University of Gondar
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Anthropology

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Unit One

- **Introduction**
- Anthropology came from two Greek words **Anthropos**-human being and **logos**-study
- Man has two important characteristics: **biological** and **cultural**
- In comparison to other disciplines, anthropology is broadest in **scope**
- It study the strategies for living that are **learned**
- Examines the **characteristics** that human beings share

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- Analyses the products of social groups -material objects and non-material creations
- It asks, what makes us human?

The Historical Development of Anthropology

- It fully developed in **20th** C
- trace its roots back to the **European Enlightenment**, in the **18th** C
- it emphasis **human progress** and **Darwinian Theory of Evolution**.
- others argue it started after the **First World War**

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- anthropology, as a **science**, developed in **France, Britain, USA and, Germany**
- it was major help for the expansion of western **colonial** powers
- at first became a profession primarily in **museums**.
- Early anthropologists studied the **cultural features** of **non-industrialized** communities
- In Ethiopia, anthropologists began to study in **1950s**.

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Sub-fields of anthropology

- **Physical/Biological Anthropology**
- It study how culture and environment have influenced biological evolution and contemporary variations.
- Human biology affects culture and vice versa
- Biological variations such as **morphology, color, and size**

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- The major sources of biological variations are derived from **natural selection, geographical isolation, genetic mutations**.
- Is concerned with human **evolution** and **genetics**.
- **Evolution** is the study of the gradual change in **structures**
- Study using **fossils/bones**

Two specialties:

- **Paleoanthropology** is the study biological evolution by analysis of fossil from prehistoric times
- **Primatology** studies about primates or recent **human ancestors**
- Study non-human primate species as **gorillas** and **chimpanzees**

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- **Human genetics** investigate how the physical traits of **contemporary Human** populations **vary**.
- By examining **DNA** and **RNA**.

Archaeological Anthropology

- It studies the ways of lives of **past** peoples by **excavating** the material culture (artifacts).
- **Artifacts** are material remains used by the past peoples (taken to the laboratory) e.g. ornaments, arrowheads, coins, etc
- **Features** they cannot be carried away from the site. Eg house foundations, ancient buildings, fireplaces,

Cont'd

- **Eco-facts** are non-artefactual, and **environmental** remains
- Its Specialties are **Prehistoric** Archaeology (before 6000 years) and **Historical** Archaeology (after writing)

Linguistic Anthropology

- It studies human language as a **cultural resource**
- Human Language (not present) Primate Call Systems (stimuli-dependent)
- **Four distinct branches**
- **Structural/Descriptive Linguistics:** understand the set of rules of given language.

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- It examines sound systems, grammatical systems, and meanings (compile **dictionaries** for unwritten languages)
- **Ethno-linguistics:** examines the relationship between **language** and **culture**.
- Linguistic categories determine how people think

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- **Historical linguistics:** deals with the emergence of language and **divergence** (daughter languages)
- **Socio-linguistics:** investigates linguistic variation within a given language. (**regional dialects**, bilingualism

Socio-Cultural Anthropology

- analyzes cultural and material life of contemporary human societies.
- It has two aspects of study:
- **Ethnography** (**field work**) describes local behavior, beliefs, economic activities, politics, and religion.
- **Ethnology** (**cross-cultural comparison**) generalize the results of ethnography.

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- **Basic Features of Anthropology**
- It is broad in **scope**. contemporary or past, primitive or civilized, biological or cultural
- **Holistic** looks any phenomena from different vantage points.
- It considers culture, history, language and biology
- **Relativistic**; explain a certain belief, in its own context. It doesn't make value judgment
- **Comparative** perspective
- It considers **insiders' views (emic perspective)**
- How people **give meaning** to their practices.

Cont'd

- In its **approach**
- its **research** approach dependent on **qualitative research**
- use instruments such as **fieldwork**, participant observation, in-depth and key informant interviews and focus-group discussion
- **Misconceptions about anthropology**
- It only limited to the study of "**primitive**" societies and **rural** people
- It is the study of **fossil evidences**
- It preserve communities far from **development**

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Anthropology and Other Disciplines

- Related with **sociology, psychology, political sciences, economics, history,**
- its broad scope, unique approach,
- The perspective is empirical, naturalistic and ideographic
- In its method of research and **data collection techniques**

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The Contributions of anthropology

- It help us to know our culture is **just one way** of life among many found in the world
- Gives us an insight into **different ways and modes of life** (relativistic approach)
- It helps us fight against **ethnocentrism**
- Used as a tool for **development** (sustainable projects)

Chapter Two

- **2. Human Culture and Ties that Connect**
- Conceptualizing Culture
- Edward Tylor defined culture as "a complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, morals, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society".
- Culture is a system of learned behavior shared by and transmitted among the members of the group.
- It includes all things beyond nature and biology.

Characteristic Features of Culture

1. Culture Is Learned: Culture is not Genetically Acquired

- Enculturation is defined as the process by which an individual learns the rules and values of one's culture.

2. Culture Is Shared:

3. Culture Is Symbolic:

- A symbol is something verbal or nonverbal, within a particular language or culture that comes to stand for something else.
- There is no necessary connection between the symbol and what it symbolizes.

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4. Culture Is All-Encompassing

- It includes, intellectual, technical, artistic, physical, moral etc

5. Culture Is Integrated: the cultural parts of are interconnected with one another.

6. Culture Can Be Adaptive and Maladaptive

- Adaptive behavior that offers short-term benefits may harm the environment and threaten long-term survival.

7. Culture Is Dynamic:Culture is changing constantly

- **Aspects/Elements of Culture**

1 Material culture; man-made objects

2 Non – Material culture; behavior of the members

Cont'd

- Values: are the standards by which member of a society define what is good or bad (general)
- Beliefs: are cultural conventions that concern true or false assumptions (specific)
- Norms: are shared rules that define how people "ought" to behave under certain circumstances.

a) Folkway: not strictly enforced

b) Mores: obliged to follow

Cultural Unity and Variations:

1) Universality: are cultural traits that span across all cultures.

