

Research report

Collections and Archives on Ethiopian Studies in the Frobenius Institute

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This report introduces archives and collections from six expeditions to Ethiopia between 1950 and 1971 at the Frobenius Institute, Germany. All of these expeditions focused mainly on southern Ethiopia. More than 90,000 pictures are available on the Frobenius Institute website. Most photographs and rock paintings were digitized from 2006 to 2009 with the financial support of the German Research Partnership (DFG). The majority are available for anyone to view and download at low resolution. The high-resolution images are also available upon request by email (detailed information on the five items required in the request is provided in this report). Despite the fact that the 16 mm film materials and Dr. Haberland's legacy materials from his five expenditures to Ethiopia have not been released on the website, this report introduces a list of these items. A total of 1,171 objects from the Ethiopia expeditions are housed at the Institute, and 900 objects from two Ethiopia expeditions, in 1934–35 and 1954, at the World Cultures Museum (Weltkulturen Museum) in Frankfurt am Main. If you have the opportunity to visit Germany and wish to learn more about Ethiopia during the past century, please contact the researchers at the Frobenius Institute; you will be rewarded with a uniquely rich collection of materials.

Key words: The Frobenius Institute, Leo Frobenius, Eike Haberland, South Ethiopia, Image archives

THE FROBENIUS INSTITUTE ETHIOPIAN EXPEDITIONS

I was a Visiting Researcher at the Frobenius Institute, Frankfurt am Main, Germany, from July 10 to 31, 2013. With the generous assistance of the Frobenius Institute, I had the opportunity to examine most of the collections and archives during my stay. In Germany, research on Ethiopian art, culture, and history has been undertaken since 16th century.⁽¹⁾ As part of this academic tradition, the Frobenius Institute was established with private funding and subsequently integrated into a national institution, the Goethe University in Frankfurt am Main. The Frobenius Institute was established in 1898 as the Afrika Archiv and renamed in 1946 after its founder, the ethnographer and Africanist, Mr. Leo Frobenius (1873–1938). He stood apart from the university realm. He began to establish his own private institute to archive documents in a small room in Berlin 116 years ago, in 1898. After World War I, these archives were moved to Munich, and the Research Institute for Cultural Morphology (“Forschungsinstitut für Kulturmorphologie”) was established in 1920. From 1925 onwards, this Institute became an adjunct faculty at the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University.⁽²⁾ The

Institute has organized research expeditions not only to African countries but also to Australia, Europe, Indonesia, Oceania, and South America since the beginning of the 20th century.

The first expedition to Ethiopia was conducted from 1934 to 1935; led by Dr. Adolfo Jensen, the expedition also included two other scholars, H. V. D. Steinen and H. Wohlenberg, and one artist, Mr. A. Bayrle. This expedition targeted not only ethnographic materials but also artistic works. After World Wars I and II, a second expedition was conducted from 1950 to 1952; Dr. Jensen again led the expedition and Drs. E. Haberland, W. Schulz-Weidner, and one artist, Ms. E. Pauli joined the expedition for the first time. They collected rock paintings and conducted field research in the Harar area. The third expedition was composed of the same team, except that Dr. H. Straube replaced Dr. W. Schulz-Weidner. The third expedition focused, in particular, on ethnographic research in southern Ethiopia and examined the Oromo and West Cushitic peoples. Only Dr. E. Haberland visited Ethiopia during the fourth expedition, in 1967; he conducted research on the history and culture of the Walaytta people. The fifth and sixth expeditions were directed by Dr. E. Haberland, who was joined by Drs. U. Braukämper, S. Seyfarth, K. H. Striedter, and W. Lange. The fifth expedition mainly focused on the Hadiya, Dauro, and Gofa, whereas the sixth expedition conducted ethnographic research on the Hadiya, Sidama, Oromo, Gamu, Gofa, Gongga, and Dizi. In the following article, I would like to introduce the archives and collections from six expeditions to Ethiopia between 1934 and 1971.

COLLECTIONS AND ARCHIVES AT THE FROBENIUS INSTITUTE

The Ethiopian collection of the Frobenius Institute can be divided into two categories: image archives, such as pictures, photographs, videotapes and paintings, and documents and materials collected by individual researchers.

