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History

Lesson Note

for Grade 11

UNIT SEVEN

STATES, PRINCIPALITIES, POPULATION MOVEMENTS AND INTERACTIONS IN ETHIOPIA (13TH – MID-16TH CENTURY)

The Christian Kingdom under the Restored “Solomonic” Dynasty (1270s -1550s)

- The Zagwe Dynasty came to an end mainly because of opposition coming from its tributary region of **Amhara** whose core area by then was the present day **southern Wollo** and **northern Shewa**.
- Yikuno Amlak (r. 1270-85), an Amhara local ruler founded the Solomonic dynasty.
- He claimed descent from **Dil Naod**- the last Aksumite king.

Legend as legitimacy

- The legend of the **Queen of Sheba** and **King Solomon** became a good instrument to establish political legitimacy.
- the Zagwe rulers were considered as **userepers**.
- “Kibre Negest” (the Glory of Kings), a 14th-century book, narrates the story.



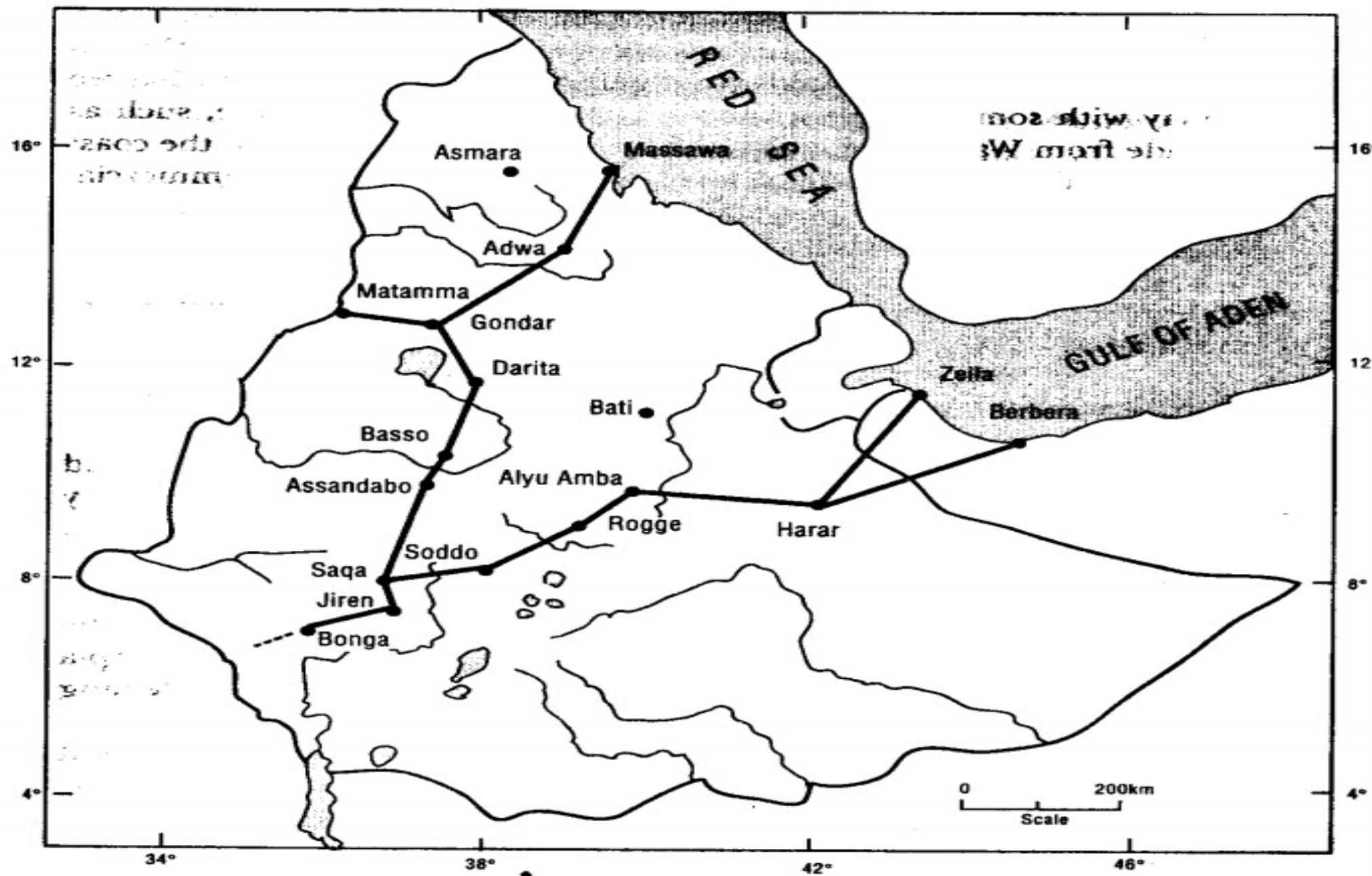
the Christian highland kingdom

- It had no fixed capital. Some areas served roving capital cities: **Lake Hayk** in Lasta and Menz, Tegulet, Bulga, Yerar, Intoto, Menagesha, Wachacha, Furi and Zikuala .
- **Yekuno Amlak** inherited almost all territories of the Zagwe kingdom.
- Later on, particularly since the coming to power of **Amde Tsion** (r. 1314-1344), the kingdom made a large-scale territorial expansion.
- The territorial expansion was accompanied by the expansion of Orthodox Church to Shewa, Gojjam,

Socio-Economy

- the economy was based on agriculture dominated by mixed farming.
- slave labour was in use
- feudalism laid its foundation
- introduction of **gult system** (a right to levy tribute on the owners of Rist land and its produce)
- trade became greatly important after Amde Tsion controlled the Muslim states.
- From 1270 to 1529 Zeila became an outlet for foreign trade

- Western and southwestern Ethiopian regions were sources of the major export items.
- Muslim merchants controlled the Zeila trade.
- the Zeila trade was a source of state revenue.
- The Christian kings organized and financed big caravans led by their trade agents.



