

UNIT 5

Politics, Economy and Social Processes from the Early 16th to the end of the 18th C's

5.1. Conflict between the Christian Kingdom and the Sultanate of Adal and After

- ❖ The revival of long-distance trade caused competition and struggle for control over the trade routes between the Christian Kingdom and the Muslim principalities.
- ❖ This was followed by a series of wars, which were depicted as wars for religious supremacy in historical accounts of Christian and Muslim clerics.
- ❖ Causes of the conflict:-
 1. competition and struggle for control over the trade routes
 2. mal-administration and exploitation of periphery made military mobilization possible.
 3. demographic pressure among the Afar and Somali pastoralists pushing to approach Harar and the Christian Kingdom.
 4. religion provided ideological justification for the wars.
- ❖ Major causes remained:- the interest to control trade routes lay at the heart of the conflict between the Christian Kingdom and the Muslim Sultanates that lasted from 1529 to 1543.

❖ Background to the Conflict

1. Among the Muslim Sultanates, internal strife, corruption and anarchy was intensified and a new leadership was urgently called for. Such leadership came from Imam Ahmed ibn Ibrahim al-Ghazi.

- ✓ The origins of Imam Ahmed, alias “the left-handed,” are obscure.
- ✓ He was born at Hubet in between Dire Dawa and Jigjiga and raised by his devout Muslim kin in one of the oases on the route to Zeila.
- ✓ He was a rigorous and ardent believer of Islam. He soldiered for Garad Abun of Adal, who during his few years in power called for Islamic Puritanism.

2. For centuries, lowland inhabiting Muslim pastoralists had wanted to expand to high plateaus for better and enough pasturelands and their attempt was held back by the Christian army.

- ✓ With increased population and overgrazing in Somali and Afar of eastern Ethiopia, between the 13th and 16th centuries, raiding and counter-raiding at water holes or animal rustling intensified.
- ✓ It was one of the Imam's remarkable achievements in leadership that he mobilized the pastoral communities of the Afar, the Somali, the Harla, Harari and others to a common cause.

- ✓ He convinced them not to fight amongst themselves but to **unite and expand to the Christian Kingdom** and resolve their pressing material needs while at the same time keep Islamic believes.

❖ The Course of the War:

- **Lebne-Dengel** was enthroned when he was **only eleven**. Assisted by the elderly Elleni and due to internal conflicts in Adal, the Christian state initially retained its interest and even scoring significant victories into Muslim territory in the early 16th century.
- However, shortly, Adal fell to **Imam Ahmed's army** in **1520**, and he **refused to pay tribute** and this was followed by a **campaign against the Christian Kingdom in 1527**.
 - ✓ The **Imam's army** fought fiercely and controlled the territories including **Bali, Dawaro, Fatagar, Sidama, Hadiya and Kambata** and the Christian Kingdom was at risk.
 - ✓ In **1528**, **Lebne-Dengel mobilized** a **vast force** and encamped about fifty kilometers east of what is now Addis Ababa.
 - ✓ There was the **problem of logistics and the leadership of the army** of Christian Kingdom failed to adopt a common strategy to defeat Adal's force.

- On the other hand, **enthusiastic Imam Ahmed's army** managed logistics problems with its **small-sized army**.
 - ✓ The Imam's army had also an **excellent leadership** characterized by **better mobility and flexible tactics** with a unified command.
- ✓ As a result, the **larger and well-equipped Christian army** was defeated in one of the most decisive engagement at the battle of **Shimbra Kure in 1529**, near present day Mojo.
- ✓ After the victory, the Imam's army made a **large-scale control** of the territories of the Christian Kingdom including **Shewa, Amhara, Lasta**, and moved as far north as **Mereb Melash**.
- ❖ **The Process of Conquest/Futuh al Habasha/**
 - ✓ Ahmad resumed an overall invasion of Christian territories in **1531** and occupied **Dawaro and Shawa**.
 - ✓ By **1535**, he brought **most parts of the country** under his control.
 - ✓ He continued his devastating conquest without any effective resistance and reached the present provinces of **Tigray and Eritrea** and along the Red Sea coast.

- ✓ By 1535, Imam Ahmed's empire stretched from Zeila to Massawa on the coast including the Ethiopian interior.
- However, Ahmad was not able to capture Libne Dingel, who remained fugitive and died in the 1540 in the monastery of Dabra Damo, and was succeeded by his son, Gelawdewos (1540-1559).
- ❖ Ahmed's Administration:
 - ✓ Imam Ahmed established a civil administrative bureaucracy constituted from his own men and newly recruited personnel from the Christian territories.
 - ✓ One of the most illuminating figures during the war was the wife of the Imam, Bati Del Wanbara. She was the daughter of a Muslim military commander of Adal known as Mahfuz.
 - ✓ Tradition claimed that Del Wanbara had encouraged her husband to avenge the death of her father.
 - ✓ She accompanied her husband throughout his expeditions and even in a state of pregnancy during which she was unable to use mules.
 - ✓ Indeed, she delivered her two sons during the campaigns of 1531 and 1533 in Ifat and present day Tigray, respectively.

