmly attached to the *Ketema rasho*, even in 1928 (Huntingford 1955: 136). However, after the fall of the Kafa Kingdom, the role of the Manjo was reduced.

In 1936, the Italians arrived to occupy the Kafa, and most Amhara immigrants with northern Ethiopian origins fled back to the north. The Italians, because of their policy of resolving disputes among indigenous populations as a bulwark against the Amhara and northern Oromo, encouraged the Kafa people to identify the land markers that define their lineage (e.g., certain trees, rocks, hillcrests) and to re-establish their traditional land claims (Orent 1970: 229).

One Kafa informant recalled how the Italian government re-established the previous structure of the Kafa Kingdom.<sup>(25)</sup> According to the informant, the Italian governors summoned the dispersed descendants of the Kafa king. Abba Qasto, a nephew of the last Kafa king, Gakki Sheroch, was a coffee merchant and was found at the market in Gimbo. He was then taken to Bonga and seated on the throne as the “Kafa king”. The Italian governor replaced the administrative structure with the previous structure of the Kafa Kingdom, restoring the *Worāfo rashos* as well as the former *Manjo taatoo* and *Manjo rashos*. The Manjo were required to supply the Italian governor with 200 hides (e.g., colobus, leopard) per month. Every year, the Manjo also supplied live wild animals, including wild boar, bushbuck, and colobus. The Manjo living in the *worāfo* hunted and gathered wild animals, leather, honey, and other goods, which the *Manjo rasho* collected and took to the *Manjo taatoo* in Bonga. The *Worāfo rashos* also brought items collected from the Kafa. Subsequently, the *Manjo taatoo* delivered these goods to Abba Qasto, who finally handed them over to the Italian governor.<sup>(26)</sup>

After the Italians left Ethiopia in 1941, positions such as *Manjo taatoo*, *Manjo rasho*, and *Manjo guudo* were abolished under the Ethiopian empire.

### 3.4. The Changing Lifestyle of the Manjo

Before the Derg era, the Manjo primarily hunted and gathered food for a living. The Manjo used to start working on their lands at daybreak; the Manjo men set out for hunting when the sun was at its

height and returned with wild animals at sunset. The Manjo hunted wild boar, bushbuck, porcupines, colobus, buffalo, leopards, elephants, and so on. These animals were targeted primarily for food, whereas others were captured for selling, e.g., civet cats, and the hides and fur of certain animals.

Today, the living environment of the Manjo has changed greatly, and hunting is rare. One of the reasons for this is the increased protection of wild animals and forest resources enacted by the government in 1980. However, despite restrictions on hunting, the Manjo continued to hunt. Indeed, hunting seems to have declined only in areas in which the populations of wild and big animals have decreased. After 1991, many Manjo converted to Protestantism and stopped eating wild animals as per Biblical prohibitions on the consumption of wild boar, colobus, and so on. Nowadays, the Manjo no longer hunt but, rather, buy meat at the market.

Manjo women used to make earthenware at home while Manjo men went out hunting. Women made plates, pans, pots, and water jugs and sold them at local markets. Nowadays, many Manjo women have stopped making earthenware as a way to generate income and usually make these products only for their own use at home. Indeed, some young Manjo women do not even know how to make earthenware. One of the reasons for this is the increasingly widespread use of kitchen utensils made of aluminum and plastic and the decreasing demand for earthenware. Another reason is that the Manjo believe that their practice of making earthenware is one of the reasons the Kafa discriminate against them.

Today, most Manjo engage in farming. The lifestyle of the Manjo no longer differs from that of the Kafa farmers who cultivate staples for food, including maize, sorghum, wheat, barley, *tef*, *ənsät*, beans, and so. Some Manjo cultivate coffee as a cash crop and keep bees, and some are even wealthier than the Kafa. Like the Kafa, the Manjo have cows, bulls, goats, sheep, fowl, horses, and so on. Those Manjo who do not own enough land to farm may make their living by selling firewood and charcoal. In this respect, the Manjo are now far from being “hunters” (Yoshida 2008: 49–50).

### 3.5. *The Relationship between the Kafa and the Manjo*

Kafa society manifests various restrictions related to status, age, sex, physical condition, death, menstruation, childbirth, and relationships among groups (i.e., the Kafa, Manjo, and Manno). Certain restrictions are also observed with respect to greetings, meals, communal labor, spousal choice, and burial grounds.

