

ENCYCLOPAEDIA
AETHIOPICA
Volume I

2003

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ENCYCLOPAEDIA
AETHIOPICA

Volume 1
A – C

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Gold coin of king Afilas,
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Introduction

The idea of creating a comprehensive work of reference for the field of Ethiopian Studies had been circulated in the scientific community for decades until, in 1994, during the 12th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies in Michigan, USA, the concept finally crystallized. A group of scholars agreed on the overall exposition, the thematic, regional and temporal scope and the structural framework of the future Encyclopaedia.

The Ethiopian Studies research group at Hamburg University was asked to take over the organization of the project. After three years of preliminary planning and negotiations, the Universität Hamburg and the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft agreed to offer the project financial and organizational support. Scholars of Ethiopian studies from Europe, the USA, Ethiopia, Eritrea and other countries united their efforts to create the provisional entry list, which was finally agreed upon in several workshops. They suggested the potential authors for the entries, helped select the field specialists who would then evaluate the articles and lent a hand in clarifying a number of basic questions. Finally, in 1998, the actual work started and the project began to take shape, welcomed enthusiastically by both older and younger colleagues throughout the world.

With more than four thousand separate entries in four volumes and an additional fifth volume designed for supplements and indices, the Encyclopaedia Aethiopica is a compendium of up-to-date information on the Horn of Africa, envisaged as a reference work for Ethiopian and Eritrean studies.

The region encompassed in the Encyclopaedia corresponds to the cultural-

geographic "Orbis Aethiopicus", with the meaning this term has developed on the basis of ancient conceptions, approximating to the Horn of Africa. The area of present-day Ethiopia and Eritrea is in the centre; Djibouti and those parts of the Sudan and Somalia bordering on Ethiopia or Eritrea are also included. Readers will also come across information on other cultural regions insofar as they are connected to the Orbis Aethiopicus, such as Egypt and Arabia, Israel-Palestine and the Graeco-Roman area, territories across the Indian ocean and Oriental Christian communities, including the Coptic, the Syriac and the Armenian.

The thematic focus of the Encyclopaedia Aethiopica is the humanities, with the core field composed of, but not confined to, history, archaeology, languages, literature, religion, arts, anthropology and social sciences. Entries from the natural sciences are, as a rule, included only if they relate to a core field.

The period covered by the Encyclopaedia spans from prehistoric times to the second half of the 20th century. The coming of the Provisional Military Government to power in 1974 clearly marks a major caesura in the region's history, with the consequences being felt until the present day, which therefore prevents any conclusive evaluation of the events of recent history in a work of this nature. For this reason, the most current developments in society, politics and foreign relations receive less attention; however, entries devoted to subjects originating before 1974 do, for the most part, shed light on the current situation.

The subject index of the Encyclopaedia Aethiopica has been developed in co-operation with a large number of scholars,

with the aim of representing different cultures and ethnic groups in as balanced a way as possible. The incidental disparity in treating certain topics reflects the varying amount of research conducted into different fields of Ethiopian and Eritrean studies thus far.

The encyclopaedic nature of the work demands that articles are concise. In order to compensate for this, almost all entries have a detailed bibliography listing primary and secondary sources for further study.

The informative value of the work is additionally enhanced by numerous geographical and historical maps, as well as by the illustrations accompanying the articles.

Potential updates received from the authors or readers after publication will be included in the fifth volume. In the meantime, addenda et corrigenda, along with a provisional index, will be made accessible to readers at the official Encyclopaedia website (<http://www.rrz.uni-hamburg.de/EAE>).

Acknowledgements

An interdisciplinary undertaking on the scale of the Encyclopaedia Aethiopica could not have been made possible without the cooperation and help of numerous people and organizations who supported the project in different ways. Therefore, it is my duty and pleasure as the Editor-in-Chief to thank those who have shared our vision of the Encyclopaedia and assisted in its preparation.

First and foremost, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all those foundations and private individuals who have financially supported the work on its way to publication. I owe my most sincere appreciation to the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, whose generous grant not only breathed life into the project but also has ensured its survival. Another generous subsidy from the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft enabled the publication of the present volume.