Consequences of the long-distance trade

- it created interconnectedness within people of various culture.
- the people developed a sense of economic interdependence
- frequent clashes between the Christian highland Kingdom and the Sultanates of the region
- exchange of social and cultural values among the diverse peoples of the region

Feudalism

- the consolidation of the feudal mode of production
- the kings maintained both hereditary chiefs and appointed their own officials
- The hereditary ruling classes were left in power under the close supervision of the central government.
- Appointees were sent to the newly incorporated areas with a large number of soldiers with the right to collect tribute from the local peoples

cont...

- Rist was a hereditary right to land use by members of families whose ancestors retained the land for a long period of time.
- the Bale Gult was responsible for the collection of tribute in kind from the peasants.
- The Bale Gult retained most of the tribute for him, and sent part of it to the central government.

Gult related

- The Bale Gult benefited from corvee (free labour) of the people under her rule.
- The Bale Gult was responsible for maintaining law and order, acting as a chief judge and giving administrative justice to the local people, raising a regional army from among the Rist land owners and commnding them during a time of regional or national crisis.

Power Struggle, Consolidation, and Territorial and Religious Expansion of the Christian Highland Kingdom

- The death of **Yikuno Amlak** in 1285 ushered in internal political instability.
- Five successive kings briefly came to power between 1294 and 1299
- The problem of succession was resolved when the mountain fortress of **Amba Gishen** or **Debre Negest** was established around 1300

- While they were in the royal prison, the princes could receive education, work on the land and even marry, but they could not leave the Amba.
- The practice remained effective until Amba Gishen was destroyed by Imam Ahmad of Adal in 1540.