Before the Derg regime, the Kafa did not treat the Manjo as equals. Up to the present, relationships between Kafa and Manjo individuals are characterized by ambiguity. While the Kafa refuse to allow the Manjo into their homes, if a Manjo comes to a Kafa house asking for food, the Kafa will give the Manjo something to eat. The Kafa believe that they will be blessed if they satisfy the hunger of a Manjo.<sup>(27)</sup> Similarly, if a Kafa meets a Manjo in the morning, the Kafa sees this as a sign of a good day.<sup>(28)</sup> The Manjo are believed to be blessed and have the status of *showe kabbo* (elders of the land). Thus, although the Kafa prefer not to share their residential and burial spaces with the Manjo, they will ask the Manjo to sow the first seeds of a planting season. If the Manjo do not have seeds, the Kafa will supply some. It is said that if the Kafa start sowing before the Manjo, the seeds will not grow well.<sup>(29)</sup> Likewise, the Kafa avoid having meals with the Manjo or using the same tableware as used by them. Marriage between the two groups is strictly forbidden. Nevertheless, a Kafa woman may ask a Manjo woman to suckle her newborn baby, believing it will make the baby grow well.<sup>(30)</sup>

However, in general, the mutual avoidance characterizing the relationship between the Kafa and the Manjo has been viewed as a focal problem. During the Italian regime, the government tried to treat the Kafa and the Manjo equally. For example, the Italian government prohibited the following manner of greeting: when a Manjo met a Kafa on the road, the Manjo had to step aside, bow and greet the Kafa with the phrase “*showocchi qebona* (literally, let me die for you)”. Nevertheless, 5 years was not long enough to dramatically change the relationship between the groups. The Derg government also viewed these restrictions as aspects of a “harmful culture” and tried to abolish them. Specifically, the Derg held several meetings to improve the relationship between the Kafa and the Manjo. At these meetings, Derg officials ordered the Manjo to bring food and drinks and ordered



the Kafa to consume them. Even if the Kafa refused, the Derg official forced them to drink, bringing the cups to their mouths. However, this top-down policy was not successful.

The Manjos' social position and way of life have changed drastically since the Derg era. Although the lifestyle of the Manjo today is the same as that of the Kafa, some Kafas still look down on and oppress Manjos. The Kafa and the Manjo generally differentiate themselves from each other. The Kafa despise the Manjo and do not include the latter in their own category of *asbo* (people). They also oppress the Manjo and attribute certain flaws to them with respect to eating habits, physical features, and certain characteristics. Typically, the Manjo are described by the Kafa as dirty, disgusting, ignorant, stupid, primitive, backward, animal-like, and sub-human. Despite the negative stereotype images of the Manjo, it was difficult for me to find any differences in their lifestyles. Indeed, these images of the Manjo lack a substantial basis in reality, and the Kafa use derogatory images and idioms only to justify their discrimination against the Manjo.

Recently, the differences that characterize the daily relationship between the Kafa and the Manjo have expanded in scope to include issues related to official participation in their society. That is, not only do few Manjos have posts on *qābāle* committees but also few hold posts as *wārāda* or zonal administrators, and only a few Manjos finish school. Most of the Manjos born before the Derg regime had little education because most Manjos who wanted to go to school were denied access to classrooms by the Kafa. Even today, the Kafa refuse to lease rooms to them. Consequently, it is difficult for the Manjo to live near high schools and, as a result, many drop out of school. In general, the Manjo believe that most Manjo are treated unfairly by government officials and policemen when problems between them and the Kafa arise. Thus, the relationship between the Kafa and the Manjo is characterized by discrimination and denial of rights.

## 4. THE MANJO PETITIONS

### 4.1. *The Manjo in Bachi qābāle*

The Manjo who started the petition movement live in Bachi *qābāle* of Yeki *wārāda*, the Sheka zone. Originally, Bachi *qābāle* was part of the Sheko land and ruled by the Sheko landlord, *balabbat*, *Kayinabu* clan. After its incorporation into the Ethiopian Empire, this area was governed by the Amhara, although the *Kayinabu* clan retained the position of *balabbat*. During this time, some people from the Amhara, Gurage, and Oromo had come to open up and work in coffee plantations and started to trade in coffee. Some Manjo worked in the coffee plantations that opened during Haile Sellasie's regime.

The population of Bachi *qābāle* exceeds 10,000 and includes almost 1,450 households. Many ethnic groups live in this *qābāle*, including the Sheko, Majangir, Amhara, Kafa, Manjo, Oromo, Bench, Sheka, Gurage, Tigrey, and so on. Because of this multi-ethnic situation, people refer to Bachi *qābāle* as "Small South Nations, Nationalities, and People's Regional States." Although data on the total Manjo population are unavailable, the percentages of Manjos who attend school are available. Bachi *qābāle* contains two schools, Bachi and Seri. In Bachi school, which has eight grades, Manjo children accounted for 13.2% (260) of the 1,960 students in 2009. In Seri school, which has four grades, Manjo children accounted for 30.8% (202) of the 655 students in 2010. These percentages show that the Manjo have a more pronounced presence in Bachi *qābāle* than in the Kafa zone.

Before its incorporation into the Ethiopian Empire, only a few Manjo lived in this area. My research on 212 Manjo households in four hamlets revealed that all members of these households had migrated from other areas (Table 1). In total, 108 individuals in the 212 households had migrated, and 104 were the second or the third generation at this location. Only one person migrated during the Italian era; his parents had been born near this *qābāle* and sold to Gore, a town in southwest Ethiopia, as slaves under the Ethiopian empire. He and his parents later obtained freedom and returned to Bachi *qābāle*.