❖ Gelawdewos and the Battle of Woyna-Dega in 1543:

- Gelawdewos (r. 1540-1559), continued to face the wars with more intensity as Imam Ahmed had received **Turkish musketeers**.
- In the meantime, based on earlier request made by Lebne-Dengel in **1535**, about **400 Portuguese soldiers**, armed with matchlocks arrived in the Christian court in **1541** **Christopher da Gama** from the coast through highlands of Eritrea to Tigre.
- Imam Ahmed and his forces seeing the coming of Portuguese, immediately marched to Tigray to **prevent the link up** the forces of Gelawdewos with Portuguese.
- The Portuguese found their way blocked by Imam Ahmed's army when they reached the areas of Wajerat in Tigray. However, in **1542, the Portuguese army** defeated the Imam's army in **two battles**.
- As a result, Ahmed appealed for military assistance from Ottomans, who sent **900 warriors and 10 cannons** from Zebid(Yemen).
- The Portuguese army, in August **1542** was defeated in **Ofla**, near Lake Ashange. In the battle, about **200 Portuguese** and their leader **Christopher da Gama** were killed and the leader was beheaded.

- An important anecdote that should be mentioned here is the role of Lebne-Dengel's wife **Seblewongel**. She is said to have **participated in the war** against Imam Ahmed in **1542**.
- After the success, Imam Ahmed was **confident about his army's**, he sent his **allies back home** and let his army camp.
- On the part of the Christians, preparations were made for final confrontation under the leadership of Emperor **Gelawdewos (r.1540-59)**.
- The Queen mother, **Seblewongel**, **advised** the reigning emperor how to prepare and march for the battle of **Woyna-Dega**.
- Due to limited resources, the monarch **employed hit and run strategy**, which severely affected Imam's army.
- **Imam Ahmed's army** could not use its previous quality of **easy mobility** because they did not know where the attacks came from.
- **On February 25, 1543** while Imam Ahmed was encamped near Lake Tana, he was attacked and killed after a fierce fighting at the battle of **Woyna-Dega**.
- Soon after the battle, Gelawdewos was confident that the nobility and his army were loyal to him. As a result, the king **restored possession of almost all the northern and central plateau**.

- Muslim communities in the highlands submitted to Gelawdewos and he was tolerant toward them to promote national conciliation and to develop revival of smooth relations with the Muslim world.
- Gelawdewos was able to restore many of pre-1520s territories and tributary regions. The king attempted to reconsolidate the state through campaigns to different areas and camping Chewa (regiment) in border areas.
- By the early 1550s, Gelawdewos had established a strong Christian Kingdom. However, the control over the Muslim dominated areas was not an easy task.
- In the period, the growing challenge to the Christian state came from:
 - the retreating soldiers of the Sultanate of Adal,
 - the Ottoman Turks,
 - Jesuit interlude, and
 - Oromo that advanced into the center.
- Adal under the leadership of Nur Ibn al-Waazir Mujahid was ready to wage war against the Christian state for revenge.
- In 1559, the forces of Emir Nur confronted Gelawdewos and killed the king himself.

- **Emperor Minas (r.1559-1563)** who succeeded Gelawdewos defeated the **Turks' force** and reclaimed territories in the coast including **Dabarwa**.
- However, in the early **1560s**, **Yishaq** revolted and allied with the Turks against him.
- Similarly, **Sartsa-Dengle (r.1563-1598)** had to defend the **Turks** while fighting with the **Agaw, Gumuz, Bete-Israel, Sidama, Enarya and the Oromo**.

❖ **Consequences of the War**

- The Muslim-Christian conflict had resulted in a number of consequences.
 1. One of the most obvious was the **huge human and material** cost. Ahmed Gragn also burnt so many **historical churches and monasteries** with their invaluable heritage possessions and their priests and monks.
 2. Both **the Muslim Sultanate and Christian Kingdom** were **weakened** thereby paving the way for an easy infiltration and success of the **Oromo population movement**.
 3. Ahmad's destruction of the **royal prison of Amba Gishen** left many contending princes free and this resulted into a dynastic conflict and political instability in the Christian kingdom.
 4. The war also led the shift of political centre of the Christian kingdom from **central Shawa** to the north, towards the **Lake Tana** area.

5. The **religious controversies in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church**, caused by the Jesuit missionaries who came from Portugal following Portuguese army and **the Ottoman Turkish threat along the Red Sea** coasts after Ahmad's war were some of **long term consequences** of the war.

6. Ahmad Grag's domination also encouraged **expansion of Islam**. However, the war had also a disastrous impact on Muslims.

✓ The Muslim states were left impoverished and the ground cleared the way for their occupations by the Oromos.

7. **Competition for supremacy** over the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean between **Portugal and the Ottoman Turks** gave the prolonged conflict between the Christian Kingdom and the Muslim principalities a **global dimension**.

