

Waldaa Qormaata Oromoo



Oromo Studies Association

P.O Box 32391, Fridley, MN 55432

www.oromosudies.org

Volume 4

March 2010 Newsletter

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1. Message from the president

After a very heavy winter and record high snow, we are finally heading into 2010 warmer weather. Please enjoy while you have the chance. The living condition of the Oromo people is still challenging. Our people have taken their taken steps in letting the world know that they will not give up their land. There is alarming news of new wave of famine and malnutrition in the entire Oromia. The campaign for 2010 election is already under way, even though the out come is very uncertain. Despite of all these obstacles and uncertainties, the Oromo people will move forward towards the goal of self determination in the near future.

OSA has started books donation for Jimma University. Please follow the instructions included in this newsletter and help the new Oromo generation in Oromia. As mentioned in the February newsletter, OSA has moved one step forward and digitalized the OSA membership form. From now on OSA active members, former members and new members could go to OSA web site and renew their memberships or become a new member on line. You can also donate any amount of money to OSA, to help this organization meet its mission. OSA is asking for donations to publish JOS. There are four

volumes of JOS ready for publication, but pending due to lack of funds. We need about \$16,000.00 to publish four volumes of JOS. OSA is also in dire need of funds to pay for Keynote speakers who will come from Africa or Europe, but are unable to pay for their plane tickets and accommodations. The strength of an organization is measured by the number of members it has. Please join OSA and make it a viable organization.

OSA is approaching its mid year conference, and would like to encourage OSA Members and friends of OSA to plan and attend it on April 3, 2010 in MN. The annual conference will be in Washington D.C. on July, 31, 2010, and August 1, 2010. All are invited to attend OSA Conferences.

Thanks

Haile Hirpa, PhD
OSA President

2. Call for 2010 presentation papers

March 7, 2010

**OROMO STUDIES ASSOCIATION
CALL FOR PAPERS/PRESENTATION
Presentation Proposal Submittal Form**

The 2010 OSA annual conference will take place on July 31, 2010, and on August 1, 2010 at the Campus Howard University, Washington; D.C. OSA is at present soliciting presentation proposals. Please complete the form below if you are interested in serving as a panelist.

Please complete all fields

Name _____ Title: Dr. Mr. Mrs. _____

Institutional Affiliation _____

Email: _____

Daytime Phone _____ (cell if possible) _____

Presentation Topic

Abstract (Not to Exceed 500 words)

Where does your presentation fit within the interest area Panels? Please mark (X) one or two of the following areas as you see fit.

- _____ PANEL I Regional perspectives: Political freedom, human rights, and the vicious cycle of conflict
- _____ PANEL II Oromia: Economic and social developments
- _____ PANEL III Oromia: History, culture, and language
- _____ PANEL IV Oromia: Human rights: The plight of Oromo prisoners and refugees and what we can do to help
- _____ PANEL V Oromia: Health Challenges: HIV/AIDS, Malaria, Iodine and Fluoride Deficiency, Malnutrition etc
- _____ PANEL VI Looking to our future: Oromo Youth perspectives and women issues
- _____ OTHER VII Please suggest a Panel _____

Please complete the form and email to OSA President at hhirpa@gmail.com no later than April 15, 2010. If you are considering multiple presentations, please complete a separate form for each. OSA will notify you by April 30th the outcome of your proposal. Thank you.

The OSA 2010 Call for Proposals is now open!

The Oromo Studies Association's 24th Annual Meeting will be held July 31, 2010, and August 1, 2010, at the Campus of Howard University, Washington, D.C .

This year's Annual Conference theme is "Oromia and East Africa in the 21st Century: Rethinking the Urgency of Paradigm shift for democracy, Human Rights and Social Justice in the Age of Intensified Globalization.". We have deliberately chosen a theme that is broad enough to accommodate wide-ranging interests, but we propose the following sub-themes as a guide:

PANEL I: Regional perspectives: Political freedom, human rights, and the vicious cycle of conflict

PANEL II: Oromia and East Africa: Political, economic, and social developments

PANEL III: Oromia: History, culture, and language

PANEL IV: Oromia: Human rights: The plight of Oromo prisoners and refugees and what we can do to help

Panel V: Oromia: Health challenges: HIV/AIDS, Malaria, Iodine Deficiency, Fluoride Deficiency, Malnutrition...etc.

PANEL VI: Looking to our future: Oromo Youth perspectives, Women Issues

OTHER VII: Please suggest a Panel _____ Please note that if you would like to organize a complete panel with a set of panelists, you can do so by proposing your own theme and speakers under “Other” above.

DEADLINE: PLEASE COMPLETE THE ATTACHED SUBMITTAL FORM AND RETURN TO OSA President at hhirpa@gmail.com BY APRIL 15, 2010.

Thank you for your continued OSA support!!

Haile Hirpa, PhD
OSA President

3. OSA Membership

This message is to announce to you again that OSA has finally digitalized OSA Membership page on OSA website. OSA membership is open to all Oromos and friends of the Oromo people. Please visit OSA web-site and renew your membership online or become a new member. You can also renew your membership by mailing, the old way. You can pay your OSA membership by Paypal, by Visa, by Mastercard, by American Express or by Discover card. Open OSA web-site and click on membership. Then follow the direction on the membership window. (Please go to <http://oromostudies.org/> and the membership page with online pay option can be found at <http://oromostudies.org/Membership.html>)

Please pass this information to all friends so that OSA membership can reach all who are stakeholders in OSA through out the world. Now you can donate any amount of money to OSA in addition to your membership fee. The detailed instruction is on OSA web site membership page. If you have any questions, please contact the OSA President at hhirpa@gmail.com or at (502) 819-4107.

