



HAL
open science

[Review of] **Richard J. Hayward & Eshetu Chabo 2014.**
Gamo-English-Amharic Dictionary. With an
Introductory Grammar of Gamo

Yvonne Treis

► **To cite this version:**

Yvonne Treis. [Review of] Richard J. Hayward & Eshetu Chabo 2014. Gamo-English-Amharic Dictionary. With an Introductory Grammar of Gamo. *Aethiopica, International Journal for Ethiopian and Eritrean Studies*, 2016, 19, pp.322-326. hal-01505335

HAL Id: hal-01505335

<https://hal.science/hal-01505335>

Submitted on 24 Sep 2022

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.

AETHIOPICA

International Journal
of Ethiopian and Eritrean Studies

Edited in the Asien-Afrika-Institut
Hiob Ludolf Zentrum für Äthiopistik
der Universität Hamburg
Abteilung für Afrikanistik und Äthiopistik

by Alessandro Bausi
in cooperation with
Bairu Tafla, Ulrich Braukämper, Ludwig Gerhardt,
Hilke Meyer-Bahlburg and Siegbert Uhlig

19 (2016)

Harrassowitz Verlag · Wiesbaden

Vignette:

Gold coin of King Aphilas, early third century CE, as drawn by A. Luegmeyer after the coin in Rennau collection. Weight 2.48 grams, diameter 17 mm.

AETHIOPICA. INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ETHIOPIAN AND ERITREAN STUDIES is an internationally refereed academic journal, edited at the Hiob Ludolf Centre for Ethiopian Studies and at the Department of African and Ethiopian Studies of the Asien-Afrika-Institut at Hamburg Universität, Alsterterrasse 1, 20354 Hamburg, Germany, Tel: +49 40 42838-7730/8380; e-mail: *aethiopica@uni-hamburg.de*

The journal focuses on philology, linguistics, archaeology, history, cultural anthropology, religion, philosophy, literature, and manuscript studies with a regional emphasis on Eritrea, Ethiopia, the Horn of Africa, and related areas. The editors welcome contributions on relevant academic topics as well as on recent research in the respective field. Each issue of AETHIOPICA contains reviews of books which form a substantial section of the journal.

AETHIOPICA is published mainly in English. Articles in French, German and Italian are also accepted for publication. An English summary for all articles in any language is provided.

A series of supplements of monographic or occasional character is also published.

Opinions expressed in articles and reviews in AETHIOPICA are the views of the authors, and not those of the editors, the publishers or the editorial board.

Editorial Team

Susanne Hummel
Thomas Rave

International Editorial Board

David Appleyard, London
Rodolfo Fattovich, Napoli
Alessandro Gori, Copenhagen
Marilyn E. Heldman, Silver Spring
Olga Kapeliuk, Jerusalem

Richard Pankhurst, Addis Ababa/London
Alain Rouaud, Paris
Shiferaw Bekele, Addis Ababa
Rainer Voigt, Berlin

Publication of this journal was supported by a grant of the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft.

© Otto Harrassowitz GmbH & Co. KG, Wiesbaden 2017

This journal, including all of its parts, is protected by copyright.

Any use beyond the limits of copyright law without the permission of the publisher is forbidden and subject to penalty. This applies particularly to reproductions, translations, microfilms and storage and processing in electronic systems.