- Having noticed the movement of **diplomatic missions between the Christian Kingdom and Portugal**, the **Turks gave moral and military support to Imam Ahmed**.
- In **1540**, the Imam turned to his Muslim ally, **Turkey**, for assistance and regional Ottoman authorities provided two hundred Muslim musketeers and ten cannons.

On the **positive side**:

- ✓ It should be restated that the war had arguably resulted in **cultural interaction** among the peoples of Ethiopia.
- ✓ **Linguistic and religious interactions** accompanied by **intermarriages** among peoples of the various cultural groups were one of these manifestations in the long history of Ethiopia and the Horn.

5.2. FOREIGN INTERVENTION AND RELIGIOUS CONTROVERSIES

- ✓ The church was weakened by the wars against the sultanate of Adal. The **destruction of property and deaths of its clergy** hampered the operation of the Church and therefore, its service as an ideological arm of the state.
- ✓ The rulers of the Christian Kingdom may have regarded an alliance with **Roman Catholicism** as a tactic to secure sufficient **modern weaponry and training** to restore its lost territories.
- ❖ **Background for the arrival of Jesuits:-**
- ✓ The background for the arrival of Catholic missionaries was led by the coming of **Portuguese diplomatic mission** in **1520** and **Portuguese army** in **1541**.

- ✓ In 1557, several Jesuit missionaries along with their bishop, **Andreas de Oviedo**, came to Ethiopia to **expand Catholicism**.
- The Jesuits promoted Catholic doctrine of **two different** and therefore **separate, natures** of **Christ-divine and human**, which was contrary to **Monophysite** theology of EOC.
- **EOC** taught that Christ, through **union or Tewahedo** had a **perfect human nature inseparable from divinity**.
 - In **451 A.D. Schism in Chalcedon**:- when Coptic Orthodox Church rejected the notions of the Council of Chalcedon and called itself a “Monophysite” believe in the “One Nature”.
 - **Diophysitism**:- two natures (human and divine) of Jesus Christ by Eastern Orthodox Churches.
 - **Roman Chalcedonian Catholic and Greek Orthodox** Churches believe into two natures of Christ include Constantinople, Greece, Cyprus, Russia, Rumania, Hungary and Serbia. Protestant churches also hold this belief.
 - **Monophysite**:- meaning single nature. It merged Christ’s human nature into his divinity, it meant there was only one single nature, a divine nature. Coptic Orthodox Church accused being Monophysite at Chalcedon but this is not what Coptic believed rather it is a Miaphysite.

- **Non-Chalcedonian Orthodox Churches** include Egypt Coptic, Syrians, Lebanon, Armenians, Ethiopians and Indians.
- The **Coptic Orthodox Churches** rejected the motion of Council of Chalcedon based on **St. Cyril's** expression "**One Nature of God the Incarnate Logos**" (**Mia Physis Tou Theou Logou Sesarkwmene**). Thus, they referred as "Monophysite" those who believe in the "One Nature".
- **St. Atnathius of Alexandria** resolved the expression of one nature does not indicate **divine nature alone or human nature alone** rather the unity of **both natures in One Nature** (like the soul and body of human).
- Monophysite **is misinterpreted** through periods in history as a believe in one nature of Christ and deny other nature.
- The expression "**One Nature**" does not indicate the **Divine nature** alone nor the human nature alone, but it indicates the unity of both natures into **One Nature** which is "**The Nature of the Incarnate Logos**". **St. Cyril the Great** taught us **not to talk about two natures after their unity**.
- **Miaphysite:-** is one nature means the Lord Jesus Christ is perfect human and perfect devine, and these two natures are united together without mingling or confusion, nor alteration in one nature; the nature of God incarnate.
- In **October 1991**, the representatives of all churches agreed on the **Statement of Christology- Incarnate Logos or Complete hypostatic union**.

- The leading members of the Jesuits mission who played key role in efforts to evangelize the country include Joao Bermudez, Andreas de Oviedo, Pedro Paez and Alfonso Mendez.
- ✓ The Jesuits began their evangelical effort with Emperor Gelawdewos (r. 1540-59), hoping that the rest of the society would follow suit.
- ✓ Gelawdewos listened and engaged in doctrinal debates with the missionaries, but he was not prepared to give in. Instead, he defended the teachings of Orthodox Christianity in a document entitled the *Confession of Faith*.
- ✓ Minas and Sertse-Dengel, who succeeded Gelawdewos one after the other, were too busy fighting against the Oromo and the Turkish forces to entertain the Jesuits in their courts.
- ✓ The Jesuits got relative success with Emperor Za-Dengel (r. 1603-4) who secretly converted to Catholicism.
- ✓ But Za-Dengel's reign was too short for the Jesuits to effect the desired result. Za-Dengel was overthrown by Yaqob (r. 1598-1603; 1604-7), who befell a similar fate in the hands of Susenyos (r. 1607-32).
- ✓ Susenyos, too, as was challenged by provincial leaders who refused to pay tribute, integrated the Oromo with the forces of central government to consolidate his power and then stabilize the country.