- Biologically based universals include a long period of infant dependency, year-round sexuality, and a complex brain (for languages).
- Among the social universals is life in groups and in family

Cont'd

- 2) Generality: are cultural traits that occur in many societies but not all of them.
- 3) Particularity: Trait of a culture that is not widespread. because of cultural borrowing, it might be widespread.
- **Ethnocentrism, Cultural Relativism and Human Rights**
- **Ethnocentrism** refers to the tendency to see the behaviors and beliefs of one's own group as the only right way of living and to judge others by those standards.
- **Cultural relativism:** the viewpoint that behavior in one culture should not be judged by the standards of another culture.

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- Anthropologists generally understand that:

1) Ethnocentrism and racism are wrong.

2) Cultural, linguistic, religious, and other kinds of diversity are good.

3) Societies and ethnic groups have the right of self-determination, of ownership of their cultural heritage and property, and of instruction of their own children.

4) All humans share a common humanity.

- **Human rights:** invokes a realm of justice and morality beyond and superior to the laws of particular countries, cultures, and religions.
- Such rights are seen as *inalienable* (nations cannot abridge or terminate them) and international (larger than and superior to individual nations and cultures).

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- **Culture Change**
- Culture change can occur
- I) Diffusion- cultural elements are borrowed from another society and incorporated into the culture.
- It can be direct (trade) or forced (imposed) or indirect, items move from group A to group C via group B
- 2 Acculturation is the exchange of cultural features that results when groups have continuous firsthand contact.
- 3 Invention-the process by which humans innovate, creatively finding solutions to problems
- 4 Globalization is the intensification of global interconnectedness.

Marriage, Family and Kinship

- Marriage is a permanent legal union between a man and a woman.
- anthropologists have debated whether or not marriage is universal
- There are exeptions such as, the Nayar of Southern India, did not have marriage in the conventional sense of the term. the husband took no responsibility for the women after the ceremony.
- **Rules of Marriage**
- Incest taboo is a prohibitions on mating with certain categories of relatives (eg nuclear family)
- There are a few striking examples of marriage between members of the immediate family that violate incest taboo. Eg, Ancient Egyptians, Incas and Hawaiians
- **Mate Selection**

a) Exogamy: a man is not allowed to marry someone from his own social group.

Marriage, Family and Kinship

Exogamy got approval in some communities because

- Attraction between a male and female gets lost due to close relationship
- A conception of blood relation prevails among the members of a group.
- exogamy has **adaptive value**, because it links people into a wider social network that nurtures, helps, and protects them

b) Endogamy: individuals marry within their own group and forbids them to marry outside it.

- Religious groups such as the Amish, Mormons, Catholics, and Jews have

rules of endogamy, Castes in India and Nepal are also endogamous.

c) Preferential Cousin Marriage:

- Cross Cousins: are children of siblings of the opposite sex- that is one's mother's brothers' children and one's father's sisters' children.

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- Parallel Cousins: When marriage takes place between the children of the siblings of the same sex, namely children of one's mother's sister and one's father brother.
- Found among some Arabic societies in North Africa

d) The Levirate and Sororate

- The levirate- is the custom whereby a widow is expected to marry the brother of her dead husband. Child from new husband belong legally to the dead brother.
- Such a custom both serves as a form of social security for the widow and her children
- The sororate, when a wife dies a widower's marrying the sister of his deceased wife.

Number of Spouses

- Monogamy: the marriage of one man to one woman at a time.
- Polygamy marriage of a man or woman with two or more mates.
- Polygyny: the marriage of a man to two or more women at a time.
- Polyandy: the marriage of a woman to two or more men at a time
- sororal polygyny Marriage of a man with two or more sisters at a time.

Advantages & Disadvantages of Polygamy marriage

- Having two/more wives is often seen as a sign of prestige.
- Having multiple wives means wealth, power, & status both for the polygynous husband, wives and children.
- It produces more children, who are considered valuable for future economic and political assets.
- Economic advantage: It encourages to work hard (more cows, goats..) for more wives

- The Drawbacks of Polygyny:Jealousy among the co-wives who fequently compete for the husband's attenttion.

Economic Consideration of Marriage

- Bride Price (bridewealth) is the compensation given upon marriage by the family of the groom to the family of the bride.
- Important function of bride price has been:-as security or insurance for the good treatment of the wife: as mechanism to stabilize marriage by reducing the possibility of divorce: as a form of compensation to the bride's lineage for the loss of her economic potential and childbearing capacity: and as a symbol of the union between two large groups of kin.
- Bride Service: When the groom works for his wife's family
- in Bible, Jacob labored for 14 years to marry Leah, and Rachel
- Bride service was also practiced by the Yanomamo, and Venezuela
- Dowry involves a transfer of goods or money in the opposite direction, from the bride's family to the groom's family.

Post-marital Residence

- Patrilocal Residence: lives near husband's father.
- Matrilocal Residence: lives near relatives of the wife.
- Ambilocal/Bilocal Residence: The married couple has a choice of living with relatives of the wife or relatives of the husband
- Avunculocal Residence: lives near the husband's mother's brother.
- Neolocal Residence: live away from the relatives of either spouse.

FAMILY

- 1. The Nuclear Family: Consisting of husband and wife and their children
- 2. The Extended Family blood ties are more important than ties of marriage.
- Extended families consist of two or more families that are linked by blood ties.
- patrilineal extended family, the young couple takes up residence in the homestead of the husband's father, and the husband continues to work for his father,

Functions of Marriage and Family

- Biological Function: sexual and reproductive
- Economic Function: Marriage brings economic co-operation between men and women and ensure survival of individuals in a society.
- Social Function: In marriage one adds, not only a spouse but most of the spouse's relatives to one's own group of kin.
- Educational (Socialization): The burden of socialization (via processes of enculturation) of new born infants fall primarily upon the family.

KINSHIP

- Kinship is the method of reckoning relationship.
- Family of orientation-The family in which he was born and reared
- Family of procreation'-The other family to which he establishes relation through marriage

- consanguineous kinship-The relationship based on blood ties
- final kin-socially or legally defined marital relationship

Descent

- refers to the social recognition of the biological relationship that exists between the individuals.
- Descent groups can be of two types: unilineal and bilateral.

1. Patrilineal descent; When descent is traced solely through the male line. Succession and inheritance pass through the male line.

