UNIT 3

PEOPLES AND STATES IN ETHIOPIA AND THE HORN TO THE END OF 13 th C.

3.1 LANGUGES, RELIGIONS AND PEOPLES OF ETHIOPIA AND THE HORN

3.1.1 LANGUAGES FAMILIES

- Ethiopia and the Horn is land marked by ethnic and linguistic diversity.
- People who speak various languages and follow different religions inhabit the Horn of Africa.
- There are over 80 languages with many dialects.

£ There are two super families' languages in the Ethiopia and The Horn

$ Afro-Asiatic

$ Nilo- Saharan

A. **AFRO-ASIATIC SUPER FAMILY**: - the largest super family in the Ethiopia and the Horn and divided into three families. those are:-

- **Cushitic**: - the majority of cushitic languages spoken by Ethiopians
  - **north Cushitic: -** **ex .**beja
  - **central cushitic:-** Bilen,Agaw, Qimant, Himitagna **and** Awign
  - **eastern cushitic:-** both the largest and the most diverse branch of the Cushitic family languages in Ethiopia
    - ✓ **Lowland cushitic:-** Oromo, Afar, Somali,Konso,Gidole, Erbore, Dasenech and Saho
    - ✓ **highland cushitic:-** Hadiya, Tambaro, halaba, Sidama,Gedeo, and Burji
- **SEMETIC:-**
  - **Northern semetic** :- Ge'ez, Tegra, Tigrigna
  - **Southern semetic:-** Amharic, Argobba, Gafat(exitnict), Guragigna, silte, Harari, and Zay.
- **OMOTIC:-**

- Most of the Omotic speakers live in and around the Omo River basin.
- **example**;- Ari, Banna, Basketo, Bench, Chara, Dawuro, Dime, Dizi, Dorze, Gamo, Ganza, Gayil, Gofa, Hamer, Hozo, Kachama Ganjule, Karo, Keficho, Konta, Korete, Male, Melo, Nayi, Oyda, Sezo, Shekkacho, Sheko, Wolaita, Yem, Zayse etc.

B. Nilo - Saharan Super Family:

- In Ethiopia, the Nilo-Saharan superfamily speakers mainly live on the Ethio-Sudanese border.

- But some of these peoples are living in the Abay gorge and along the banks of the tributaries of Abay in Wallaga.

£ This superfamily has two families:

- **Chari-Nile**: this family includes the languages of the people of Anuak Nuer, Mi'en, Majang, Benishangul, Kunama, Mursi, Surma and Tirma.
- **Koman**: includes the peoples of Gumuz, Koma, Sese, Ma'o, and Komo**.**

A number of reasons have been cited for the death of a language. Languages cannot exist without their speakers and therefore they die.

➔ **Questions;-** List some languages in danger of extinction in Ethiopia. Why do languages die out, and some are in danger of extinction?

- **Answer**;- The major Reasons for death of languages include geographical location, cultural contact, religious and social factors such as intermarriages, modernisation and urbanisation, and peaceful coexistence with other languages. For example, as the elder speakers will die while the rest will start speaking another language.

- Some languages of Ethiopia are danger to extinction.

- ***From Omotic:***-Ganza, Hozo, Kachama, Karo, Nayi, andi Southern Mao (Anfillo).

- ***from Semitic family***;- Argobba, Geez and Zay

- ***and from Nilo-Saharan family;***- Gabato, Kwama, Kwegu, Opuuo and Shabo

- An extinct language from semetic family is *Gafat*.

3.1.2 Major Religions of Ethiopia

What are the major religions of Ethiopia? The major religions practised by diverse people of Ethiopia are indigenous religions, Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

1. **<u>Indigenous Religion:</u>**-Indigenous religions are beliefs that are practiced only within a given culture.

- Since ancient times, they have been native to the region and followed by the local people.

- Sedentary settlement and agricultural development saw the emergence of priests who conduct praying for rainfall, thanksgiving and safety from natural hazards.

- They either worship or provide sacrifices to them. People of Indigenous Religion also owe special reverence to their ancestors.

- Followers of traditional religions believe that their supreme deity is the creator.

- Waqeffanna of the Oromo is based on the existence of one Supreme Being called Waqa.

- Waqa's power is manifested through the spirits called Ayyana.
- Revered experts, Qallu (male) and Qallitti (female), have maintained a link between the Ayyana and the believers.
- An exciting feature of indigenous religion is its practices and beliefs are fused with Christianity and Islam.
- This phenomenon of mixing of religions is known as syncretism.

A. Judaism Today it is practiced by a community of people known as Bête-Israel (literally, house of Israel).

- They used to live in north-western Ethiopia, to the north of Lake Tana in the provinces of Dembiya, Semen, and Wegera.
- The Bête-Israel accounts of origin assert that they stem from the tribes of Israel who arrived in Ethiopia during the Exodus in Israel.
- ***Judaism*** is establishing in the teachings of the Old Testament part of the Bible and share common practice s with the Ethiopian Orthodox Church.
- Both follow the Old Testament practices and use Geez for liturgy.

