



AFRICA IN MOVIMENTO / AFRICA ON THE MOVE

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TITLE: HIGHLAND TO LOWLAND MIGRATION OF PEOPLE IN ETHIOPIA: PREDICAMENTS ON THE HOST PEOPLE

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ABSTRACT: In response to environmental degradation, population growth and land scarcity as well as ensuing food insecurity, there is massive migration of people in Ethiopia from the highland to lowlands. Among other things, this has a wide range of social consequences on the recipient community. This research intensively studies the case of northwest Ethiopia. Due to migration of historically and culturally dominant highland Amhara, the indigenous people in this region known as Kumpal are confronted to the traditional stigma. They are also labelled as “primitive” and thus are obliged to end their culture to escape marginalization. The Kumpal are also subjected to various kinds of problems of insecurity and crime such as robbery, theft, and homicide. As the migrants took more and more apparent numerical majority, the Kumpal are also increasingly politically marginalized. As the physical domination of migrants increases, the natives increasingly move away to remaining fringes of unfilled “deserts”. This case study shows that the principles of intra-ethnic resettlement as well as that of integration of the settlers to the host community propounded by post-1991 government policy of Ethiopia are merely on the paper. There is no responsible action taken by the state at all levels to save the native minority from swiping encroachment and lasting dominance of migrants. The research calls upon measures to save the Kumpal continue as viable social group.

AUTHOR'S ACADEMIC PROFILE:

Desalegn Amsalu is a researcher at the Institute of Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa University. He is a BA in English Language and Literature, as well as Law, MA in Ethiopian Studies and Social Anthropology, and PhD candidate in Social Anthropology. His overwhelming interests are social and political anthropology and Law.