- ✓ Probably as a means to this, Susenyos sought for an alliance, which he got through the **diplomatic advisory of Pedro Paez**.
- ✓ **In 1612, Susenyos converted to Catholicism** and announced it to be **state religion later in 1622**. In the meantime, in 1617-8 several anti-Catholic voices mounted following the changes in liturgy and religious practices.
- ❖ Even worse, with the monarch's consent, another Spanish Jesuit, **Alfonso Mendez** ordered:-
 - ✓ **re-consecration** of Orthodox priests and deacons and **rebaptism** of the mass.
 - ✓ the **suspension of Jewish** customs such as male circumcision and the observance of the **Sabbath**.
 - ✓ Additional pronouncements include **prohibitions** of preaching in **Ge'ez**, fasting on **Wednesdays and Fridays**, reverence for **Ethiopian saints** and the Ark of Covenant (**Tabot**).
 - ✓ Meanwhile, he ordered **eating pork, Latin Mass and Gregorian calendar** to be adopted.

- ✓ The reforms led to revolts led by the ecclesiastics and the nobility. Even loyal followers of the emperor including his own son Fasiledas (r. 1632-67) were opposed to the changes initiated by the Jesuits.
- ✓ After 1625, controversies, rebellions, repressions mounted and the state came to the verge of falling apart. In a battle in June 1632, large number of peasants lost their lives in one day.
- ✓ Finally, the emperor abdicated the throne in favor of Fasiledas, who countered the Catholic transformation.

❖ Fasiledas:-

- ✓ restored the position of Orthodox Church as the state religion,
- ✓ expelled the Jesuits and punished local converts including Susenyos' uncle and the most fervent supporter of Catholicism, Se'ela Kristos.
- ✓ By fearing another religious conflict, Emperor Fasiledas introduced a new policy called "Close-Door Policy", which isolated the state from all Europeans for about a century and a half.
- ✓ Conversely, he initiated and adopted a policy of close diplomatic relations with the Islamic world and formed an alliance with the neighboring Muslim states to ensure that no European crossed into the Christian Kingdom.

- ✓ As a result, in 1647, he concluded an agreement with the Ottoman Pasha at Suakin and Massawa to the effect that the latter should block any European from entering in to his territory.
- ✓ By doing so, Fasiledas was able to restore peace and order.
- Ethiopia's diplomatic break from Europe remained effective until the beginning of the nineteenth century with the exception of secret visits by a French Doctor Charles Jacques Poncet and the Scottish traveler James Bruce in 1700 and 1769, respectively.
- ✓ Yet, the Jesuit intervention triggered doctrinal divisions and controversy within the Ethiopian Orthodox Church that was divided into disputant sects and reached its peak during the Zemene Mesafint.
- ✓ Tewahedo teaches Hulet Lidet (two births) of Christ: first in eternity as a Divine Being the eternal birth and second, born again from St. Mary into the world as a perfect man and perfect divinity united in one nature, thus Tewahedo (United). It was dominant in Tigray and Lasta.
- ✓ Qibat (Unction) was also developed from Hulet Lidet doctrine and accepted the eternal birth as the first birth of Christ, but claimed that at the moment of his incarnation, when he was born into the world, Holy Ghost anointed him.
- ✓ This sect was dominant in Gojjam.

- ✓ *Sost Lidet/Three Births (Ya Tsega Lij/Son through Grace)* taught that Christ was **first born in eternity** as divine being, was born again in the **womb of St. Mary** and **anointed by Holy Ghost**. This sect was dominant in **Gonder and Shawa**.

5.3. POPULATION MOVEMENTS

- The movements of people from one place to another have played important roles in **shaping the history of Ethiopia and the Horn**.
- Population movements occurred in the Horn due to **various reasons**, in varied **scales** and followed different **directions**.
- In **Ethiopia and the Horn**, the causes of the movements could be attributed to the region's long socio-political conditions involving **military conflicts, drought and demographic factors**.
- ✓ Population movements had extensive effects including the **integration of peoples across ethnic and religious lines**.
- ✓ **Major outcomes of population movements** during the period include **religious, ethnic and linguistic interactions and intermingling** of peoples through **intermarriage, change of abode, original culture and evolution of new identities**.

I. POPULATION MOVEMENTS OF THE ARGOBA, AFAR, AND SOMALI

❖ Causes:

1. The military conflict between the Christian Kingdom and the Sultanate of Adal in the late 15th and the early 16th centuries was partly responsible for the population movement of the Argoba, Afar and Somali.
 2. The demographic pressure on environment gave background for the population movement.
- This population movement was probably triggered off by:
- population growth and shortage of grazing land, and
 - finally, mounting pressure of Oromos, who began their expansion in the 15th Century.

A.The Argoba: the Argoba were major agents of Islamic expansion, trade and Muslim state formation in the Horn.

- ✓ Towards the end of the 13th century, with the decline of the sultanate of Shewa, the sultanate of Ifat, in which the Argoba were dominant, became the center of Muslim resistance.