Consolidation and Territorial Expansion

- Amde Tsion conquered
 - Damot in 1316/17
 - Felasha between Dembiya and the Tekeze in 1332
 - Gojjam in 1323/24
 - northern provinces as far as Massawa
 - he appointed Ma`ikele Bahr (later, Bahire Negash) to be a governor of Eritrea
 - the Sultanate of Ifat in 1328

The Conquest of Amde Tsion

- the Sultanate of Hadya in about 1317

Relation with the Sultanate of Ifat

- **Daradir** opened a massive offensive on the frontier territories of the Christian highland kingdom.
- After a temporary victory, Daradir was finally defeated and killed.
- **Sabr ad-Din I** (fl. 1332) launched his attack in 1332 and his assault resulted in defeat his flight to Dawaro.
- **Haqq ad-Din II** (r. 1363/64-87) rebelled against Amde Tsiyon`s sons and successors, Seyf Ar`ed (r. 1344- 71) and Newaye Mariyam (r. 1371-80).

Relation with Hadya

- **Garad Amano** rebelled against Amde Tsion by stopping paying tribute.
- The punitive campaign was followed by the imprisonment of Amano and his entourage.

The Sultanate of Adal

- Some members of the **Walsma dynasty** founded the Sultanate of Adal in the eastern lowlands in 1380.
- **Haqqad-Din II** (r.1363/64-87) extended influence in the surrounding sultanates.
- He rebelled against **King Dawit**. Finally he was killed in a campaign in 1387.
- **Sa`ad ad-Din II** (r. 1387-1403) led a rebellion that lasted until 1403 when he was killed in Zeila.

Ahmed Badlay

- **Sultan Ahmed Badlay** organized rebellion against King Yishak (r. 1413-30) and Zer`a Ya`ekob (r. 1434-68).
- He was successful in securing the support of **Mahiyo of Hadya**. However, the latter defeated and killed Ahmad Badlay in 1445.

Zer`a Ya`ekob and His Successors

- Zer`a Ya`ekob crushed the rebellions of the sultanates of Hadya and Adal.
- Be`ede Mariam failed to suppress rebellions of the sultanates.
- In March 1529, a coalition of Muslim lowlanders led by Imam Ahmad of Adal utterly defeated King Libne Dingil`s (r. 1508-40) army at the battle of Shimbra Kure

Religious Expansion

- Christianity revived in Shewa and the monastery of **Debre Asbo** became (later renamed as **Debre Libanos**) an epicenter
- Debre Libanos was founded by **Abune Tekle Haymanot**.
- Abune Tekle Haymanot converted **King Motalami**.
- Abba Iyasus Moa founded the **Monastery of Haig**.
- the disciples of Abune Tekle Haymanot and Abba Iyasus Mo`a spread Christianity to Gojjam, Damot, Enarya & Wajj.

Religious Expansion

- Of the monasteries the number of monasteries on the islands of [Lake Ziway](#) and [Lake Tana](#) are worth mentioning.
- Kings supported the construction of churches and large monasteries, and granted them large tracts of land.
- the church-state marriage reached its peak during the reign of King Zera Ya`ekob (r. 1434-68).

The Expansion of Islam and the Emergence of Muslim Sultanates

- The expansion of trade and the religion Islam played role for the emergence of the Muslim Sultanates of the Ethiopian region.
- the Red Sea coast and the port of Zeila on the Gulf of Aden were portals to the advent of Islam.
- The first Muslim settlement took place on the Dahlak Islands and the Red Sea coastal areas

The Expansion of Islam Contd

- Arab and non-Arab Muslim merchants, who established important market centers along the Zeyla trade routes leading to the interior, were instruments to the expansion of Islam.
- The transaction was conducted in **bartering**.
- The interaction these merchants had in the community helped them spread their religion in Harar, Eastern Shewa, Wollo, Bale, Arsi and other regions of the interior.

The Expansion of Islam contd

- This process in the passage of time led to the foundation of the sultanates of Shewa, Ifat, Fatagar, Dawaro, Darha (Dera), Bali, Hadya, Arababni, Sharkha and Adal.