The realization of the project would also have been unthinkable without the substantial support of the Universität Hamburg, the Zeit-Stiftung Ebelin und Gerd Bucerus, the Johanna und Fritz Buch Gedächtnisstiftung, the German-Israeli Foundation, the Hamburgische Wissenschaftliche Stiftung, the Karl-Heinz Ditze-Stiftung and the Stiftung zur Förderung der Äthiopistik. I would also like to express my gratitude to the members of the Institute of Ethiopian Studies of Addis Ababa University and to its Director Baye Yimam for their readiness to help in various matters.

It would be impossible to acknowledge adequately all those who have participated in the preparation of the Encyclopaedia so far, and only some of the persons whose knowledge, skill and commitment have

helped to shape the work can be mentioned here individually.

My greatest thanks go to the Hamburg editorial staff, who have invested extraordinary amounts of their time and energy in the enterprise. I offer my sincere gratitude and appreciation for all of their effort in discussing the structure and contents of the volume, communicating with the authors and field specialists, revising, completing, correcting and following up on the articles and, last but not least, for their readiness to take over those entries that had remained without an author, sometimes at the very last moment.

The contribution of numerous colleagues who, through their written and spoken advice, have participated in shaping the project was of invaluable importance. The project's official field specialists who suggested the entries, helped choose the authors and evaluated the articles are listed on page ix.

I am also indebted to those visiting scholars who, whilst pursuing their own research at Hamburg University, invested their time and skill in the Encyclopaedia. Among them, my special thanks go to Steven Kaplan, Gianfrancesco Lusini, Abbebe Kifleyesus, Fekade Azeze and Bahru Zewde. I would also like to use this opportunity to thank all our other colleagues who found some days or weeks to pay short but highly productive visits to the project.

Sometimes the articles were composed in languages other than English. I would like to extend my thanks here to all those who have helped in translating the articles, and especially to the Hamburg editorial team, as well as to all those who cannot be named here individually due to constraints of space.

The detail maps accompanying the articles were prepared by Matthias Schulz; Wolbert Smidt selected the illustrations; the image processing and manuscript preparation were in the capable hands of Thomas Rave and Evgenia Sokolinskaia. To Thomas Rave I owe special thanks for the develop-

ment of the diacritical font sets used throughout the Encyclopaedia.

The Harrassowitz Verlag and the Memminger Medien Centrum printing press were always on hand with professional technical advice, for which I give my most sincere thanks.

Siegbert Uhlig

Hamburg, in January 2003

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A

Aadaa

According to context, the ↗Oromo word A. (of Arabic origin) can be translated as 'culture', 'custom', 'maxims', 'rules', 'habits', 'way of life', 'traditional laws', or 'traditions' (cp. TilDic 7). In Muslim Northern Africa, India and Indonesia 'āda is restricted to pre-Islamic "custom" or "customary law", and therefore rated as being essentially distinct from and inferior to ↗šarī'a, whereas for the Oromo, divine laws and man's laws are balanced and complement each other; as a commonly used saying puts it: *aadaa namma, aadaa Waaqa*, 'men's customs, God's customs'. In discussion A. is often paired with ↗seera or *hera*, that is law which has been formally declared by a recognized authority, such as a ruler or a council, to such an extent that in daily practice "it is difficult to demarcate the boundary between the two" (MHasOr 16).

Its comprehensiveness and pervasiveness make A. a key word in Oromo thought and discourse. It stands for the common cultural inheritance which Oromo stress when, from local to national levels, they discuss their shared identity and the shared *nagaa* ('peace') which spans their cultural diversities. A. can only be learned through long application and experience. The words of those elders who have become experts in A. are respected and heeded. As a proverb expresses it: *Aadaan wa miidaasit, aada maleen wa balleesit*, 'customs arrange all things; without customs all things are destroyed'. A. and its opposite *aniti* ('not-custom') "signify moral good and evil, the discriminating criteria of human action, the basis for moral judgement" (Tablino 1999:246f.). As it is continuously interpreted and reinterpreted by the elders, "who symbolize the continuity of life and God's blessing" (Aguilar 1998:168), A. can adapt to change while remaining true to its roots. In practical day-to-day matters, such as immediate rights of access to land and water or changing economic conditions, A. can be responsive and flexible. This is so because A. is oral and based in those relevant conjunctions of memory and recollected precedents which serve to maintain *nagaa* in the present.

