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AETHIOPICA

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He-N

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## Introduction

Two years have passed since Volume Two of the *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica* appeared, and now, thanks to the co-operation of hundreds of scholars, the third volume of the reference work has appeared. As before, the regional scope covers the entire Horn of Africa with the focus being on Ethiopia and Eritrea, which have for centuries held the attention of European scholarship. These two countries are, however, not taken in isolation but are at the same time considered in their broader geographic context, as the latter has at all times had a marked influence on their internal development. In the first instance the principal players have been the civilizations of Arabia and the Mediterranean, and in this respect the *Encyclopaedia* offers a number of pioneering studies.

The humanities are at the centre of the *Encyclopaedia's* thematic scope, the main axes being languages and literatures, history and culture, art and religion. Overview articles appear alongside entries devoted to specific topics, all arranged in alphabetical order. The rise to power of the Provisional Military Government, as before, offers the main *terminus ad quem* for the *Encyclopaedia's* temporal scope, though later developments are in all cases taken into consideration.

Volume Three continues what was true for Volume Two. Authors and the editorial team in Hamburg have addressed the topics covered with increasing attention, achieving the scholarly standard that will serve as the measure for future work on the *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*.

The wide acceptance of the publication proves that it is responding to a long-felt desideratum in African and Oriental studies. The *Encyclopaedia* offers new momentum to fundamental and groundbreaking research in the field of Ethiopian Studies as well as a valuable

tool for students of the discipline. The fact that both political and cultural organizations make use of the *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica* proves the value of the scholarly information it provides beyond the purely academic world. The first volume has in the meantime been reprinted, another sign of general interest in the subject and the format of the *Encyclopaedia*.

Of the over 4,500 articles that are planned to appear in the five volumes of the *Encyclopaedia* nearly 1,000 are included in the current volume, written by over 290 authors from 25 countries. The cases of particularly fruitful and intensive collaboration between authors, field specialists and the editorial team are marked by the siglum "Red.", and the authors thank all parties for their flexibility in making this possible. The total number of contributors to the *Encyclopaedia* has thus exceeded 470. As in the previous volumes, the textual information is enhanced by maps and illustrations.

Simultaneously with the editorial work the index to all the volumes is being created, which will occupy the larger part of Volume Five. It is planned to give active *Encyclopaedia* authors access to the preliminary version of the indices via the website <http://www.rrz.uni-hamburg.de/EAE>. The regularly updated *Addenda and corrigenda* to the published articles of the first volumes can be found on the same website. The most important corrections and additions will also be included in Volume Five.

In order to comply with the strict deadlines of the funding organizations and complete the volume on schedule those few articles that have not been received on time will appear in Volume Five. In these cases the entry titles appear in the volume in alphabetical order with the endorsement "s. vol. 5".

## Biblical Abbreviations

### O.T. Old Testament

Gen	Genesis	Prov	Proverbs
Ex	Exodus	Ecc	Ecclesiastes
Lev	Leviticus	Song	Song of Songs
Num	Numbers	Wis	Wisdom
Deut	Deuteronomy	Sir	Sirach
Josh	Joshua	Ba	Baruch
Judg	Judges	Is	Isaiah
Ruth	Ruth	Jer	Jeremiah
1 Sam	1 Samuel	Lam	Lamentations
2 Sam	2 Samuel	Ezek	Ezekiel
1 Kgs	1 Kings	Dan	Daniel
2 Kgs	2 Kings	Hos	Hosea
1 Chr	1 Chronicles	Joel	Joel
2 Chr	2 Chronicles	Am	Amos
Ezra	Ezra	Obad	Obadiah
Tob	Tobit	Jon	Jonah
Jdt	Judith	Mic	Micah
Neh	Nehemiah [= 2 Ezra]	Nah	Nahum
3 Ezra	Apocryphal Book of Ezra	Hab	Habakkuk
4 Ezra	Apocalypse of Ezra	Zeph	Zephaniah
Esth	Esther	Hag	Haggai
1 Mac	1 Maccabees	Zech	Zechariah
2 Mac	2 Maccabees	Mal	Malachi
Job	Job	En	Enoch
Ps	Psalms	Jub	Jubilees