Features of Muslim Sultanates

- Their population was made up of Muslim communities.
- Their rulers exercised both religious and political powers.
- Islam and trade were the main factors in their emergence.
- Most of them were located in the southeastern lowlands of the Ethiopian region.
- Although some of their communities practiced mixed farming, the economy of the Sultanates mainly depended on trade.

Trade and Trade Routes

- Apart from Zeila, the old northern Swahili city states of **Mogadishu**, **Brava** and **Merca** served as ports for their hinterland.
- The trade of Zeila played a crucial role for the emergence and consolidation of various sultanates in Ethiopia.
- It also contributed for the emergence of trade centers and market towns.
- The trade route was a **conduit** for socio-economic and cultural interaction

The Sultanate of Ifat

- location- east of the Shewan plateau
- origin- probably mid-13th century.
- Umar Walasma- the first known leader
- Dynasty- Walasma
- Umar Walasma made the state prominent
- the state defeated and conquered the Sultanate of Shawa

The Sultanate of Ifat

- The Sultanate of Ifat was able to establish monopoly over the Zeila trade route
- The local communities in the area where Ifat flourished were converted to Islam.
- Emperor Amde Tsion defeated Sultan Sabrad-Din in 1332.
- Hence, Ifat became a tributary state.

The Sultanate of Hadya

- Origin- not clearly known
- location- the most westerly territory in the Ethiopian region. Its territorial extent went as far as Gibe River, Lake Hawasa and close to Lake Ziway.
- royal title- Garad
- King Amde Tsiyon made Hadya a tributary state
- the state of Hadya faced punitive expeditions from the Christian Highland Kingdom

The Sultanate of Hadya

- Queen Mother Elleni, a lady from Hadya, was married to Emperor Zara yaqob.
- Be`ede Mariyam (r. 1468-78) and Libne Dingil (r. 1508-40) had wives from Hadya.
- The rebellion of Hadya in the reign of King Sertse Dingil (r. 1563-97), forced the Emperor to abandon the Sultanate because of increasing pressure from the expanding Macha Oromo.

The Sultanate of Bali

- location- the most southerly: south Dawaro and Sharka, east of Hadya, west of Adal
- Garad - royal title
- Polulation- heterogeneous including
- the Garads of Bali paid tribute to the Christian highland kingdom until the 16th century

The Sultanate of Sharkha

- origin- not clearly known
- location- north of Bali and west of Dawaro
- Population- some groups of Oromo and ancestors of the present day Halaba ethnic group.
- Amde Tsion made the state tributary. This relationship lasted until the rise of Imam Ahmad of Adal

The Sultanate of Dawaro

- Location- south of Fatagar, south Ifat on the right bank of the Awash River, north of Wabi Shabale River, bordering Bali.
- Population- ancestors of the present-day Sidama people
- The Dawro people trace their origin from the Sultanate of Dawaro.
- According to tradition, the Dawro people moved to the Omo River region in the 16th century because of the wars of Imam Ahmad

The Sutanate of Darha

- location- east of the Awash River between the sultanates of Dawaro and Bali.
- it was once under the influence of Bali
- it was a place of exile for unruly monks

The Sultanate of Fatagar

- Origin- it emerged emerged about the mid-13th century
- Location- between Lake Ziway in the south and the present day Bishoftu area in the north
- the territories of Minjar, Shenkora, and Ada`a were a part of it
- it became a province of the Christian highland kingdom

The Sultanate of Arababni

- information about the state comes from an Arab writer **Al- Ummeri**
- location- south of the Awash River between the Sultanates of Hadya and Dawaro

The Sultanate of Adal

- Origin- founded by the **Walasma** rulers of Ifat towards the end of the 14th century
- The militant group of the Walasma dynasty retreated further to the south eastern lowlands of Harar and founded the Sultanate of Adal around 1380 centered at Dakar but in 1520, it was shifted to Harar.
- Among others, **Sa`ad ad-Din II** (r. 1387-1403), rebelled against King Dawit I (r. 1380-1412).