Thirty-three householders migrated during Haile Sellasie's regime, and 81 other householders

Table 1. Number of Manjo in four hamlets who migrated to Bachi *qābāle*

Period	Italian (1936–1941)		Haile Sellasie (1941–1974)		Derg (1974–1991)		EPRDF (1991–present)	
	1	2·3·4	1	2·3·4	1	2·3	1	2
Generation	1	6	33	81	25	7	49	10
Number	1	6	33	81	25	7	49	10
Total	7		114		32		59	

were their sons, grandsons, or great-grandsons. It was this group that was the primary force behind the petitions. Under the Haile Sellasie regime, some Manjo families migrated from Bitā *wārāda* to Bachi. The story behind this migration was explained by Manjo migrants and their sons. The present Bitā *wārāda* used to be ruled by *Bitā rascho* Atturuse, and the Manjo who lived there were ruled by *Manjo rascho* Haggiti of the *Shookko* clan who worked under *Bitā rascho*. One day, *Bitā rascho* Atturuse ordered *Manjo rascho* Haggiti to go to Bonga, a journey of several days on foot. There was a rumor that *Bitā rascho* Atturuse had a plan to kill *Manjo rascho* Haggiti during his trip because the Kafa had become irritated by the fact that, after the Italian regime, the Manjo had started to act as if they were their equals. Thus, it is said that *Bitā rascho* Atturuse put the Manjo in their place. *Manjo rascho* Haggiti heard the rumor, was afraid of dying, and escaped to Alamo in Yeki *wārāda* of the Sheka zone. After a few years, he migrated to Bachi. The Sheko *balabbat* said, “We will give you and your children enough land. Please bless us and our children”. The Manjo received the land, started their life there, and blessed the Sheko in return.

A total of 25 householders migrated during the Derg regime, and seven householders were their sons or grandsons. Forty-nine householders migrated during the EPRDF, and 10 were their sons. During the Derg and EPRDF regimes, the Manjo migrated to Bachi *qābāle* from Chana *wārāda* in the Kafa zone for two reasons: to escape from oppression by the Kafa and to achieve economic success.

#### 4.2. Representatives of the Manjo

The Manjo living in Bachi *qābāle* started a petition following an incident in 1997 in which one Manjo man visited another Manjo man, Alemayehu Aragi. The first Manjo individual had come from Chana *wārāda* and said that, “The government is looking for Alemayehu Aragi.” At that time, Alemayehu Aragi was in Tepi. A Manjo man, Geneme Kelli, overheard this message and went to Tepi, where he met Alemayehu Aragi and told him what he had heard. They returned and called the Manjo men who live in Bachi *qābāle* to discuss the event. After a few days, four Manjos, including Alemayehu Aragi and Geneme Kelli, visited Chana *wārāda* to meet the original Manjo man. However, they did not meet him, and the Kafa told them to come again. Their second visit to Chana *wārāda* ended in the same way. As a result, the Manjo came to believe that the Kafa were intentionally withholding information and decided to start a petition addressed to the government.

They immediately organized a committee with a chairman, vice-chairman, accountant, secretary, and other officers. In June 1997, the committee, which consisted of the 207 Manjo elders who lived in Bitā *wārāda* and Yeki *wārāda* in the Kaficho Shekacho zone (the present-day Kafa and Sheka zones), appointed two Manjo men, Alemayehu Aragi and Alemayehu Ambo, as their representatives. These individuals were educated and Amharic-literate. Alemayehu Ambo was a grandchild of *Manjo rascho* Hayano. *Manjo rascho* Hayano was a brother of *Manjo rascho* Haggiti in Bitā *wārāda*. Alemayehu Aragi worked as a sanitation expert, and Alemayehu Ambo worked as a member of a *qābāle* in the Derg.

The petition was supported by the Manjo living in Bitā *wārāda*, Decha *wārāda*, Chana *wārāda*, Gesha *wārāda*, and Yeki *wārāda*. Financial support came primarily through the committee, members of which visited the aforementioned Manjos to solicit support for, and contributions to, the petition

drive. Some Manjo individuals directly gave Alemayehu Aragi and Alemayehu Ambo 1–10 birr for their coffee.

#### 4.3. Content of the Petitions

The Manjo have been circulating petitions directed at local, regional, and federal governments from 1997 to the present. In total, they have made their petitions more than 40 times. There have been more than 100 documents, all written in Amharic. The Manjo committee members copied and retained almost all of the petitions; with their permission, I photographed these along with related documents during the research I conducted between 2005 and 2010.

In 1997, the Manjo petitioned the zonal and regional governments and the Kafa Sheka People's Democratic Organization (KSPDO). The Manjo argued that their right to be treated in accord with the "Nations, Nationalities and Peoples" provision was being violated, that they were discriminated against by the Kafa and the Sheka, and that they were deprived of opportunities to be employed as administrative officials, teachers, police, and so on. The Manjo requested permission to form an organization to seek both recognition and their rights.