Printing and binding by Memminger MedienCentrum Druckerei und Verlags-AG

Printed on permanent/durable paper

Printed in Germany

www.harrassowitz-verlag.de

ISSN 1430-1938

Table of Contents

Editorial	6
Bibliographical abbreviations used in this volume	6
Articles	
GETATCHEW HAILE, <i>The Marginal Notes in the Abba Gärīma Gospels</i>	7
Fr. MAXIMOUS EL-ANTONY, JESPER BLID, and AARON MICHAEL BUTTS, <i>An Early Ethiopic Manuscript Fragment (Twelfth– Thirteenth Century) from the Monastery of St Antony (Egypt)</i>	27
MERSHA ALEHEGNE, <i>Orature on Literature: The Case of Abba Gärīma and His Gospel</i>	52
ANAÏS WION, ANNE DAMON-GUILLOT, and STÉPHANIE WEISSER, <i>Sound and Power in the Christian Realm of Ethiopia (Seventeenth–Eighteenth Centuries)</i>	61
MARIA BULAKH, SUSANNE HUMMEL, and THOMAS RAVE, <i>Bibliography of Ethiopian Semitic, Cushitic and Omotic Linguistics XIX: 2014/2015</i>	90
Proceedings of the ‘19 th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies: Ethiopia – Diversity and Interconnections through Space and Time’, Warsaw, Poland, August 24–28, 2015: Panel on ‘Islamic Literature in Ethiopia: New Perspectives of Research’	100
ENDRIS MOHAMMED YESUFE, <i>The Ramsa of šayḥ Aḥmad Ādam, al-Danī al-Awwal (d. 1903)</i>	102
SARA FANI, <i>Arabic Grammar Traditions in Gibe and Harär: Regional Continuity vs Specificity of Scholarship</i>	113
ALESSANDRO GORI, <i>Some Observations on the Text of šayḥ Hāšim’s Faḥ al-raḥmānī</i>	135
MINAKO ISHIHARA, <i>Change in the Significance of Affiliation to Ṭarīqa: the Case of Tiḡāniyya in and around Ġimma</i>	149
MICHELE PETRONE, <i>Ethiopian Tiḡāniyya in Context</i>	165
Miscellaneous	
ALESSANDRO BAUSI, <i>The Encyclopaedia Aethiopica and Ethiopian Studies</i>	188
MARTIN HEIDE, <i>Bemerkungen zu einer Rezension, und zugleich Überlegungen zur Editionspraxis christlich-arabischer bzw. äthiopischer Übersetzungsliteratur</i>	207
RAINER VOIGT, <i>Oromo-Wörterbücher</i>	220

Table of Contents

WOLBERT G.C. SMIDT, <i>Photos as Historical Witnesses: The First Ethiopians in Germany and the First Germans in Ethiopia, the History of a Complex Relationship</i> (ULRICH BRAUKÄMPER)	293
DONALD N. LEVINE, <i>Interpreting Ethiopia: Observations of Five Decades</i> (HERBERT LEWIS)	295
IVO STRECKER, <i>Berimba's Resistance. The Life and Times of a Great Hamar Spokesman</i> (ALKE DOHRMANN)	298
CHIKAGE OBA-SMIDT, <i>The Oral Chronicle of the Boorana in Southern Ethiopia</i> (MARCO BASSI)	300
ABDULKADER SALEH MOHAMMAD, <i>The Saho of Eritrea: Ethnic Identity and National Consciousness</i> (MAGNUS TREIBER)	304
JULIA PFITZNER, 'Unser Kalender funktioniert nicht mehr!' <i>Ernährungssicherung und Anpassung im Zeichen des Klimawandels</i> (GÜNTHER SCHLEE)	306
AARON MICHAEL BUTTS, ed., <i>Semitic Languages in Contact</i> (ALESSANDRO BAUSI)	308
MULUKEN ANDUALEM SIFEREW, <i>Comparative classification of Ge'ez verbs in the three traditional schools of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church</i> (HIRUIE ERMAS)	312
RAINER VOIGT, ed., <i>Tigre Studies in the 21st Century/Tigre-Studien im 21. Jahrhundert</i> (OLGA KAPELIUK)	315
SALEH MAHMUD IDRIS, <i>A Comparative Study of the Tigre Dialects</i> (MARIA BULAKH)	319
RICHARD J. HAYWARD and ESHETU CHABO, <i>Gamo-English-Amharic Dictionary</i> (YVONNE TREIS)	322
Dissertation abstract	
SOLOMON GEBREYES BEYENE, <i>The Chronicle of King Gälawdewos (1540–1559): A Critical Edition with Annotated Translation</i>	327

Editorial

The present issue of AETHIOPICA, like the preceding one, is partly monographic, with a section containing the proceedings of the Panel on Islamic Literature in Ethiopia: New Perspectives of Research, from the ‘19th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies’, held in Warsaw, Poland, on 24–28 August 2015.

Starting from this issue, the annual bibliography on Ethiopian Semitic and Cushitic linguistics held from its inception in 1998 for eighteen years by Rainer Voigt is handed over, on Voigt’s own will, to a pool of younger scholars, with the substantial support of the AETHIOPICA editorial team. I would like on this occasion to express the deep gratitude of the editorial board of AETHIOPICA and of all scholars in Ethiopian Semitic and Cushitic linguistics to Rainer Voigt for his fundamental and valuable contribution.