Political and Socio-Economic Conditions of the Western, Southern and Central States in Ethiopia

- The Kingdom of Gojjam

- ❖ location- the south of Lake Tana
- ❖ origin- no clear evidence
- ❖ King Amde Tsiyon (r. 1314-44) reduced it to tributary status.
- ❖ Monks who took Christianity to Gojjam faced resistance from Zhan Kimir and Zhan Chuhay.
- ❖ it was ruled by royal appointees

The Kingdom of Gojjam

- The Amhara of Shewa and the medieval province of Amhara the eastern parts of Gojjam were inhabited the eastern parts of Gojjam.
- Much of Gojjam, especially its eastern territories, were fiefs of the famous Queen Elleni, who is alleged to have rebuilt the monastery of Mertole Mariyam.

Polities of Bizamo, Wajj and Ganz

- Bizamo
- existed on the southern bend of the Abay River just opposite the present district of Wemberma in southern Gojjam.
- Demography- populated by Shinasha people
- a tributary to the Christian Highland Kingdom
- Part the People of Bizamo fled across the Abay River into Gojjam because of the advent of the Macha Oromo towards the end of the 16th century

- Wajj
- origin- no evidence
- location- around Lake Ziway, west of Fatagar and east of Hadya.
- ethnic identity- no evidence
- royal title- Qats
- a tributary since the campaign of Amde Tsion
- the Oromo occupied Waj in the last quarter of the 16th c.

Ganz

- Location- in the Rift Valley area between Wajj to the east, Kambata to the west and Hadya to the south.
- no evidence about origin and ethnic identity
- Royal title- Garad
- a tributary since the reign of Amde Tsion
- Islam spread after the war of Imam Ahmad

The Kingdom of Ennarya

- Location- north of the Gojeb River and west of the upper course of the Gibe River
- tributary since the reign of Emperor Amde Tsiyon
- pure gold from Ennarya was exported as far countries as Egypt, Greece and Rome.
- strongly resisted the incursion of Macha Oromo
- Finally Limmu Oromo conquered Enarya

The Gonga People

- Communities- Kafi Noonoo, Shekki Noonoo, Anfillo, Shinasha Ennarya and Bosha.
- The arrival of the Macha Oromo to the region caused their displacement
- the Shinasha moved across the Abay and settled in southern Gojjam and Metekel.
- kingdoms of Ennarya, Anfillo, Bizamo, Kafa, and Shekka formed their own kingdoms
- They had the habit of stone fortifications and enclosures in the 16th and 17th century

Relationship between the Christian Highland Kingdom and the Sultanate of Adal (1520s – 1559)

- There was political upheaval in Adal in the second half of the 15th century.
- Emir Mahfuz organized and led rebellion against **Eskindir** (r. 1478-94) and **Na`od** (1494-1508). He was finally killed by the army of King Libne Dingil (r. 1508-40) in Zeyla in 1517.
- The political crisis came to an end when Ahmad ibn-Ibrahim al-Ghazi assumed power.

Relationship between the Christian Highland

Contd

- According Futuh al-Habesha, Ahmad belonged to a clan called **Balaw** in Hubat.
- His wife Bati Dil Wambara was the daughter of Mahfuz.
- He consolidated his power in the lowlands by reconciling the conflicting Afar, Somali and Harari communities.
- Imam Ahmad played the role of mediator to end the conflict among **Afar, Somali** and **Harari** communities.

Relationship between the Christian Highland

Contd

- Imam Ahmad launched attacks on the Christian army stationed in the provinces of Dawaro, Fatagar and Bali.
- King Libne Dingil ordered the Christian governor of Bali named Degelhan to respond to the assault Adal. But the latter lost the military engagement.
- Ahmad crushed Libine Dingil`s army at the battle of Shimbira Kure in March 1529.
- The musketeers from Yemen contributed for the victory.