### N.T. New Testament

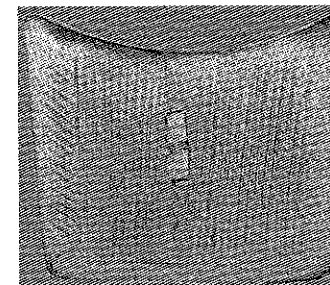
Mt	Matthew	1 Tim	1 Timothy
Mk	Mark	2 Tim	2 Timothy
Lk	Luke	Tit	Titus
Jn	John	Phlm	Philemon
Acts	Acts	Heb	Hebrews
Rom	Romans	Jas	James
1 Cor	1 Corinthians	1 Pet	1 Peter
2 Cor	2 Corinthians	2 Pet	2 Peter
Gal	Galatians	1 Jn	1 John
Eph	Ephesians	2 Jn	2 John
Phil	Philippians	3 Jn	3 John
Col	Colossians	Jude	Jude
1 Thes	1 Thessalonians	Rev	Revelation
2 Thes	2 Thessalonians		

## Headrest(s)

H. are wooden artefacts of everyday life used as a kind of cushion to protect special hairstyles, and in some cases additionally used as a small stool. Their use is known throughout many countries in sub-Saharan Africa (e.g., Ethiopia, Sudan, Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Kongo, Nigeria), Oceania and the Pacific region and East and South-east Asia (Indonesia, China, Japan). Even in some European alpine areas (Piedmont, Aosta valley) the use of H. was known. In ancient Egypt noble people were buried with their H.

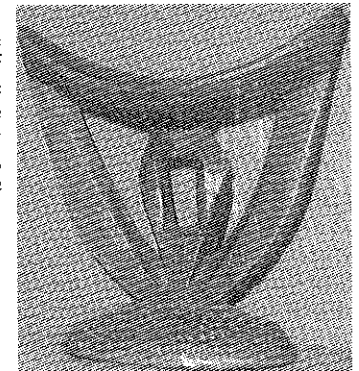
In Ethiopia H. are (or were) used in many regions except in extensive parts of the Christian highlands. They are (or were) the individual possessions of a person. All types of Ethiopian H. have in common that they are made of one single piece of wood. They are stable and fit to the shape of the human head and neck. Some are decorated with engravings of geometrical ornaments or parallel grooves. Others are covered with pearls or paint, decorated with leather straps or metal inlays. Most of them are worked in a careful way and have a very smooth surface. The wood of the H. is often polished with certain kinds of leaves to smoothen the surface, and rubbed with castor oil (*Ricinus communis*) to achieve a dark colour and enhance the patina. The size ranges from 10 cm to 36 cm in height and 10 cm to 30 cm in width. Most of them are nearly the same size in height and width, but some have a broad (e.g., Naqatom) or a high shape (e.g., Somali).

Ethiopian H. show an enormous variety in shape. They can roughly be divided into the following types:



Headrest in concave form (type 1), from Hadiyya; photo by the author, courtesy of the Frobenius-Institut (inventory no. 3642)

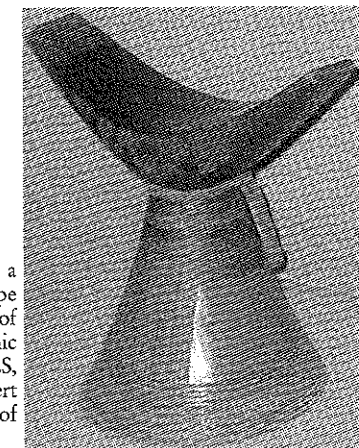
Headrest with several "pillars" (type 2); collection of the Ethnographic Museum of the IES, photo by Wolbert Smidt, courtesy of the IES



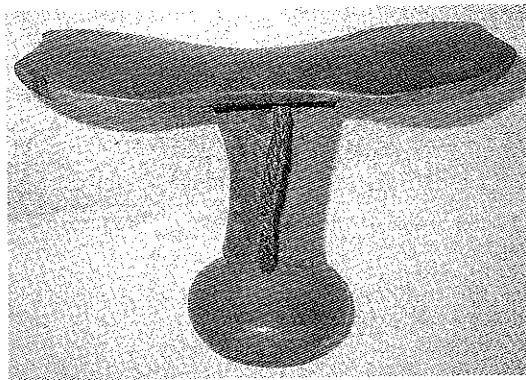
1) H. with the upper side simply carved in a concave form; sometimes the upper part is more elaborate (e.g. Oromo, Sidaama) or has two short legs (e.g. Ďáasanač, Bášada).