So far the following individuals have used the online option and renewed their memberships or have become new members. These individuals are from all over the world and from all walks of life, professionals, senior citizens and students included. Their names are as follows: Haile Hirpa, Haile Qerenso, Trevor Trueman, Peri Klemm, Bonnie Holcomb, Gobena Huluka, Mesfin Abdi, Guluma Gemed, Asafa Jalata, Zeituna Kelil, Assefa Kuru, Jemal Gishe, Ibssa Ahmed, Admasu Tucho, Gudaye Tasissa, Jawar Mohammed, Arfase Gemed, Begna Dugassa, Eshetu Beshada, Aregash Deressa, Samuel Geleta, Yoseph Aga, Debela Amante, Mosisa Aga, Koste Yadeta, Fantahun Diba, Shibu Fufa and Mohammed Hassen Ali.

I am betting to announce hundreds of names next month.

So far, the following OSA Members have contributed donations as listed below. We ask you to donate as much as you can to help OSA. The OSA EC believes donation to OSA is a sacred civic duty of OSA members and friends of OSA.

1. Dr. Peri Klemm	\$100.00
2. Dr. Asafa Jalata	\$200.00
3. Dr. Haile Hirpa	\$250.00
4. Dr. Mohammed Hassen Ali	\$200.00

4. Progress on Oromo Professional Teams

To enhance effective services to the Oromo people, Oromo professionals are organizing themselves in their respective fields of their professions and skills under the umbrella of OSA. To date the following Professionals are developing teams effectively.

1. Dr. Begna Dugassa in area of health, email b.dugassa@utoronto.ca
2. Mr. Michael Jacobs in the area of environment, email nortonjacobs@gmail.com
3. Dr. Samuel Geleta in area of Food security, email Sxgeleta@salisbury.edu
4. Dr. Badhassa Tadesse in area of Economics, email btadesse@d.umn.edu
5. Mr. Beyene Megersa in Qubee, email bmeersa@yahoo.com
6. Mr. Habtamu Dhugo in area of journalism, email boruufwaqaa@gmail.com
7. Ms. Zakia Posey in the area of Youth development, email poseyzak@msu.edu

I would like to thank the above professionals for their leadership and encourage all professionals to get organized as soon as possible. OSA is actively working to organize other professionals in their respective fields. Please contact any if the above team leaders at any time. Please be proactive and serve the Oromo people with your profession and skills. If you have any questions or recommendations, please let us know.

5. Jimma University Books Donation Project

Dear OSA Members and friends of OSA,

Please look at the request of Jimma University Oromo Folklore Department appeal and respond to them generously. This young university needs our help. OSA is counting on all Oromo professionals to help our young people. Please take few minutes of your time and plan how to get this book. Please ask coworkers, friends, relatives or your bosses to donate these books. Before you know we will have truck load of books. Please plan and ask. Asking for books donation is the easiest favor you can ask anyone you come across. People are very generous when you ask for book donation. It might be much easier if you contact Obbo Habtamu to make shipment arrangements. OSA can coordinate with Obbo Habtamu. Please take the list to your local libraries and you might collect more than you need in a very short period of time.

Obbo Habtamu Dhugo, OSA contact person received the following message:

I have just (02/25/2010) received a list of books from prof Dereje Fufa, the chairman of the Department of Oromo Folklore at Jimma University. Individual OSA members and OSA as an organization can buy and donate books listed by topics.

Dereje would especially like willing individuals to donate books listed under the heading "Very Crucial Ones of All". Book donations can be made directly from OSA to the Department of Oromo Folklore or individually to the department. Donor names will be put on the titles page of each book to acknowledge the generous assistance. Please contact profs Dereje Fufa or Melkamu Dumessa to provide you with shipping addresses at emails melkamu94@yahoo.com and dereje_2008@yahoo.com

Jimma University is a young University <http://www.ju.edu.et>. The Department of Oromo Folklore is one of the youngest programs there, probably less than 5 years since inauguration. I am aware that professors there are trying to run the department virtually with no reference books or resources in English or Afaan Oromo. Any donations people make will make a difference in the lives of students and teachers at the department. Interested individuals can donate any books they can afford.

If you get donations from organizations, we can use OSA's Tax exempt number. Individuals can also use OSA's Tax exempt number. Please contact Obbo Habtamu Dhugo for coordination at www.boruufwaqaa@gmail.com.

Thank you,

Haile Hirpa, PhD
OSA President

Reference tools

A. Bibliographic, encyclopedias, dictionaries, guides....

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Bauman, Richard, and Joel Sherzer eds. *Explorations in the Ethnography of Speaking*. Cambridge University, 1974.

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C. Theory and technique

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Briggs, Charles, *Learning how to Ask: A Sociolinguistic Appraisal of the Role of the Interview in Social Science Research*. Cambridge University, 1986.

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Thompson, Stith. *The Folktale*. University of California, 1977.

(2) ballad and epic

Buchan, David. *The Ballad and the Folk*. Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972.