In 1998, the Manjo petitioned the zonal and *wäräda* governments and the KSPDO, claiming that they had been treated as wild animals or barbarians and oppressed and deprived of their rights and freedom in the Kafa and Sheka zones for a long period. Moreover, as per the "Nation, Nationality and People" provision, the Manjo claimed to have a different history and identity from those of the Kafa.

The Manjo did not file any petitions between October 1998 and September 2000, reportedly because six Manjos had been jailed for not paying tax in Decha *wäräda*, and other Manjos feared arrest. The Manjo explained that this action against the petitions by the government was wrongful arrest. During this time, Alemayehu Aragi and Alemayehu Ambo visited all *wärädas* in the Kaficho Shekacho zone to investigate the customs and habits of the Manjo and compile the oral traditions that were part of Manjo history.<sup>(31)</sup> They also counted the number of Manjo individuals and clans. The research results were presented in Amharic in a 29-page hand-written report. This report concluded that the Manjo constitute a nation, nationality and people with its own culture, customs, and habits and a language that is distinguishable from *Kafi-noono* and *Sheki-noono* (the Sheka language). This report, attached to a petition submitted to the government, served as evidence in support of the Manjo's status as an independent nation, nationality and people.

During this period, the Manjo also allied themselves with the Majangir and Sheko around Bachi *qābāle* with respect to their rights and status. The Manjo, Majangir, and Sheko met weekly at various homes or at the Protestant church. Alemayehu Aragi and Alemayehu Ambo proceeded to establish the Manjo's own political party, the Manjo People's Democratic Party in Awasa. However, this initiative failed because Alemayehu Aragi and Alemayehu Ambo joined the party of the Sheko and Majangir (i.e., the Sheko-Majangir Democratic Unity Party) without the consent of the aforementioned Manjo committee in Bachi *qābāle*. The Manjo ended their partnership with the Majangir and Sheko in 2000 because the movement focused only on the Majangir and Sheko, groups with their own language, culture, and political party as well as many educated members.<sup>(32)</sup> It is clear that the Majangir and Sheko provided the Manjo with important knowledge, including techniques related to petitioning and information about the Constitution.

In 2000 and 2001, the Manjo returned to filing petitions not only with the zonal and regional governments but also with the federal government and several organizations including the House of Peoples Representative, the SNNPRS, the EPRDF Office, Radio Fana, and the Ethiopian Radio Organization, amongst others. Their most important goals, to achieve recognition under the "Nations, Nationalities and Peoples" provision of Article 39, and to have their own representatives in the House of Peoples' Representatives under Article 54 of the Constitution, were clearly articulated. For instance, Alemayehu Aragi and Alemayehu Ambo, the representatives of the Manjo in the Kafa and Sheka zones, argued that the Manjo are a minority group with a population of almost one million individuals in more than 40 clans living in the SNNPRS and Oromiya and Gambela Regional

States. Although the Manjo had had their own king and administrative structure in the past, they did not have the rights and status accompanying recognition according to the “Nations, Nationalities and Peoples” provision.

#### 4.4. *The Attack by the Manjo and the Attitude of the Government*

The zonal government initially cooperated with the Manjo. When the Manjo asked permission to organize a meeting to educate other Manjos about the situation, the zonal government granted permission and sent letters to all *wārādas* in the Kaficho Shekacho zone. Sometimes, *wārādas* even gave the Manjo horses so that they could visit rural areas. However, after 2000, the government cracked down on the Manjo’s petitioning, citing its supposed illegality. The police searched several Manjo houses in Bachi *qābāle* and, although nothing was found, some Manjo men were arrested. The Manjo interpreted these actions as signs that the government hoped they would abandon the idea of petitioning.

During February 6–12, 2001, a meeting that included representatives of the Sheko, Majangir and Manjo, and government officials of the SNNPRS, Sheka zone, and Yeki *wārāda* was held in Tepi. The meeting focused on two questions related to the Manjo: Is the violence directed at the Manjo a result of their presumed sub-human status, and do the Manjo qualify as a nation, nationality and people? The government’s responses to these questions held that the social position of the Manjo was related to the history and culture of the Kafa and that little information about the Manjo was available. Thus, the government did not make any decision.

In March 2002, the Manjo living in Bachi *qābāle* of Yeki *wārāda* and Woshero and Shota *qābāles* of Bita *wārāda* launched an attack against their Kafa neighbors. Many Kafa were killed and their houses burned to the ground. The impact of the attack was tremendous, and many Manjo were taken into custody. After the attack, discrimination against the Manjo in the Kafa zone became a human rights issue, and a number of NGOs initiated campaigns to abolish discrimination against the Manjo (Yoshida 2008: 57). Because of the incident, the Manjo were unable to continue to organize petitions. In 2005, the Manjo re-started petitioning the zonal, regional, and federal governments by appointing new representatives to achieve their goal of improvement in the social status of the Manjo in the form of official recognition as an ethnic group and an end to the discrimination perpetrated by the Kafa.