Lit.: MARIO I. AGUILAR, *Being Oromo in Kenya*, Trenton, NJ 1998, 168; MARIO BORELLO, *Dizionario Oromo-Italiano*, ed. by HANS-JÜRGEN SASSE – PAOLO TABLINO, Hamburg 1995 (Kuschitische Sprachstudien 10); MHasOr 16; TON LEUS, *Mammaassa Booranaa*, Yaaballoo 1999, 4; JAN PRINS, "'Ada", in: *EP*, vol. 1, 170–74; PAOLO TABLINO, *The Gabra: Camel Nomads of Northern Kenya*, Nairobi 1999, 246f.; TilDic 7.

Paul T.W. Baxter

Aari

Aari language

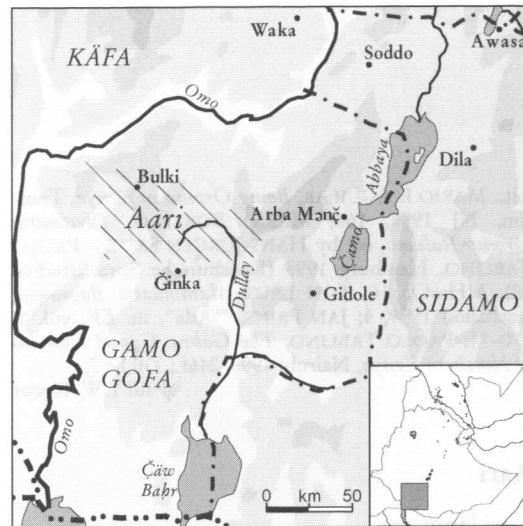
The A. language is also called Ari, or Šanqəlləñña (the latter, lit. 'the language of ↗Šanqəlla [black people]', is a derogatory term applied by Central Ethiopians). There are nine or ten dialects of A., such as Bako, Biyo, Galila, Šangama etc. Among them, Galila is considerably different from others. Dialect area is usually equated with a former chiefdom. The central dialect is Sido, spoken in the area of that name.

A. call their language *Aari af*. A. has been classified in various ways, but it is certain that with Banna, Hamär and Dime (↗Hamär cluster) it constitutes a group which is usually called the South Omotic (or ↗Aroid) group of the ↗Omotic sub-family of the Afro-Asiatic phylum. The number of speakers is estimated at more than 100,000.

A. has five vowels: *a, i, u, e, o*. Length is distinctive, as in *muda* 'all' vs. *muuda* 'sorrow'. Consonant phonemes are: *ʔ, p, b, ɸ, t, d, d̥, k, g, q, s, z, ʃ, ʒ, ts, dz, tʃ, ç, ǰ, ç, w, y, m, n, r, l, h*; /p/ has [p], [f] and [ɸ] as its allophones; /q/ is realised as [q] or [ɣ]; /h/ is usually [h] and its breathiness extends to the following vowel. Accent is not distinctive.

As to the case system, A. is an accusative-marking language and the nominative is not marked at all. The basic structure of the verb is stem+aspect+person suffix. Derived stems are formed by adding such suffixes as *-s* (causative), *-ar/-er* (passive), *-im* (reflexive).

The copula is *-(y)e* in the present tense, but its use is not obligatory. Pronouns are distinguished according to person (1/2/3) and number (sg./pl.).



Masculine and feminine forms are distinguished only in the third person singular. A. has postpositions such as *-k* 'with' or *-ken* 'for'.

