



Research Paper

Envisioning 'Jefore' and Its Attributes: Evidence from Gurage Rural Landscape

Abinet Shiferaw

Department of Sociology, Wolkite University, Wolkite, Ethiopia

Abstract

Article History:

Received: 24 September 2024

Accepted: 19 December 2024

Published online: 14

January 2025

Keywords:

attributes, Gurage, implication, Jefore, rural landscape

Indigenous landscapes remain a reflection of sustainable human-environment interactions and diverse attributes. Among the Gurage, Jefore is a reflection of intensive nature-culture interactions for diverse needs. This article explores the socio-ecological attributes of Jefore's rural landscape. Ethnographic research design and data collection tools such as key informant interviews, focus group discussions, observations, and a transect walk were used to generate data from three districts of West Gurageland. Scoring from diverse data sources, Jefore is the long-existing local landscape tradition. It has diverse attributes that embeds aspects of Gurage's life such as identity, social interactions, socio-cultural and economic productions, livelihoods, and well-being. For socio-cultural attributes, it remains the core of cultural productions, social interactions, social alliances, and identity for the group. Jefore aesthetic and therapeutic attributes magnify the wider well-being associations including scenic values, ecological and health-enhancing qualities and embodiment effects. Envisioning the Jefore landscape has ensured sustainable landscape values and attributes that serve long generations. Therefore, stakeholders must take into account Jefore's landscape values, attributes, and the effects of rural landscape planning when making decisions and implementing interventions.

1. Introduction

Humans and landscapes are in daily interaction with each other (Khaledi, et al., 2022), and landscapes are an interface between nature and culture (Schmitz & Cristina, 2021). The landscape is considered a socio-cultural product and the enforcement of social institutions (Howard, et al., 2013). The landscape was mostly valued for its habitat, diverse wildlife, and recreational purposes (Lisa, 2023). Landscapes can be seen as objects, ideas, representations,

experiences, processes, fluid impressions, part of our creation, and places that should support livelihoods and well-being (Howard et al., 2013).

Landscape refers to the connection between social group members and their physical surroundings (Alvarez, 2011), and requires individuals' creative awareness to adapt and understand the elements within a given territory. According to the European Landscape Convention landscape is defined as: "An area, as

Author email: abinetkok@gmail.com

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.70984/mpdr7523>

perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors." (ELA, 2000:18)

Different landscapes are formed by continuous interaction between natural processes and human activities, influenced by history, economy, and ecology (Antrop, 2013). Cultural landscapes connect current inhabitants with past generations, shaping their views and understanding of their environment (Ingold, 2009). Landscapes are crucial in expressing cultural identities, creating and disputed by individuals, groups, and nations (Roe, 2013). They serve as a structure of feeling through activities and performances, allowing individuals to connect with specific places and histories (Tilley, 2006; Barbara, 2001).

Humans interact with their environment objectively and subjectively, using perceptual tools to learn about it, form mental representations, and respond appropriately (Khaledi, et al., 2022). Deborah and Michael (1997) argue that cultural landscapes represent the makers of social relations, as the built environment actively shapes these relationships. They serve as a source of identity, knowledge, social processes, practice, and performance, and can indicate landscape crises (Howard et al., 2013). Heritage can be seen as an inheritance, bequest, or part of the past used for contemporary purposes (Graham, et al., 2016). The Council of Europe's 2005 Framework Convention emphasizes cultural heritage as a reflection of evolving values and traditions.

Quality in living spaces is crucial for individual and social well-being, sustainable development, and economic activity. Landscapes serve as resources for production and aesthetic experiences, supporting human well-being through ecosystem services and cultural services. Landscapes can promote restoration through aesthetic quality and have affective and socio-

cultural roots, leading to health and well-being experiences. Qualities like place, identity, and memory are actively produced and negotiated within historic environments (Gaoyuan, 2021; Bell et al., 2018; Council of Europe, 2008). Howard's (2020) work challenges traditional nature-culture relationships by presenting the natural environment as an active agent in artistic creation, contributing to a broader understanding of landscapes in contemporary art and culture (Carolin, 2024).

The landscape is a reflection of the interaction between culture and nature, influenced by dwelling theory. It is qualitative, emotional, and meaningful (Ingold, 2009). Landscape is recognized as a foundation of identity and an ideology for sustainable living. It serves as an approach to research and planning (Roe, 2013). Kidd's 2013 concept of landscape multi-functionality encompasses ecological, economic, socio-cultural, historical, aesthetic, and therapeutic functions. *Ecological functionalities*, as areas of living; *economic functionality*, as an area for production; *socio-cultural functionality*, as an area for recreation and identification with socio-cultural attributes; *historical functionality*, as an area for settlement and identity, which offers a sense of socio-cultural continuity; *aesthetic functionality*, as an area for experiences; as well as *therapeutic functionality*, as an area for health-enhancing and/or promotion of physical and mental wellbeing and spirituality.

Gurage's rural landscape features traditional settlements, roads, open fields, forests, socio-cultural practices, labor associations, and customary law systems, contributing to its unique and distinctive rural landscape. The Gurage's local knowledge systems, including vernacular traditions, social governance, and environmental management, are interconnected with their socio-ecological landscape framework, influencing their everyday living and engagements. Recent

research has begun to appreciate Jefore in landscape studies, focusing on its physical characteristics, ecosystem provisions, sacred aspects, multifunctionality, and perceptions (Shale & Saito, 2021b; Shale & Saito, 2021b; Shiferaw et al., 2017; Shiferaw et al., 2023a; Shiferaw et al., 2023b; Shiferaw et al., 2024). These studies offer a comprehensive understanding of socio-ecological characteristics and people's associations with their everyday cultural landscape.

Previous studies have paid limited attention to the diverse attributes of Jefore, which span socio-cultural, ecological, and ecosystem dimensions. This study addresses this gap by investigating the socio-cultural significance, aesthetic value, and therapeutic qualities of Jefore within the Gurage rural landscape. It focuses on its influence on everyday life, rural landscape planning, and cultural traditions, underscoring the need for further exploration of these deeply integrated landscapes.

Specifically, this research independently examines the socio-ecological characteristics of Jefore in village communities, its role in rural landscape planning, and its connections to cultural heritage. By addressing these aspects, the study aims to bridge the existing research gap and provide a comprehensive understanding of

Jefore as part of the Gurage rural landscape. The objectives include:

- Assessing the socio-ecological features of Jefore,
- Exploring the socio-cultural and ecological attributes of Jefore, and
- Investigating the implications of Jefore for rural landscape planning.

2. Method

2.1. Study Area

The study focuses on West Gurageland, a region with a rich history of Jefore and spacing traditions. It includes four traditional agroecological zones: Afro-Alpine, Temperate, Sub-tropical, and Tropical. The region's climate and rainfall allow for diverse crop cultivation. With high population pressure and settlement history, 92% of the Gurage population relies on subsistence agriculture, primarily *enset* for food and chat and eucalyptus trees for cash (Zerga et al., 2021; Sahle and Saito, 2021b). The West Gurage rural landscape is unique in its settlement, vernacular traditions, spacing, socio-ecological governance systems, and wisdom of human-environment interactions, with notable differences in dialects, religious dominance, and spacing concepts, particularly in the Jefore tradition (Shiferaw et al., 2023b; Shiferaw et al., 2024; Sahle & Saito, 2021a; Sahle & Saito, 2021b; Shiferaw 2017).