After the incident, the regional government researched and discussed the Manjo issue. It studied the discrimination against the Manjo as well as the Manjo’s claim that they were a nation, nationality and people in the context of the social, economic, historical, cultural, and political situations in the Kafa and Sheka zones. On May 21, 2008, the regional government resolved the Manjo issue. The decision was documented in “*A Decision concerning the Identity Request of the Manja Community* (የማንጃ ማህበረሰብ የማንነት ጥያቄን አስመልክቶ የተሰጠ ውሳኔ).” The regional government concluded that there was social discrimination against the Manjo. However, they rejected the idea that the Manjo are a nation, nationality and people after examining the Manjo’s claim that they qualify for this status, according to Article 39 of the Constitution, based on their historical background, lifestyle, customs, language, identity, and place of domicile. Although the regional government accepted that the identity of the Manjo differs from that of the Kafa, they did not find other differences between the two groups. Indeed, the regional government concluded that the Manjo did not have their own history, culture, language, and area of domicile. Finally, they concluded that the main problem was the lack of “good governance.”

The regional government sent the document to the Kafa and Sheka zones and to the representatives of the Manjo. The decision was also reported by the *Dawn of South* (የደቡብ ንጋት) newspaper in an article entitled “*The Identity Request of the Manja Community and their Historical Background* (የማንጃ ማህበረሰብ የማንነት ጥያቄና ታሪካዊ አመጣጥ),” which was published on June 10 and 26 and July 10 of 2008. However, the Manjo have not accepted this decision and have continued their petitioning to this day.

## 5. BACKGROUND AND FEATURES OF THE MANJO PETITION

### 5.1. Geographic Features as Grounds for the Petitions

The Manjo living in Bachi *qābāle* differ from the Manjo living in other areas. The Manjo in other areas of the Kafa zone are not as active politically as are those in Bachi *qābāle*. Most of the Manjo in Bachi *qābāle* migrated from the Kafa zone because of discrimination by the Kafa. Bachi *qābāle*, which has the largest population in Yeki *wārāda*, contains many ethnic groups living next to one another. The area around Bachi *qābāle*, in the Kafa and Sheka zones, is prosperous and well-suited to coffee cultivation. Historically, many people came to this area to do business. Many of the Manjo who migrated to Bachi *qābāle* started to cultivate coffee as a cash crop. As a result, differences between the living standards of the Manjo and other ethnic groups, including the Kafa, decreased. Additionally, the Manjo living in this area are wealthier than those living in other areas.

The multi-ethnic situation in this area made the Manjo conscious of their relationship with the Kafa and led them to complain about the Kafa's discriminatory treatment toward them. There is no doubt that their consciousness increased as a result of the Majangir incident. The Majangir, an ethnic group living primarily in the Gambela, Oromiya Regional State, and the SNNPRS, revolted in Tepi in April and May 1993. According to Sato, the Majangir, who claimed to be indigenous to Tepi, were dissatisfied with the distribution of administrative posts and the demarcation of the border (Sato 2002: 191–193). After this incident, the Majangir worked in cooperation with the Sheko and continued their political movement to secure an appropriate regional border and the rightful distribution of administrative power based on their right to self-determination. Not only did the Manjo engage in discussions with the Majangir and Sheko from 1998 to 2000 but they also attacked the Kafa in March 2002. Indeed, this attack occurred on the same day that the Majangir and the Sheko attacked their Sheka neighbors, the *wārāda* administrative office, and the police station in Tepi.

Needless to say, literacy in Amharic is essential for writing a petition. The Manjo living in Bachi *qābāle* have more education and exposure to Amharic than do the Manjo living in other areas. Although the mother tongue of the Manjo is the Kafa language, many can speak, read, and write Amharic fluently. Moreover, they can speak the languages of several other groups with whom they live: the Sheko, Majangir, Oromo, Bench, and so on. Amharic is important as a medium by which to communicate with their neighbors. Their Amhara neighbors, who migrated to Bachi *qābāle* from Wello in 1985, under the Derg resettlement policy, influenced the Manjo to master Amharic.

The location of Bachi *qābāle* further supported the Manjo. Bachi *qābāle* is located on the causeway to Tepi, which is approximately 23 kilometers away. Tepi is connected to Addis Ababa by public transportation. Until 2006, a domestic flight connected Addis Ababa and Tepi, making it very convenient to travel between these locations. Cash income from coffee cultivation provided financial support for the Manjo's petitions.

### 5.2. Historical and Cultural Features of the Manjo

Certain historical and cultural features distinguish the Manjo from other minorities. According to their oral traditions, a Manjo was “the first king” of the Kafa Kingdom, and the Manjo were the “first people” in Kafa. These oral traditions explain why the Manjo are “indigenous people” who differ from the Kafa, who have deprived them of positions and land.

