UNIT ONE
STATES AND PEOPLES OF THE SOUTHERN ETHIOPIA IN THE 19THCENTURY

1.1. The Omotic States

- The peoples and the states which occupied the territory around the Omo river basin speak various languages collectively known by linguists as Omotic languages.
- The most important languages under the Omotic language family are Kaffa, Walayita, Dawuro, Bench, Dorze ,Gamo, Gofa, Koyra, Yem, Sheka, and Maji.

The Kingdom of Kaffa

- It is found south of the Gojeb River.
- The land is Kaffa and the people are called **Kaffecho**.
- These dynasties were **Matto and Minjo**. The Matto dynasty ruled Kaffa before 1390. The first king of the Minjo dynasty was Minjilo and after whom, the ruling dynasty came to be known as Minjo.
- Five prominent kings successively ruled Kaffa were:
    1. Gahe Nhchochi (r.1821-1841),
    2. Kawe Erochi (r. 1841-1843),
    3. Kaji Sharochi (r.1843-1868),
    4. Gali Sarochi r.1868- 1890
    5. Galito, Gaki Sharochi. (r 1890-1897).
- The Kaffa kings held a royal title called **tato**.
- The tato was assisted by state councilors called **Mikerecho**.
- The economy of Kaffa was based on agriculture and trade.
- Taxes were collected by assigned collectors called **Tate- kisho**, meaning the hand of the king.
- The most trade items of Kaffa were: coffee, ivory, musk, slave and gold.
- Kaffa is also known for its coffee production.
- Beads, salt bars and iron bars were used as medium of exchange.
- Following the expansion of Menilik, Kaffa was finally incorporated into the Ethiopian Empire in 1897.

The kingdom of Yem

- ✓ The **Yem** people occupied the western bank of Gibe River.

- ✓ In the nineteenth century the kingdom of Yem was ruled by a dynasty called the **Mowa.**
- ✓ The kings of Yem adopted a title called **Ano**.
- ✓ The council of officials known as **astesor**.
- ✓ The astesor was chaired by an official who had the title called **waso**.
- ✓ The provinces and sub provinces were ruled by officials known as **erasho (rasho**) and gena respectively.
- ✓ The economy of the kingdom was based on agriculture, trade, handicrafts. This kingdom was finally conquered by the force of Menelik in 1894.

The Kingdom of Walayita

- This kingdom had a strong connection with the medieval state of **Damot**.
- The founder of this kingdom was **Motalam**i founded a dynasty called **Walayita Malla**.
- In the fifteen century the Walayita Malla dynasty was ousted from power and replaced by a rival dynasty called **"Tigre"**. The Tigre dynasty ruled Walayita until the end of nineteenth century.
- The kings of Walayita used the royal title called **Kawo**.
- The economy of Walayita was based on Agriculture.
- The last king to rule independent Walayita was **Kawo Tona**.
- Walayita was finally conquered by Menilik II in1894 after a stiff resistance.

The Kingdom of Sheka

- ✓ This kingdom was found to the east of Baro and west of Gojeb Rivers or to the west of Kaffa kingdom.
- ✓ The two ruling dynasties were **Batto and Bushasho**.
- ✓ The Bushasho dynasty of Sheka ruled from the end of 16th to the19th centuries.
- ✓ Christianity is believed to have been introduced to Sheka in the late sixteenth century.
- ✓ The kings of Sheka like Kaffa used the royal title "**tato**".
- ✓ The kingdom of Sheka had a close economic, political and historical relationship with Enarya, Kaffa and Anfillo.
- ✓ The five kings of Sheka were:
    1. Bedi Nechochi (r.1800-1805),
    2. Tachi Nechechi (r.1805-1810),
    3. Gali Goechi (r.1820-1850),
    4. Deji Goechi (r.1850-1887),
    5. Techi Goechi (r.1887-1898)
- ✓ Besides the above states, there were also other Omotic states. Among these the most important were the kingdoms of Dawuro, Konta, Gamo and Gofa.