2. Matrilineal descent; the descent is traced solely through the female line. Only females acquire the succession and inheritance.

3. Cognatic Descent; individuals are free to show their genealogical links either through men or women.

Unit-Three

Human Diversity, Culture Areas and Contact in Ethiopia

Human Beings & Being Human: What it is to be human?

- The comparative approach, which is also known as cultural relativism, entails that cultures shouldn't be compared one another for the sake of saying one is better than the other.
- Instead cultures should be compared in order to understand how and why they differ and share commonalties each other.
- Human biology affects human culture; and similarly, human culture affects human biology.
- One example of this is that the brain size of humans has become larger over millions of years of evolution, and this is considered biological change.
- Whereas, the change in human brain has brought cultural changes in terms of increased intelligence.
- This is why anthropologists use the term **biocultural Evolution** to describe the dual nature of human evolution: both biological and cultural dimensions.

The biocultural animal?

- Humanity stands for the human species, a group of life forms with the following characteristics:
- Bipedalism (walking on two legs);
- Relatively small teeth for primates of our size;
- Relatively large brains for primates of our size;
- Using modern language to communicate ideas; and
- Using complex sets of ideas called culture to survive.
- The term humanity can be applied to modern humans (Homo sapiens sapiens) as well as some of our most recent ancestors, without the second sapiens suffix.

Origin of the Modern Human: Homo sapiens sapiens

Cosmologies Vs. Evolutionally and Paleo-anthropological Explanations

- Theories concerning the evolution of life date back to the ancient Greeks, but it was only during the 19th century that the first comprehensive theories of evolution were developed.

Cosmologies and Human Origins

- Cosmologies are conceptual frameworks that present the universe (the cosmos) as an orderly system.
- **Cosmologies** account for the ways in which supernatural beings or forces formed human beings and the planet we live on.
- For example, the **Navajo** people of the southwestern United States believe that the Holy People, supernatural and sacred, lived below ground in 12 lower worlds.

- Human mortals, called Earth Surface People, emerged, and First Man and First Woman were formed f rom the ears of white and yellow corn.
- In the tradition of **Taoism**, male and female principles known as yin and yang are the spiritual and material sources for the origins of humans and other living forms.
- **Western Traditions of Origins**
- In the ancient Greeks, one theory is that Prometheus fashioned humans out of water and earth.
- Another had Zeus ordering Pyrrha, the inventor of fire, to throw stones behind his back, which in turn became men and women.

- The Greek philosopher Thales of Miletus attempted to understand the origin of the world without reference to mythology.
- He argued that life originated in the sea and that humans initially were fishlike, eventually moving onto dry land and evolving in to mammals.
- The most important cosmological tradition affecting Western views of creation is recounted in the **biblical Book of Genesis**.
- This Judaic tradition describes how God created the cosmos.
- describes how creation took six days during which light , heaven, Earth, vegetation, Sun, Moon, stars, birds, fish, animals, and humans originated.
- Yahweh, the Creator , made man, Adam, from "dust" and Woman, Eve, was created from Adam's rib.

- The versions of creation discussed in the biblical text fostered a specific concept of time: a linear , non-repetitive.
- This view led some theologians to attempt to calculate the precise age of the Earth.
- One of the best known of these calculations was done by Archbishop James Ussher of Ireland.
- By calculating the number of generations mentioned in the Bible Ussher dated the beginning of the universe to the year 4004 BC.
- Thus, according to Bishop Ussher's estimate, the Earth was approximately 6,000 years old.

Evolutionary and paleo-anthropological perspectives on human origin

- As opposed to cosmological explanations, today anthropologist rely on scientific views of evolution in order to explain human origins.
- Simply put, **evolution** refers to a process and gradual change in specie over time.
- In fact, evolution is used to describe the cumulative effects of three independent facts.
- They are:
- **Replication:** The fact that life forms have offspring;
- **Variation:** The fact that each offspring is slightly different from its parents, and its siblings; and
- **Selection**: The fact that not all offspring survive, and those that do tend to be the ones best suited to their environment.

- In this case, Charles Darwin is known for his theory of **natural selection** in the evolution of species and the idea of **survival of the fittest.**
- Today, anthropologists have countless amount of data, much of it based on studies of DNA, the molecule that shapes all Earth life, to back the claims Darwin made in 1859.

The Kinds of Humanity: human physical variation

Racial types- anthropological perspectives

- Biologically speaking, a **race** is a group of organisms of the same species that share similar physical (and genetic) attributes and specific geographic regions.
- Just like any other living thing, human beings adapt to their environments through an evolutionary process.

- we survive our environments not because we've adapted to them biologically, but with culture.
- Adaptation is can be understood as a process (behavioural and/or biological) that increases the likelihood of survival for an organism.
- In humans, adaptations include complex behavior, such as making tools. These behaviors aren't passed on genetically but rather culturally.
- Skin color—one of the most visible human characteristics — is a good example of adaptation to a particular environment.
- The darkest skin appears in populations originating in tropical zones, such as Africa and Asia.
- The lightest skin is traditionally found in northern Europe because over time, natural selection favored darker skins in areas that received extensive and more intensive sunlight,

- because individuals with lighter skin in these areas were more prone to skin cancers.
- Darker skin, then, is an adaptation to the geographical conditions of Africa.
- What's the adaptive value of lighter skin? It has to do with vitamin D.
- Vitamin D is a nutrient that helps human bones form properly.
- Without enough vitamin D, deformities like the disease rickets, happens
- Another example of biological adaptation in human beings is the difference of **stature** between arctic (such as Inuit) and East African (such as Maasai) people.
- In biology, **Bergmann's rule** indicates that in colder regions, warm-blooded animals will have stockier bodies because stockier bodies are more efficient at retaining body heat (E.g, Inuits)

- However, the Maasai of East Africa have taller and more slender bodies because of excess heat in their hot environment.
- The rapid physiological changes that occur in one's lifetime like a mountaineer's adjustment to lower oxygen levels at high altitude are referred to as **habituation or acclimatization**.
- **What Anthropologists can say for sure about Human Races?**
- Homo sapiens sapiens does feature geographically based differences within the species.
- However, you must consider two very important points.
- First, these genetic differences don't mean a lot, biologically.
- So it's also inaccurate to say "the African race" or the "European race"

- Because a look at the genes shows no significant species-level differences
- Rather than talk about races, anthropologists talk today more of ancestry, a more general term that recognizes the reality of some geographically specific human adaptations
- Second is that cultural behavior isn't genetically linked to those geographical differences.
- Most of human behavior isn't biologically determined most of it is culturally learned.