Johnson, John, Tom Hale and Steven Belcher, eds. *Oral Epics from Africa: Vibrant Voices from a Vast Continent*. Indiana University, 1997

(3) Myth

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B. Material culture

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D. Ritual, festival, and belief

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IV. Regional studies

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V. Related works

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Gans, Herbert. *Popular Culture and High Culture: An Analysis and Evaluation of Taste*. Basic Books, 1974.

Geertz, Clifford. *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*. Basic Books, 1973.

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VERY CRUCIAL ONES OF ALL

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6. Recognizing and Celebrating the Contribution and Success of Our Own Professor

OSA would like to recognize Dr. Asafa Jalata for being the scholar of the week. Dr. Asafa has been working tirelessly for the rest of his life to promote the Oromo cause. Today he is being recognized for a very successful contribution and OSA is very proud of his contribution to the human society at global level. Congratulations Dr. Asafa!!

Scholar of the Week



Asafa Jalata

Asafa Jalata, a professor in the Department of Sociology, has three journal articles and a book in press this year. His new book, *Contending Nationalisms of Oromia and Ethiopia: Struggling for Statehood, Sovereignty and Multinational Democracy*, deals with the struggles of Oromia, the largest political region in Ethiopia. The book demonstrates how the oppressor Ethiopian nationalism rationalizes and justifies a hierarchical organization of various peoples and how the oppressed Oromo nationalism provides for the Oromo nation a vision and a program for seeking self-determination and sovereignty by radically transforming the Ethiopian colonial state and its racist political structures and by promoting a multinational democracy.

Jalata—a leading social scientist in the fields of indigenous studies, human rights, Africana studies, and global studies—is engaged in identifying and explaining the chains of historical and political economic forces that shape racial inequality, development, and social movements on local, regional, and global levels.

See Asafa Jalata in the [Selected Works Author Gallery of Trace](http://works.bepress.com/asafa_jalata), UT's digital showcase and archive, at http://works.bepress.com/asafa_jalata

Selected Publications

Contending Nationalisms of Oromia and Ethiopia: Struggling for Statehood, Sovereignty and Multinational Democracy (Binghamton: Global Academic Publishing at New York University) (in press).

“The Conceptualization and Theorization of Terrorism,” *Humanity & Society*, Volume 34 (2) (in press).

“The Tigrayan-led Ethiopian State, Repression, State Terrorism, and Gross Human Rights Violations,” *Horn of Africa Journal*, Volume 26 (in press).

“The Ethiopian State: Authoritarianism, Violence and Clandestine Genocide,” *Journal of Pan African Studies*, Volume 3 (6) (in press).

“Being in and out of Africa: The Impact Duality of Ethiopianism,” *Journal of Black Studies*, Volume 40: 189-214 (2009).

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“Foundations of a State in Oromia: Applying *Gadaa* Principles in the Twenty-First Century,”

Journal of Oromo Studies, Volume 15 (2): 133-189 (2008).

“Struggling for Social Justice in the Capitalist World System: The Cases of African Americans, Oromos, Southern and Western Sudanese,” *Social Identities: Journal for the Study of Race, Nation and Culture*, Volume 14 (3): 363-388 (2008).

7. Thank you note to Dr. Trevor Trueman

In the first week of March 2010, under the leadership of Dr. Trevor Trueman, Oromo Support Group, published a 37 page report on political detention and killings from 2008 to 2010. This report revealed all the details of the persecution that the Oromo people are facing as we speak.

Dr. Trueman is a living figure who has dedicated his life to human rights. I wish I have 1% of Dr. Trueman’s dedication and talent. If Oromo nationals use 1% of Dr. Truman’s dedication on human rights issue, the Oromo people could be emancipated in a couple of years.

On behalf of the OSA Executive Committee, I would like to say thank you to Dr. Trueman for being a living Oromo hero. With the hard work of Dr. Trueman and other peace loving people, Oromia shall be free very soon.

8. New books and articles

A. A NEW BOOK

AFAAN OROMOO HAABARANNU !

LET US LEARN OROMOO LANGUAGE !

By

Zelealem Aberra Tesfa

This book is meant for Children of Oromos in Diaspora as well as for those adults who are not as yet literate in the Oromo language. In addition any foreigner who wants to communicate in Oromoo will benefit tremendously.

Kutaa Jalqabaa

Dhugaa dha..!
Maaltu hanga afaan
ofii gaha...?

“Afaan dhabuun
of dhabuu dha!”
... .jedha ture
abbaan koo!

AAA...BAA...CAA..!

Dhugaa dha..! Maaltu hanga afaan ofii gaha...?

AFAAN OROMOO HAABARANNU !
LET US LEARN OROMOO LANGUAGE !

Kutaa Jalqabaa Namni Afaan Oromoo yeroo gabaabaa keessatti, akka salphaatti baree dubbisuu fi barreessuuf fedha qabu hundi barroo kanarraa bu'a guddaa argata. Barroon kuni ijoollee yookaan beekaa, Oromoo yookaan keessummaa biyya alaa hundaaf akka ta'utti qophaayee. Barroon kun jechoota dheeraa yookaan gabaaba ta'an, akkasumas cimaa yookaan laafaa ta'an dubbisuu fi qalbeefachuun bartootaaf akka salphatuuf tooftaa addatiin qophayee. Tokkoo-tokkoon jechootaas suuraa fi fakkii dhaan deggeramani waan dhityaatanif eenyumtiyyuu salphaatti hubachuu danda'a; akkasumas sammuu bartoota keessatti hubannoo laayyootti hinirraanfatanne uuma. Barroon kuni kutaa 26 yeroo gabaatu, raawwin kutaa hundaa galmee hiika jechoota—hiika afaan Inglizi—fi gilgalaan hordofama.