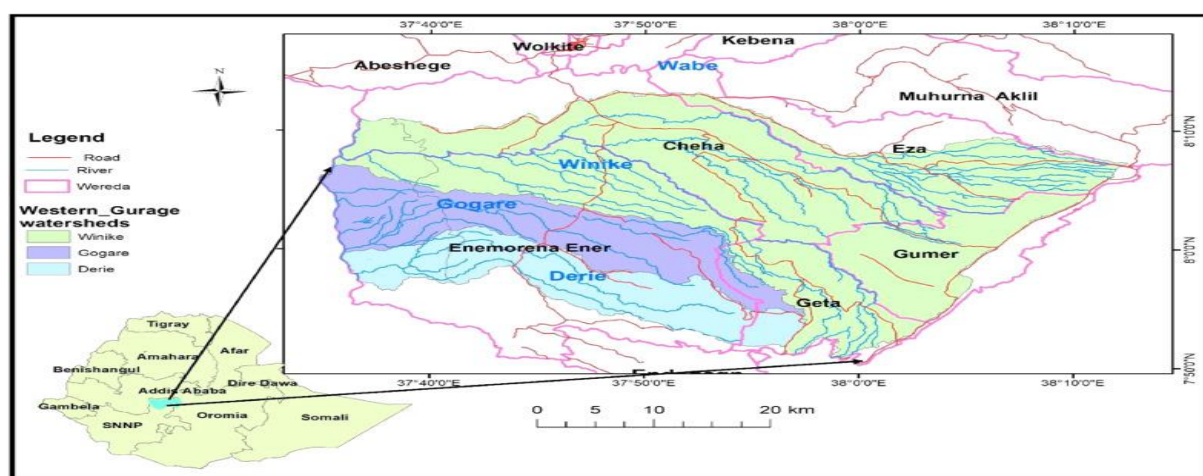


Figure 1: Map of West Gurageland (Source: Zerga, et al., 2021)

2.2. Methods of Data Collection

The study uses ethnographic data collection to describe and analyze the Gurage rural landscape, Jefore, emphasizing its importance in communal identities, sense of place, spiritual attachments, social capital, and well-being. The research project involved ethnographic interviews with key informants from various social groups based on age, sex, and socio-economic status to understand Jefore and villagers' experiences. Around 60 informants were recruited from three districts, ensuring diversity in perspectives, experiences, and engagements with Jefore. Focus group discussion was used to understand the Sebat Bête Gurage Jefore among informants, focusing on gender separation among peasant and craft communities. Twelve focus group discussions were conducted, with 86 participants, aiming to better articulate their understanding and reflection on the village's Jefore. The method helped to articulate the wider attributes of the Gurage Jefore collectively.

Observation was employed to explore the socio-ecological characteristics of the Gurage rural landscape, encompassing its social attributes, ecological qualities, and physical features. The Jefore, a natural and social setting, is observed as a combination of natural and social settings. This method of data collection also helped to examine the physical status of village landscapes, including Jefore paths, indigenous trees, and human activities. It also highlights historical and symbolic marks, long-existing village trees, and the ecological and ecosystem qualities of the villages. The research also involved a transect walk across Sebat Bête Gurage villages, capturing physical features and social compositions. The expedition covered 80 km, focusing on an ethnographic-based understanding of Gurage landscapes. It included year-long field engagements and experiential exploration, providing a comprehensive

understanding of rural landscape socio-ecological landscapes.

2.3. Method of Data Analysis

This ethnographic study utilized thematic analysis, where themes and subthemes derived from the research objectives were expanded to provide detailed narration and meaning. The data analysis process involved transcription, coding, organization, and analysis. Additionally, data gathered from transect walks and observations were integrated as visual representations and summarized in tables, offering a comprehensive understanding of the socio-ecological attributes of the Gurage rural landscape in Jefore.

2.4. Ethical Consideration

The study, part of a PhD project sponsored by Addis Ababa University, involved effective communication with local authorities and communities to access data. Letters of support were written from Addis Ababa University to the Gurage Zone Administration, Gurage districts' offices, and Kebele officials. Informed consent was obtained from local authorities and communities. The research report was based on community data, including interviews and visuals, obtained with informed consent from the village community and parents of children.

3. Results

3.1. Socio-ecological Characters of Jefore

3.1.1. Naming and Contexts of Jefore

The name "Jefore" originates from various related spellings and pronunciations, including "Jefore," "Jefuere," "Jeforo," and "Jefoure," all of which are collectively referred to as "Jefore" in this study. Jefore has factual and contextual meanings. The factual meaning relates to the village's big road network, locally known as godana, which serves the trafficking of humans and animals, connects villages, and divides settlements (dwellings) from left to right. As a village's main road network (godana), it has sub-

road networks (motta) and footpaths (ema). Those sub-road networks mainly serve trafficking for humans, stocks, and even vehicle transports and short paths to other villages. Footpaths primarily function as routes for accessing rivers and fields, as well as for transporting livestock to water points. The village's main road network, godana, connects villages and divides settlements. It includes sub-road networks (motta) and footpaths (ema), serving human trafficking, stock transport, and short paths to other villages. Jefore in Gurage rural landscapes is more than just a physical road network; it has various contextual meanings, including being equivalent to a village, a socio-economic space, a site of social justice, and a public gathering place. These interpretations reflect the positionality of Jefore in everyday matters and contexts.

3.1.2. Jefore as an Embedded Landscape Concept

Jefore, as an embedded concept, is considered a framework for villagers' values and interactions. It has been reflected in every aspect of the village's life. Socio-culturally, people produce and reproduce their collective and personal identities from it. Economically, livelihood orientations and practices are strongly associated with Jefore. Politically, it affects villagers' notions of decision-making and participation. Conceptually and practically, it is part of social justice, equity, and participation as micro-socio-economic and political decision-making gravity. Jefore is part of the psychological support of the villagers for social network development and promotes the values of togetherness and membership among villagers as engagement spaces.

3.1.3. Structural and Symbolic Aspects of Jefore

Jefore is the settlement component of the Gurage's rural landscape. It has physical, social, architectural, and symbolic aspects. It is rooted in

every aspect of Gurage's life. Jefore's physical dimensions are road and path networks, public spaces, and single or collective trees. Jefore subways lead to different directions (water points, pasture lands, market centers, and other villages). Jefore is characterized by both width and length. The width varies between 11 ± 4 meters and 36 ± 10 meters, while the length extends significantly across villages, except where interrupted by rivers or gorges, ranging from 3 to 10.5 kilometers (See Fig. 2). Some marks identify private and public spaces, such as qiye (a stone mark) that demarcate between Jefore and private holding. The symbolic aspects of Jefore consist of some stone marks (stales, graveyards, and Jefore central measurement named qiye) that keep Jefore measurement from both sides of the settlement. In each Jefore, there is a central avenue with old tree(s) that serve as gathering places for humans and stocks.