1.2. The Oromo Monarchies

- At the beginning of nineteenth century, monarchical states emerged in Oromo settled areas of Gibe Valley by the Macha Oromo during the expansion governed by Gada system.
- By about 1800, however, the Oromo of the Gibe Valley had undergone a profound political transformation. The traditional gada system was transformed into monarchical system of government. Many factors accounted for this transformation.
    1. The Oromo of this region had come into contact with Omotic states which had a long tradition of monarchical government.
    2. The expansion of Oromo into wide area affected the system which worked very well in small groups.
    3. The long distance trade and the spread of Islam seem to have undermined the power of the gada government.
    4. Frequent wars gave rise to powerful individuals such as the **Abba dula** who became influential.
- Five states emerged around Gibe River which came to be known as the "**Gibe monarchies**". These were **Gera, Goma, Guma, Jimma and Limu- Enarya**. The earliest of these monarchical states was **Limu-Enarya**. This state was built on the ruins of the medieval kingdom of Enarya/ Hinnario.
- Enarya was defeated after long period of resistance by the Mecha Oromo.
- Limu-Enarya reached the height of its power during the reign of **Abba- Bagibo, or Ibsa (r.1825-1861**).
- From the middle of nineteenth century on Limu-Enarya declined and gave way to its rival, Jimma Kaka. Jimma under its ruler, Abba Jifar became powerful and controlled trade and trade routes.
- The two other Oromo states emerged in Wollega region was **Leqa Neqemt** founded by a **Bakare Godana and Leqa Qellam** founded by **Tullu** .

1.3. The Harar Emirate

- The Harari people lived in the city of Harar.
- The Sultanate of Adal was the most powerful state in the 15th and 16th centuries and much of the territory in the East had been under the hegemony of this sultanate.
- In 1577 the pressure of the Oromo expansion forced the sultanate of Adal to shift its center from **Harar to Ausa** in the north east of the Awash valley.
- The Harar wall was built by **Emir Nur**, the immediate successor of **Ahmed Ibrahim Ibin El Ghazi**, commonly known as **Ahmed Gragn**.
- Amir Ali Dawud (r. 1647-1662) declared the independence of the Harar emirate .
- The city was strategically situated between the trade routes of the northern Somali Coasts and the Interior of the Ethiopian region. Two routes from the northern Somali ports of **Zeila and Berbera** meet at Harar.
- Oromos around the city became good farmers. These farmers exchanged their agricultural products for items brought to the city by foreign merchants.
- Harar is one of the earliest centers of Islam in Ethiopian region.
- The emirate had maintained close economic and political ties with Yemen and the Arabian Peninsula through Zeilla and Berbera ports.
- Many foreigners lived in the city of Harar. Among these, the most important were the Arabs, Persians, Turks, Armenians and the Greeks.
- In 1875 the ruler of Egypt, **Khedive Ishmael** (r.1863-1879) sent a military expedition led by **Mohammed Rauf Pasha** and occupied Harar. After ten years of occupation, the Egyptian army withdrew in 1885.
- Soon after the withdrawal of the Egyptian troops Menelik of Shawa, defeated the force of the last Emir of Harar, **Emir Abdullahi at the battle of Chalenqo**, on January 6, 1887 and conquered Harar.

1.4. The Sheikdoms Asosa, Benishangul and Komosha

- Muslim states or Sheikdoms situated along the Ethio-Sudan border were Asosa,

or Aqoldi, Beni Shangul and Khoosha. The main factor for the rise of these Muslim States was the influence of Islam and the border trade.

- This region was very rich in gold.
- This and other natural resources of these states attracted the Sudanese (the Mahdists) and the Egyptians to develop a special interest in the region.
- However, their attempt to control the region failed as the result of the incorporation of the whole region in to Menelik's Empire in 1880s and in 1890s.