Here is a simple and easy-to-understand book for those interested in studying Oromoo and want to master reading and writing in the shortest possible time. Oromoo is the third biggest language in sub-Saharan Africa; and is spoken mainly in Oromia (Ethiopia) and Northern Kenya by more than 50 million people. In order to make the learning process enjoyable and unforgettable, and comprehension of each and every Oromoo vocabulary easier, the author has employed corresponding pictures and cartoons as visual aids. In addition, each of the 26 chapters of the book is followed by a mini dictionary that provides English equivalents for each Oromoo word learned in the preceding chapter. At the end of each chapter, there are study exercises before proceeding to the next. It is a wonderful book for any beginner, native or foreigner.

Ykkös offset Singsbyntie 386 67710 Singsby Vaasa / Finland

B. Article

Oromo Fashion:

Three: Contemporary Body Art Practices among Afran Qallo Women

BY

Peri M. Klemm

In 1998, when I first visited Harar, a town in eastern Ethiopia, I was traveling with a young Muslim Oromo-American woman. Wherever we ventured in and around the old walled city, people stopped dead in their tracks and stared. Not at me, per se, although my light skin and hair color certainly attract attention, but at my traveling companion. She looked Ethiopian, certainly, and even Oromo. Her headscarf indicated her faith in the devoutly Islamic region of Harar and though I also covered my head as a sign of respect, for her it was culturally and religiously motivated. Unlike Oromo women in Harar, however, she usually wore the clothes of an American college student and she appeared heavier than most Ethiopian women in her T-shirts, jeans, and sneakers. In Harar, those bold enough, usually men, stopped her on the street to ask her with some insistence: What is your father's name? Where is your family's house? Why do you dress this way? Those living in and near Harar, we learned, were particularly curious about my friend because she could not easily be identified. I, on the other hand, as a white foreigner, was either classified as part of the growing tourist presence in Harar or as an NGO worker on temporary leave.² Categorizing people by ethnicity, religion, marital status, social and

economic class, and occupation is by no means limited to the inhabitants of eastern Ethiopia. Throughout Africa, one could argue, those not easily deposited into recognized and accepted expressions of personhood are suspect and afforded considerable attention. In Harar, however, where four major ethnicities live and work within close proximity to one another, identifying and categorizing others through visual signifiers such as clothing, hairstyle, and body markings is crucial to formulating all future modes of interaction. This is particularly overt for women. Men from all local ethnicities—Harari, Argobba, Somali, and Oromo—wear similar types of clothing, including waist wraps made of imported Indonesian textiles or pants with T-shirts, dress shirts, and jackets, which render them virtually indistinguishable from one another (Klemm 2002:196). Women, on the other hand, clearly differentiate themselves through specific dress ensembles that convey their regional ties, clan affiliation, class, and life-cycle stage. This information is clearly communicated to individuals who understand the complex language of dress in eastern Ethiopia. Beyond the immediate visual correspondences, more subversive political references also exist, many of which have developed during the last generation. This paper examines three body arts created and worn by Oromo women and explores how each communicates ethnic and politically seditious codes. Each is a relatively new art form created within the last fifty years, easily situated within the framework of fashion. In the following three examples—**qarma, ambarka, and kula**—Oromo women have adapted wearable, imported commodities in ways that render them culturally appropriate and politically meaningful. In doing so, they claim a place for them-selves in a rapidly changing and increasingly modern Ethiopian economy, while still maintaining ties to indigenous practices.

Oromo Aesthetics And Women's dress Rural Oromo women are constantly on the move. As traders they haul heavy bundles of wood, coal, produce, and water along the main thoroughfare to and from local markets in the city of Harar and in surrounding communities (Fig. 1). Oromo women in eastern Ethiopia are currently facing a debilitating drought that is affecting livestock and crops and sending many to seek aid in urban centers in Jijiga, Dire Dawa, and Hargeisa and refugee camps near the border with Somalia. In addition, hunger, malaria, cholera, dysentery, and infectious diseases are a constant battle. Yet even in the face of these challenges, these same women, both young and old, are deeply invested in fashion. Oromo woman interviewed throughout eastern Hararge confessed that they take fashion very seriously, for it provides them access to specific kinds of modernity. Through contemporary costume women reconfigure and make relevant the markers that connect them to their cultural, religious, and familial heritage.⁵ They also use dress to make sense of their current situations and to create visual networks to distant and often unfamiliar Oromo communities in the Diaspora, many of which are currently engaged in a struggle for nationalism and self-determination. Creating conscious connections to a larger Oromo identity is achieved through personal expressions found on the body, particularly around the neck, on the face, and in the hair. Herein I will discuss three parts of this ensemble of bodily embellishments used by unmarried, rural Oromo women in order to emphasize the importance of transnational fashion as a pliable medium used to communicate a political voice. These three body arts are: a beaded necklace called ambarka (Fig. 2), a beaded headband called qarma (Fig. 3), and temporary facial markings known as kula, literally 'to color the face' (Fig. 4). Each of these items is constructed with newly imported materials that travel from ports along the Somali coast to local markets in Ethiopia's