3.1.4. Socio-cultural Aspects of Jefore

The cultural traditions of the Gurage are largely shaped by the Jefore landscape framework. This framework influences cultural practices, social interactions, networks of social capital, and daily livelihoods, encompassing social, economic, and ecological dimensions of life in the Gurage rural landscape. Therefore, socio-ecological space has its own governance system for its sustainability. The governance system named YeJefore Kitcha (Law of Jefore), which is customary, exists across generations to manage and sustain Jefore tradition and people's access to it. Wise individuals oversee the administration of Jefore and handle disputes related to Jefore and other land uses. In the Gurage rural landscape, Jefore functions as an open field that serves a variety of socio-cultural purposes and practices. It is a space for public socio-cultural activities, bringing together social groups and their respective interests. The socio-cultural dimensions of Jefore encompass its infrastructural roles as a space for everyday living space, social network and social capital

formation, labor engagements, ritual and cultural practices, cultural productions, socialization, and social administration and governance, among other activities.

3.1.5. Ecological Aspects of Jefore

Ecologically and physically, Jefore is a long, wide, green, and neat area, with ecological variation throughout. Along Jefore, there are central squares known as YeJefore Adebabay, which serve as meeting or gathering centers for the villages. Ecologically, Jefore is primarily located in the midland and is home to old local tree varieties that provide meeting grounds for villagers, shelter for livestock, and resting places for the community. The old local trees, mostly consisting of podocarpus (zigiba) and cordia Africana (Wanza), are found in the midpoints of

Jefore (See Fig. 2). Its ecological qualities - greenness, neatness, and attractiveness/aesthetic - are highly magnificent during rainy seasons (See Fig. 2). In dry seasons, its ecological quality remains stable other than its greenness; some scenic and aesthetic values go with ecosystem qualities that go with rainy seasons. For many observers, one of the aesthetic and therapeutic values of Jefore goes with the ecosystem and ecological qualities. The Gurage's rural landscape remains remarkable for its ecological qualities, such as its greenness, neatness, openness, and so on, in addition to physical measurement qualities like width and length. (See Fig. 2)



Figure 2: Jefore as road network and with aesthetic and therapeutic attributes in Mutta Jefore, Eza district (Source: Author's photos)

3.2. Spatial and Physical Characteristics of Jefore Roads

The length of Jefore ranges from 1.2 to 13 km, with the average length for the 21 Jefore roads being 5.99 km. The width of Jefore varies from 11 to 36 meters, with an average width of 23.9 meters across the 21 Jefore sites. The area coverage of Jefore spans from 3.2 to 25.6 hectares, with an average area of 14.4 hectares for the 21 sites. The shape of Jefore is predominantly characterized by two main types: straight and straight with curves; however, two

sites feature straight and irregular shapes, as well as curvilinear shapes. The side fencing of Jefore consists mainly of structured wood and trees, although wood and soil bunds are also common in some areas. The number of trees along Jefore ranges from 0 to 95, with an average of 21.4 trees across the sample sites. The roads to Jefore sites typically begin from main roads (asphalt or all-weather roads), but some start from communal or cropland areas, while the two sites begin independently from wetland or Afro-alpine vegetation areas. The roads end in various land

use and land cover features, including stream canals, communal lands, forests, gully gorges, degraded land, parks, shrublands, cereal crops, and wetlands. These cultural, physical, and ecological characteristics of Jefore highlight its complexity as an indigenous road network, emphasizing that Jefore is a well-articulated and structured system rather than just a simple road, reflecting deep knowledge and social significance. (See the Appendix for detailed information on the 21 Jefore roads)

Jefore is the core and an embedded settlement framework that interconnects many aspects of Gurage village (See Fig. 3). Aspects are socio-ecological, such as dwellings, compounds, private spacing, tree varieties, fencing, enset farms, communal fields, wetlands, central squares, trees on Jefore, and so on. Other than these visible social, physical, and ecological characters of Jefore, there are invisible Jefore

elements that become part of the wider settlement framework of Gurage village, including the governance system of the village, what we call Yejoka Kitcha, which governs Gurage total life; governance aspects of Jefore (Yejeffre Kitcha), which governs Jefore as a landscape aspect; Yezher dane (Land Judge), expert elders who administer land cases or dispute within villages, and socio-economic networks and labor organizations around Jefore in supporting villages livelihoods. Besides, there are symbolic aspects of Jefore that mark the demarcation between Jefore as a public holding and private compound to ensure the total well-being of Jefore against private interventions. Figure 3 demonstrates dwellings, open fields of Jefore, big trees, right and left side fencing, private open space within a compound, enset farming, and other land use/covers traditions which illustrate Gurage's rural landscape settlement framework along with Jefore.



Figure 3: Geharad Jefore in the Enemoherna Ener district of the Gurage landscape (sketched based on orthophoto images (Source: Sahle & Saito, 2021b))

3.3. Attributes (Values) of Jefore

3.3.1. Cultural Production and Reproduction

Many landscape scholars agree that cultural landscapes are sources of feelings, emotions, beliefs, and practices. Landscapes allow cultural continuity for the group concerned (Anthrop, 2013; Haward, 2013). In this regard, the Sebat Bête Gurage cultural landscape, mainly Jefores, is a center of cultural production and reproduction, social practices, and performances. It is the place where collective socio-cultural and economic demands are made and sustained across generations. Jefores are also places where ethno-architecture and ethno-spacing, ritual practices, and socializations are generated and regenerated among generations. They are places of memory and identity, as well as gatherings of people during feasts.

Folk traditions, such as folk music and expressions, are sustained, generated, and regenerated over time. Both folk and modern Gurage music traditions have a connection with Jefore. Video recordings of folk and modern music are often done beforehand. Such recordings aim to capture the minds of people, their associations, and their memories of their landscapes. Informants noted that those video clips of traditional songs made in Jefore settings were preferred for their psycho-emotional, socio-cultural, and ecological associations with village settings. Mostly, the socio-physical landscapes are mentioned and displayed in their artworks. Good Jefores are considered agents of cultural production and reproduction and frame collective identities for their socio-ecological senses (See Fig. 5).



Figure 4: Cultural production attributes of Jefore in Desene, Eza district (Source: Author's photos)

In their business transactions, they often use their village-setting identity as a business logo, focusing on their socio-ecological settings. This effort maintains connections with their origins and cultural productions. Generally, Jefore is a hub for cultural production, reproduction, and adaptation, providing an open school for everyone to access and learn from. The presence of numerous events within a single landscape by various social groups is due to this phenomenon.

3.3.2. Social Interactions Services

Gurage Jefore is interwoven with culture, livelihood, and socio-cultural fabrics. According to elders, the Sebat Bête landscapes are mapped in people's minds, though many villagers leave their homes for a better living. They return to their villages for the Meseke festival to refresh their family network, fulfill emotional and social obligations, and achieve personal and family satisfaction, happiness, and success. Jefores are places of socio-cultural assets and engagement for adults in everyday life. Women's and men's

labor associations and social support networks are important social fabrics around Jefore. Thus, Jefore contributions to social networks were significant as living and working spaces. Among the Gurage, moral persons and communities are shaped by their interactions within landscapes, according to informants.

A strong social relationship is a manifestation of each household's everyday social and livelihood strategies. The Gurage tradition is a tradition of mutuality and cooperation for common interests. A given homestead has five to twelve (5–12) households that form social networks for livelihood engagements. Such social networks and mutual interdependencies are framed within the Jefore. Thus, the social interaction role of Jefore is pervasive for community mobilization in everyday life. As common landscapes, they create a permanent system of cooperation among village communities. Settlement patterns create bondage among villagers and serve different socio-economic and cultural purposes. Jefore serves as a meeting ground for villages' socio-cultural events and practices (such as livelihood, wedding, and funeral rituals). Landscapes' are places where values and norms are shared by villagers regardless of gender and age.