The image archives contain more than 90,000 pictures (paintings and photographs), which are available on the website.⁽³⁾ http://bildarchiv.frobenius-katalog.de/start.fau?prj=isbild_en. The majority are available for anyone to view and download at low resolution. The high-resolution images can be obtained by request to the Institute. After identifying the images, the applicant should send the required information to the appropriate contact e-mail address, as outlined below.

a. For the photographic collection (index numbers FoA)

Contact: Mr. Peter Steigerwald

E-mail: P.Steigerwald@em.uni-frankfurt.de

Tel: +49 (0)69 798 33212

b. For the ethnographic picture archive and the rock art archive (index numbers EBA, FBA, KBA, PBA)

Dr. Richard Kuba

E-mail: Kuba@em.uni-frankfurt.de

It is necessary for the applicant to mention five items in their request

- (1) Name of applicant;
- (2) Affiliation of applicant;
- (3) Reference number of image(s) of which you would like to receive the high-resolution image(s);
- (4) Name(s) of journal(s)/book(s) in which the image(s) will appear;
- (5) Other: whether the image(s) will be used for research purposes.

Apart from its image archives, the Frobenius Institute is unique in collecting the materials of German ethnologists. Amongst these are the materials of two of the former directors, who had a regional focus on Ethiopia and led the above-mentioned expeditions: Drs. A. E. Jensen and E.

Haberland. The archive has an online database (<http://archiv.frobenius-katalog.de/>), which is currently only available in the German language. However, a digitizing project has recently begun on an English language version, which will be available in autumn 2015.

Two parts of the collection had not yet been published on the website when I was at the Institute. One list (Table 1) contains 16 mm film material from South Ethiopia, collected during the above-mentioned expeditions and digitized by Dr. Sophia Thubauville. The Frobenius Institute also has an ethnographic collection comprising about 1,200 items collected in Ethiopia during the Institute's expeditions in the 1960s and 1970s.⁽⁴⁾ The ethnographic collection focuses on day-to-day material culture, with a focus on pottery.

Table 1. List of Film Materials on South Ethiopia (This list is based on the data of Thubauville, 2011)

No.	Title	Region	Recorder	Min
1	Veterinarian Burial of mule Water pipe Assembly Mule Funeral service Shepherd standing on one leg	n.d. n.d. Schangama n.d. n.d. Sidamo n.d.	Schulz-Weidner	14.19
2	Fetching water Funeral service Slash-and-burn farming Ox plough Wedding	Maale Schangama Schangama Aari Schangama	Schulz-Weidner	11.41
3	Slash-and-burn farming Funeral service Slash-and-burn farming Cabbage garden Production of rope Dance (only men)	Schangama Maale Schangama n.d. n.d.	Schulz-Weidner	9.03
4	Slash-and-burn farming Cultivation with digging sticks Ox plough Harvest Cabbage garden Ensete processing	Schangama	Schulz-Weidner	14.27
5	Traditional boats with paddle	n.d.		4.37
7	Funeral service 1) Dance 2) Drumming 3) Lamenting	Sala	Schulz-Weidner	14.30
9	Ensete processing To dig up bulb Chopping with knives Pounding	Sidamo	n.d.	10.53
11	Dance Funeral service	Maale Maale	n.d.	8.13
12	Dance, Funeral Service Carrying water gourd Scooping water Market in Gazer Fortune-teller (with stones)	Maale Maale Maale Aari Maale	Schulz-Weidner	10.59