eastern Highlands. Each item is also filtered through specific design strategies that either directly copy or visually reference dress styles of the past. While Oromo women today are constantly redefining their individual tastes and priorities, they are collectively rooted in an indigenous aesthetic system and governed by culturally endorsed prescriptions surrounding the degree to which innovation is encouraged or discouraged in their personal arts. Within these prescriptions, fashion in the form of constantly changing, imported commodities can be manipulated to reflect meaningful connections to indigenous notions of family, individuality, value and memory. What is worn is largely dictated by what is considered to be appropriate, financially viable, and above all, beautiful. But due to the limited repertoire of materials available for purchase in the urban markets, which are visited by the various ethnic groups who rely on these centers for their outfits, many of the same articles are incorporated into costumes across ethnic lines. Yet Oromo dress is distinctly Oromo in several ways. For example, women's body arts are rendered uniquely Oromo through the specific design and color choices that women make; these rely heavily on stylistic conventions, durability, financial constraints, and material availability in the production of textiles, leather, bead, and metalwork. In addition, items that may appear similar to another ethnic group's body art are encoded with Oromo folk-lore and historical narratives. They thus become wearable markers that constantly refer backward in time to a distinctly Oromo heritage in much the same way that the past is evoked today through women's songs and dance gestures. Warwick and Cavallaro write, "in framing the body, however precariously, dress contributes to the symbolic translation of materiality into cultural images or signifiers" (1998:3). The ways in which abstract principles such as moral codes, ethnic affiliations, and political agendas become embedded in and communicated through tangible forms on the body is a complex negotiation. As objects and bodies change through time and place, meaning also fluctuates and shifts. Further, in their discussion of ornaments among the Booran Oromo, Aneesa Kassam and Gemetchu Megersa point out the difficulty in direct semantic translation between Oromo and Western notions of adornment. Oromo describe jewelry in particular as *nagata* 'putting on', *waan fayya* 'beautiful things' or more rarely, *mard'aad* 'that which goes round' (1989:23). An object worn on the body is as much noted for the act of its placement and for the relationship it holds to the body and other objects as for its ability to beautify. The Oromo manage this negotiation through their categorization and placement of dress. Oromo aesthetic of dress arrangement is dependent on two competing concepts within wider Oromo society. On the one hand, sacred objects and acts should be kept hidden. In this sense, the most spiritually or socially powerful body art practices should not be perceptibly pronounced. On the other hand, women should be recognized first and foremost for their ethnic distinction, a process that is only possible by drawing attention to the ensemble of things with which they deco-rated their bodies. These two ideals between hiding that which is most value-laden and making available the visual symbols of Oromo identity are brought into dialogue on the body through an aesthetic of accumulation that mixes the textures and colors of various body modifications and supplements (Klemm 2006:138, Rubin 1974:12). At her head, for example, an Oromo woman layers fiber, cloth, and beaded bands over and under a hairnet or headscarf that may be further ornamented with modern accessories like butterfly hairclips, while more potent medicines and amulets remain invisible, tucked under her hair (Fig. 5). The layering effect both disguises the clarity of

individual objects and brings them into a relational patterning with other similar and different items. As objects shift in position or as they are replaced with items of more modern appeal, such as pink nail polish temporarily dabbed onto the face instead of permanently tattooed marks, they continue to be arranged appropriately, through an aesthetic of accumulation.

The Afran QALLO Oromo of Eastern Hararghe

The Oromo population resides primarily in Ethiopia but also in Somalia, Kenya, and abroad. Within Ethiopia, they number close to thirty million people, or 40 percent of the population. The Oromo in Ethiopia recognize their nation as Oromia, extending 600,000 square kilometers from the Nile River in the north to the Hararghe Plateau in the southeast. After Arabic and Hausa, the Oromo language, Afaan Oromo, is the most extensively spoken language on the African continent (Brooke 1956:69). Despite the wide use of the language, until the 1990s, Afaan Oromo was only formally recognized and taught in schools during Ethiopia's brief Italian Occupation (1936–41) and only under the present government has any significant progress been made in the development of the Oromo language at the national level, including the publication of the first texts exclusively in Afaan Oromo using the Latin script rather than the established Amharic Sabeian syllabary. While the Oromo constitute the ethnic majority within Ethiopia, they have historically been marginalized politically, economically, and socially within the Ethiopian state.⁶ The Eastern Oromo, for example, lived under Ethiopian imperial rule most of the last century and under intermittent conditions of subordination within the region of Harar since the eighteenth century. Today, they live within a nation-state that is built upon the recognition of ethnic diversity. It is within these contexts, where issues of identity are crucial, that women's costume in eastern Ethiopia becomes especially telling. When and from where the Oromo first appeared in present day Ethiopia is a contentious issue that precipitates controversy about land use and indignity and continues to be heavily debated among Oromo and non-Oromo populations alike.⁷ Most scholarship characterizes Oromo movement into Ethiopia as a single wave of migration from either the Somali coast in the east or Lake Turkana in the south, or from the northern Highlands near present-day Bale spurred by pressures from Somali herders during the sixteenth century. These accounts rely heavily on a highly biased and propagandistic account written by a monk named Bahrey who lived in southern Ethiopia in 1593. More recent revisionist scholarship challenges the claim that the Oromo fled in mass exodus into the Ethiopian interior. Since the existence of nomadic pastoralist bands has been verified by archaeological evidence several centuries earlier (especially in the eastern regions of Ethiopia), it is possible that the Oromo migration and subsequent assimilation was, in fact, a gradual transition that happened at various moments in different places. The Oromo are the largest ethnic group in the central eastern region of the country. They are organized through a segmentary patrilineal structure. They come from the Barentuma branch or eastern division of the great Oromo confederacy, which was born out of the union of Xabboo and Haromeetu, the original Oromo father and mother, and propagated through their two sons Barentuma, also known as Barentu, and Booran, also known as Borana (Bedri Kabir 1995:7). Those descendants of the Barentuma lineage near to Harar—the Ala, Oborra, Baabbile, and Daga—are known as the Afran Qallo, literally