Elderly people also take part in socio-physical landscapes (Jefore and other social organizations) for everyday occasions. They are remaining active in decision-making on social matters, sharing knowledge and experiences, and exploring their landscapes, memories, and experiences. One elder explained daily life on Jefore:

We are a witness to our village; people visit us for consultation and sharing of our life experiences in many regards, like livelihoods, histories, and other social issues. We pass on our knowledge and experiences to adults and the younger generation. We are also exploring memories and experiences of us, our fathers, and our

forefathers around our landscapes. (An elder interview in Gumer)

Jefores have a deep-rooted emotional impact on people's minds and experiences. According to Gurage elders, some people are still reluctant to leave their villages amid land scarcity because of strong social bonds, emotional associations, and their ancestors' promises. A woman noted the role of Jefore in case of social support as:

The settlement pattern that Gurage developed in line with Jefore creates strong bondage among the Sebat Bête. The elders have close support for their daily demands and services from the coffee association. Jefore has been seen as a social infrastructure that facilitates people's interactions and activities. (A female key informant, Abeke, age 60).

3.3.3. Marriage and Social Alliance

Though it was based on past experiences, today's elders are concerned with such roles in Sebat Bête landscapes. They are concerned about the socio-ecological landscape qualities of villages before sending their daughters for marriage and social alliances. For the bride and her family, landscapes (both socio-physical and socio-economic) are expected to exist with full potential to provide livelihoods, social services, and social protection. The roles of Jefore in marriage, social alliance, and acceptance are still very great. As noted by many focus group discussants, respected elders, well-respected communities, potential landscapes for livelihoods, and socio-cultural services are or were guaranteed for the brides and their families. Therefore, the socio-physical qualities of landscapes in the past, in rare cases today, remain important guarantees for brides' livelihoods, social and personal security, as well as family guarantees for their daughters' destinations. Similarly, the resource potentials of the particular village (quality Jefore) are seen as an easy lifeway for brides striving for livelihood at new

localities. The values of Sebat Bête landscapes for individual, family, and collective livelihoods and social security guarantees are still demanding.

However, good Jefore does not simply mean a good landscape for daughters' lives and social interaction. They are sources of social alliances with out-groups. Among the Sebat Bête Gurage, good landscapes (social and physical forms) are sources for public and community benefits. As witnessed in focus group discussions and interviews with women as patrilocal residents, Jefore contributed to the social alliance among clans or lineages. As a fact, social and physical landscape resources are not distributed equally across Sebat Bête. Each clan or lineage pulls on each other for resource substitution. This landscape condition also creates an advantage for social alliance and cooperation reciprocally.

3.3.4. Jefore as Identity

Landscapes are the foundations of culture and identity (Howard, 2013). Historically, each landscape has historical and ancestral associations with its founders. Socio-culturally, each landscape has socio-cultural associations as manifestations of everyday collective living. Economically, each landscape has a strong orientation with resources, livelihood governance, and a way of life that provides typical livelihood characteristics for the community. Psychologically and emotionally, each landscape form has a strong association with individual and collective emotion, psychology, and well-being. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that Sebat Bête landscapes are sources of identities for individuals and groups with strong associations.

Among the Sebat Bête Gurage community, associations with ancestors are strong village norms that are valued most in daily living and activities. They strongly followed the values and norms that ancestors go through over generations

in all forms of human and ecological interactions. Associations with private and collective resources are mediated by ancestors' values and norms as village depicted or farmed collective identity. Village-based socio-ecological identities are binding factors for village living and are typical features of the Sebat bet Gurage community in response to socio-cultural and ecological collective affairs compared to other cultures. In group discussion with senior experts from the agriculture, environment, and culture departments regarding the layered nature of the Sebat Bête Gurage landscapes' identity one participant summarized the reality as:

Among the Sebat Bête Gurage, landscapes do not convey a single truth or fact. It is an embedding concept that holds together all the fabrics of society that link each other for its meaning and identity formations. Thus, our landscape is like a bundle or onion that you access in different layers when you go through. (Interview in Agana town)

Largely among the Sebat Bête Gurage, associating Jefore with ancestors' memories and experiences is strong for landscape sustainability as well as for promoting person and place identity within the collective frameworks of village landscapes, where social groups are producing and reproducing as well as sustaining their identities.

3.4. Aesthetic and Therapeutic Attributes

3.4.1. Aesthetic Benefits

"The aesthetic functionality of landscape is 'an area for experience'" (Kidd, 2013:373). A landscape transformed into everyday reality offers numerous potentialities for various social groups (Luig and Oppen, 1997). In Gurage's rural landscape, settlements, including dwellings, spacing, Jefore, and home gardens, are considered better places for well-being. Villages are well-designed culturally and physically to provide socio-cultural engagements, aesthetics, and therapeutic provisions (See Table 1 & 2,

Appendix). A 35-year-old non-native high school teacher describes their living environment as a greenfield, with local air, water, and social relationships providing rest, breath, and satisfaction. As an observer, an outsider, aged 30, observed the situation.

Sebat Bête Gurage settlements offer aesthetics for socio-cultural and ecological plays, influenced by various socio-ecological factors. Village features like home gardens, cultural houses, fencing traditions, stock distributions, and old trees contribute to scenic environments with seasonal variations. (Observer in Gulech Jefore)

Trees and fruit trees in Jefore provide meeting points for humans and animals, adding aesthetic value to the village. Sebat Bête Gurage village is an ideal place for living due to social values, aesthetic traditions, and ecological provisions

(See Table 1). In Gurage's rural landscape, ecological features like big or old local trees, neat, green, and open fields, quality local weather and scenic values, stock distributions, activities of social groups, and cumulative human, animal, and ecological factors contribute to the village's aesthetics (See Fig. 6). Here, I (the author) share my observations and experiences of aesthetic experiences and feelings:

Among the Sebat Bête, what you feel is aesthetic are not only those places that you reach with your foot. You can perceive the scenic and aesthetic settings of remote villages with your sense organs when you move your eyes and mind [embodiments] to the surroundings. There, you can see blurred villages, lined spaces, green fields, agroforestry practices, housing traditions, and spacing that affect your mind and body. (Researcher as observer)



Figure 5: Aesthetic and therapeutic attributes of Jefore in Desene (Eza District) and Gulcho (Gumer District) (Source: Author's photos)

The community values their Jefore for its social and physical beauty. Jefore ensures well-being and aesthetic appeal (See Fig. 6). A 12-year-old schoolgirl from Burda examines the aesthetic and freedom values of Jefore. According to her, during her stay in Addis, everything seemed personal, with no freedom of space, movement, enjoyment of good living, or environment. Everything is closed and disturbed because of the noisy and congested environment. However, she

was liberated when she came to her parents for the freedoms enjoyed from the physical and social environment, such as good air, weather, relationships, and enjoyment with friends, as well as freedom of space, which is highly limited in Addis. One elder also stated “Our minds are fixed on memories, enjoyment, and satisfaction with our children and their activities. We have nothing beyond our villages. Jefore brings every outdoor activity to us.” (Interview in Burda)