Bibliographical abbreviations used in this volume

- AE* *Annales d’Éthiopie*, Paris 1955ff.
ÄthFor Äthiopistische Forschungen, 1–35, ed. by E. HAMMERSCHMIDT, 36–40, ed. by S. UHLIG (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner (1–34), 1977–1992; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz (35–40), 1994–1995).
AethFor Äthiopistische Forschungen, 41–73, ed. by S. UHLIG (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1998–2011); 74–75, ed. by A. BAUSI and S. UHLIG (*ibid.*, 2011f.); 76ff. ed. by A. BAUSI (*ibid.*, 2012ff.).
AION *Annali dell’Università degli studi di Napoli ‘L’Orientale’*, Napoli: Università di Napoli ‘L’Orientale’ (former Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli), 1929ff.
CSCO Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, 1903ff.
E Ae S. UHLIG, ed., *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, I: A–C; II: D–Ha; III: He–N; in cooperation with A. BAUSI, eds, IV: O–X (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010); A. BAUSI in cooperation with S. UHLIG, eds, V: Y–Z, *Supplementa, Addenda et Corrigenda, Maps, Index* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2010, 2014).
EP *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, I–XII (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1960–2005).
EMML Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library, Addis Ababa.
JES *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, Addis Ababa 1963ff.
JSS *Journal of Semitic Studies*, Manchester 1956ff.
NEASt *Northeast African Studies*, East Lansing, MI 1979ff.
OrChr *Oriens Christianus*, Leipzig–Roma–Wiesbaden 1901ff.
PICES 9 A.A. GROMYKO, ed., 1988, *Proceedings of the Ninth International Congress of Ethiopian Studies, Moscow, 26–29 August 1986*, I–VI (Moscow: Nauka Publishers, Central Department of Oriental Literature, 1988).
RSE *Rassegna di Studi Etiopici*, Roma, 1941–1981, Roma–Napoli 1983ff.
ZDMG *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, Leipzig–Wiesbaden–Stuttgart 1847ff.

unknown. It will prove an indispensable tool for anybody interested in Təgre language, and will be of great use for scholars dealing with Ethiopian Semitic linguistics, as well as for the dialectologists, historical linguists, and scholars of linguistic typology. The material presented will also be of value for future research on the history and ethnography of Eritrea.

Maria Bulakh, Russian State University for the Humanities

RICHARD J. HAYWARD and ESHETU CHABO, *Gamo–English–Amharic Dictionary: With an Introductory Grammar of Gamo* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2014). 1172 pp., hardback. Price: € 198.00. ISBN: 978-3-447-10109-7.

The lexical documentation of Omotic languages is patchy and still in its early stages. Apart from Wolf Leslau's (1959) *Moča Dictionary*, a slim book with ~1,000 entries, lexical data on individual languages is, at best, to be found in research articles, in the appendices of grammars and in grey literature. The *Gamo–English–Amharic Dictionary* (hence GEAD) is thus an immensely valuable new publication. Omotic linguistics owes a lot to the first author, Richard J. Hayward (RJH), who has been engaged for more than three decades in the description of Omotic languages, especially of the Ometo group. The second author, Eshetu Chabo (EC), is a Gamo native speaker originally from Čenča (Čänča), living in London since (at least) the end of the 1980s, and RJH's long-term research assistant. The GEAD is a voluminous book, consisting of a grammar (pp. 11–346), an extensive trilingual dictionary (pp. 347–862), and two indexes (English: pp. 863–1006, Amharic: pp. 1007–1172). It addresses a scientific audience as well as the Gamo community.