B. Christianity was introduced to Ethiopia around 330AD (4^{th}C) frementius (also known as Freminatos), who converted king Ezana (r.320 - 350AD).

- Consequently, Christianity secured royal support and became the state religion that later helped its expansion.
- the coming of monks called the 'Nine Saints' towards the end of the fifth century, Christianity spread more among the broad masses.
- Churches were built, and
- monasteries were established, of which the first being the monastery of Debre-Damo.
- The Bible was translated into Ge'ez, and
- since then, Ge'ez began to serve as the language of the Church in Ethiopia.

i. Patriarch Atnatewos of Alexandria consecrated Freminatos as Abuna Salam, the first bishop of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church.

ii. This tradition of consecrating and sending a bishop to Ethiopia continued until 1959 when Abune Baselios became the first Ethiopian Patriarch.

iii. Until that year, the head of the Church was always from Egyptian.

iv. The expansion of Christianity continued during the Zagwe period (1150-1270).

The expansion of Christianity was accompanied by the development of art, literature, architecture, and music in the country.

Catholics

- At the end of the 15th century, Portuguese voyages of discovery opened the way for contacts between Catholicism and Ethiopia.
- fromthe mid-sixteenth to the early seventeenth centuries, , unsuccessfully tried to convert Ethiopian Orthodox Christians to Catholicism.
- In the mid-16th century, Ethiopian rulers allowed Jesuits to preach in the country.
- In 1622, Susneyos publicly announced his adherence to Catholicism, a strategy to reinforce his political power.
- The Portuguese Jesuit Afonso Mendes was appointed Patriarch of Ethiopia in 1622 by Pope Urban VII ,
- Emperor Fasilidas, expelled the Patriarch and the European missionaries in 1636.
- This action led to the complete closure of Ethiopia to further contact with Europeans until the early 19th century.

At the opening of the 19th century, Catholic and Protestant missionaries started evangelisation activities in Ethiopia.

C. Islam

- Islam arose in the early 7th century in the Arabian Peninsula and spread to other parts of the world.
- Prophet Mohammed began teaching Islam in Mecca, he came into a series of conflicts with the Quraysh tribe.
- The Aksumite king, Armah Ella Seham (Ahmed al-Nejash in Arabic sources), gave them asylum from 615-28.
- Muslim clerics and merchants served as the missionaries of Islam in the Horn of Africa.
- Islam was introduced to the region through three main gateways. These were:

i. The Red Sea in the north, Islands of dahlak
ii. the Gulf of Aden in the, ease, Zeila port
iii. The Indian Ocean in the southeast, Somali Region.

*what was the major factors for unsuccessful of Islam penetrating in to the northern of Ethiopia?

- Islam failed in penetrating the interior of northern Ethiopia from the lowlands.
- Because Christianity was well, establish in the highland regions since the mid-fourth century AD.

- Consequently, Islam was confined to lowland regions in northern Ethiopia.
- Islam successfully spread into eastern Harar, Shewa and Wollo regions. Later on, Islam spread to south-central Ethiopia's Bale, Arsi and Hadya regions.
- The establishment and growth of Islam contributed to the development and enrichment of the cultures of the regions. The mosques and Islamic centers of learning developed.

The Settlement Pattern of Peoples of Ethiopia

- The peopling of Ethiopia results from an extensive process of movement due to pull or push factors.
- The shortage (scarcity) of resources pushes people, whereas availability pulls. Migrations were quite common in history, and almost all groups have a story of migration.
- The other form of movement accounting for the origin and settlement of the various peoples of Ethiopia was population movement.
- the Cushitic and Semitic language speaking peoples had occupied the area b/n the Red Sea in the east and Blue Nile in the west
- The Cushitic speaking people have evolved to be the largest linguistic group in Ethiopia and the Horn, followed by Semitic speaking peoples.
- Except the Shinasha and the South Mao speaking peoples, most Omotic peoples have inhabited south western Ethiopia along the Omo River basin.
- In the west, the Nilotic speaking peoples are largely inhabited along the Ethiopia-Sudanese border, although some of the Chari-Nile family settled as far as Southern Omo.

3.2 The Pre-Aksumite States and their Geographical Setting

Punt:

- Punt was an ancient state in the Horn of Africa. However, Punt's exact location and territorial limits are not well known.
- Historians stated present-day of Punt was known Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia.
- Punt was R/n ships with Egypt;- The trade was conducted by land and sea routes. goods (item)Others such as ivory, panther and other skins, myrrh and myrrh trees, ostrich feathers, etc.
- The Egyptians sent hatchets, daggers, necklaces, etc
- Other pre-Aksumite states emerged since 1000BC.
- These include Yeha, Hawlti-Melazo, Addi-Seglemeni, Metera, Kaskase, Coloe, etc.