Elders in Sebat Bête Gurage recall resettlement program tensions during the socialist regime, influenced by settlement traditions and social and ecological fullness, comparing congested and open-space environments. According to one elder,

Our landscape is not only our livelihoods and our cultures but also our mind, imagination,

and beauty, as our ancestors provided socially and physically. That is why we appreciate both the social and physical provisions and aesthetics of our landscapes. (Interview with senior elder, age 82 in Gumer)

Table 1: Perceived aesthetic attributes of Jefore

No.	Aesthetic attributes of Jefore	Remark
1.	Good engagement experiences with local ecology	Influence body and mind
2.	Quality air, local weather, scenery	(embodiment) as nature
3.	Villages free of wind and water erosion	generated and culture
4.	Resource flows and integration	protected and sustained
5.	Sensing and feeling the local environment	landscape.
6.	Physical and ecological embodiment	
7.	Imagined living place with ecological and physical suits	

Source: Triangulated from primary data

3.4.2. Therapeutic Provisions

Therapeutic landscapes consist of social, symbolic, and physical landscapes that contribute to well-being with 'health-enhancing properties' (Williams 2007). According to Williams (2007), anthropological consideration of health and illness involves the social relations within whom people live, construct, and negotiate therapeutic landscapes. Sebat Bête Gurage's landscape, mainly Jefore, offers therapeutic dimensions due to its diverse socio-ecological features. These features promote physical, social, psychological, and emotional well-being and provide better living environments. Daily experiences in these socio-ecological settings lead to health benefits, including good psychology, emotional health, spiritual strength, mutuality, cooperation, togetherness, and common engagements. Ritual collaborations also enhance recovery and future prospects (See Table 2).

Our villages are where people retreat for better health and to overcome emotional stress. The health benefits of our village landscapes are pervasive for every villager,

mainly the elders. The well-being benefits are not merely among us; our stock shares them as better pasture, a shed, and an attractive resting place. (A woman key informant, age 55 in Abeke)

Jefore, as an embedded landscape framework, offers therapeutic benefits that integrate with everyday living and human-environment interactions (See Table 2). Village health workers emphasize the impact of Jefore on the quality of the living environment, social relationships, and socio-physical health of villagers. Jefore's enhanced relationships among villagers increase activity, collaboration, and happiness. Villages with better Jefore experience better social interactions, influencing children's attitudes and future (See Fig. 7). Social networks along Jefore provide emotional and physical support, enhancing health and association. People with certain kinds of emotional and social disturbances receive empowerment from Jefore and village social networks, leading to fast recovery. A therapeutic environment, offers outdoor recreation and physical exercise for

youth, providing aesthetic and therapeutic experiences (See Table 1, See Fig. 7 & 6). It has direct health benefits and is enjoyed by both locals and non-villagers.

The Sebat Bête Gurage Jefore has therapeutic values for agroforestry and stocks, protecting fields from disturbances and stock disturbances (See Fig. 8). Quality settlement is crucial for a healthy garden, stock, and living area. Focus group discussants from Eza district agriculture and natural resource departments emphasized the role of Jefore for healthy agroforestry practices and herding, as well as home gardens' productivity as resources circulation space as pasture reserve during rainy and winter seasons, as well as some pick agriculture time of this

peculiar landscape tradition. As noted by one elder,

Our Jefores are remaining healthy for our enset and stocks. They are protecting our enset from dust and heavy weather and temperature and providing shelter for our livestock from the heavy sun during midday. Livestock always needs a comfortable place to rest during the midday hours. Such relaxation or rest also has a direct contribution to better milk provisions and livestock appearances. However, in recent years, because of the erosion of Jefore, our farm or enset and stocks have been affected by heavy sun, wind, dust, and rain without protection. Jefore is the village's dust infusion protection. (Interview in Buchach Jefore)



Figure 6: Therapeutic views of Jefore in Desene and Mutta villages as a good dwelling place (Source: Author's photos)



Figure 7: Safe grazing of Jefore for livestock in Yerezeb and Desene (Source: Author's photo)

Table 2: Perceived therapeutic attributes of Jefore by villagers

Perceived Therapeutic Benefits of Jefore		
Human benefits		Remark
1.	Recreation (for all community)	Jefore is a core place for outdoor social and physical activities for villagers. Its aesthetic and ecosystem as well as physical quality as greenness and open fields promote better health that supports the physical and emotional health of the village community and enhances the well-being of villagers regardless of age and sex.
2.	Playground (children and youth)	
3.	Physical exercise and games (youth)	
4.	Safety place for children and elders from the hazardous environment	
5.	Good air/weather/scenery and clean living and working setting	
6.	Health restoration and recovery site	
7.	Empowering with blessing and social support	
8.	Protected humans from disturbed weather and ecology	
9.	Tracing of good days memories (elders)	
Stocks therapeutic benefits		
11.	Shelter and rest place under big trees from heavy rain and strong sun	Jefore is the best gathering place for village stocks. Mainly milking cows, cafes, sheep, donkey, horse, hen and so on remain on Jefore for permanent grazing. As permanent grazing fields, it is considered as safe for milking cows and cafes.
12.	Good pasture during summer and winter without difficulties far open fields	
13.	Place for pre- and post-pasture gathering	
Home garden therapeutic benefits		
15.	Time-space provision for home garden freed from livestock engagement	The Gurage, mostly agroforestry, is dominated by <i>enset</i> plants. However, its farm quality and productivity is ensured by the provision of Jefore for time-space for pasture engagements mainly during summer and winter seasons when the home garden is busy for production and late to farm harvesting. So before harvesting of farm products traditionally stocks remain on Jefore to ensure farm life and quality.
16.	Influence home-gardens quality with its ecosystem quality	
17.	Preventing the well-being of home garden from wind erosion and dust practices	
18.	Ecosystem influence of home-gardens	
19.	Make the village free of wind and water erosion as safety for ecology and human activities.	

Source: Triangulated from primary data

Generally, the aesthetic and therapeutic attributes of Gurage Jefore are magnificent. Aesthetically, Jefore remains a source of ecosystem qualities and provisions for human and non-human biological beings as a common living place (See Fig. 7 & 8). What ecologists call ecosystem services such as quality air, imaginative and attractive scenery, quality local air and weather, formidable living environments, provisions like

water, food, and air, regulated resource flows and integrations, and a protected environment from erosion from both wind and water for living beings demand. Therapeutic qualities such as health-enhancing environment behaviours are mostly generated from the aesthetic and social qualities of villages generated from ecological and social features for human and non-human biological beings living, influencing everyday

human and non-human living beings' engagement and wellbeing.

4. Discussion

Lisa (2023) highlights that landscape properties such as topography, dominant ecosystem, and land use are crucial factors in shaping the perception of ecosystem services. Landscape preference research also links physical, socio-cultural, and aesthetic aspects to landscape sustainability (Gaoyuan Yang, 2021).

The Gurage's rural landscape is a blend of socio-cultural and ecological attributes, promoting human-ecological well-being and better living. Jefore, a knowledge system of environment, settlement, and social attraction, integrates nature and culture for sustainable living across generations. Its ecological and socio-cultural provisions reflect its embedded nature within culture and nature. The Jefore landscape framework connects Gurage residents with their ancestors, histories, and experiences, influencing their aesthetic and therapeutic aspirations. This framework highlights the deep-rooted appreciation of ancestors' landscapes among the Gurage community.