- ✓ On the eve of the wars of Imam Ahmed al Ghazi, the Argoba joined the Afar and the Somali against the Christian Kingdom.
- ✓ The area inhabited by the Argoba was also a target of the expanding Christian Kingdom and was the major center of conflict. This was because the major caravan trade routes passed through Argoba territory.

B. The Afar: before the 16th century, due to drought, the Afar moved towards the east until they reached the middle Awash.

- ✓ Trade routes linking the ports in the Horn passed through the Afar's territory.
- ✓ As a result, the region was the centre of competition between the Christian Kingdom and the Muslim sultanates to control the trade routes.
- ✓ Besides being actors in the conflict, the conflict inevitably pressurized the Afar to move into different directions to avoid the risk of the conflicts.
- ✓ In the 16th century, their pastoral economy helped them to survive the destructive effects of the wars.

C. The Somali: their territory laid in the medieval competition for the control of trade routes.

- ✓ The population movement of the Somali was a strong force behind the military strength of the Imam.
- ✓ However, the population movement of the Somali did not last for long as they returned to their home base following the defeat of Imam Ahmed in 1543.

II. GADAA SYSTEM AND THE OROMO POPULATION MOVEMENT (1522-1618)

A. The Gadaa System

- The Oromo population movement of the 16th century cannot be better understood without considering the Gadaa system.
- The Gadaa system was an institution through which the Oromo:
 - socially organized themselves,
 - administered their affairs,
 - defended their territories, maintained law and order, and
 - managed their economies.

- Studies do not clearly indicate **when and how the Gadaa system emerged**. However, it is clear that for long the society organized their **politics, economy, social, cultural, and religious affairs** through the *Gadaa* institution.
- The account by **Abba Bahrey** indicates that during the early 16th century, the **system fully functioned** because of which the Oromo were well organized.
- Thus, it is reasonable to think that the Oromo had practiced the **Gadaa system long before the 16th century** movement of the Oromo.
- Recent studies based on the **Gadaa calendar** and *Gadaa* centers suggest that the system evolved from the earlier **Cushitic age-set social organization**.
- **Time computation and recording history** was based on the **eight-year** segment of time. In the system, eight years **represented one Gadaa period**, **5-gadaa periods or 40 years** represented one generation and nine generations represented an era.

- Gadaa was interrupted and revitalized during various eras because of various internal and external factors. For instance, the Borana-Barentu Gadaa was instituted after interruption for nearly two generations. It was revived in 1450 at Madda Walabu that became the central Chaffe (assembly) and seat of the senior Qallu until 1900.
- The Gadaa system constituted elements of democracy such as: -
 - periodic succession and power sharing to prevent a one-man rule,
 - representation of all lineages, clans and confederacies.
 - served as a mechanism of socialization, education, maintenance of peace and order, and social cohesion.
 - Gadaa constituted rules of arara (conflict resolution), guma (compensation) and rakoo (marriage).
 - provided a socio-political framework that institutionalized relationship between seniors and juniors and egalitarian relations among members.
- The Gadaa system organized the Oromo society into age-grades and generation sets delineating members' social, political, and economic responsibilities. Ten age- grades and five classes operated in parallel.

- The system helped the members of age-sets to develop a consistent and stable sense of self and others. **Sons** joined the **first grade** as members of *Gadaa* class (generation class or set) forty years after their **fathers**.

Age-grades and their roles

Gade Grade	Age	Roles
Dabale	Birth-8 years	Socialization
Game	9-16 years	
Folle	17- 24 years	Military training, agriculture, etc.
Qondala	25-32 years	Military service
Raba-Dori	33-40 years	Candidates for political power
Luba	41-48 years	Leaders of Gadaa government
Yuba	49-80 years	Senior advisors, educators and ritual leaders

- The ***gadaa/luba*** assumed power for **eight years**. The head of the government was known as ***Abba-Gadaa*** and assisted by several representatives from among the generation set.

- These included *Abba Bokku* (father of scepter), *Abba Chaffe* (head of the assembly), *Abba-Dula* (war leader), *Abba Sera* (father of law), *Abba Alanga* (judge), *Abba Sa'a* (father of treasury) and other **councillors**.
- In the *Gadaa* system, the **senior Qallu** (*Abba Muda*) played indispensable roles in **power transfer and legitimizing** the ruling *gadaa* class.
- **Women** maintained their **rights by the Sinqe institution**, which helped them to form **sisterhood and solidarity**. Women from childhood to old age i.e. *guduru* (pre-pubescent), *qarre* (adolescent, ready for marriage), *kalale* (wives of *Luba* and *Yuba*) and *cifire* (wives of *Gadamojji*/above 80 years) were believed to have **sacred power**.
- They involved in occasions like **power transfer, conflict resolution, thanks-giving and others**. The *kalale* were also privileged to support and **advise the ruling class**.
- The *Gadaa* system functioned by the **cyclical power transfer** from one *Gadaa* class to the next every **eight years**.