Human Races: the history of racial typing

- Some of the first records of humans classifying others as certain "types" come from ancient Egypt by skin color:

- Egyptians were red-skinned, people south of Egypt were black-skinned, those living north of the Mediterranean Sea were white-skinned, and people to the east were yellow-skinned.
- By the the16th century, during the Age of Discovery, Europeans voyaging around the world found unknown people.
- Because of skin color and religion(non Christian), the Europeans labeled them Savages.
- Some naturalists in the 16th through 19th centuries proposed that savages were even a different species than white Europeans, saying that they shouldn't even be considered human.
- The root problem at the identification of human types was **biological determinism**, the idea that physical traits were somehow linked to behavior.

- Many thought traits like intellect, values, and morals were all products of one's race.
- A similar way that everyone including early anthropologists had this idea all wrong was in the application of Darwin's principles of biological evolution to societies.
- This led to a concept known as **social Darwinism**, the idea that as societies and nations evolved and competed, the morally superior societies would prevail as the less-moral, "savage" societies were weeded out.
- therefore, in Germany, the Nazi party began to systematically kill those members of society that it considered inferior to the northern-European Christian ideal they held.

The Grand Illusion: Race, turns out, is arbitrary

- One thorough 1972 study by Harvard anthropologist R.C. Lewontin concluded that "Human racial classification is of no social value and is positively destructive of social and human relations.
- For biomedical reasons the reality of genetic ancestry can be important, but color coded races, loaded with behavioral traits, are basically arbitrary.

- **Why is Everyone Different? Human Cultural Diversity/Variation**
- Although all humans are of the same species, they don't all act the same;
- i.e., human behavior varies tremendously worldwide
- what does account for human behavioral variation?
- it is culture, not race, that control a person's characteristics
- Cultures differ because people live in different conditions (e.g., be it ecological, economic, or social).
- each culture is ultimately a unique adaptation to the social and environmental conditions in which it evolves.

- **Culture area and cultural contact in Ethiopia**
- According to Afred Kroeber culture areas simply refers to a cluster of related cultures occupying a certain geographical region.
- In relation to the form of subsistence, we may come up with different culture area in Ethiopia: plough culture area, enset culture area, & pastoral culture area

a. **The Plough Culture Area**

- represents those parts of the country where agriculture is predominantly the means by which subsistence is eked out.
- Most of the highland and central parts of the country is considered a plough culture.
- Some of the ethnographers who studied the area are Donald Levine, Allen Hobben, Fredrick Gamst, and Jack Bauer.

b. **Enset culture area**

- covers a vast region in the southern part of the country.
- Enset cultivating areas of the present day SNNPRS region like the Guraghe, Sidama and Gedeo constitute enset culture area.
- In this region, enset serves as a staple diet to the people who make use the plant in a wide variety of forms for a living.

c. Pastoral culture area

- is found in the lowland areas covering a large section of:
- the Afar in the northwest, Somali in the southeast and Borena of southern of Ethiopia inhabitants of the pastoral culture area rely significantly on their herds and cattle for a living.
- Mobility of people and herds is a major characteristic feature of the people

Chapter Four

- Marginalized, Minorities, and Vulnerable Groups
- **Marginalization** is defined as a treatment of a person or social group as minor, insignificant or peripheral.
- Marginalization involves exclusion of certain groups from social interactions, marriage relations, sharing food and drinks, and working and living together.
- Women, children, older people, and people with disabilities, religious, ethnic, and racial minorities are among marginalized groups in different societies and cultures.
- **Crafts workers** such as tanners, potters, and ironsmiths are marginalized in many parts of Ethiopia.

- **Vulnerability** refers to the state of being exposed to physical or emotional injuries.
- **minority group** refers to a small group of people within a community, region, or country.
- In most cases, minority groups are different from the majority population in terms of race, religion, ethnicity, and language.
- Gender-based marginalization
- Women vulnerable to gender-based violence such as rape, early/child marriage, abduction/forced marriage, domestic violence and (harmful traditional practices (HTPs), female genital cutting/mutilation.

Female genital cutting

- Female genital cutting (FGC) is practiced in 28 countries in western, northern and eastern Africa.

- Somali, Afar, and Harari are the three regions with very high prevalence of the practice, whereas relatively low FGC prevalence are in Tigray and Gambella.

Health impacts of female genital cutting

- There are four major types of FGC. They are Type I (clitoridectomy), Type II (excision), Type III (infibulation), and Type IV (all the rest). The first three types of FGC are practiced in Ethiopia.

Marginalized occupational groups

- marginalized occupational groups in our country are tanners, potters, weavers and ironsmiths.
- They are considered as impure and excluded from social interactions, ownership of economic resources (e.g., land), and participation in associations and celebrations.

- Craft-workers in Ethiopia produce several articles such as traditional hand-woven clothes, household utensils, and farm tools.
- weavers produce cultural clothes to millions of people.
- **Ironsmiths** make and repair iron articles without using machines. They contribute a lot especially in rural areas.
- Ironsmiths serve rural communities by producing farming tools such as plough shares, sickles, and hoes, knives and axes
- **Tanners** make leather products that serve community members.
- **Potters** produce pottery articles essential for food processing and serving and fetching water.

Type of marginalization	Manifestations of marginalization
Spatial marginalization	-settle/live on the outskirts of villages, near to forests, on poor land, around steep slopes. -They are segregated at market places -When they walk along the road, they are expected to give way for others
Economic marginalization	are excluded from certain economic activities including production and exchanges. are not allowed to cultivate crops. -have a limited access to land and land ownership.
Social marginalization	-are excluded from intermarriage, do not share burial places with others; they are excluded from membership of associations such as iddirs. When they are allowed to participate in social events, they must sit on the floor separately
ltural marginalization	-labelled as impure and polluting; they are accused of eating animals that have died

- **Age-based vulnerability** is susceptibility children and older people, to different forms of attack both physical and emotional

Children: Discrimination/vulnerability

- girls are exposed to HTPs such as FGM and early/child marriage.