Gamo is spoken by more than one million speakers in southwestern Ethiopia in the Gamo-Gofa Zone whose administrative centre is Arba Məñč. It is a member of the Central Ometo dialect cluster and thus closely related to Wälaytta. Gamo is used nowadays as a medium of instruction in primary schools (grade 1–4) and taught as a subject up to grade 10. Apart from a grammatical pilot sketch by Éva Hompó in 1990 and a PhD thesis on Gamo syntax by Nicholas Taylor in 1994, a few articles have been dedicated to individual grammatical issues and to the politically sensitive question of how far Gamo and the other North Ometo varieties differ from each other. To date, the boundaries and the internal dialectal variation of the lects called 'Gamo' are uncharted terrain and defining them would call, as RJH/EC state, 'for an Ometo-wide research programme involving mutual intelligibility tests across an extensive network of lects displaying varying degrees of divergence over a

considerable number of morphosyntactic features' (p. 6). Here, an almost unexplored field for future research opens up.

Part 1 of the GEAD is a detailed description of phonology and morphosyntax. Despite its length, the authors call it an 'introductory' grammar. It aims at providing the analytical background for the transcription and grammatical glosses used in the example sentences of the dictionary. But, in fact, it goes far beyond this modest goal. The phonology chapter treats consonants, vowels and tonal accent as well as phonotactic issues. The subsequent chapters are concerned with the morphology and morphosyntax of nominals (subtypes of nouns, pronouns and numerals) (§ MS1.0), adjectives (§ MS2.0), postpositions (§ MS3.0), verbs (§ MS4.0) including so-called 'compound verbs', consisting of an invariant 'particle' (ideophone) and a light verb (§ MS4.1.2.7), adverbs (§ MS5.0) and 'pro-sentences' (interjections) (§ MS6.0). Sections § MS7–8 deal with coordination, disjunction and (in)direct speech.

In the dictionary (part 2), lexical entries covering half a page are common. An entry consists of a Latin transcription of the lemma plus a second word form, an Ethiopic transcription, an indication of the word class membership of the lemma, an English and an Amharic gloss. This is followed by (i) sub-entries for morphologically derived forms, compounds and idioms, (ii) sub-entries for another word class, if a lemma belongs to more than one, and (iii) sub-entries for distinct meanings of a polysemic (or homophonous) entry. All head and sub-entries are illustrated by glossed examples with an English and an Amharic translation. Ample cross-references are given. The English–Gamo index (part 3) is a reverse wordlist based on part 2 and enables 'the user to locate the appropriate Gamo entry (or entries) in the *Dictionary*, for it is only there that proper detail and exemplification will be found' (p. 863). The Amharic-Gamo index (part 4) provides easy access for users with an Amharic background.

Due to limitations of space, I cannot attempt anything approaching a full review. In the following, I restrict myself to observations on the orthography and the presentation of examples before proceeding to a general critique. On pp. 24–35, the authors introduce the two transcriptions used in their dictionary, a modified Latin alphabet and a modified Ethiopian script, both of which are 'maximally phonemic' (p. 24). Although RJH/EC state that they 'would not wish to get into debate' on their Latin transcription (p. 7), I cannot but disagree with their decision to establish yet another Latin-based orthography. The GEAD orthography follows neither the transcription used by RJH in earlier publications nor today's official Gamo orthography, which largely follows the Qubee conventions. The official Gamo orthography is not even reviewed in the present work. In an already messy orthographic landscape such as South Ethiopia, it would have been all the more important for

the Gamo community, which has hardly any access to written material in their language, to have the official orthography applied in the GEAD.

Since Gamo has only fairly recently been introduced as a medium of instruction, most literate Gamo speakers are more familiar with the Ethiopic script used for Amharic. In order to make the Ethiopic script, an alphasyllabary, fit a phonemic transcription of a language with phonemic consonant and vowel length, RJH/EC decide on several adjustments (pp. 31–35). While an established diacritic (˘) is applied to mark long consonants, new symbols and conventions are invented to overcome other shortcomings of the script. The *hulätt näṭʼib*-symbol (ṭ), which serves as a word separator in the Ethiopic script, is introduced as a mark for long vowels, e.g. ṭṭ ṭṭ for *póó'o* 'light' (p. 34). Gamo consonant phonemes which have no equivalent in the Ethiopic syllabary are represented by unused signs, e.g. Gamo /dz/ is symbolized by ṭ/ṭ(ä)/ (p. 34). The modifications result in a complex, non-intuitive Ethiopic transcription, which differs, firstly, from other modified Ethiopic scripts used to write Omotic languages of the area (e.g. Baskeet) and, secondly and more importantly, from the Ethiopic script used by bible translators in the Gamo area itself. RJH/EC were certainly well-intentioned in trying to make the GEAD accessible to readers who are more familiar with the Ethiopic than the Latin script. However, in the end, RJH/EC might confuse all Gamo users, irrespective of the script they learned in school. This confusion is potentially disastrous in a community with only a very young writing tradition.