1.5. The Shawan Kingdom

- Shawa was founded in 1695 by the local aristocrat called **Negasi Kirstos**.
- The core area of the Shawa state was a locality called **Menz**.
- After Negasi Kirstos, Shawa was ruled by his successors;
    1. Sibste (r.1703-1745),
    2. Amha Yesus (r.1745-1775),
    3. Asfa Wossen (r.1775-1808), and
    4. Wosen Seged (r.1808-1813).
- Shawa reached the height of its power during the reign of **Shale Selassie** (r.1813-1847).
- The administration of Shawa was sub-divided in to nine provinces, namely, **Minjar; Bulga, Yafat, Gidim, Tegulet, Menze, Gishe, Moret and Shawa-Meda**.
- The economy of Shawa was based on agriculture and Trade.
- The territorial expansions of king Shale Selassie enabled the kingdom to have access to a supply of ivory, coffee, Gold, civet cat and slaves.
- The economic prosperity and political stability of the Kingdom attracted a considerable European interest in Shawa. The first Europeans to approach the Shawan king were the missionaries **Isenberg and Krapf**, who arrived at the court of Shale Selassie in 1837. In 1839 another European, the French chemist **Rochet d'Hericourt**, came to Shewa. The foreign contacts helped king Sahle Selassie to get firearms with which he was able to expand his kingdom.

- King Sahel Selassie died in 1847 and was succeeded by his son **Haile Melekot**.
- The reign of Haile Melekot (r1847-1856), marked the end of the autonomous existence of Shawa. This was because Emperor Tewodros II (r.1855-1868) campaigned to Shawa in1856 and made it one of his provinces.
- King Haile Melekot died a little before Tewodros defeated the Shawan force at the **Battle of Bereket,** in November 1855.At the end of his Shawan campaign Tewodros captured Menilik, the son of Haile Melekot and brought him to his court where he stayed for the coming ten years. In 1865, Menilik escaped from Meqdella royal prison and established his power in Shawa. His first capital was at **Ankober** and with the expansion of his domain; he shifted his center to **Entoto** until the founding of Addis Ababa.

1.6. Trade and Trade Routes

- One of the lines begins from **Bonga**, the capital of the Kingdom of Kaffa, this trade route ran northwards through important trade centers such as, Jiren (in Jimma), Seka(in Limu Enarya), Asendabo(in Horro gudru),Basso(in Gojjam),and Darita (in Begemider). From Darita the routes enter Gondar,the important trading center in the northern region.At Gondar the trade routes branched in to two. One branch of the trade route proceeded westward to the Sudan through Metemma (Galabat).The other branch ran northward through Adwa and entered Massawa on the Red Sea coast.
- The second major line of trade route connected the Ethiopian region with **Zeila and Berbera**, the most important commercial centers of the northern Somali coast. This route was very important, particularly during the reign of Negus Sahale Selassie. This line also served the Shawan kingdom when it was detached from Gonderian rule during the “Era of Princes” (“Zemene Mesafint”).
- A great variety of items were exchanged in the trade between the Ethiopian region and the Red Sea coast.
- The main source of trade items was the southwestern part of the region where coffee, ivory, gold, Animal skin, rhinoceros horn, musk and slave were plentiful.
- The imported trade items include: mirror, cowries shells, cotton cloth, glass and iron wares.
- Bartering was a system in which people exchange what they have with what they don't. In the nineteenth century, however, different items were used as a medium

of exchange. Among such items, the most important was salt in the form of bars (salt bars), commonly known as **"amole**".

- Apart from these traditional currencies, **Maria Theresa dollar (thaler**) served as medium of exchange in the nineteenth century. Maria Theresa coins were introduced into Ethiopian region at the end of eighteen century.
- The Muslim Oromo merchants were known as "**afkala**".
- The active muslim merchants in the northern were also called **Jabarti**.
- The leader of the caravan traders was known as "**nagadras**" or chief of traders.

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ከ9-12 ላላችሁ ተማሪዎች

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Thank You