13	Expedition members Mule caravan Dance Market Car and house	Maale	n.d.	13.37
14	Dance Market Dance Agriculture with digging sticks	Banna n.d. Schangama Schangama	Haberland und Schulz-Weidner	11.01
15	Ensete processing	Sidamo	Haberland	11.45
16	Fire drilling Food preparation Iron smelting Cattle slaughter	n.d. n.d. Dime n.d.	Schulz-Weidner	7.04
17	Market	Many regions, one of them is Gazer	Haberland	5.16
18	Wedding (Dances)	Schangama	Schulz-Weidner	11.15
19	1) Applause from the crowd Drawing, Ethiopian Drawing Material demonstrated by Harberland Boats on Lake Margharita 2) Film of Frobenius Institute 3) Funeral service Ensete processing	n.d. n.d. n.d. n.d. Schangama Schangama	n.d.	7.45
20	Ox plowing Festivity Landscape Women carrying	Schangama	Schulz-Weidner	5.49
21	Market Dance Landscape Expedition camp	Gazer n.d. Schangama	n.d.	8.01
22	1) Funeral service Boats on Lake Margharita 2) Stitching leather Expedition Mule Market bustle Cooking Skirt	Sidamo n.d. n.d. Sidamo (?) (Darassa) (Darassa)	n.d.	13.10
23	Funeral service Water pipe	Schangama	Schulz-Weidner	5.30
24	Market Pot selling, fresh corn, cotton, blanket Reception Embassy (?)	Dorse n.d.	Straube	5.41
25	Wedding Dance Landscape Wedding Lyre Dance and lyre Playing the lyre	Schangama	Schulz-Weidner	11.02

26	Craftsman 1) Production of rope 2) Blacksmith 3) Producing a door made out of bamboo 4) Potter	Aari	Schulz-Weidner	5.19
27	Village Spinning Market <i>Waka</i> Stick fighting Dance	Konso Bodi (?) Banna	Haberland	10.46
28	<i>Waka</i> Villages Dance War dress Market	Konso	Haberland	10.17
40	House building	Borana (?)	Haberland	Ca. 10
41	Music and dance	Schangama	Schulz-Weidner	Ca. 10
44	Wedding Bride and groom Dance	Schangama	Schulz-Weidner	2.40
50	Band	Addis Abeba	n.d.	2.32
52	At the court of the nobility Amhara wearing war dress Grand feast with raw meat and Tejj	(Soddo?)	n.d.	3.17
53	Dressing two men	Sidamo	Pauli	1.38
56	Agriculture with hoes	Maale	Haberland	0.51
59	Trial	Amhara	n.d.	1.19
60	Agriculture	Schangama	n.d.	1.04
61	Ensete processing	Schangama	n.d.	0.45
62	In the shadow of the golden lion (dance with spear and leopard skin)	Maji	Jam Borgstädt	2.55
63	Reception	Amhara	n.d.	3.17
68	Mule caravan Expedition member Haberland Boxes and saddle from mules Prof. Jensen Amhara settlement Mrs. Pauli smoking	n.d.	n.d.	4.07
71	Pottery golden lion, potter, children digging clay, woman making pottery	Aari	n.d.	1.52
72	Iron mining	Dime	n.d.	7.40
73	Dance, funeral service	Maale	Pauli (?)	8.07
75	Funeral service and burial of a woman	Schangama	Schulz-weidner	8.10
76	Leather processing	Sidamo und Darassa	n.d.	10.48
77	Slash-and-burn farming	Maale, Schangama	Schulz-Weidner	Ca. 10
78	Funeral service	Sala	Schulz-Weidner	5.13
79	Ensete Processing (1954/55)	Sidamo and Darassa	Haberland and Pauli	21.32

Among the documents and materials collected by individual researchers in southern Ethiopia, those of Dr. E. Haberland are particularly valuable, both as ethnographic data and as historical documents for understanding modern history and analyzing socio-cultural change in southern Ethiopia (Table 2).⁽⁵⁾ Abbink pointed out that, in relation to modern Ethiopian society and politics, these are important materials for understanding Walaytta society and culture before the emergence of the Ethiopian socialist regime (Abbink 2006: 7).