Historically, the Manjo were differentiated from the Kafa by the regional administrative structure and were ruled by the Kafa king through *Manjo taatoo*, *Manjo rasbo*, and *Manjo guudo* during the Kafa Kingdom and the Italian regime. In fact, some Manjos still remember the name of *Manjo rasbo*. One of the key persons behind the petitions, Alemayehu Ambo, is a grandson of *Manjo rasbo* Hayano in Bitā. There are also many other descendants of *Manjo rasbo* Hayano in Bachi *qābāle*. This means that *Manjo taatoo*, *Manjo rasbo*, and *Manjo guudo* are not ancient history to the Manjo who file petitions. Some descendants of *Manjo rasbo* are conscious of their ancestry, culture, and history; this consciousness enhances support for the leaders of the Manjo political movement.

These historical and cultural features of the Manjo have been included in academic works written

by foreign researchers and in Amharic books noting differences between the Kafa and the Manjo. The Manjo have referred to these studies to justify their claim that they are a nation, nationality and people. In his interview, Alemayehu Ambo often referred to the Amharic book *Kafa and its History from 1390 to 1897* by Antonio Shechi (ከፋና ታሪክ ከ1390–1897 ዓ. ም. ከእንቅስቃሴ ሺቺ), which was written by Takle Shaligito Shaqo, a Kafa man (Takle 1992/93). The book quoted Bieber and Cecchi. Although Alemayehu Ambo did not read the original book written by Bieber and Cecchi, he talked about it as if he had read it. When I stayed in Bachi *qābāle*, many Manjo asked me to bring books about the Manjo written by foreigners.

Ethiopia contains other minorities who, like the Manjo, experience social discrimination. For example, the Manno experience the same kinds of social discrimination experienced by the Manjo. Although the Manno have also voiced complaints, no movement, such as that producing the Manjo's petitions, has emerged. Manno clan names are shared with the Kafa.<sup>(33)</sup> Although one of my Manno informants told me that there was a *Manno rasbo* until the Italian regime, it seems that there was no structure akin to the *Manjo taatoo*, *Manjo rasbo*, and *Manjo guudo*. In particular, the Manjo differ from other minorities in that the *Manjo taatoo* appears not only in oral traditions but also in the records of the Kafa Kingdom and Italian regime. However, the former *Manjo rasbo* and the latter one should be differentiated. In fact, knowledge of tanning and pot-making does not make the Manno suitable for leadership. Furthermore, minorities who suffer discrimination are deprived of access to education and economic and political resources. Thus, most minorities who suffer discrimination tend to remain silent.

### 5.3. Logic of the Manjo

The Manjo circulated petitions in 1997 in an effort to improve their social status and abolish discrimination in the Kafa and Sheka zones. However, in 2000, the Manjo emphasized their Constitutional status as a nation, nationality and people, with their own culture, history, language, and identity that differed from those of the Kafa.

The petitions outlined the evidence supporting the Manjo's status as a nation, nationality and people, with their own culture, history, language, and identity. For example, the Manjo have their own clans, which differ from those of the Kafa. Additionally, there is a strong taboo against marriage between Manjos and Kafas. The Manjo were influenced by the division between the Kafa and Sheka zones in 2000, which was caused by the Sheka's insistence that their language differed from that of the Kafa. Indeed, the Manjo described *Kafi-noono* and *Sheki-noono* as different dialects. They argued that if the government recognizes *Sheki-noono* as a separate language, it should do the same for the Manjo language, *Manji-noono*.

Although no census of the Manjo has been taken, Manjo leaders insist that their population in the SNNPRS, Oromiya, and Gambela Regional States numbers more than one million. Alemayehu Ambo said the Manjo population in the Kafa and Sheka zones was 108,932. Additionally, Manjo populations in each regional state numbered approximately 500,000 in the SNNPRS, 150,000 in Oromiya, 150,000 in Amhara, and 200,000 in Gambela.<sup>(34)</sup> These figures were calculated by Alemayehu Aragi and Alemayehu Ambo when they visited the Kafa and Sheka zones and researched the Manjo's population, culture, oral traditions, and so on between 1999 and 2000.

There are two versions of how the Manjo estimated their population in the absence of census data. First, Alemayehu Ambo and many other Manjos who participated in the petition drives explained that the Manjo, Manja, Bandu, Waata, Wayto, and Fuga are the same except for their names. They insisted that, historically, numerous Manjos migrated from the Kafa zone to many parts of Ethiopia because of the Kafa settlement. The Manjo who migrated to each area took on other names: the Manja, Bandu, Waata, Wayto, and Fuga. Today, some Manjos have married Bandus, and both parties recognize their common origin. The Manjo, however, have no relationship with the Waata, Wayto, or Fuga, and no precise census data on the populations of the Waata, Wayto, and Fuga exist.<sup>(35)</sup>

Second, the Manjo's claim is related to Article 61 of the Constitution: "Each Nation, Nationality and People shall be represented in the House of the Federation by at least one member. Each Nation

or Nationality shall be represented by one additional representative for each one million of its population.” Indeed, the Manjo have been seeking positions as teachers, police officers, and representatives at the Congress of the Representatives of the People of the federal government. Because the Manjo constitute a nation, nationality and people, the Manjo deserve representation at all administrative levels. Nonetheless, it is difficult to deny that the Majangir and Sheko advised the Manjo about the petitioning process.