- With some minor differences in nomenclature in different parts of Oromo territories, the five *Gadaa* classes (generation sets) are listed below:

The Five Gadaa Classes

Fathers	Sons
Melba	Harmufa
Mudana	Robale
Kilole	Birmaji
Bifole	Mul'ata
Michille	Dulo

B.The Oromo Population Movement (1522-1618)

❖ Causes:-

- ✓ A combination of natural and manmade factors caused the Oromo population movement of the 16th and 17th centuries.
- 1. Natural factors include demographic pressure and subsequent need for land to accommodate the growing human and livestock population.

2. The **conflict between the Christian Kingdom and Muslim Sultanates** from the 13th to the 16th centuries might have pressurized mainly pastoral Oromo groups to leave the lands they inhabited for other areas.

❖ **Courses of the Movement:-**

- ✓ In 1522, when the population movement began, the Oromo were already organized under **Borana and Barentu confederacies**.
- ✓ The Oromo forces took **northern direction** and passed through a corridor between **Mount Walabu and Lake Abbaya**. When they reached half way between **Lakes Abbaya and Hawassa** then **westward** and across the **Bilatte River** to the **southwest**.
- ✓ From **1522 to 1618**, the Oromo fought **twelve Butta wars**.
- ✓ The first *Gadaa* i.e **Melba (1522-1530)** fought and defeated Christian regiment **Batra Amora** led by **Fasil** and occupied **Bali**.
- ✓ **Gadaa Mudena (1530-8)** reached the **edge of Awash River**.
- ✓ The **Kilole Gadaa (1538-46)** controlled **Dawaro** after defeating Christian regiment **Adal Mabraaq**.
- ✓ **Gadaa Bifole (1546-54)** advanced to **Waj and Erer**.
- ✓ The **Michille (1554-62)** scored victory over **Hamalmal's** force at **Dago**, and **Jan Amora**; on Adal led by **Emir Nur Mujahiddin** at Mount **Hazalo**.

- ✓ The *Harmufa* (1562-70) fought Minas (r.1559-63) at Qacina and Wayyata; occupied Angot, Ganzyi, Sayint etc.
- ✓ In 1574, Sartsa Dingil's (r.1563-97) cavalry led by Azzaj Halibo defeated *Robale gadaa* (1570-78) at Woyna Daga, but Robale recovered by defeating Zara'a Yohannis' force.
- ✓ The *Birmaji* (1578-86) controlled Ar'ine in Waj, crossed Jama to Wolaqa and overwhelmed the Daragoti regiment.
- ✓ The *Mul'ata* (1586-94) seized Damot, Bizamo, Gafat, Dambiya and Tigray.
- ✓ In the early 17th century, the *Dulo* (1594-1602), *Melba* (1603-10), and *Mudena* (1610-18) expanded to West and Northern parts of the Horn of Africa.
- ✓ Others like the *Warday* moved to Kenya and Bur Haqaba and Majertin in Somalia.
- ❖ Why the Oromos so successful:
 - The wars between the Christian Kingdom and Muslim Sultanates,
 - The organization of the Oromo under the *Gadaa system* played crucial role in the success of the Oromo population movement.

- In the course of their movement into various regions, different Oromo branches established *Gadaa* centres.

The Five major Gadaa centres

Gadaa Centers	Respective Oromo clans
<i>Oda Nabee</i>	Tulama
<i>Oda Roba</i>	Sikko-Mando (Arsi)
<i>Oda Bultum</i>	Itu-Humabenna
<i>Oda Bisil</i>	Mecha
<i>Oda Bulluq</i>	Jawwi Mecha


- ✓ Other places, which became *Gadaa* centers, were **Gayo** of Sabbo-Gona, **Me'e Bokko** of Guji, ***Oda Dogi*** of Ilu, ***Oda Hulle*** of Jimma, ***Oda Garado*** of Waloo, etc.
- ✓ *Gadaa* leaders such as Dawe Gobbo of Borana, Anna Sorra of Guji, Makko-Bili of Mecha, Babbo Koyye of Jimma and others established *Gadaa* centers and laid down cardinal laws in their respective areas.

- However, various Oromo groups kept their relations through the office of *Abba Muda* (the father of anointment) seated at *Madda Walabu* and formed *alliances during times of difficulty*.
- Besides, they obeyed *similar ada* (culture) and *sera* (law) through sending their *delegates to Madda-Walabu*, the *central chaffe* until the pan-Oromo assembly was forbidden in 1900 due to the political influence of the Ethiopian state.
- In due course, *Gadaa* devised *effective resource allocation formula including land*. Land holding system to regulate resource and their interaction among different clans is known as the *qabiyye system*.
- The system established rights of *precedence (seniority)* in possession of land. Accordingly, *place names* were given the names of the *pioneer* as a marker of *qabiyye rights*.