Elders value sociocultural and well-being attributes in their daily lives, with historical connections to their ancestors' landscapes. Gurage landscapes serve as sources of identity and socio-ecological attributes, shaping their understanding and perception of their environment. Ecosystem service values can be used as a proxy for ecosystem demand based on people's perceptions, desires, and socio-cultural attributes (Lisa, 2023). Elders and women in Sebat Bête Gurage believe their social landscape enhances well-being and social support. Social support and networks help children overcome life and business challenges, and many experience annual or occasional travel to their origin villages.

The Gurage emphasizes the powering and depowering of individuals and groups through ritual landscapes and oral expressions. Landscape powering involves actions based on emotions, while depowering involves neglecting landscape norms. Elders advise against actions that contradict tradition or affect landscape values, but neglecting these norms can lead to societal exclusion. Global change processes like agricultural intensification, rural abandonment, urban sprawl, and socioeconomic dynamics are posing a threat to cultural landscapes worldwide (Schmitz & Cristina, 2021).

The role of "place" in people's lives and environmental perception is magnificent. Landscape perception can provide valuable insights for landscape management, enhancing decision-making processes and understanding ecosystem service demand for land management (Gaoyuan, 2021; Lisa, 2023; Kidd, 2013). Jefore's rich space and cultural landscapes contribute to people's mindsets and memories, affecting their health and well-being. Its socio-ecological qualities strengthen villagers' mental and physical well-being, promoting social and ecological security.

The Sebat Bête Gurage cultural landscape, primarily Jefore, is a multifunctional landscape with socio-ecological attributes that enhance people's well-being and balanced nature-culture interaction. Its aesthetic attributes include scenic and recreational values, ecosystem provision, and therapeutic attributes, promoting health enhancement and supporting everyday living for villagers and disabled individuals. Largely, maintaining indigenous spacing traditions ensures nature and culture wellbeing, improves living conditions, and supports everyone, including disabled individuals.

Jefore is a crucial aspect of Gurage culture, representing both tangible and intangible aspects. It is a physical space with dimensions based on land availability and settlement type. Jefore, tangible aspects represent physical space with

width and length based on land availability and settlement nature. It has symbolic aspects and qiye as demarcation lines between Jefore and private land holdings. Intangible aspects involve cultural production and reproduction, encompassing socio-cultural and economic fabrics, experiences, memories, and histories. The Gurage landscape, primarily Jefore, is a reflection of human interaction with nature and cultures, encompassing a sense of place, engagement, phenomenology, mutual transformation, and place attachment.

Gurage's rural landscape is crucial for integrated development and human-centered efforts, with Jefore teaching sustainable human-environment interaction. The culturally rooted experiences in rural planning and integration emphasize the importance of Jefore as a valuable lesson for sustainable human-environment interaction and rural development and planning efforts. It promotes socio-ecological values in daily interactions, people, and stock-environment interactions, and supports wellbeing assurances through socio-economic collaboration networks, cultural practices, and aesthetic and therapeutic qualities.

Gurage's rural landscape significantly impacts human-centered development initiatives and integrated rural development. Jefore serves as a valuable lesson for sustainable human-environment interaction, reflecting culturally-based experiences in rural planning and integration issues. Its socio-economic collaboration networks, cultural practices, and ecological traditions contribute to health-enhancing qualities. The recognition of Jefore landscape tradition benefits public and development stakeholders in promoting human-centered approaches.

5. Implications of Jefore for Rural Landscape Planning

The lessons we learn from the Gurage rural landscape highlight the significant role of Jefore

in rural settlement and landscape planning within national contexts. Historically, among the Gurage, the logical thought behind the designation of Jefore as an open space and road network is glorified by the local community with some justification. Jefore, for many elders, represents the wisdom of Gurage ancestors in designing the dwelling with conducive manners that serve cultural, social, ecological, and stock interests. Some of the logic behind the designation of Jefore is going with social justice, equity, resource access, open space demands for better settlement, and resource distribution by tracing different land and/or resource-holding opportunities of households within villages.

As noted in the Appendix, the width, length, and physical and ecological qualities of Jefore mark the village as a better dwelling area. The Jefore as an embedded rural landscape concept has magnificent implications for sustainable human-environment interactions to sustain village community everyday living that demand the integration of nature and cultures. Jefore is a typical example of a rural landscape that serves diverse interests as a means of infrastructure for everyday living, community engagements, and nature-culture interactions.

In history, the Gurage rural landscape, mainly its settlement traditions, including dwelling and Jefore traditions, remain historically magnificent aspects of settlement traditions in Ethiopia. The Gurage rural landscape had gotten attention from the country's stakeholders in the contestation for Rural Dwellings under the Ministry of Housing Construction. For instance, in the 1950s, the Gurage rural landscape, mainly its dwelling and spacing traditions including Jefore had got public attention, recognition, and reward from the Ministry of House Construction as compared to other rural Ethiopian housing and spacing traditions. The recognitions are given to the dwelling's overall quality in enhancing well-being, the construction quality, socio-ecological

sustainability, and the wisdom exerted in the dwelling tradition.

Similarly, during the Derege period, the villagization program when uprooted many communities from their origin village across the country with a new vision of villagization for better infrastructures and social service provisions; it was only the Gurage countryside that escaped the project of villagization for its remarkable settlement, dwelling, Jefore, other spacing, economic and social principles. Largely, the Gurage countryside was found better for the vision of villagization with its original essence in fulfilling social provisions, social mobilization, and infrastructural provision in a unified manner as opposed to constraints of villages and dwellers fragmentation. Interview sources also reflected the political regimes of Ethiopia, mainly the Imperial and Derege regimes, recognized the outstanding values and magnificent implications of the Gurage settlement for dwelling significance and its wider provision. They also recognized Gurage settlement traditions and dwellings as a model for the rest of Ethiopia's countryside. Today, we also need to consider such cultural potentials and culture-rooted landscape planning to ensure better and sustainable living in rural contexts that balance sound human-environment interaction and social integration. In its socio-physical arrangements and contexts, for any rural development efforts, Gurage villages are costless and cost-less for rural development efforts; spatial planning mainly for integrated rural development efforts that demand culture-nature coalition as culture rooted rural landscape.

6. Conclusion

The transmission of traditional ecological knowledge is crucial for the adaptation and social-ecological resilience of cultural landscapes, ensuring sustainable resource use and biodiversity conservation (Schmitz and Herrero, 2021). Sebat Bête Gurage's cultural landscapes, primarily Jefore, offer vast heritage

and tourism potential, including intangible aspects like 16th-century memorial stones, caves, old trees, agroforestry, and sacred forest reserves. These sites showcase socio-historical landscapes, cultural practices, and tombs of village heroes.

Jefore, a rural landscape, serves diverse socio-economic and cultural interests. Its multifunctional nature allows villagers to circulate socioeconomic and cultural practices. The ecological qualities of Jefore enhance aesthetic and therapeutic benefits, enhancing warmth and emotion. Memorial associations from childhood to the elderly significantly impact psychological and social well-being.