Factors encouraging early marriage:

- Social norms: Chastity and value attached to virginity
- Economic factors; economic security for young girls

Marginalization of older persons

- Ageism refer to stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination against people based on their age.
- **Religious and ethnic minorities**
- -The Jewish people (targets of extermination in Germany)
- -Muslim Rohingyas in Nyanmar

Unit Five

- **Identity, Inter-Ethnic Relations and Multiculturalism in Ethiopia**
- **Ethnicity; Definition**
- Ethnicity means a group of people bound together by the same manners, customs or other distinctive features"
- ancient Greeks were using the term 'ethnos' in practice to refer to non-Hellenic, people who are non-Greek
- England, it used to refer to someone who was neither Christian nor Jewish (to refer to heathen or pagan).
- The North American tradition adopted 'ethnic' as a substitute for minority groups within a larger society of the nation-state
- the collapse of the colonial world in the 1950s and 1960s has brought even more confusion on questions of 'race', 'culture' and 'ethnicity'.

- The homelands of former European colonizers have become populated with new, post-colonial immigrants
- 'ethnic', thus defined by preserving historical ethnicity by descent or territory while adding ethnicity as an immigrant minority
- 'ethnicity' contains a multiplicity of meanings

Conceptualizing Ethnicity

- According to Weber, an "ethnic group" is based on the belief in common descent shared by its members, extending beyond kinship, political solidarity, language, religion, etc
- ethnic groups are those human groups that entertain a **subjective** belief in their common descent because of similarities or physical type or of customs.

- And “it does not matter whether or not an objective blood relationship exists”, but believed to exist.
- people come to see themselves as belonging together as a consequence of **acting together.**
- Though any cultural trait in common can provide a basis for and resources for ethnic closure: language, ritual, economic way of life, etc
- Barth began with what actors believe or think: **ascriptions and self-ascriptions**.
- A **categorical ascription** is when it classifies a person in terms of his basic, most general identity, determined by his origin and background.
- Barth focused not upon the cultural characteristics of ethnic groups but upon relationships of cultural differentiation, **'us' and 'them'.**
- The features that are taken into account are not the sum of **'objective' differences**,

- The cultural contents of ethnic dichotomies would seem analytically to be of two orders:
- (i) **overt signals or signs** - the diacritical features that people look for and exhibit to show identity, often such features as dress, language, house-form, or general style of life, and
- (ii) **basic value orientations:** the standards of morality and excellence by which performance is judged.
- According to Barth cultural difference between two groups is not the decisive feature of ethnicity.
- Rather, what makes social groups distinct is the **social interaction** with other groups, therefore **social boundary** is the point
- Frenchness is created and becomes culturally and politically meaningful only through the encounter with Englishness,

- There may also be considerable cultural similarity but different ethnic group
- There may also be considerable cultural variation within one ethnic group

Ethnic Group

six main features of an ethnic group

1. A common proper name, to identify and express the "essence" of the community;

2. A myth of common ancestry that includes the idea of common origin in time and place and that gives an ethnic group a sense of **fictive kinship**;

3. Shared historical memories,

4. One or more elements of common culture, include religion, customs, and language;

5. A link with a homeland, its symbolic attachment to the ancestral land,

6. A sense of solidarity

Ethnic Identity

- Typically, ethnic identity is an affiliative construct, where an individual is viewed by themselves and by others as belonging to a particular ethnic or cultural group.
- Affiliation can be influenced by racial, natal, symbolic, and cultural factors
- **Racial factors** involve the use of physiognomic and physical characteristics,

- **Natal factors** refer to "homeland" (ancestral home) or origins of individuals, their parents and kin, and
- **Symbolic factors** include those factors that typify or exemplify an ethnic group (e.g. holidays, foods, clothing, artifacts, etc.).
- On the individual level, ethnicity is a **social-psychological process**, which gives an individual a sense of belonging and identity.

(social) External aspects refer to speaking an ethnic language, culture, religion, practicing ethnic traditions,

- The internal aspects of ethnic identity refer to (1) cognitive, (2) moral, and (3) affective.
- the feelings of sympathy and loyalty toward members of the same ethnic group.

Race –The Social Construction of Racial Identity

- For some time, it was common to divide humanity into four main races
- *Europeaeus*: White; muscular; hair – long, flowing; eyes blue
- *Americanus*: Reddish; erect; hair – black, straight, thick; wide nostrils
- *Asiaticus*: Sallow (yellow); hair black; eyes dark
- *Africanus*: Black; hair –black, frizzled; skin silky; nose flat; lips tumid
- In other words, race is often perceived as something that's inherent in our biology, and therefore inherited across generations.
- However, modern genetics abandon race as a variable in biomedical research, and this has two main reasons:

1. There has always been so much interbreeding between human populations

2. The distribution of hereditary physical traits does not follow clear boundaries.

- Genetic studies concerning human variation show that humans are > 99% genetically alike.
- Surprisingly, of the <1% variation [~85% is found within any human population (such as town/village/ethnic), ~10% is between any two groups, even those geographically close and ~5% is between geographically distant groups or from different continents]
- Biologically speaking, there is no such thing as a "**pure**" race
- race is a group of human beings socially defined on the basis of physical traits
- Racism, obviously, builds on the assumption that personality is somehow linked with hereditary characteristics

Theories of Ethnicity

The Primordial Model of Ethnicity

- Herder envisaged that every people had its own values, customs, language and argued for the "atavistic power" of the blood
- Primordialism is an "objectivist or essentialist theory" which argues, that "ultimately there is some real, tangible, foundation for ethnic identification."
- Geertz articulated ethnicity as a natural phenomenon deriving mainly from kinship, locality and culture
- Moreover, Smith indicated that, 'primordialism' makes two distinct claims.
- Firstly, ethnicity and ethnic attachment is "**natural and innate**", which would never change over time,
- secondly, it is "**ancient and perennial**", fixed, permanent and primarily ascribed through birth.