2) H., where parts of its body are carved out so that several columns are formed (e.g., Gurage, Arsi Oromo). These columns can be vertical or diagonal. It can be made of a four-sided piece of wood with small depth or of one foot, linked with the upper part by two (s. ill.) or more columns.

3) Another type of H. consists only of a leg and the upper part. A common variant of this type is that with a conical leg (see ill.). This conical leg is often hollow and may be used to store small pieces of chewing-tobacco or butter, which is used to smoothen the skin.



Headrest with a conical leg (type 3); collection of the Ethnographic Museum of the IES, photo by Wolbert Smidt, courtesy of the IES



Headrest with a narrow leg (type 4), Nāṅatom type; photo courtesy of Serge Tornay

4) This type consists of three elements: one narrow leg with a broader foot and an optically separate upper part. The foot may be flat and rectangular, but can also be spheric (e.g., Hamär; Nāṅatom, see ill.). The upper part is either rectangular or waisted with rounded ends. It is usually flat or concave and broader than the foot (e.g., Oromo, Issa, Afar, Gurage, Arsi, Mursi, Suri, Nāṅatom, Hamär, Banna, Bäšada, Kara, Arbore, Bodi). The leg of the H. often has a handle made of fibre, leather or a thick metal wire to carry it (mainly in southern Ethiopia). Small containers with tobacco or small knives can be fixed to this handle, or the foot might be hollow and used as a container itself.

5) H. with three legs made out of a naturally formed piece of bough (e.g., Afar). Other ethnic groups use the same type as a stool only (e.g., Suri, Kara). This is also the case with the stools of the Me'en which resemble the H. of type 3.

Beside its practical use (protection of hairstyles, seat) the H. has the function of marking the social status of its owner. For example, the size of the H. does not necessarily correspond to the height of its owner. Among some ethnic groups (e.g. Hamär, Arbore) married men use bigger H. than other men. In Hamär the H. (*borkoto*) are connected to the male sphere; they are an essential part of male decoration. The men use them for

sleeping and sitting. It is considered to be important not to sit on the dusty ground like women and children. Women use, if at all, flat, polished pieces of wood to sleep on.

Similar to the Hamär, is the use of H. among the Nāṅatom, who call it *akičolong*, and the Arbore, where small boys, who do not use H. (*kara galeba*) for sleeping, sit on them. In contrast to the Hamär, the Hadiyya (and Gurage) men and women both used H. (*barkumma*), which were not suitable for sitting. The Hadiyya H. were made by local woodworkers or they used imported ones from Sidaama, Arsi and Gurage. Since beds and cushions of Amhara style were introduced they (like the neighbouring ethnic groups) stopped using H. Today these types of H. are only found in museums. Those H. found on the tourist market are mostly produced for the souvenir shops.

Lit.: JON ABBINK, *The Me'en of South-Western Kāfa: Material Culture of an Ethiopian Shifting-Cultivator People*, Addis Ababa 1992; MUSÉE ROYAL DE L'AFRIQUE CENTRALE TERVUREN (ed.), *Éthiopie, Objets d'Éthiopie. Catalogue de l'exposition 'Aethiopia, Peuples d'Éthiopie'*, Tervuren 1996 (Annales Sciences Humaines 151); SERGE TORNAY, "La culture matérielle des Nyangatom (Basse vallée de l'Omo, Gemu Goffa)", in: *Éthiopie d'Aujourd'hui: la Terre et les Hommes*, ed. by MUSÉE DE L'HOMME, Paris 1975, 45-52.