Relationship between the Christian Highland

Contd

- The ambition of Imam Ahmad was to create an Islamic empire in the Horn of Africa.
- Adal annexed Dawaro and Bali in 1531 .
- Libne Dingil led a fugitive life until his death in 1540.
- Imam Ahmad used Debre Birhan, and in Wajj and Dawaro as command centers to launch military campaigns.
- Of all states Wolaïta made successfully resistance

Relationship between the Christian Highland

Contd

- Imam Ahmad controlled Tigray and the areas adjoining the Red Sea area.
- He divided southern and norther regions into provinces which were governed by his appointees
- Imam was finally killed at Woina Dega in 1543

Relationship between the Christian Highland

Contd

- Controlling of the Zeila trade and its route was the cause of the war between the Christian Highland Kingdom and the Sultanate of Adal.
-

The Involvement of the Portuguese and Ottoman Turks

- Portugal and Ottoman Turks had intense rivalry to control the Mediterranean and Red Sea areas.
- The portuguses embassy came to Ethiopia in 1520 and stayed in the country until 1526. Jao Bermudez did not go back to home though.
- **Lebne Dengel** sent a message to the Pope and King of Portugal through Bermudez in 1535. He requested of their assistance.

The Involvement of the Portuguese contd

- Bermudez came to Ethiopia in 1541 with 400 Portuguese soldiers under the command of Christovao da Gama.
- They landed at Massawa and proceeded their march to the interior to meet the king.
- They faced resistance in eastern Tegray and were forced to return to Dabarwa on the Red Sea coast.
- This development forced Imam Ahmad to shift his command center to Deresge in Semien.

The Involvement of the Portuguese contd

- The military confrontation at Saharti resulted in the defeat of the Adal forces the imam was wounded and retreated.
- After another military engagement, the Adal forces retreated to Lake Ashenge.
- While the Portuguese survivors kept marching to meet Gelawdewos, Imam Ahmad contacted Ottoman Turks and secured the assistance of 900 Turkish muskeeters.
- The battle at Wafla resulted in the death and beheading of Christopher da Gama.

- The Portuguese survivors met the royal forces whereas Imam Ahmad sent back the Turkish soldiers.
- In February 1543 Gelawdewos led the joint forces of Ethiopia and Portugal and defeated the Imam`s army at the battle of [Woina Dega](#) in Dembiya.
- When Imam Ahmad was killed, his wife **Bati Del Wanbara** retreated to her home.

- The last confrontation between the forces was in 1559 when the battle ended with the death of Gelawdewos in south central Ethiopia.

Consequences of the Conflict

- huge material destruction
- the loss of human lives
- Many churches and monasteries were looted and burnt
- destruction of invaluable religious documents and relics
- depopulation
- the Christian kingdom became weak
- rivalry between the monarchy and regional lords

Consequences of the Conflict

- population movements in the region
- apprehension of conflict caused leaving one's settlement
- intermixture of ethnic and religious groups
- Settlement of Muslims in the highland areas
- disruption of the Zeyla trade

Population Movements in the Ethiopian Region

- The movement of the Somali, Afar and Argoba People was caused by
 - ❖ the conflicts between the Sultanates and the Christian highland kingdom
 - ❖ draught and famine

The Somali

- Prior to the 16th century, Somali sub-groups moved into the interior of the Horn of Africa
- The Somali soldiers formed a significant portion of the forces of Adal under Imam Ahmad.
- pastoral sections of the Somali also moved to the eastern highlands in search of water and pasture

The Afar

- Drought and famine moved the Afar towards the middle Awash.
- During the war the Afar moved to relatively safer areas.
- They were on the side of Adal during the war of Imam Ahmad.
- The Afar pastoral groups moved into the highlands of the Ethiopian region

The Argoba

- The Argoba accepted Islam in an earlier time through religious leaders who came from Arabia
- During the medieval period, the Argoba were agents of trade, Islamic expansion and Muslim state formations in the Horn.
- They had connections with Ifat, Harar, and Hadya.
- Today, in addition to the Argoba Zone in the Afar Regional State, there are some villages of the Argoba in Southern Wollo, Northern Shewa in Amhara, and Hararge in Oromia Regional States

The Oromo Population Movement

- the Oromo population movement began from the Bale highlands.
- the Oromo population in the highlands of Bale and practiced mixed farming.
- Young men who moved with their cattle to the valleys of of Middle Awash and the **Ganale River** in the south evolved into evolved into separate Oromo sub-groups with a predominantly pastoral economic life.