5.4. INTERACTION AND INTEGRATION ACROSS ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS DIVERSITIES

- The **political, social, and economic processes** of the medieval period were the major factors for the people's interactions across regions.
- Such **interactions** occurred **during peace and conflict times**. The cases in point were the **trade contacts and conflicts** to control trade routes, religious expansion, and territorial expansion and population movements.
- One of the **major consequences of the interactions** in the medieval period particularly in the **population movement** of the 16th century was the **integration of peoples across ethnic and religious diversities** in Ethiopia and the Horn.
- It is apparent that **territorial and religious expansion** by the **Christian kingdom** diffused **Christian tradition from north to the south**. Similarly, the **wars of Imam Ahmed and the population movements of the Argoba, the Afar and the Somali** caused the **expansion of Islam into the central parts** of Ethiopia.

- One consequence of the Oromo population movement was that it put an end to the wars between the Christian and Muslim states as well as the southward expansion of the Christian state.
- At larger scale, the Oromo contact with diverse peoples in the 16th century brought far-reaching integrations among peoples across ethnic and religious background.
- The Oromo integrated non-Oromo through two adoption mechanisms: *Guddifacha* and *Moggasa*.
- *Guddifacha* refers to the adoption of a child by a foster parent. In this system, the child enjoyed equal rights and privileges with a biological child.
- *Moggasa* was a system of adopting non-Oromos commonly known as *Oromsu*. *Moggasa* was the practice of incorporation of individuals or groups to a clan through oath of allegiance with all the rights and obligations that such membership entailed.
- *Moggasa* was undertaken by the Abba Gadaa on behalf of the clan. The adopted groups gained both protection and material benefits. Thus, it led complete assimilation and disappearance of Bizamo, and Damot as well as mutual assimilation with Ennarya.

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- The process significantly contributed to the social cohesions, national integration, and the revival of long-distance trade.
 - The interactions also resulted in an exchange of socio-cultural values and institutions. A number of peoples in the neighborhood of the Oromo adopted Gadaa system and Oromo language. E.g. Sidama and Gedeo adopted the Gadaa system.
 - The Oromo adopted and adapted cultures and traditions of the people with whom they came into contact. E.g. the adoption of monarchical systems and the integration of the Oromo to the Christian and Muslim states.
 - It is important to mention the rise of nobles in the northern Oromo in politics particularly during the Gondar period, Zemene-Mesafint and the making of modern Ethiopia.

5.6.THE GONDARINE PERIOD AND ZEMENE-MESAFINT

I.THE GONDARINE PERIOD

A. Political Developments

- The **period of Gondar** begins from the reign of **Emperor Sartsa-Dengle** when the political center of Ethiopian emperors shifted to **Gondar area**.
- Emperor Sartsa-Dengle established royal camp **at Enfranz** in **1571**.
- **Emperor Susenyos** also tried to establish his capital near Gondar like at **Qoga, Gorgora, Danqaz and Azazo**.
- **Gondar** was founded in **1636** by **Fasiledas** as his political seat.
- Gondar achieved its **glory during** the reigns of its first three successive emperors: **Fasiledas (r.1632–67)**, **Yohannes I (r.1667-82)** and **Iyasu I (r.1682- 1706)**.
- Among the **major reforms during these periods** were:
 - the restoration of **Orthodox Church** as state religion, and
 - the establishment of a royal prison at **Amba Wahni** to solve problems stemming from power rivalry.

- **Emperor Yohannes I** and his council established a **separate quarter for Muslims** at **Addis Alem**.
- His successor, **Iyasu I**, reformed **land tenure system**, introduced a **system of land measurement** in Begemder, **taxes**, and **customs**, and revised the *Fetha Negest* (the civil code).
- The **assassination of Iyasu the Great** by a faction under the leadership of his own son, **Tekle-Haymanot**, ushered in **political instability in Gondar** involving **intrigues and poisoning** of reigning monarchs.
- **Tekle-Haymanot** was crowned in **1706** before the death of his father and was in turn **assassinated by Tewoflos**. **Tewoflos** was again **killed by Yostos**, who was also **poisoned and replaced by Dawit III**, who himself was **poisoned and replaced by Bakafa**.
- **Bakafa** tried to **restore stability** with the support of his followers and his **wife Etege Mentewab** until he was incapacitated in **1728**.
- The **Gondarine Period** also witnessed increased **involvement of the Oromo in politics and the army**.
- From **1728 to 1768**, **Etege Mentewab** together with her brother **Ras-Bitwaded Walda Le'ul (1732-1767)** dominated the **Gondarine court politics**.

- **Walda Le'ul** was influential during the reigns of **Iyasu II (1730-55)** and **Iyoas (1755-69)**. Following his **death in 1767**, **Etege Mentewab** was challenged by **Wubet Amto**, her daughter-in-law from Wollo.
- To counter the growing power of the **Wollo Oromo** in the royal court, Mentewab sought the alliance of **Ras Mika'el Sehul of Tigray** who was **politically astute and military powerful**.
- **Mika'el Sehul** succeeded in stabilizing the situation and **refused to return to Tigray although demanded by Iyoas**. This was followed by the **killing of Iyoas** and his replacement by an **old man Yohannes II** by **Ras Mika'el**. Soon **Ras Mika'el killed Yohannes II** and put his son **Takla-Haymanot II (1769-77)** on power. This marked the onset of the period of **Zemene-Mesafint (1769-1855)**.