Instrumentalist (Situational) Theory of Ethnicity

- These are individuals affiliations to the communities which are beneficial to them or bring them practical advantages (mostly economic and political).
- These bonds of an individual to a community are characterized as, formal, intentional, purposeful, requiring conscious loyalty and formed on the basis of choice,
- They prevail in organizations such as trade unions, political parties, professional unions etc
- These groupings can be founded and can cease to exist.
- They are not universal and historically lasting.
- Ethnic group should be regarded not as a community at all but as a **rational** and purposive association.

Social Constructivist Theory of Ethnicity

- ethnicity is something that is being negotiated and constructed in everyday living.
- Therefore, ethnicity is situational, flexible and variable and changes through time
- this approach has **subjectivist** stance, which sees ethnicity as basically a social-psychological reality of individual or a matter of perception of "us" and "them"

Unit Six

Customary and Local Governance Systems and Peace Making

- Indigenous systems of governance have been used to maintain social order across Ethiopian regions.
- **The Oromo Gadaa**
- The Gaada of the Oromo is one of the well-studies indigenous systems of governance since 1950.
- Scholars studied the Oromo Gaada include Baxter, Haberland and Asmerom.
- The Gadaa system is 'an age grading institution of the Oromo that has a complex system of administration, law making and dispute settlement'
- In the Gadaa system, political power is transferred from one generation set (Luuba) to another every eight years.
- Gaada officials such as the Abba Gaada and Abba Seera serve for eight years and leave their position to the new generation of Gadaa officials.

- The law making process has rooms for wider participation of the people. Gumi gaayo, a law making assembly of the Borana Oromo, is a good example.
- Gumi gaayo is held every eight years to revising, adapting, making and publicizing the customary law (seera) and custom (aadaa) of the Oromo.
- The Waliso Oromo have a law making assembly known as yaa'iiharaa, held every eight years.

The Gedeo Baalle

- The Gedeo of southern Ethiopia have an indigenous system of governance called Baalle.
- The Baalle and the Gaada system of the Oromo have some similarities. For example, both have grading system and exercise periodic transfer of power (i.e., every eight years).

- The role of religion is high in the two indigenous systems of governance.
- Moreover, the customary law of the Gedeo is called Seera. The Ya'a, the general assembly, is the highest body of the Gedeo indigenous system of governance.
- The Baalle is a complex system which has three administrative hierarchies: Abba Gada, Roga (traditional leader next the Abba Gada), and two levels of council of elders known as Hulla Hayyicha and Songo Hayyicha.
- Conflicts are resolved by the Songo hayyicha at village level.
- When disputes are not settled at the village level, cases can be referred to first to the Hulla Hayyicha and finally to the Abba Gada.

Dere Woga of the Gamo

- the Gamo did not have a centralized political system.
- The Gamo people were organized into several local administrations locally known as deres.
- there were more than 40 deres across the Gamo highlands. Each dere had its own ka'o (king) and halaqa (elected leader).
- The indigenous system of governance embraces the dere woga (customary law) and the dubusha assemblies.
- The highest body of the indigenous governance is the dere dubusha, a general assembly that is responsible to make and revise customary laws, resolve major disputes that cannot be solved at the lower levels.
- The dubushas assembly has three hierarchies: 1) the dere dubusha (at the top), sub-dere dubusha (at the middle), and guta/neighborhood dubusha (at the village level).
- Minor cases and disputes are resolved by the dere cima, council of elders.

Intra and inter-ethnic conflict resolution institutions

- There are different indigenous institutions of conflict resolution and peacemaking across regions and cultures in Ethiopia.
- Different terms used to discuss these indigenous institutions. The following are some of them: customary dispute resolution mechanisms; traditional mechanisms of conflict resolution; grassroots justice systems; and customary justice institutions.
- Indigenous justice institutions and mechanisms share several common aspects including the following:
- High involvement of elders at different stages of conflict resolution and peacemaking process.
- Preference and respect for elders known for their qualities including experience in dispute resolution; knowledge of customary laws; impartiality, the ability of listening;

- Indigenous justice systems also have differences in terms of hierarchies, procedures and level of complexities.
- Customary justice institutions include three major components.
- The three components are 1) customary laws, 2) council of elders, and 3) customary courts or assemblies.
- Customary law: it refers to a body of rules, norms, and a set of moral values that serve as a wider framework for human conduct and social interactions.
- The Sera of the Sidama, the dere woga of the Gamo, the Seera Addaa of the Oromo; Gordena Sera of Kestane Gurage are examples of customary laws.

- In most cases, customary laws are available orally. Some customary laws are published in recent years.
- For example, the Sebat Bet Gurage published their customary law named Kitcha: The Gurage Customary Law in 1998.
- Similarly, Kistane/Sodo Gurage have a written version of customary law known as Gordena Shengo.
- Council of elders: The council of elders embraces highly respected and well-experienced community members who have a detail knowledge of the customary laws.
- The institution of council of elders has different names in various ethnic groups: Yehager Shimagile (Amhara), Jaarsaa Biyyaa (Oromo), etc
- Customary courts are public assemblies that serve two major purposes: (a) hearing, discussing and settling disputes, and (b) revising, adapting, and making laws.

The three structures of Gamo customary justice system

- The Dere Woga (Customary law):It is a comprehensive body of rules and procedures that govern a wide range of issues includes, property ownership, marriage/divorce, conflict resolution.
- The Dere Cima: Literally, dere cima means elders of the land/country. It includes notable and respected elders experienced in resolving disputes.
- Dubusha: it is customary courts. has two major functions: (a) hearing, and resolving disputes, and (b) revising and making laws.
- In most Gamo communities, the structure of the customary courts has three levels: Guta dubusha, at the village level; sub-dere dubusha, at the kebele level; and dere dubusha at the higher level.
- Cases would be heard at the guta dubusha level, if not settled, referred to the second and third level of the structure.
- dere dubusha is a sacred place where supernatural power exists. It is a place where curses are uttered in its name; justice is delivered.