'the four sons of Qallo' (ibid., p. 2). Each Oromo clan, or gosa, traces its line of descent to Ala, Oborra, Baabbile, or Daga. Thirty years ago, the Oromo of the former Eastern Hararghe province were conservatively estimated to number 1.5 million, although it is likely to be closer to 4 million today (Buschkens and Slikkerveer 1982:526). The Afran Qallo Oromo have largely given up pastoralism and RabaDori, their traditional governance system known among other Oromo groups as the gada system. Referred to as Qottu or 'those that dig' in the past, the Afran Qallo are principally rural agriculturalists today. The fact that they have remained settled in communities for the past century has meant that the Afran Qallo Oromo have had increasingly better access to markets and trade goods. This access is reflected in the types of materials incorporated into Oromo women's dress.

Qarma: headband :Oromo dress has been subject to an array of imported trade goods including textiles, jewelry, and cosmetics that come into the markets in and around Harar from India and the Middle East and more recently from Taiwan and China. In the eighteenth century, Harar was a strategic trading center situated between the Gulf of Aden and the interior of present-day Ethiopia. Under the Egyptian Occupation of Harar from 1875 to 1886, caravans from the east intensified, bringing a number of Indian, Turkish, and Yemeni merchants. Under Egyptian law, the Oromo were compulsorily confronted with a new religion and taxation system and a new administration that essentially banned their traditional socio-political age grade system, RabaDori (Mohammed Hassen 1980:224). Further changes in the first decades of the twentieth century, when Harar became part of the Ethiopian empire under Emperors Menelik II and Haile Selassie I, created closer alliances between Oromo and neighboring Argobba, Harari, and Somali groups due to their common experience with imposed feudal-ism, Orthodox Christianity, and growing poverty. Approximately 100 years ago, when they could afford to do so, Oromo women in both farming and herding villages began replacing their leather skirts with cotton dresses and their leather headbands, or *madiicha*, with metal forehead bands known collectively as *qarma* (Fig. 3; Klemm 2002:206). The most common *qarma*, called *qarma loti*, or chain headband, consists of a silver metal forehead piece made from silver beads or filigree fashioned into five triangles (Fig. 6). Both Harari and Oromo women wear these metal forehead bands today on special occasions. They are created by Harari smiths in Harar and sold in the gold and silver shops inside the walled city in the old horse market, Faras Magala. The wealthier Harari wear a kind of *qarma loti* made out of gold instead of the aluminum, tin, or nickel alloys created for the Oromo. The Harari headpiece also consists of seven triangles instead of five and displays more intricate filigree work. However, during the time of the Egyptian Occupation, the *qarma loti* worn by both Oromo and Harari women was identical in appearance and was created from silver by Harari smiths. The Maria Theresa dollar, a silver coin first minted in 1780 with the portrait of the Austro-Hungarian queen, was then the main source of silver for jewelry and other decorations throughout eastern Ethiopia and accounts for the similarity in design and use between Oromo and Harari headgear. However, when the Egyptians pulled out of Harar in 1886, they are believed to have taken countless sacks of Maria Theresa coins with them, thus depleting the local supply. Since many of these coins left Harar between 1875 and the turn of the century, silverwork has almost come to a complete halt. In the 1970s, spools of low-grade metal chain began

arriving in the marketplace, and local Oromo recreated qarma loti with this new readymade material (Fig. 7). This industrial chain was cheap and plentiful, and most importantly, its presence meant that Oromo women no longer had to enter affluent Harari jewelry shops, where they were often made to feel like second-class citizens. In the last twenty years this metal headpiece has been transformed again through a network of colorful seed beads that are either worn with the spool qarma loti or have replaced it entirely (Fig. 8). This modern beaded band is called challee qarma, or 'beaded headpiece'. Challee qarma refers to both open interlaced strands of multicolored seed beads and horizontal strands of white seed beads connected with plastic, colored buttons. This recent change in material can be viewed, first and foremost, as a political move by Oromo women to create new dress forms that no longer resemble Harari qarma as a means of creating distance from their Harari neighbors, an ethnic group with which they have growing tension over land and demographic representation. A headband is also one of the few ornaments shared by all divisions of the great Oromo confederacy throughout Ethiopia, Somalia, and Kenya, although materials and form vary widely. While women infrequently travel great distances, many of them express a desire to connect with the other groups that make up the thirty million Oromo population outside their own lineages with whom they share a language. Distinguishing themselves through forehead decorations is one way to create visual participation in emerging Oromo nationalism. Lastly, these new beads that flood the market are considered fashion-able and young female traders spend their free time scouring bead kiosks for the latest colors and sizes with which to make their hairline most attractive and stylish.