Alke Dohrmann



Headrest with three legs (type 5), from Kibiš at the Nakua (Nāṅatom); photo 1975, courtesy of Serge Tornay

## Healers

In the African Horn, as elsewhere in Africa, alternative forms of healing exist alongside the modern bio-medical system. In case of disease and other kinds of affliction it has been and still widely is the norm that people first had recourse to H. (often referred to as *ḥil*, *ḥakim*, 'doctor') and traditional medicine, before they looked for assistance from modern medicine (s. also Hospitals). The concept of H. includes various types of specialists, most of them connected to magic and/or the religious sphere. H. may be herbalists, spirit mediums (Possession cults), priests or traditional scholars, but also marginalized people (s. EAE vol. 5) with special skills and a certain connection to the supernatural. However, traditional healing is not only of a spiritual nature, but also includes methods such as the use of bleeding, herbal medicine and massage, which are widely practised and can be most efficacious.

Stories about Christian monks and saints acting as H. play an important role in the Christian tradition. *Abunä* Zāmika'el Arāḡawi is credited with many miracles of healing in and around Dābrā Damo, the important monastery he founded (Kriss - Kriss-Heinrich 1975). Miraculous healing is an essential ingredient of most hagiographies, perhaps because the ability to cure through prayer is an example of the mediatory role of the saint. The overwhelming impression created by the texts is that holy men were valued as H. because of the special relationship they enjoyed with God and the power which was believed to reside in their religious paraphernalia. Their importance is exemplified by events such as the dramatic clash between monastic and pre-Christian clergy in the *Gādlä Tāklä Haymanot's* description of the attempts to heal the "evil" King Motālami.

In their miraculous healing, Christian holy men commonly employed holy water (*Sābāl*) and the soil from saintly places, prayer, human saliva, the Eucharist, the monastic garb and the cross as curative devices (KapMon 84). Holy men could just as effectively call down some frightening disease by cursing those who offended or disobeyed them, as they could heal. *Aše* Amdā Šoyon I is said to have blamed a serious illness upon the wrath of *abba* Bäšālotä Mika'el and asked the saint to forgive and heal him (Conti Rossini 1905:37).

Within the Ethiopian Orthodox Church there is a variety of healing traditions that can be de-

finied as part of a continuum; some of them are central to the church's ministry, while others lie beyond the authorization of the church. Three models of healing help to define this continuum:

1. The first model might be described as "priestly healing", because it is fully endorsed by the church authorities. Priests and monks or others authorized by them might act as H. This includes the administration of the sacraments, the recitation of hagiographies and liturgies for the sick, the application of holy relics (e.g., the leg-bone of St. Tāklä Haymanot) and the ingestion of or immersion in holy ash, holy mud and holy water. These elements are taken from the church compound and are considered efficacious against disease because of their sanctity. The reception and application of holy water form the heart of priestly healing. Holy springs are located within the church compound or at some distance from the church, where people who have found H. offer alms and prayers. The healing is effected primarily through exorcism, as the demonic source of the disease (Demons) is expelled by the purity of the water and provoked to evacuate the body of the victim.

2. The second model concerns the healing activities of the *dābtāra*, some of whom engage in occult or herbal healing. The method of healing that *dābtāras* perform predominantly is prohibited by the church authorities and the *dābtāras* are prevented from receiving holy communion if they are known to be occultists. However, they still can fulfil duties as church musicians. Thus a tension exists because a healing praxis that is conducted by clergy is condemned by church authorities. *Dābtāra*-H. often are believed to nurture evil and other spirits, who are said to advise them on appropriate treatment options for clients. Sometimes such a spirit might direct a *dābtāra* to concoct a herbal remedy, or make an amulet that the patient can wear around his/her waist or neck, or write a magic scroll that may be attached to the body or placed in the house of the afflicted individual. The *dābtāras* also cast horoscopes and on some occasions the astrological prediction (Oracles and divination; *Awdä nāḡāšt*) indicates that the client should make confession to his/her father-confessor or travel to a certain holy spring.

3. A third model is represented by spirit-possession cults, the practitioners of which are commonly women (s., e.g., *Mālkam Ayyahu*). These cults are condemned by the Church, and women afflicted by *zar* spirits, for example, would be sub-