The word order is Subject-Object-Verb, as in *dübina pultan ayso apla dübise*, 'Thief-the door-the breaking clothes stole (3 sg. masc.)', i.e. 'The thief broke in to steal the clothes'. The modifier usually comes after the modified item and also the relative clause is placed after the antecedent.

The ten-word list for A. is: *wollaqa* 'one', *qastan* 'two', *makkan* 'three', *noo* 'fire', *noqa* (in Sido: *loqa*) 'water', *háy* 'sun', *arpén* 'moon', *zomí* (*maqás*) 'blood', *adím* 'tongue', *atsí* 'tooth'.

A. is not a written language. Although some texts were compiled using the Ethiopic syllabary as a part of the literacy campaign, the attempt did not spread widely: only a primer (1991), the New Testament (1997) and several small books have been published in the A. language.

The study of A. only began as late as in the 1980s with the publication of Carolyn Ford's report (1985). Although we now have an excellent detailed outline of A. grammar by Richard Hayward, and other scholars' works on phonology, morphology and lexicon, we need still more data for further research.

Lit.: CAROLYN FORD, *Report on Aari Linguistic Survey*, submitted to Language Academy, Ministry of Culture, Addis Ababa 1985; ID., *Notes on the Phonology of the Aari language*, unpublished ms. submitted to the Ministry of Culture, Jinka, South Omo 1996; RICHARD HAYWARD, "Notes on the Aari Language", in: ID. (ed.), *Omotic Language Studies*, London 1990, 425-93; BendLang; HAROLD C. FLEMING, "Omotic Overview", in: *BendNonSLang* 298-323.

Yoichi Tsuge

Aari ethnography

The A. people, numbering over 100,000, inhabit the south-western spur of the highlands and adjacent lowlands of the South Omo Region of Ethiopia, to the north of the town of \nearrow Ginka in the former \nearrow Gamo Gofa Province of south-western Ethiopia.

Agriculturists, the A. cultivate different sorts of *ansät*, sorghum, and since recently also maize, supplemented by other grains and legumes. Vegetable gardens, fruit trees and various root plants also flourish. Plentiful rains and fertile soil produce rich crops most years, even when neighbouring areas suffer drought. Cash crops are coffee and cardamom. People raise sheep (or goats in the lowlands) and cattle, as well as chickens. Mules are the favoured beasts of burden, coping well with narrow, slippery trails, but tending to succumb to disease in the lowlands. Within the past 15 years some all-weather roads have been built to reach major towns in the area.

Heavy rainfall washes iodine and other nutrients from the soil, resulting in a high incidence of goitre in the highlands. In the past, lack of access to medical help made for a high infant mortality rate, fistulas and a fair number of deaths in child-bearing. Respiratory and digestive-tract diseases still claim many lives among the very young. Malaria is a growing problem in the lowlands; occasional outbreaks of meningitis and relapsing fever also occur. Immunization programs for children are lowering the rate of tetanus, measles and other diseases. A new hospital in the regional capital Ginka meets a real felt need. The A. generally do not practise female genital mutilation, nor is male circumcision culturally prescribed.

Before the coming of the Amhara rulers, the A. people were divided into chiefdoms. The chief (*baabi*) would lead in various rituals, so that he planted the first seeds, harvested the first crop, etc. The people would work in his field on certain days. They still recognise the chief of their area and his family, though he has no formal authority. The *baabi* are supported in their religious functions by a hereditary priesthood, which has the power to depose them in case of inability to fulfil their obligations.

The social organization is characterised by the duality of exogamous patrilineal moieties. They consist of several clans and lineages, which vary in number in different A. territories. At the head of the one moiety is the lineage of the chief; at the head of the other, the lineage of the priests.