Ambarka: beaded necklace. For young, unmarried Oromo women living in and around the town of Fedis south of Harar, the ambarka necklace is their most prized possession. These women are born into generations of traders. Like their ancestors, they spend a great deal of their lives in transit, collecting necessities such as wood kindling in the rural areas, which they then sell in towns and along the main road that links Harar to Addis Ababa and the commercial railway town Dire Dawa (Fig. 1). A bundle of wood sticks for cooking, a scarcity in the almost completely deforested region, will fetch the equivalent of 50 US cents and take up to a week to collect and deliver. Economically these young women and their families are trapped within a system of poverty due to their limited, if not disease, and low life expectancy. Within this system, the beaded ambarka, invented within the last fifteen years, has come to find a prominent place around the necks of young women. The ambarka distinguishes these women as traders, but more importantly, it is encoded with notions of modernity and nationalism. In the areas east and south of Harar, the ambarka is regularly worn by young women who belong to the Ala and Baabile sub-groups of the Afran Qallo. Slight variations in ambarka design are also worn in other Afran Qallo areas but are given different names.⁸ An ambarka is constructed either of two thick, single-beaded bands joined at the bottom in a series of beaded rows ending with fringed beaded strands or two double-beaded bands connected at the bottom and fringed. In both cases, the necklaces, which are 4 to 8 centimeters (1½"–3") in diameter, rest flat on the chest, reaching to the breastbone (Figs. 2, 9). The young women who make these necklaces string imported seed beads onto twine in diamond-shaped patterns framed within broad registers of a single color. The unused twine at the top is further braided into two strands to secure the ambarka at the neck. The seed beads,

which come from the Czech Republic and more recently China, are purchased in single-color strands and have been sold since 1990 in the markets of Harar, Fedis, and Baabile. They are most readily available in white, green, yellow, blue, and red. Ambarka and challee qarma are most commonly worn together by unmarried girls, who are taught to bead in seclusion during menses as a way to pass the time. Young Oromo women generally only wear beaded items that they themselves have assembled and pride themselves in never creating the same pattern twice nor wearing the pattern of fellow Oromo traders. For this reason, beadwork provides a relatively recent avenue for personal creativity. Women who can afford the spectrum of bead colors can create a variety of looks as long as they follow the prescribed stylistic code. This code requires a series of diamond shapes dissected by two diagonal lines situated within a sequence of horizontal bands. To create variety, a woman may vary the thickness, number of bands and diamonds, and color in each necklace (Fig. 11). It may at first appear odd that necklaces only a decade and a half old would possess such rigid stylistic conventions. These necklaces are, however, actually very close in style and production to a long-standing tradition of basket making (Fig. 11). Woven fiber baskets were used until fairly recently in almost every household activity and they served as the main decoration in the home (Fig. 12) for both Oromo and Harari women, as Belle Tarsitani explores in her contribution to this issue. While baskets still play a role as household containers and make up part of a woman's dowry, the laborious task of fine basket making is now less often practiced. As is true throughout Africa, in the last half century the introduction of plastic buckets and dishes, tin platters, and cast-iron cooking pots has slowed the production of pottery and basketry. Afran Qallo women have largely given up the personal control they once had in producing their own household and ceremonial wares. A woman's financial resources and her desire for foreign manufactured goods now dictate the materials she uses in her home. In addition, the cement walls that are currently replacing traditional thatch or mud walls are not suited to displaying hand-made baskets or even modern metal-stenciled platters. Many women with whom I have spoken also state that the major famines since the 1980s coupled with the current political climate have created situations for migration and displacement among the Afran Qallo. Women do not pass time preparing beautiful houses as they did in the past, and notions of home are no longer rooted geographically. Instead, the creative energy previously spent in the decoration of interior spaces is now focused on the production of body art. Women hang beautifully patterned bead necklaces on themselves just as they once placed baskets on the walls of their homes. Expressions of an Afran Qallo identity are today located within the frame of the self. Challee qarma worn with ambarka create a complete set of upper body jewelry. While earrings made of seed bead loops and other necklaces may be added and exposed arms may be decorated with tin bracelets, these serve as secondary items to the crucial placement of beaded forehead and necklace bands. Each woman takes great pride in the purchase, production, and wear-ing of these materials. Women explained that it takes hundreds of hours to complete their challee (beadwork). Since the bead-work itself is not difficult, women are able to produce their challee themselves. While they may work in groups when they have a free moment in the day, most women try to differentiate their own challee from others through individual choices in patterning and color. It is considered a shameful offense to copy the designs of others or to sell or trade one's necklace. When a woman dies her daughters will cut and unravel her necklaces and headbands and distribute the beads for future