Jefore as socio-ecological landscape serves ecological functionality as living areas, economic functionality for production, socio-cultural functionality for recreation, historical functionality for settlement and identity, and aesthetic functionality for experiences. Economic functionality includes business activity, employment, and community cohesion. Socio-cultural functionality promotes well-being, interaction, and education. Cultural attributes include aesthetics, heritage, jobs, and recreation, while ecosystem attributes include air quality, climate balance, disease control, pest control, and pollination.

Largely, Gurage Jefore is the wider manifestation of identity as a quality settlement and dwelling space that serves as common ground for village gathering and engagement. It is a center for village associations and affections that combine memories and current socio-cultural, ecological, and settlement attractions. However, visible ignorance affects the continuity of the indigenous spacing traditions and the wider socio-ecological provisions and attributes generated from them. The growing gaps in perceptions and values of the current generation for the long-existing landscape tradition are affecting the state of Jefore and its knowledge system across Gurage villages. Respecting the envisioning aspects of Jefore is mandatory. Jefore is a total socio-

ecological infrastructure of Gurage life. It is everything to codify everyday living, engagements, and man-environment interactions. Maintaining Jefore is all about safeguarding the total identity of Gurage, ranging from social to environmental. Jefore reflects the socio-cultural and ecological identities of Gurage as the framework of wise human-environment interactions, perceptions, and memories that enhance the aesthetic and therapeutic qualities of the Gurage's rural landscape.

The integration of rural landscape development and planning in urban and rural contexts is becoming the norm in the 21st century. The recognition of Jefore as indigenous spatial planning and utilization in rural landscapes is crucial, especially in times of resource scarcity and declining socio-ecological values, reflecting the country's long environmental history. To incorporate Jefore rural landscape tradition into rural landscape planning, a comprehensive understanding of its community values is needed, along with positive interventions and considerations. Some of the considerations include:

- Gurage's rural landscape is characterized by Jefore tradition, crucial for socio-cultural productions, ecological provisions, sustainable dwellings, and supporting living beings' wellbeing. Thus, the conservation of Jefore as the socio-ecological infrastructure is an expectation of private and public stakeholders.
- Jefore's unique socio-cultural attributes contribute to villagers' well-being through Jefore associations and ecosystem provisions, making it a primary task for local socio-ecological actors for rural landscape governance.
- Envisioning Jefore involves promoting and integrating its socio-cultural attributes and ecological qualities and provisions in the midst of landscape

intervention and planning efforts for sustainable human-environment interaction.

- Integrating rural landscape development and planning has become the fashion of twenty-first-century landscape planning both in urban and rural contexts. So recognizing Jefore as a culture-rooted landscape design and governance tradition that supports and enhances dwelling standards, people interactions, man-environment interactions, and well-being provisions need to expand as best lessons and experiences for the rest of rural Ethiopia in rural development and rural landscape planning efforts.

Acknowledgments

The author thanks Addis Ababa University for financial support for the fieldwork, the Gurage community and informants for their kind collaboration and willingness during the data collection, and local officials for their fieldwork facilitation.

References

- Alvarez, M. (2011). The Cultural landscape concept. *Revista de Antropologia*, 6 (1), 57-80. <http://dx.doi.org/10.11156/aibr.060104e>
- Antrop, M. (2013). A brief history of landscape research. In Howard, P., Thompson, I., and Waterton, E. (Eds.), *The Routledge companion to landscape studies* (pp. 1-11). London: Routledge.
- Bell, S. L., R. Foley, F. Houghton, A. Maddrell, and A. M. Williams (2018). From Therapeutic Landscapes to Healthy Spaces, Places and Practices: A Scoping Review. *Social Science & Medicine*, 196 (3), 123–130. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2017.11.035>
- Bolliger, J., & Kienast, F. (2010). Landscape functions in a changing environment. *Landscape Online*, 21 (1), 1–5. <http://dx.doi.org/10.3097/LO.201021>
- Brace, C. (2013). Landscape and identity. In Robertson, I., and Richards, P. (Eds.), *Studying cultural landscapes* (pp. 121-138). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Carolyn, M. (2024). What's in a landscape? Nature, memory, and tourism in Bitterfeld-Wolfen's post-mining landscape, East Germany. *Landscape Research*, 49 (7), 1001-1014. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01426397.2024.2397598>
- Cassar, L. (2013). Landscape and ecology: The need for a holistic approach to the conservation of habitats and biotic. In Howard, P. Thompson, I., and Waterton, E. (Eds.), *The Routledge companion to landscape studies* (pp. 395 - 404). 96), Routledge, London.
- Council of Europe (ed.) 2009. *Heritage and Beyond*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing.
- Czepcznski, M. (2008). *Cultural landscapes of Post-Socialist Cities. Representation of Power and Needs*. Ashgate e-Book.
- Daniel, T. C., Muhar, A., Arnberger, A., Aznar, O., Boyd, J. (2012). Contributions of cultural services to the ecosystem services agenda. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 109(23), 8812–8819. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1114773109>.
- Deborah, F. and Michael, N. (1997). Class, gender, and the built environment: Deriving social relations from cultural landscapes in Southwest Michigan. *Historical Archaeology* 31 (2) 42–62 (1997). <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF03373602>
- Egoz, S. (2013). Landscape and Identity: Beyond geography of one place. In Howard, P. Thompson, I., and Waterton, E. (Eds.), *The Routledge companion to landscape studies* (pp. 272 - 283). Routledge, London
- Council of Europe. (2000). *European Landscape Convention*. Retrieved May 2017, from http://www.coe.int/t/e/Cultural_Co-operation/Environment/Landscape/ Gaoyuan Yang, et al (2021). From preference to landscape sustainability: a bibliometric review of landscape preference research from 1968 to 2019, *Ecosystem Health and Sustainability*, 7 (1), 1948355. <https://doi.org/10.1080/20964129.2021.1948355>
- Graham, B. J., Ashworth, G., Tunbridge, J., Ashworth, G. J., & Tunbridge, J. E. (2016). A geography of heritage: Power, culture, and economy. *New Zealand Geographer*, 56 (2), 61-62. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-7939.2000.tb01581.x>
- Hirsch, E. and M. O'Hanlon, eds., (1995), *The Anthropology of Landscape: Perspectives from space and place*. Clarendon Press, Oxford.
- Howard, P. (2013). Perceptual lenses. In Howard, P. Thompson, I., and Waterton, E. (Eds.), *The Routledge companion to landscape studies* (pp. 43-53). Routledge, London.

