

News and Notes

The 19th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies

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The 19th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies (ICES) was held August 24–28, 2015, in Warsaw, Poland. This was the first ICES to be held in Europe since the 16th such conference, which was held in Norway. More than 300 people from 24 countries participated in the 2015 conference. According to the organizers, participants included 70 scholars from Ethiopia, 54 from Germany, 19 from Poland, 14 from the USA, 13 from the UK, 11 from Japan, 10 from France, 9 each from Israel, Italy, and Sweden, and 8 each from Norway and Russia. Apparently, many people from Addis Ababa University had hoped to participate. However, some of them had canceled for economic reasons. Thus, the total number of participants from Ethiopia was lower than at the last conference, which was held in Dire Dawa. On the other hand, the number of participants from provincial universities in Ethiopia was remarkable; they came from more than 10 universities. To enable more Ethiopian researchers to participate in the conference, the conference fee was waived. The University of Warsaw invited 12 researchers from Addis Ababa University; other Ethiopian researchers participated using funds from provincial universities in Ethiopia, or they came from European universities in countries such as France and Germany.

On the first day, August 24, participants began to register at 8:30 in the main hall of the Old Library Building at the University of Warsaw. Presentation venues included the main campus of the University of Warsaw (Old Library Building and Faculty of Oriental Studies) and the National Museum in Warsaw. A welcoming reception was held in the National Museum, where participants also enjoyed a special exhibition. The opening session started at noon. Prof. Adam Łukaszewicz from Warsaw University gave the opening lecture, a presentation about the history of Ethiopian studies in Poland. Ethiopian studies in Poland began in the 1950s. Although the people involved in those early days planned a conference for 1968, they were unable to achieve that end. Thus, their long-cherished dream was realized when Poland hosted the 19th ICES.

On the second day, two Ethiopian films were shown at the National Museum in Warsaw: *Beti and Amare* and *Crumbs*. We were treated to two keynote lectures, one on the second day and one on the fourth day. Prof. Baye Yimam talked about “Movement, Contact, and Diffusion of Features in the Ethiopian Language Area” on the second day, and Mr. Yaqob Arsano presented on “The New Hydro-diplomacy of the Nile: Prospects for Peace and Security in Northeastern Africa” on the fourth day.

The main theme of this conference was “Diversity and Interconnections through Space and Time.” In keeping with this theme, participants presented papers on extremely diverse themes and from many fields of study. Presentations included 38 special panels covering 10 fields: Classical Ethiopia; Literature; Linguistics; History; International Relations; Law, Politics, and Society; Ecology and Environment; Youth and Development; History of Ethiopian Studies and Ethiopianism; Music; and Cinema. In addition, 18 general panels included other papers sorted by theme. The organizers of

each panel determined the presentation time. For example, for the panel in which I participated, each panelist was allotted 20 minutes for the presentation and 10 minutes for discussion. Some presenters who were unable to come to the conference presented via Skype.

As for panels related to education, most of the presentations focused on the question of how we could attain the developmental goals. The paper presented by Mr. Mohammed Jemal was stimulating. This paper showed conditions under which history education in school tended to be taken lightly because it did not relate to development directly. He also highlighted the difficulty of achieving a unified perception of national history in a multiracial state. The majority of the panels and papers were in the fields of political and social science, which had eight panels. Unfortunately, one of these was canceled because all of the presenters were absent. In the panel on issues related to lands at the periphery ("Power, Peripheries, and Land: Development across the Last Frontiers of Ethiopia"), half of the papers discussed issues in recent large-scale government-led developments and displacement in the South Omo Valley. Some papers on this issue were presented in another political and social science panel and in a panel on historical studies. Thus, it seemed that the issue of land and development in the South Omo Valley drew considerable attention from a lot of researchers both in and outside Ethiopia. All three panels related to anthropology had numerous papers, so the presentations took the entire day. One panel, "Culture and Rhetoric in Ethiopia" (the organizer was Prof. Ivo Strecker), showed various examples of cultural interpretations of rhetoric used in specific contexts, such as in common conversation or in scenes of negotiation.

The weather was comfortable for the duration of the conference, except for one day, when we had heavy wind and rain. More than 180 people participated in excursions over the course of 6 days. They visited many historical sites, including the Old Town, which was declared a world heritage site after reconstruction following the Second World War.

This was my first time participating and presenting at an international conference, so I sometimes felt nervous and confused. In retrospect, I realize that it was a very fruitful time and a good opportunity for me to forge relationships with international researchers. Through this conference, I gained new knowledge and motivation to continue my studies.

The conference organizers do not plan to publish proceedings from this conference. Instead, they recommend that panel organizers and presenters publish papers covering their presentations.

Finally, I would like to thank many people, including the organizers of this conference at Warsaw University, for managing the event, which proceeded without any significant problems. The 20th International Conference on Ethiopian Studies will be held at Mekelle University, Ethiopia, in 2018.

List of participants from Japan

Haruka Arii (Kyoto University)

How Women Choose Their Schooling in Their Life Course: The Case of Maale, Southwestern Ethiopia

Takeshi Fujimoto (Toyama University)

From Frontier to Periphery: An Anthropological Analysis of Lowland Settlement Abandonment among the Malo of Southwestern Ethiopia

Hideyuki Inui (Yamaguchi University)

From Information Structure, Topic and Focus in Basketo

Minako Ishihara (Nanzan University)

Tariqa as Network: Documentation of the Tijaniya Organization in Ethiopia

Morie Kaneko (Kyoto University) & Masayoshi Shigeta (Kyoto University)

Formation and Sharing of Local Knowledge on the Production and Consumption of Fermented Ensete (Ensete Ventricosum, Musaceae) Starch among the Aari People of Southwestern Ethiopia

Momoka Maki (Sophia University)

Women's Fighter in TPLF: Women's Agency in the Struggle and Post-Conflict Society

Nobuko Nishizaki (Fukushima University)

Dynamics of Cultural Tourism, Wildlife Tourism and Local Community in Southwestern Ethiopia

Chikage Oba-Smidt (Osaka Prefectural University, JSPS Research Fellow)

History and Historical Consciousness in Oral History: An Analysis of the Oral History of Migration of Rayyaa-Oromo

The Political Rhetorics of the Boorana: An Analysis of Rhetorics in the Oral Chronicles of the Boorana-Oromo

Masayoshi Shigeta (Kyoto University)

Ethnobotanical Research on People-Plant Relationships in Ethiopia: Thirty Years of Engaged Area Studies with Local People and Ensete (*Ensete Ventricosum*)

Nobuhiro Shimizu (Keio University), Riichi Miyake (Fuji Women's University), & Rumi Okazaki (Shigeru Ban Architects)

A Study of the Urban Formation Process of an Ethiopian Hillside City and its Adjustment to Current Urbanization: Case Study on Enda Meskel and Kebele 14 Area at Mekelle City, Tigray Region

Tadesse Daba (Kyoto University) & Masayoshi Shigeta (Kyoto University)

Nutritional, Socio-Economic, and Cultural Values of Teff (*Eragrostis tef*) Varieties in Ethiopia

Gen Tagawa (Hiroshima City University)

Women's Sexuality in the Patriarchy of the Borana-Oromo

Sayuri Yoshida (Nagoya University)

From Differentiation to "Social Discrimination": Changing Relationship between the Kafa and the Manjo in Southwestern Ethiopia