Yeha:

- located 30 kms to the northeast of Aksum and was the oldest of these centers.
- It probably emerged around 1000BC.
- R/ships with South Arabian through Trade;-ivory, rhinoceros horn and other commodities coming from the interior.
- The period of its prosperity (zenith) was from about 750 to 500BC.

Hawulti Melazo:

- situated to the southeast of Aksum.

Damat:

- Existed before the rise of Aksum. Its center was south town of Aksum.
- Some of Damat's rulers used the South Arabian *political* and *religious* title called ***mukarib***. This indicates tha
- Damat had established external relations with South Arabia.
- Damat used the port of Adulis on the Red Sea coast.

3.3 Aksumite Kingdom

- Aksum was not the first state that emerged in Ethiopia.
- The term Aksum was derived from two terms, Ak/ku means water in Agaw and sum/shum means chief in Semitic; hence 'chief of water'.
- Aksum emerged in the first century AD with its nucleus at Aksum. The City of Aksum was its political and religious center.
- ***Economically***, the Aksumites depended on plough agriculture and trade.
- The state also generated considerable income from local and external trade conducted via the port of Adulis on the Red Sea coast.
- Coins Aksum made from bronze, silver and gold.
- In the first three centuries, Ge'ez evolved as a written language.
- The Aksumite had beliefs in indigenous religions before the introduction of Christianity in the 4th century AD and Islam in the early seventh century.
- ***Relationships of Aksum*** with south Arabia (present day Yemen), Greek and Roman.
- ***The contributions of Aksum: -*** the ruins of Aksumite temples, iron tools, bricks, coins, tombs and obelisk, and shipbuilding technology.

Fall Down of Aksum

1. ***External problem:***-the control of Red Sea and destructions of port of Adulis by Muslim Arabs in 702AD;-The loss of trade led to the decline of its economic, political and military power.

2. ***Internal problem***:- The rebellion against king Kaleb (r.500 - 535AD) broke out.the opposition of the Beja people from the north.

@the last Aksumite king, was called *Dil Naod.*

3.4 Zagwe Dynasty

- The Zagwe dynasty came from the local Agaw ruling class in Lasta, part of the Aksumite Empire.
- Mera Tekle Haymnot founded the Zagwe dynasty around 1150AD.
- He established a new capital at Adefa (Roha) in Lasta.
- The economy of the Zagwe dynasty in based on agriculture and trade. The Zeila port was the main outlet during the Zagwe time.
- The Dahlak Islands on the Red Sea coast served as an outlet.

Achievement of Zagwe Dynasty

1. The Zagwe dynasty is known in Ethiopian history for its remarkable architectural achievement.
2. The technology of building the monolithic rock-hewn Churches at Roha; later, the capital was renamed Lalibela.
3. The surviving pieces of evidence are the eleven rock-hewn churches constructed during the reign of Emperor Lalibela in the first half of the thirteenth century.

downfall of the Zagwe dynasty.

Intenal problem

- firts, the problem of political succession to the throne among the Zagwe princes.
- Secondly, strong opposition from the regions of Tigray and Amhara.
- the leading clergy members of the Churches of Aksum and Debre Damo spread anti-Zagwe propaganda related to the legend of the Queen of Sheba and King Solomon of Israel.
- ***Yekuno Amlak*** organised a movement against the Zagwe rule. He defeated Yetbarek, the last Zagwe king, on the battle field in 1270AD.
- Yekuno Amlak (r. 1270-1285) declared himself an Emperor and, at the same time, became the restorer of the so-called "Solomonic dynasty".
- The tradition of identifying the Christian kings of Ethiopia with ancient Israel continued until 1974.

@the last Zagwe king, was called *Yitbarek.*

3.5 The Sultanate of Shewa

- The introduction of Islam to the Horn was followed by the emergence of a series of Muslim states since the ninth century AD.
- The first to be established was the sultanate of Shawa in 896AD.
- Since the founders of this sultanate claimed descent from the Makhzunmite clan of southern Arabia, the dynasty became known as the Makhzunmite dynasty.
- Its location was in the hot lowland region on the left of the Awash River.
- Ifat emerged to the south of Shewa, founded by Umar Walasma (hence the Walasma dynasty) in 1285AD, it would have destroyed the older Makhzumite dynasty.
- it became the strongest Muslim sultanate in the region. Ifat controlled a vast territory through which the long-distance trade routes of Zeila passed.
- Ifat became the strongest rival of the Christian highland state.
- Since 1270 the Christian highland state had also developed a great interest in the Zeila trade and trade routes. Therefore, the need to control the Zeila trade became the main source of conflict between the two states.