The Oromo Population Movement

- Sedentary Oromo groups had already existed in the Sultanates of Sharka and Dawaro before the 16th century
- The movement of the Oromo rapidly increased during the period after the defeat and death of Imam Ahmad.

The Oromo Population Movement

- The Cause of the Movement

- ☐ An increase in the number of cattle populations in the highlands of Bale
- ☐ a shortage of pasture land

Directions and Stages of the Movement

- The Oromo were organized into the Borana and Barantu confederacies.
- **Borana**: Macha, Tulama, Guji and Southern Borana Oromo
- Barantu: Karayu, Ittu, Marawa, Akkachu, Arsi, and Humbana.

Directions and Stages of the Movement

- In the course of their movement and expansion, the Borana moved in the direction of the central and southwestern Ethiopian regions.
- Some Borana groups moved to [Kenya](#)
- the Barantu Oromo followed a north easterly direction and ultimately reached the Awash Valley, Harar, Wollo and other adjacent areas.

- The Macha and Tulama groups, who took the initiative to start the expansion, moved to the Rift Valley Lakes region.
- The Oromo launched swift attacks on the states of **Hadya, Bali, Sharkha, Dawaro** and **Fatagar**.
- The operation of the Christian forces under Gelawdewos failed to check the rapid advance of the Oromo who controlled the territories of these Muslim states in the 1550s.

- At the beginning of the 1560s, the Macha and Tulama established their new center at [Odaa Nabee](#), near Dukam, where they held a common Chafee (assembly).
- Using Odda Nabee as a springing board, Macha and Tulama attacked the states of Wajj, Bizamo, Damot and Gafat.
- **King Sertse Dingil** (r. 1563-97) who scored a victory over them in 1572 in the land of the Maya around Wajj.

- The medieval kingdom of Ennarya put up resistance against the Oromo expansion until 1710.
- The Kingdom of Kafa successfully repelled the attack of the Oromo, and aborted their movement to the south of the river

The Movement of Barentu

- The movement of Barantu took a north easterly direction.
- The **Arsi** moved from the highlands of Bale into the Lake Ziway area and settled in their present-day Arsi.
- The **Karayu** left the upper course of the Wabi Shabale River and moved eastwards to their present territory in the eastern lowland.
- The Ittu, Humbana and other eastern Oromo branches moved to their present territory of Hararghe.

Consequences of the Movement

- The Christian kingdom was restricted to the regions north of the Abay River.
- The Sultanate of Adal was reduced to the city of Harar surrounded by the Jagol wall.
- The states of Bali, Hadya, Fatagar, Dawaro, Damot, Gafat and Bizamo were either destroyed or highly influenced by the Oromo.

Consequences of the Movement

- The communities who accepted the Oromo were treated kindly and they were adopted to be Oromo.
- Those who resisted were harshly treated, their property was plundered and parts of their populations were forced to flee from their ancestral territories.
- the exchange of socio-cultural values and institutions between the Oromo and the people with whom they came into contact.

Consequences of the Movement

- The Oromo embraced either Christianity or Islam based on the religion of the peoples whom they settled with
- Different centers of Gadaa assembly assembly sprang up in different areas and Gadaa grades also took various names in different places
- The Oromo have been governed by the same Gada values due to the existence of the Gadaa federation system which has been strengthened for a century by Muda ceremonies.

Consequences of the Movement

- Rise of powerful warlords who began to challenge the authority of Gadaa officials.
- Some **Abbaa Duulaa** built their own private armies for further control of land, markets and trade routes.
- the power of Gadaa declined to control the ambitious Oromo war leaders who stayed more than eight years eventually became **Mootii** (king).