The Manjo have attempted to present themselves as different from the Kafa by using a logic that refers to their culture, history, language, and other factors, and to the Constitutional definition of nations, nationalities and peoples. In other words, the Manjo claim they are a nation, nationality and people because of their ability to demonstrate their specific character, a feat that can also be used for political purposes.

## 6. CONCLUSION

In this article, I have discussed the Manjo's petitions to abolish social discrimination against them and their request to be recognized as a nation, nationality and people. I have devoted special attention to the details and background of the petitions.

The lifestyles of minorities who have traditionally served as craft workers and hunters have changed. The Manjo were hunters and played important roles in the Kafa Kingdom. After 1897, however, the Manjo lifestyle and the role played by this group declined. Today, the Manjo no longer hunt, and their standard of living is the same as that of the Kafa. However, the Kafa look down on and oppress the Manjo. The Manjo feel that they are being deprived of their rights, and they are struggling to abolish the discrimination perpetrated against them by the Kafa. However, Ethiopia provides little social security for, and few policies to help, minorities who experience discrimination.

The difference between the Kafa and the Manjo might be understood in terms of the meaning of “nations, nationalities and peoples.” The Manjo have been underscoring the many original differences between themselves and the Kafa with respect to culture, history, language, clans, identity, and so on. However, it should be noted that there is no appropriate term for describing minorities such as the Manjo, who live with another ethnic group with whom they share a culture and a history and who differ from the majority with respect to their identity.

Needless to say, the petitions put together by the Manjo relate to the social and political situation in Ethiopia. They reflect the problems associated with a policy of self-determination that is based on ethnicity. The petitions used differences between the Kafa and Sheka as the basis for claims that the Manjo differ from these two ethnic groups. Research by foreign scholars has also supported these claims. Thus, claims to a distinct ethnic identity can have a strong impact on the government. It can be said that the petitions were the process by which the Manjo became conscious of their own culture, history, language, and identity in that they enabled them to redefine themselves according to the Constitution. Indeed, the Manjo have been trying to position themselves in present Ethiopia as a nation, nationality and people.

After the incident in 2002 and the decision by the regional government, many Manjo have become more conscious of their own identity. In this article, I did not refer to the Manjo who have not participated in the petition drives. Thus, it is difficult to generalize for all Manjo in the Kafa zone. It is necessary to consider the impact of the petitions on other Manjos and on other minority groups. This is just the beginning of the discussion about providing social security for minorities who are discriminated against.

## NOTES

- (1) For example, five ethnic groups live in the Benishangul Gumuz Regional State, and half the population

of this area are the Berta and Gumuz. This state is characterized by conflict between the Berta and the Gumuz caused by regional governance (Brems & Van der Beken 2008). In the SNNPRS, the Welayta pressed claims for separate administrative recognition in 2000 (Vaughan 2006). Recognition as a nation, nationality and people is rare, and the only example of such recognition is the Silte, who were recognized as a nation, nationality and people, totally distinct from the Gurage, in 2001 (Nishi 2003).

