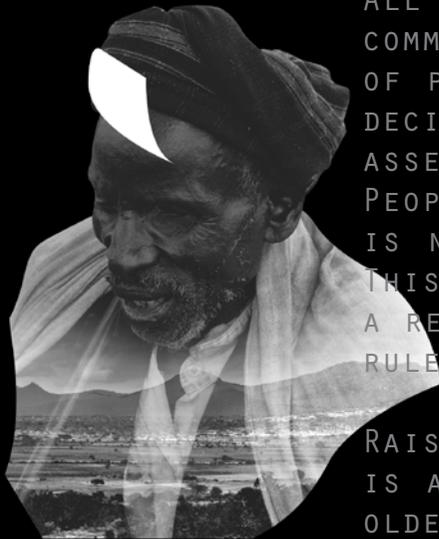


**ETHIOPIA**  
*where*  
**DEMOCRACY**  
*was*  
**BORN**

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THE COFFEE CEREMONY AT THE BEGINNING OF AN  
ASSEMBLY OF BORANA PEOPLE FROM DARITO VILLAGE





THE BORANA, SO-CALLED "MORNING PEOPLE", ARE THE LARGEST TRIBE OF THE OROMO PEOPLE AND THEY LIVE IN THE GREAT RIFT VALLEY ON THE EASTERN BANKS OF THE OMO RIVER BETWEEN ETIOPIA AND KENYA. BORANA, NOMADIC ZEBU BREEDERS WHO LIVE IN MUD HUTS MADE OF ANIMAL DUNG, ARE KNOWN FOR THEIR PARTICULARLY DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL SYSTEM. ALL DECISIONS ARE TAKEN TOGETHER WITH THE APPROVAL OF THE WHOLE COMMUNITY. ALTHOUGH THEY ARE DIVIDED INTO CLANS AND THE PRINCIPLE OF PRIVATE PROPERTY IS WELL KNOWN IN THEIR SOCIETY, BORANA HAVE DECIDED TO REGULATE POTENTIAL CONFLICTS THROUGH A SYSTEM BASED ON ASSEMBLIES AND COMMON CONSENT. BORANA DO NOT ELECT REPRESENTATIVES. PEOPLE DECIDE DIRECTLY THROUGH ASSEMBLIES AND SINCE THE MAJORITY IS NOT ENOUGH FOR THEM, THEY TRY TO REACH UNANIMOUS CONSENSUS. THIS IS WHY DISCUSSIONS CAN GO ON FOR DAYS. THE HEAD OF A CLAN IS A REPRESENTATIVE FIGURE WHOSE ROLE IS TO MAKE MEMBERS FOLLOW THE RULES OF THE GAME, BUT HE DOES NOT TAKE IMPORTANT DECISIONS.

RAISING ONE'S VOICE AND EXPRESSING ONESELF IN AN AGGRESSIVE MANNER IS AGAINST THE LAWS OF COMMUNITY LIVING. AND IF IT HAPPENS, THE OLDEST MEMBER OF THE ASSEMBLY STARTS CRYING IN A DRAMATIC WAY (IN THE THEATRICAL SENSE OF THE TERM) PREVENTING ANY POSSIBLE ARGUMENT. SUCH AN APPARENTLY PERFECT SOCIETY, HOWEVER, HAS ITS OWN CONTRADICTIONS. LIKE IN THE ATHENIAN DIRECT DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM, WOMEN ARE ALSO EXCLUDED FROM ANY FORM OF POWER AND, ALTHOUGH THEY CAN PARTICIPATE IN ASSEMBLIES, THEY DO SO AS MERE SPECTATORS WITH NO RIGHT TO EXPRESS THEIR OPINION NOR VOTING RIGHTS. THEIR MALE RELATIVES DO IT IN THEIR PLACE, OFTEN WITHOUT FULLY EXPRESSING THE POINT OF THEIR WIVES OR SISTERS.

HERDS AT SUNSET GOING BACK  
TO THE DARITO VILLAGE



A BORANA OLD MAN WITH AN OROORO, THE CEREMONIAL  
WALKING STICK USED BY ASSEMBLY LEADERS AND MODERATORS





SALT INCRUSTATIONS ON THE FACE OF A BOY FROM EL SOD WHO COLLECTS SALT IN THE CHOWBET CRATER LAKE. THE TAMPONS IN HIS NOSE AND EARS PREVENT SALT WATER FROM GOING INSIDE



AN ASSEMBLY OF BORANA PEOPLE WITH ALL THE INHABITANTS OF THE DARITO VILLAGE

A BORANA UNDER AN ACACIA  
TREE NEAR THE DARITO VILLAGE



A BORANA OLD MAN WITH AN OROORO, THE  
CEREMONIAL WALKING STICK USED BY  
ASSEMBLY LEADERS AND MODERATORS



DONKEYS TRANSPORTING SALT  
COLLECTED IN THE CHOWBET  
CRATER LAKE TO THE EL  
SOD VILLAGE AND BEYOND



BORANA MEN FROM EL SOD VILLAGE COLLECTING SALT  
WITH ARCHAIC METHODS IN THE CHOWBET CRATER LAKE





A HERD GOING DOWN  
TO THE 'SINGING WELL'  
NEAR EL SOD VILLAGE



SUNSET AMONG ACACIA TREES IN THE DARITO VILLAGE



HUTS IN THE ARERO-VILLAGE WHERE ABBAA GADAA, A BORANA LEADER ELECTED EVERY 8 YEARS, LIVES

YOUNG BORANA WOMEN WITH THEIR CHILDREN  
IN A HAT IN THE DARITO VILLAGE



SALT COLLECTED IN THE CHOWBET CRATER LAKE  
IS PUT INTO SACKS TO BE TRANSPORTED BY  
DONKEYS TO THE EL SOD VILLAGE AND BEYOND



A BORANA MAN FROM EL SOD VILLAGE COMING  
OUT OF THE CHOWBET CRATER LAKE AND  
TRANSPORTING LARGE BLOCKS OF SALT  
COLLECTED WITH ARCHAIC METHODS





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