- Ingold, T. (2009). 'Against space: Place, movement, knowledge'. In: Kirby, Peter W. (ed.) *Boundless worlds: An Anthropological Approach to movement*. New York: Berghahn Books, pp. 29-44.
- Howard, L. (2020). *Landscape as Stage: Environmental History of the American West*. Yale University Press
- Khaledi, H. J., Khakzand, M., & Faizi, M. (2022). Landscape and Perception: A systematic review. *Landscape Online*, 97, 1098. <https://doi.org/10.3097/LO.2022.1098>
- Kidd, S. (2013). Landscape planning: Reflections on the past, directions for the future. In Howard, P. Thompson, I., and Waterton, E. (Eds.), *The Routledge companion to landscape studies* (pp. 366- 382). Routledge, London.
- Knudsen, C., Metro-Roland, M., Rickly-Boyd, J. (2013). Landscape research and tourism research. In Howard, P. Thompson, I., and Waterton, E. (Eds.), *The Routledge companion to landscape studies* (pp. 286-295). London: Routledge.
- Krauss, W. (2013). The Anthropology of post environmental landscapes. In Howard, P. Thompson, I., and Waterton, E. (Eds.), *The Routledge companion to landscape studies* (pp. 76-86). Routledge: London.
- Lisa K., et al (2023). Where and why is landscape considered valuable? Societal actors' perceptions of ecosystem services across Bavaria (Germany), *Ecosystems and People*, 19:1, 2192813, DOI: 10.1080/26395916.2023.2192813
- Price, Colin, (2013). Researching the economics of landscape. In Howard, P. Thompson, I., and Waterton, E. (Eds.), *The Routledge companion to landscape studies* (pp. 308-321). Routledge: London.
- Roe, M. (2013). Landscape and participation. In Howard, P. Thompson, I., and Waterton, E. (Eds.), *The Routledge companion to landscape studies* (pp. 335- 352). Routledge: London.
- Sahle, M., & Saito, O. (2021b). Mapping and characterizing the Jefoure roads that have cultural heritage values in the Gurage socio-ecological production landscape of Ethiopia. *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 210, 104078. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2021.104078>
- Schmitz, M & Cristina, H. (2021). Cultural Landscape Preservation and Social–Ecological Sustainability, *Sustainability* 13(5): 2593. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13052593>
- Shiferaw, A, Hebo, M., & Senishaw, G. (2024) Perceptions and engagement experiences of cultural landscapes among the Sebat Bête Gurage in Ethiopia: a dwelling and multifunctional landscape perspectives, *Cogent Social Sciences*, 10(1), 2350131., <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2024.2350131>
- Shiferaw, A. (2017). *Aspects of Jefore as the Cultural landscape in Sebat Bête Gurage* [Paper presentation]. Unpublished Paper Presented at the Meeting of the 25th Anniversary of Masters Program Inauguration of Social Anthropology, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Addis Ababa University.
- Shiferaw, A., Hebo, M., & Senishaw, G. (2023a). The spiritual ecology of sacred landscapes: Evidence from sacred forests of the Sebat Bête Gurage, Central - South Ethiopia. *Cogent Social Sciences*, 9(1), 2210900. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2023.2210900>
- Shiferaw, A., Hebo, M., & Senishaw, G. (2023b). Landscape multifunctionality and dynamic aspects of 'Jefore' in the Western Gurageland, Central-South Ethiopia. *Environmental Challenges*, 13, 100743. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envc.2023.100743>

- Sahle, M., & Saito, O. (2021a). Assessing nature's contributions to people by *Jefore* roads for sustainable management in the Gurage socio-ecological production landscape in Ethiopia. *Sustainability*, 13(7), 3806. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13073806>
- Spencer, S. (2010). A Feminist framework for analyzing powered cultural landscapes in historical archaeology. *International journal of historical archaeology*, 14 (4), 498-526. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10761-010-0122-x>
- Tengberg, A., Fredholm, S., Eliasson, I., Knez, I., Saltzman, K., & Wetterberg, O. (2012). Cultural ecosystem services provided by landscapes: Assessment of heritage values and identity. *Ecosystem Services*, 2, 14–26. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecoser.2012.07.006>
- Terry, D., Andreas M., Arne A., et al. (2012). Contributions of cultural services to the ecosystem services agenda. *Proceeding of the national academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 109 (23), 8812-8819. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1114773109>
- Tilley, C. (2006). Introduction: Identity, Place, landscape, and Heritage. *Journal of Material Culture*, 11(1-2), 7-32. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1359183506062990>
- Ward, C. (2013). Landscape perception and environmental psychology. In Howard, P., Thompson, I., and Waterton, E. (Eds.), *The Routledge companion to landscape studies* (pp. 25-42). Routledge: London.
- Wattchow, B. (2013). Landscape and a sense of place: A creative tension. In Howard, P. Thompson, I., and Waterton, E. (Eds.), *The Routledge companion to landscape studies* (pp. 87-96). Routledge: London
- William, A. (2007). *Geographies of Health: Therapeutic Landscapes*. Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Publishing Limited.
- Zerga B., Workineh, B, Teketay, D, Muluneh, W, and Mesfin, S. (2021). Land Use and Land cover changes driven by the expansion of eucalypt plantations in the Western Gurage Watersheds, Central-south Ethiopia. *ELSEVIER, Journal of Trees, Forests and People*, 5 (2021) 100087.

Appendix: The spatial and physical characteristics of the selected Jefere roads

Sample Jefere	No. of trees on Jefere	Side fencing type	Length (km)	Average width (m)	Area coverage (ha)	Shape of Jefere	The road begins from	The road ends
Aegera	0	Structure wood, tree	3.8	27 ± 4	5.4	Straight with curve	Main road	Stream canal
Agured	23	Structure wood, tree	3	19 ± 7	12.9	Straight with curve	Main road	Park
Atazo	0	Structure wood, tree	13	16.6 ± 4	10.2	Straight with curve	Main road	Stream canal
Bercha	1	Structured wood, soil bund, tree	7	11 ± 4	11.7	Straight	Communal land	Stream canal
Boqeta	8	None	2.6	27 ± 11	17.4	Straight	Main road	Communal land
Cheret	95	Wood, tree	6.5	26.8 ± 8	21.5	Straight	Cereal crop	Shrubland
Debesa	6	Structured wood, soil bund, tree	10.7	22.5 ± 4	25.6	Straight	Main road	Forest
Demberi	60	Structure wood, tree	7	36 ± 10	20.5	Straight	Cereal crop	Forest
Dengeth	35	Structure wood, tree	5.7	24.4 ± 10	21.6	Straight with curve	Other Jefoure	Forest
Desene	9	Structure wood, tree	5.2	20.7 ± 10	14	Straight with curve	Main road	Stream canal
Geharad	38	Structure wood, tree	5.5	34.6 ± 5	7.8	Straight with curve	Main road	Degraded land
Inagera	37	Structure wood, iron sheet	8.7	24 ± 6	20.6	Straight	Communal land	Degraded land
Kentuat	0	Structured wood, Soil bund, tree	10.5	19 ± 8	4	Straight	Afro-alpine vegetation	Gully gorge
Lencha	9	Wood, tree	2.8	15.8 ± 7	24	Straight	Cereal crop	Cereal crop
Luqe	19	Fence, open	1.2	23 ± 11	19	Curvilinear	Wetland	Park
Mamochema	0	Structure wood, tree	4.5	28.5 ± 6	16.5	Straight	Other Jefoure	Communal land
Sefato	8	Structure wood, tree	2.3	13 ± 6	14.7	Straight with curve	Communal land	Wetland
Yadazer	39	Structured wood, soil bund, tree	6.5	32 ± 16	9	Straight and irregular	Communal land	Gully gorge
Yegirar daber	62	Structure wood, tree	6	28 ± 6	19	Straight	Other Jefoure	Stream canal
Yejeje	0	Structure wood, tree	5.3	30 ± 4.6	3.4	Straight with curve	Main road	Stream canal
Yekote	0	Structured wood, soil bund, tree	8	24 ± 7	3.2	Straight with curve	Cereal crop	Communal land