- (2) In this article, for *Kafi-noono*, I used the spelling system established in the Kafa zone, which relies on Latin script.
- (3) My field work from 2005 to 2006 was funded by Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan. The research was conducted under the "Historiographical Investigation of Ethnic Conflict in Northeast Africa" project (Project Leader, Prof. Katsuyoshi Fukui, Kyoto University). The fieldwork, conducted from February to March 2008, occurred under the aegis of the Global COE Program at Nagoya University: "Hermeneutic Study and Education of Textual Configuration" (Project Leader, Prof. Syoichi Sato). The research performed from 2008 to 2009 was funded by a Research Fellowship for Young Scientists (Japan Society for the Promotion of Science). I conducted research in 2010 through the Shibusawa Ethnological Foundation for graduate students. The IES also supported my research.
- (4) Interview with a Manjo man, Arba Minch, October 12, 2006.
- (5) Some people identify themselves as Maniyo, a group living in the eastern part of the Kafa zone. Most Maniyo women are potters and some Maniyo men are blacksmiths. It is said that the Maniyo use the evil eye, and the Kafa discriminate against them.
- (6) This estimate was provided by the Head Administrator of the Kafa zone in 2005. In terms of percentages, this amounts to 1.1–1.4 % of the entire population of the Kafa zone. On the other hand, researchers and NGOs have attempted to estimate the Manjo population. Van Halteren (1996: 4) "guestimated" that the Manjo account for 5–10% of the entire population of the Kafa and Sheka zones. Action Aid Ethiopia, an NGO that has engaged in projects for the Manjo since 2005, estimated the Manjo population to be 7,111 in Chana *wārāda* and 4,064 in Gimbo *wārāda*. Based on these data, the Manjo constitute 4% of the total population of Chana and Gimbo *wārādas*. Population figures for the Manno are unavailable.
- (7) Manjo clan names include the following: *Agaro, Beeboo, Beedo, Cagacho, Chichacho, Daggo, Dallo, Decoo, Diido, Dooqiyo, Dukimano, Gajjo, Gocho, Gono, Goppo, Goyidoo, Guraro, Kaabo, Kaafu, Kashimo, Macoo, Maanecho, Maaracho, Nookko, Nuukacho, Oddo, Shakko, Sheccho, Shiccho, Shookko, Yappho, Yaxxo*, and so on. Each clan is identified according to its area of residence or characteristics. For example, the *Gono* include the *Maare Gono, Madde Gono, Ciche Gono, Agale Gono, Ufe Gono*, and *Shishe Gono*. The *Dukimano* and *Goppo* are of low status.
- (8) Pottery is customarily made by Manno and Manjo women.
- (9) Interview with a Manjo man, Bachi *qābāle*, Yeki *wārāda*, September 14, 2005. Lange mentioned the same oral tradition (Lange 1982: 181).
- (10) Interview with a Kafa man, Gidi Tongolla *qābāle*, Decha *wārāda*, November 2, 2008.
- (11) *Dooco* is local beer.
- (12) Interview with a Manjo man, Gayo *qābāle*, Bitā *wārāda*, September 16, 2006.
- (13) Interview with a Manjo man, Modiyo Arara *qābāle*, Decha *wārāda*, October 4, 2006.
- (14) There were initially 12 districts, which were then divided into 18 districts.
- (15) Interview with a Kafa man, Bekkiyo Gindecha *qābāle*, Addio *wārāda*, June 29, 2008.
- (16) In *Kafi-noono*, *taatoo* means king, and it is translated as *nəgus* in Amharic. The word *taatoo* also means chief and leader (e.g., *Geppe taatoo* is a ritual leader of *deji*). In the Kafa Kingdom, the *Nao*, who were also conquered by the Kafa, had their own king, *Nao taatoo*. Cerulli insisted the *Nao taatoo* has the status of a sub-king and thus was a vassal of the Kafa king (Cerulli 1956: 91). With respect to the similar historical courses followed by the Manjo and the *Nao*, it seems the *Manjo taatoo* was allowed to maintain his position so he could play several roles for the Manjo.
- (17) *Aacho* means gold in the Kafa language.
- (18) One *gacha* is 40 ha. *Gacha* in *Kafi-noono* has the same meaning as *gasha* in Amharic.
- (19) Huntingford insisted that, in wartime, all Kafa except the Manjo, Manno, Ebbo, and Yoyo clans and slaves were liable to be called upon for service (Huntingford 1955: 126). However, some of my Manjo informants told me that the Manjo also fought in wars.
- (20) With the exception of the quotations from the literature, this section is based on interviews with the Kafa and Manjo. In terms of the *Manjo taatoo*, I interviewed a Manjo man whose grandfather was a



*Manjo taatoo* under the Kafa Kingdom and whose father was a *Manjo taatoo* under the Italian occupation. Awasho Olla, Decha *wārāda*, December 30, 2008.

- (21) A grave of an ordinary person is called a *maasho*. After conversion to Christianity, people buried their dead in churchyards. Interview with a Manjo man, Awasho Olla, Decha *wārāda*, October 7, 2008.
- (22) One of my Kafa informants told me that the border of the Kafa Kingdom had gates (*kello*). Ten Manjo men and 100 Kafa men guarded each gate.
- (23) Interview with a Kafa man, Yama *qābāle*, Tello *wārāda*, November 20, 2008.
- (24) Interview with a Manjo man, Agaro Bushi *qābāle*, Decha *wārāda*, September 16, 2008.
- (25) Interview with a Kafa man, Modiyo Arara *qābāle*, Decha *wārāda*, November 13, 2008.
- (26) Interview with a Manjo man, Awasho Olla, Decha *wārāda*, December 30, 2008.
- (27) In contrast, when a Manno comes to a Kafa home requesting food, the Kafa have a bad feeling. Because the Kafa consider that the Manno are not blessed.
- (28) Meeting a Manno in the morning is seen as an omen of a bad day.
- (29) Interview with a Kafa man, Angiyo Qolla *qābāle*, Addio *wārāda*, September 28, 2008.
- (30) Interview with a Kafa man, Bitā Genet, Bitā *wārāda*, January 1, 2010, and with a Manjo man, Bachi *qābāle*, Yeki *wārāda*, December 12, 2009.
- (31) Interview with a Manjo man, Tepi, January 27–28, 2006.
- (32) Interview with a Manjo man, Bachi *qābāle*, Yeki *wārāda*, December 16, 2009.
- (33) Fujimoto (2003: 141) indicated that Ota Mani have the same clan names as the farmers and the smiths in the Malo.
- (34) Interview with a Manjo man, Bachi *qābāle*, Yeki *wārāda*, September 24, 2005.
- (35) The Wayto are not mentioned in the 2007 census. However, the past two censuses reported the population of the Wayto as 3,816 in 1984 and 1,515 in 1994. Zerihun noted that the population decrease is probably attributable to a redefinition of their ethnicity (Zerihun 2010: 1162).

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