B. Achievements of the Gondarine Period

- Gondar became the **center of state administration, learning, commerce, education, art, and crafts** for more than two centuries.
- **The first three kings** were successful not only in **political affairs but also in cultural developments**. This enabled Gondar to repeat the **splendors of Aksum and Lalibela**.

- The **cultural achievements** of the period led some writers to describe Gondarine period in history as **Ethiopian Renaissance**.
- **Architecture:** when Gondar served as a **permanent capital**, for about **one hundred fifty years**, Ethiopian kings built significant **secular buildings** like **castles, bridges, residences, bath, library, towers, fortifications** and there are **squared, round and unknown shape of churches**.
- In the cities compound the most impressive building known as **Fasil Gemb**, there are different **palaces** corresponding to **Emperor Fasiledas, Yohannes I, Iyasu I, Dawit III, Bakafa** and regent **Queen Mentewab**.
- The **Gondarine architecture** would have started before the reign of emperor Fasiledas during the reign of **Emperor Sartsa-Dengle** at about **1586, at Guzara** near **Enfranz**, and built a very **fine bridge** near his palace at Guzara, and **Emperor Susenyos** likewise erected a **bridge** over Blue Nile at Alata.
- Even it goes back to the reign of **Lebne-Dengel (r.1508-1540)** that is the pointed oval dome over the center of the church of **Bahir Gimb Mikael** considered as built by him.

- **Painting:** With a wealth of religious paintings on manuscripts and on wood, ornaments, weapons and other accessories especially, the churches built by Queen Mentwab were known by beautiful paintings, cross and an art works.
- **Literature:** The Imperial and provincial scriptoria produced a great number of manuscripts. Besides the Gospels, the Miracles of Mary, the Lives of Ethiopian Saints and the Litanies, and many other kinds of illuminated manuscripts were also produced.
- Gondar is also known for its traditional medicine, music and poetry.
- **Trade and Urbanization:** Gondar was a commercial center that connected long distance trade routes of the southern region with Massawa and Metemma in the Ethio-Sudan border.
- Gold and salt were used as medium of exchange. The appearance of daily market was known.
- With spread of urbanization, the city became residences of foreign communities like Indians, Greeks and Armenians. The city had an estimated 60,000-70,000 population.

- In addition to its **political and commercial importance**, it served as **religious center of Christians, Muslims and Bete-Israel**. Besides, it served as the **center of Ethiopian Orthodox Church** (residence of the **abun and Ichege**) until the mid of 19th Century.
- Many of Orthodox churches served as **education centers** (known by excellence in teaching **aqwaqwam**), liturgical chanting was centered at Gondar.

II. The Period of Zemene-Mesafint (1769-1855)

- **Zemene-Mesafint** refers to the period when **actual position of political power** was in the hands of different **regional lords**.
- **Zemene Mesafent** was the period when Ethiopia was **divided** within itself with **no effective central authority**; the **regional lords constantly fought** against each other for **expansion of their territory** and to become the guardian of the king.
- The period lasts from the time **Ras Michael Sehul** "assassinated" king **Iyoas** in **1769 to 1855**, when **Kasa Hailu** was crowned as **Tewodros II**.

- **Ras Mika'el** who was a **king maker** in the period took strong measures against the nobility. These measures made him highly unpopular because of which **coalitions of lords of Gojjam, Amhara, Lasta and Wollo** that defeated him at the **battle of Sarba-Kussa in 1771**.
- The main political regions that **Zemene-Mesafint lords** ruled were **Tigray, Semen, Dembiya, Begemidir, Lasta, Yeju, Wollo, Gojjam and Shewa**.
- When compared to each other the **“Yeju dynasty”** was the leading power during the **Zemen-Mesafint** with the center at **Debre-tabor**. **Ali Gwangul (Ali I or Ali Talaq)** was considered as the founder of **“Yeju dynasty”** in **1786**.
- Yeju rule reached its **zenith** under **Gugsa Marso (r.1803-1825)** who made incessant struggle against **Ras Walde-Silassie** of **Enderta** and **Dejjazmatch Sabagadis Woldu** of **Agame**.
- In **1826**, **Gugsa's successor**, **Yimam (r.1825-8)**, defeated **Hayle-Mariam Gebre of Simen**. **Maru of Dambiya** was also killed at the **battle of Koso-Ber in 1827**.

- The period of *zemene mesafint* was brought to an end by Kasa Hailu of Qwara through a series of battles that lasted from 1840s to 1855.

Major features of *Zemene-Mesafint* include:

- absence of effective central government;
- the growing power and influence of the regional warlords;
- the domination of Yejju lords over other lords in northern Ethiopia;
- rivalry and competition among regional lords to assume the position of king maker;
- establishment of fragile coalition to advance political interests;
- Ethiopian Orthodox Church was unable to play its traditional role of unifying the state due to doctrinal disputes;
- Revival of foreign contacts that ended the “Closed Door Policy.”
- In addition to the above features, there were developments in terms of literature, arts, architecture etc during the period.