Strengths of customary justice institutions

- Incur limited cost in terms of time and resources/money; elders do not request payment for their services; fines and compensation are relatively small;
- Conflict resolution process are held in public spaces in the community; different parties (victims, offenders and community members) participate in the process; decisions are communicated in public;
- Decisions are easily enforced through community-based sanctions including social exclusion; compliance ensured through blessings and the threat of curses;
- Customary systems aimed at restoring community cohesion, social relations, collective spirit and social solidarity
- Rely on respect for elders, the tradition of forgiveness, transferring compensations, embedded in indigenous beliefs

Limitations of customary justice institutions

- Limitations related to protecting and safeguarding women's rights. Indigenous justice institutions are dominated by men. For example, the council of elders are not open to elderly women.
- Indigenous institutions of dispute resolution are within the same ethnic group. Their potential in resolving inter-ethnic conflicts is very limited.

Inter-ethnic conflict resolution

- there are some example of interethnic conflict resolution institutions in some parts of Ethiopia. Abbo Gereb is one of them.
- It is a dispute resolution institution in Rayya and Wajirat district, Southern Tigray.
- Abbo Gereb serves to settle disputes between individuals or groups from highland Tigray and lowland Afar.

- Conflict between the two groups often arise because of dispute over grazing land or water resources, particularly in dry season.
- When conflict arises between parties from two ethnic groups, notable elders from Tigray and Afar come together to resolve the dispute and restore peaceful relations.
- Most of the elders involved in inter-ethnic conflict resolutions are bilingual: speaking Tigrigna and Afar.

Women's role in conflict resolution and peacemaking

- One of the limitations of customary justice systems, is the marginalization of women.
- In some cultures, women participate in dispute settlement processes when cases are related to marriage and women's issues.

Women's peacemaking sticks

- Sidama women have two instruments of power: the Yakka and the Siqqo.
- The Yakka is women's association or unity group. The Siqqo is a stick that symbolizes peace and women honor.
- Mobilizing the Yakka and holding the Siqqo, Sidama women stand for their customary rights.
- They do this, for example, when a woman is beaten up by her husband or a pregnant woman is mistreated.

Don Kachel: Agnuak women peacemaking institution

- Don Kachel involves a peace-making movement initiated by Jaye, a group of wise and elderly Agnuak women.
- The Jaye start a peace-making movement based on information gathered through women's networking.
- After examining the arguments of the two parties, the Jaye give their verdict.

- The party that caused the conflict request for forgiveness in public and pay some compensation.

Women's institution of reconciliation: Raya-Azebo, Tigray

- The Debarte plays an important role in avoiding harms associated with the culture of revenge.
- A man may kill another man in a fight. The incident would trigger the feeling of revenge among male relatives of the murdered man.
- In such a tense situation, the wife of the killer requests for the Debarte intervention.
- The wife and her female relatives get ready wearing their netela upside down and covering their hair with black cloths to show their grief and regret.
- After these preparations, the Debarte lead the female relatives of the killer to the home of the murdered man and persuading the victim's relatives to give up revenge.

- **Legal pluralism: interrelations between customary, religious and state legal systems**
- Legal pluralism refers to the existence of two or more legal or justice systems in a given society or country.
- Legal pluralism is evident in the Ethiopian context. Multiple legal institutions, including customary laws and courts, state laws and courts, and religious laws and courts (e.g., the Sharia Law) work side-by-side in most parts of the country.
- The FDRE Constitution provides ample space for religious and customary laws and courts to address personal and family cases.
- In accordance with provisions to be specified by law, a law giving recognition to marriage concluded under systems of religious or customary laws may be enacted (Article 34(4).

- Religious and customary courts that had state recognition and functioning prior to the adoption of the Constitution shall be organized on the basis of recognition accorded to them by the Constitution. (Article 78(5))
- in remote and rural areas state/formal justice institutions, customary justice institutions, and religious courts work together.
- Eg the districts in Gamo zone.: 1) state justice institutions: state law, districts court, and the police; 2) customary institutions: dere woga/customary law, dubusha/customary court, and dere cima/council of elders; and 3) social court attached to each kebele administration.

Unit Seven

Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) and Practices

Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS)

- IKS is defined as technical insight of wisdom gained and developed by people in a particular locality through years of careful observation and experimentation with the phenomena around them.
- It is accessible by recall and practice
- It consists of ideas, customs, taboos, codes, institutions, tools, techniques, artifacts, rituals, ceremonies, folklores.
- IKS refers to " a total of knowledge and practices, whether explicit or implicit, used in the management of socioeconomic, ecological and spiritual facets of life stored in the collective memory and communicated orally among members of the community and to the future generations [through, stories, myth, songs, etc].

Indigenous peoples

- In international context, while the term ‘indigenous’ is understood (mostly by Europeans) as being similar or synonym to ‘traditional’, ‘aboriginal’, ‘African’, and ‘native American’,
- ‘indigenous people' refers to a specific group of people occupying a certain geographic area for many generations
- Indigenous people possess, practice and protect a total sum of knowledge and skills constitutive of their meaning, belief systems, livelihood constructions and expression that distinguish them from other groups.
- The World Bank's definition of indigenous peoples includes close attachment to ancestral territories and the natural resources in them; presence of customary social and political institutions; economic systems primarily oriented to subsistence production; an indigenous language, often different from the predominant language; and self - identification and identification by others as members of a distinct cultural group.

- Being indigenous is about "continuity of habitation, aboriginality, and often a 'natural' connection to the land"
- For example, in the cosmology of Native Hawaiians the land is an ancestor who gave birth to Hawaiians (Trask 1999). Thus, the relationship to the land is a form of kinship.
- Academic definitions of indigenous identity has elements: living in tradition-based cultures, having political autonomy prior to colonialism, and seeking to preserve cultural integrity in the present. They also recognize the role of land to indigenous peoples.
- Self- identification as Indigenous peoples at the individual level and accepted by the community as their member;
- Historical continuity with pre-colonial and/or pre-settler societies;
- Strong link to territories and surrounding natural resources;

- Distinct social, economic or political systems;
- Distinct language, culture and beliefs;
- Formation of non-dominant groups of society; and
- Resolve to maintain and reproduce their ancestral environments and systems as distinctive peoples.
- Regarding their number, it is estimated that there are approximately 370 million indigenous peoples live in some 90 countries across the world.
- While they constitute 5 percent of the world's population, they make up 15 per cent of the world's disadvantaged.
- Of the 7,000 languages in the world today, it is estimated that more than 4,000 are spoken by the indigenous peoples.