The Gadaa System of the Oromo

- The Gadaa system is an indigenous democratic socio-political institution of the Oromo.
- UNESCO ascribed the Gadaa system as an intangible World Cultural Heritage of humanity at its 11th intangible world heritage in 2016.
- Under the Gadaa system newly born generations of Oromo children are expected to pass through a series of Gadaa grades that succeeded each other every eight years in assuming military, economic, political and ritual responsibilities.

Gadaa Age Grades

Grade	Age of Individuals
Dabale	0-8
Game-Titiko	8-16
Game-Gurgudo	16-24
Kusa	24-32
Raba-Doori	32-40
Gada	40-48

he Gadaa System of the Oromo

- The full cycle of the Gadaa system was ten Gadaa grades, which was divided into two periods of forty years each.
- The Gadaa government called **Chaffee** (Assembly) was also set up by officials elected from among the members of the Gadaa.
- Gadaa officials were elected on the basis of their ability. The qualifications for election include oration, knowledge of history and traditions of the society, past military achievements with recognizable potential for future leadership.

Gadaa Officials

- **Abbaa Bokku/Gadaa**- father of the Gadaa or spokesperson
- Abbaa Sera (the chief judge) Abbaa
- Abbaa Duulaa (commander of the army)
- The Gadaa system set limits on Gadaa rulers and guaranteed the rights to be enjoyed by all members of Oromo society.
- The democratic nature of the system preserved the unity of the Oromo and sustained its internal peace for centuries back.



Cont....

□ After the inscription, the UNESCO wrote this on its website about the element of Gadaa system:

- Gadaa is a traditional system of governance used by the Oromo people developed from knowledge gained by community experience over generations.
- Gadaa is organized into five classes.
- Gadaa system has the **principles of checks and balances**:
 - through periodic succession of **every eight years**, and
 - **division of power** (among executive, legislative, and judicial branches),
 - **balanced opposition** (among five parties), and power sharing between higher and lower administrative organs

Congratulations!

The Gada System
an indigenous democratic
socio political system
of the Oromo People
inscribed in UNESCO
as Intangible World Heritage

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Gadaa Administration

- The elected Gadaa officials ruled the Oromo in accordance with the laws of the Gadaa system for eight years.
- The government's independent executive, legislative and judicial branches were a way of balancing power.
- Corrupt or dictatorial leaders would be removed from power through a process called “buqqisu” (removal) before the official end of their term.

- **Siinqee** is womens' institution parallel to the Gadaa system.
- **Siinqee**
 - promoted gender equality
 - a peace-making institution
 - **Haadha Siinqee** holds a thin stick after her marriage
 - Siinqee is a symbol of blessing for fertility, production and prosperity in her life time.
 - **Haadha Siinqee** participates in the peace making processes along with the legal experts and elders

Haadha Siingee



Why the Gadaa System Declined?

- emergence of powerful Abbaa Duulas (war leaders) who gradually became Mootii (king)
- involvement of the Oromo in long distance trade
- the expansion of Islam among the Oromo
- interactions with the monarchical Omotic states
- missionary activities
- the influence of the hierarchical system of the Ethiopian Empire state

Moggassa and Guddifacha

- **Moggassa** means adopting a new **Oromo or non-Oromo sub-group** or any other social group as a body (in mass) by a ceremony of oath held in the presence of the Abbaa Gadaa.
- Adopted Oromo sub-groups or any other group became collectively **Ilma Gossa** (sons of the sub-group) and were entitled to all the socio-economic and political rights adoption entailed.

Moggassa and Guddifacha

- The weak Oromo or non-Oromo groups gained both protection and material benefits from the members of the adopting gossa.

Moggassa and Guddifacha

- Guddifacha was an institution for adopts individual to be an Oromo.
- The adopted one was regarded as a real son, and he enjoyed all rights of a true son.