South Aari Waleda and the South Omo Zone are known as the Gamo-Gofa region; many anthropologists have conducted research in this area and there are rich ethnographic images taken in the 1950s in this region at the Frobenius Institute, such as photographs of livelihood activities, periodic markets, and ritual ceremonies. In my fieldwork area, the South Aari region, people's lives have changed considerably since 1950. These images could be analyzed based on my recent ethnographic data from the perspective of how local people have adapted to modern society. The region has undergone economic development and is now part of a federal system with a modern infrastructure, a modern education system, and a market economy, and these modern systems have also penetrated the daily lives of the local people.⁽⁶⁾

Table 2. List of Legacy Materials of Dr. Haberland at the Frobenius Institute, 24th July 2013

(Number of all materials in this list: 124)

Types of Material	Year	Additional Information	Remarks
Field notes	1990	Zway	Some pages are missing
Field notes	1990	Gurage	Some pages are missing
Field notes	1990	Laki	Some pages are missing
Field notes	1970s	Wolaytta Kingdom	Some pages are missing
Field notes	1970s	Walaytta	Some pages are missing
Field notes	1970s	Ubamer	Some pages are missing
Field diary	1954–1956	Konso expenditure	
Documents	n.d.	Government Statistic data (Soddo)	
Documents	n.d.	Sidama map	Unpublished
Documents	n.d.	The title of the book is <i>Die Konso</i>	Unpublished
Documents	n.d.	The title of the book is <i>Die Sidama</i> (273 pages)	
Photo album	1905	German embassy	
Notes on Film	n.d.	Sidama funeral ceremony	
German newspaper	1964–1990	Article on expenditures	
Radio show notes	n.d.	German Radio in Ethiopia	
Sketch	n.d.	Sketch of material culture	
Documents	n.d.	List of plants in Amharic	
Documents	n.d.	Notes on songs and stories	
Documents	n.d.	Linguistic notes on Arbore and Tsamai	
Documents	n.d.	Oromo linguistics	
Documents	n.d.	Borana material culture	
Documents	n.d.	Notes on Arissi Stone stella	
Ethiopian newspaper	n.d.	Article for which Dr. Haberland received the Haile Sellasie Award	
Documents	n.d.	Sidama ensete notes, varieties and cultivation	

As stated above, a large volume of materials on Ethiopia is housed at the Frobenius Institute. If you have the opportunity to visit Germany and wish to learn more about Ethiopia during the past century, please contact the researchers at the Frobenius Institute; you will be rewarded with a uniquely rich collection of materials. Finally, I am very grateful to the Institute's staff for their continuing work in digitizing and organizing the Institute's collections for the public.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This stay was financially supported by Strategic Young Researcher Overseas Visit Program for Accelerating Brain Circulation, Kyoto University (Leader: Dr. Ishikawa Noboru, FY2012–2014). I would especially like to thank the Director of Frobenius Institute, Prof. Dr. Karl-Heinz Kohl and Research Fellow Dr. Sophia Thubauville.

NOTES

- (1) Ethiopian studies began in 1513 in Germany, when Hiob Ludolf conducted interviews with Abba Gorgoryos, who had come from Ethiopia as an informant on Ethiopian culture and history (Haberland 1986: 5). Haberland summarized the history of Ethiopian studies in Germany as having resulted from collaboration with Ethiopians and having mainly focused on the humanities, including history, arts, language, and ethnology (Haberland 1986).
- (2) Please refer to the website; <http://frobenius-institut.de/index.php/en/>
- (3) Most photographs and rock paintings were digitalized from 2006 to 2009 with the financial support of the German Research Partnership (DFG). The total number of objects from the Ethiopian expeditions is 1171. The contact person for the Ethiopia collection is Dr. Sophia Thubauville. E-mail: Thubauville@em.uni-frankfurt.de.
- (4) The objects from Ethiopia collected during the expeditions before 1960 are housed at the World Cultures Museum (Weltkulturen Museum) in Frankfurt am Main. According to the museum's database, there are approximately 1,800 Ethiopian objects from the Frobenius Institute; 19 from the Frobenius Expedition of 1934–35, and 900 objects that were brought back from the 1954 Frobenius Expedition.
- (5) The studies of Dr. Haberland have been referred to as describing the changes in local people's lives in the context of recent times (Donham 1986; 1994, Zitelmann 1996) and have been regarded as a prototype of research into ethnicity and local people's lives.
- (6) Abbink wrote that the work of Haberland would be an essential starting point in writing an historical ethnography of Walaytta that would focus attention on the current concerns of the region and its people, as well as do justice to the evaluation and transformation of Wolaytta society in the past century (Abbink 2006: 15).

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