Indigenous Knowledge (IK)

- According to Warren, indigenous knowledge is the local knowledge – knowledge that is unique to a given culture or society.
- IK contrasts with the international knowledge system generated by universities, research institutions and private firms.
- IK has different but closely related names such as 'folk knowledge', 'local knowledge or wisdom', 'non-formal knowledge', 'indigenous technical knowledge', 'traditional ecological knowledge', and others.
- indigenous knowledge is the knowledge that people in a given community have developed over time, and that continues to develop.
- It is based on experience, often tested over centuries of use, adapted to local culture and environment, dynamic and changing.

Special Features of Indigenous Knowledge

- Ellen and Harris identified features of indigenous knowledge

1. Local, in that it is rooted in a particular community and situated within broader cultural traditions;

2. Tacit knowledge and, therefore, not easily codifiable.

3. Transmitted orally, or through imitation and demonstration. Codifying it may lead to the loss of some of its properties.

4. Experiential rather than theoretical knowledge. Experience and trial and error, tested in the rigorous laboratory of survival of local communities constantly reinforce IK.

5. Learned through repetition, which is a defining characteristic of tradition even when new knowledge is added. Repetition aids in the retention and reinforcement of IK.

6. Constantly changing, being produced as well as reproduced, discovered as well as lost; though it is often perceived by external observers as being somewhat static.

Significance of indigenous knowledge

- Until relatively recently, the development of a community's conception of knowledge was influenced primarily by the philosophy and methods of western science.
- Today, however, both scholars and public policy makers are recognizing the importance of various local or culture-based knowledge systems
- Indigenous knowledge is important in that people in a community value whatever resource they get from the environment through sustainable production systems.
- a large percentage of the earth's genetic diversity has been maintained and managed through farmer's IKS
- Indigenous knowledge system enable people to develop strategies for handling household and communal activities.

- For example in Ethiopia Debo and Jige are an important uniting forces in communal activities.
- Over the years, IKS authorities make local rules to protect resources such as plants, stone terracing, agro-forestry, rivers, food preservations, conflict management, calendar, fallowing as a soil regeneration practice,
- IK is a key element of the "social capital" of the poor; their main asset to invest in the struggle for survival, to produce food, to provide for shelter or to achieve control of their own lives.
- Instead of relying on imported Western technologies, people in the developing nations can choose from readily available indigenous knowledge or, combine indigenous and Western technology.
- However, it is important to note that not all indigenous practices are beneficial to the sustainable development of a local community; and not all IK can a priori provide the right solution for a given problem.
- Typical examples are slash and burn agriculture and female circumcision.

Indigenous knowledge and development

- Indigenous knowledge passes from one generation to the next and enable indigenous people to survive, manage their natural resources and the ecosystems surrounding them like animals, plants, rivers, seas, natural environment etc
- Knowledge of these elements form a set of interacting units known as indigenous coping systems.
- In other words, "IK is relevant to development process such as agriculture, animal husbandry, traditional medicine, saving and credit, community development, poverty alleviation, and peaceful coexistence".
- Indigenous knowledge may help identify cost -effective and sustainable mechanisms for poverty alleviation that are locally manageable and meaningful.

- Many plants currently growing wild in the ancestral domain produce natural dye, fiber, detergent and natural oil.
- Several plants in the ancestral domain have medicinal uses.
- Chemical compounds of these plants could be identified for the production of organic medicine
- According to the World Development Report, knowledge, not capital, is the key to sustainable social and economic development.
- Building on local knowledge, the basic component of any country's knowledge system, is the first step to mobilize such capital.
- The key factor in the development process is in the involvement of those who possess indigenous knowledge.
- A study of 121 rural water projects in 49 countries found that 70 % succeeded when the intended beneficiaries participated in project design, compared to a 10 % success rate among programs where they did not.

Preservation, Challenges and Limitations of IK

- Indigenous knowledge, which has generally been passed from generation to generation by word of mouth, is in danger of being lost unless it is formally documented and preserved.
- The loss of IK would impoverish society because, just as the world needs genetic diversity of species, it needs diversity of knowledge systems.
- The rapid change in the way of life of local communities has largely accounted for the loss of IK.
- Younger generations underestimate the utility of IK systems because of the influence of modem technology and education.
- Since IK is essential to development, it must be gathered, organized and disseminated, just like Western knowledge"

Limitations of IK

- There is historical and contemporary evidence that indigenous peoples have also committed environmental sins' through over-grazing, over-hunting, or over-cultivation of the land.
- Practices based on, for example, mistaken beliefs, faulty experimentation, or inaccurate information can be dangerous and may even be a barrier to improving the wellbeing of indigenous people.

The Erosion of Indigenous Knowledge Systems(IKS)

- recent and current rate of loss in IK is accelerating because of rapid population growth, growth of international markets, educational systems, environmental degradation, and development processes and projects, such as dams, rapid modernization and cultural homogenization.

- The introduction of market-oriented agricultural and forestry practices focused on monocropping is associated with losses in IK and IK practices, through losses in biodiversity and cultural diversity.
- For instance, policies promoting generic rice and wheat varieties devalue locally adapted species.
- With the ready availability of many commercial foods, some biodiversity seems to become less relevant, such as seed and crop varieties selected over the years for their long-term storage attributes.
- In the short term, chemical inputs seem to reduce the need to tailor varieties to difficult growing conditions, contributing to the demise of local varieties.

- With deforestation, certain medicinal plants become more difficult to find (and the knowledge or culture associated with the plants also declines).
- More and more knowledge is being lost as a result of the disruption of traditional channels of oral communication. Neither children nor adults spend as much time in their communities anymore
- As IK is transmitted orally, it is vulnerable to rapid change — especially when people are displaced or when young people acquire values and lifestyles different from those of their ancestors.
- Also, in some countries, official propaganda depicts indigenous cultures and methodologies as backward or out of date
- Often, formal schooling reinforces this negative attitude.