The GEAD is a rich source of examples, which all readers will welcome. They are, however, extremely difficult to process. The source line is not segmented. The gloss line is not aligned and appears as running text. Overly complex grammatical abbreviations are used (pp. 336–343), e.g. 'FpartProx-DeicPron' for 'feminine particularising proximal deictic pronoun'. Readers must pay attention to the conventions for capitalization, bracketing and subscripts. Postpositions (Pp) receive no functional glosses. Derived verbal stems are translated rather than glossed (e.g. 'talk-to-one-another' for 'talk-PASS'), and thus the visibility of derivational morphology is lost. Readers have to adjust to the unconventional values attributed to full stops, plus signs and hyphens (pp. 331–335): '.' marks morpheme boundaries in a word (elsewhere in the linguistic literature: '-'), '+' marks enclitic elements (elsewhere mostly: '='), and '˘' marks one-to-many-correspondences between a Gamo morpheme and several glossing elements as well as multi-word English translations (elsewhere: '˘' and '˘'). To further complicate matters, the hyphen has a different function in the source line, where it indicates a morpheme boundary and thus corresponds to '.' or '+' in the gloss line.

Umpuši aččan gididaakko ta
Umpúšó.Obl RelN(Prox).Obl+Pp(-n) be-present.I.RelvPf.Int.Hypo 1SgDet]N
 haa yikke-šin
ProxDeicDet]N come.Pf-1Sg-Neg+Past

I wouldn't have come here if I had been at *Umpúšó's* (place) (ex. 34b, p. 92)

A truly interested reader might not be deterred by examples such as the one above, but she is finally close to despair when she arrives at example 40c (p. 97), in which four uninterrupted gloss lines spread across two pages.

The present work is monumental, precious, exceptionally detailed and mirrors the intimate knowledge that the authors have of Gamo. However, the weaknesses of the GEAD are also apparent. Too much was attempted: a grammar and a dictionary in a single volume, a book for linguistic experts, for Gamo native speakers who want to learn more about their language and extend their knowledge of English (p. 963), and for people accessing Gamo through Amharic. The resulting tome is heavy and difficult to handle. It would have been better to split it up into two volumes or to develop a linguist and a native-speaker version.

Despite its volume, indispensable information is missing. There is no mention of the classification of the language, of closely related languages, of speaker numbers, no information on the internal differentiation of the language and not even a sketchy map of the speaker area. Most notably, no information on the data sources is given. The book seems to be based entirely on the native speaker knowledge of the second author. I might, of course, be wrong, but no other sources (consultants, oral or written corpora) are mentioned. I do not intend to question EC's authority, but, from a methodological point of view, it would be problematic if such an authoritative publication as a dictionary were based on a single source, the more so when the person providing the data has been living outside the speaker area for decades.

The layout of the GEAD is unsightly (e.g. abundant use of italics and bold, ragged right-alignment). The GEAD would have benefitted from another round of proof-reading. Errors in wording, missing diacritics, misplaced or forgotten tone marks and other typos can be spotted easily when reading through the book. Here are some examples: *variatiion* > *variation* (p. 34), *phenemes* > *phonemes* (p. 35), *azini* < *azinâi* (p. 73), *áse* > *asé* (p. 74), *seen* > *seem* (p. 82), undeleted: ****Check this example* (p. 95), *yuuyyá* > *yuuyá* (p. 847). The indexes have not been edited, and one wonders who would look up 'be reported', 'be born', 'be in disgrace' under B and 'the future' and 'the cold' under T.

Beyond any doubt, the GEAD is a huge leap forward in the study of Gamo and an invaluable, data-rich input for researchers working on syn-

Reviews

chronic studies of related languages and on diachronic studies of Ometo and Omotic. If only we could look forward to a second edition or an electronic version!

Yvonne Treis, Centre national de la recherche scientifique–Langage,
Langues et Cultures d’Afrique Noire (CNRS-LLACAN)