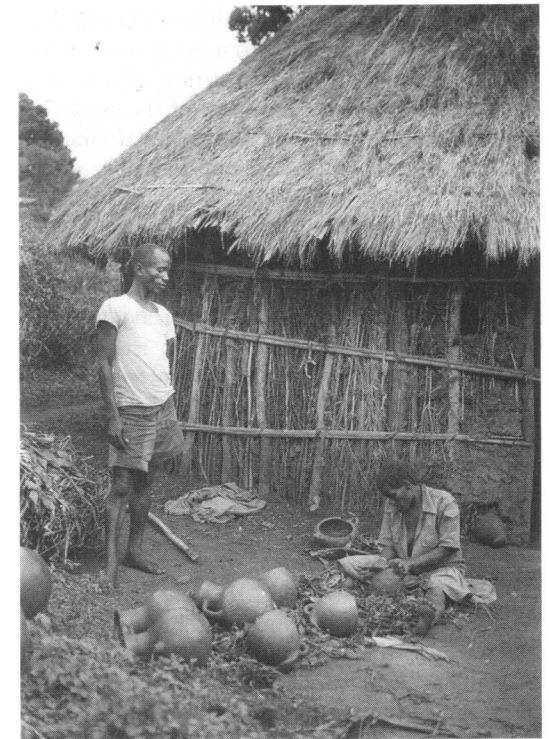
Traditionally the artisans (blacksmiths, tanners, wood-carvers, potters, basket-weavers) were partially avoided by non-artisans and they did not intermarry with non-artisans, but this is changing under the influence of both the Gospel (introduced largely by Evangelical missionaries) and politics. In addition to other tools, the smiths make the *waali*, a sickle-like instrument with wide curved blade that is useful for cutting through thick brush, lopping off small tree-limbs, etc. This tool is found in every home and coveted by neighbouring people groups. Wood-carvers make beautifully decorated chairs, bowls and other household items.

In the south and south-west the A. are neighbored by pastoralists and they raid each other's cattle. There are occasional conflicts between the south-western A. and the \nearrow Mursi, but for the most part the A. live at peace with their neighbours, who do not consider it bravery to kill an A. because of the A.s' non-warring, agricultural life style. To the north-west are the \nearrow Dime.

Amhara rulers sent by *ase* \nearrow Mənilək II to rule the area became landlords and the A. were reduced to serfdom. This contributed to a decline in A. culture. With the overthrow of the monarchy in 1974, the land was reclaimed by the A. people. Their social and economic situation has improved considerably over the past quarter-century. Interest in education has increased and most towns have a school.

Most A. still follow a traditional religion. They venerate one creator-god, who lives/is in Heaven (*zaabi*), and one earth and fertility deity, female in most A. groups (*beri*), who lives in holy groves or near watercourses. The offertories are situated in the holy groves or in the granges of chiefs and clan elders. Religion includes veneration of \nearrow ancestors, whereas the clan-founders are often believed to have a supernatural origin (from a certain river, mountain, tree, etc.). Sickness, infertility and death may be attributed to the resentment of a deceased relative. The ancestor is appeased by the offering of a sacrifice, usually a sheep. When a person dies, a sheep may be slaughtered and its intestines "read" to find the cause of death.

As Orthodox Christian priests used to accompany or follow the Amhara rulers, there is an Orthodox church in almost every town. Protestant missions have been active in the area since the early 1950s and about 10% of the population



Aari woman making pottery, photo courtesy of Alexander Naty, 1990

profess Protestantism. More recently the number of mosques has increased, but few A. profess Islam.

Lit.: ALEXANDER NATY, "Articulating the Experience of Domination: Metaphors of Powerless among the Aari People of Southern Ethiopia", in: *PICES* 13, vol. 2, 501-15; GEBRE YNTSO DEKO, "The Livelihood System of the Ari of Southwest Ethiopia: The Economic Behavior of Farmers under Local and Extra-Local Contexts", *ibid.*, vol. 3, 853-66.

Carolyn M. Ford; Red.

Abä mənēt \nearrow Monasteries

Abaarsa

A. ('curse, scolding', GreggDic 3) is a time sanctioned \nearrow Oromo cultural practice used to show abhorrence of the conduct of those who persist in violating an established social norm by making him a public example and a warning. A large part of the Oromo population still adheres to A.

Only the wise, mature, impartial and pure-hearted elders in society, who have gained respect through their deeds, can handle such a ceremony. They prohibit the evil-doer from using the common burial ground, the well and