jewelry rather than wear the challee or save it as a memento. Beaded bands, then, have a life-cycle dependent on the life length of their owner. When I asked why challee could not be exchanged (hoping to buy one myself) women laughed and I was told, “When the body dies it goes back to the earth. When the challee dies it goes back to other challee.”⁹ Challee worn at the forehead and at the neck functions as a statement about a woman’s financial position, her capacity as a skilled artisan, and her desire to accentuate and draw attention to her torso and head, the area that attracts the gaze. By extension, unmarried women further advertise their skills and mark their interest in future mates through the necklaces they bead for young men (Fig. 13). The distinctive diamond-shaped patterns and primary colors of beaded headbands and necklaces also signal a more personal transformation of the wearer herself. While girls may wear a single beaded strand, young Afran Qallo women begin wearing complete beaded sets after their excision ceremonies. At the onset of menses, which usually follows this earlier rite, young women receive strands of beads from their relatives and are encouraged to bead while they sit in seclusion. Lastly, Oromo women describe the strands of the fashionable beads that flood the market as progressive and worldly. They point out that women all over Africa wear jewelry made of these beads and even visitors from outside Africa seem to want them. Thus, women use these new plastic and glass beads from India, China, and the Czech Republic to create global allegiances to notions of Africa and the world beyond. Like the garma, a necklace is one of these ornaments shared by all Oromo throughout eastern Africa, although, as with the headband, materials and forms vary widely. The stylistic choices of diamonds and horizontal bands are also significant in this discussion of nationalism and Oromo identity. Certainly women are drawing on basketry as a model in their ambarka beading through the same concerns with containment of shapes, the repetition of form and pattern and the use of primary color sets of stripes and diamonds. We know from Phillip Paulitschke, the Viennese ethnographer who visited Harar in the 1880s, that 120 years ago, the rhombus was the most reproduced figure in dress and jewelry designs and on the flat expanses of everyday objects (1896:162).

10 This shape is still visible on the incised gourds made by Oromo men. Yet a review of the ambarka reveals that ambarka diamonds are further divided into four by two strong diagonals (Fig. 14). When I asked what this division of the diamond was called, women told me it was simply known as “Afran Qallo” and I dismissed the divided diamond design as nothing more than a genealogical identifier. In hindsight, however, I believe that there is more to it. This divided diamond pattern is unique to the ambarka and is a very recent bead pattern. It emerged at a time when the EPRDF government was attempting to suppress all forms of Oromo nationalism. In this context, this divided diamond pattern may directly represent the Afran Qallo or more specifically ‘the four sons of Qallo.’ The larger diamond is Afran Qallo and the four smaller diamonds are his four sons from which all Afran Qallo trace their genealogy: Ala, Oborraa, Baabbile, and Daga. Each of these clan names is thought of as a large shade tree, the symbolic location for traditional worship, court counsel, and business matters for the Oromo, and today a metaphor of cultural vitality and unity.

11 kula: Color Throw up your head in the air, tilt it and lay your naannoo

12 in harmony Shaggee of straight nose

13 black edged eyelids and close eye brows that look as if they are carved your kula

14 and qarmafarooraa

15 and kulkultaa

16 I saw, they look as if they are flawlessly created—From the song Mari Mee, recorded in 1994. In the song Mari Mee quoted above, the singer compliments the decorated space between the young Oromo woman's eyes, the central focus for cosmetics. Adorning the eye area and the cheeks with colored pigment known as kula is a recent phenomenon. Today, women no longer utilize natural mineral pigments on the face but instead invest in more fashionable and easily applicable substances: bottles of nail polish. Nail polish is today applied to the bridge of the nose, between the eyebrows, and to the cheeks (Figs. , 15). Nail polish decoration, which either exists side by side with tattooing and scarification on young women's faces or has replaced them entirely, falls along a continuum in the indigenous practice of facial alteration. Historically, an Oromo woman's face became a canvas for subtle tattoo marks, tumtuu, applied in conjunction with scarification, haaxixa (Fig. 16). Scars are usually incised with a sharp thorn or razor that lac-erate the first few layers of skin above the eyebrow, along the bridge of the nose, and on the cheeks and that heal in a recessive dell. These marks, which are usually made at the onset of puberty, become meaningful on several levels: when those above the eye are cut, the blood is allowed to drip down and cleanse the eyeball, which is believed to free it from disease; the mark along the nose is intended to visually lengthen the nose and enhance its appeal; the marks on the cheeks further beautify a woman's face and can suggest geographical identity. Often haaxixa are enhanced with tumtuu, in which a green-black paste made of soot and plant extract is applied with thorns pricked under the skin. Today, the process of scarification and tattooing is usually discussed as a feature-enhancing cosmetic that, like dots of polish, adds to a woman's attractiveness. Haaxixa placed above the eyebrow, along the bridge of the nose, and on the cheeks are intended to heal, protect, and beautify. But marks around the eyes are also meant to divert the gaze of strangers who could potentially inflict harm through attack with the evil eye. The evil eye as a pan-Ethiopian phenomenon is most widely known as buda, a term which references both the inherent eye power and the individuals who possess it, usually castes that smelt iron, tan leather, and fashion pots as their primary means of livelihood (Klemm 2007:99). The practice of scarring the face is also reported to have been used specifically during the first reign of Haile Selassie I to make ugly, rather than to beautify. The Oromo speak of a turbulent time in the 1920s when young men and women began disappearing in great number. As most Afran Qallo Oromo had had little exposure to Ethiopia's government or state-sponsored education at this period, an uncertainty grew concerning the motivations of a distant leader called Haile Selassie I. Radical changes to land use policy, the complete eradication of the traditional socio-political governing institutions, and new demands for labor and a national militia, created mounting distrust toward the Ethiopian state. Informants state that in the 1930s it was confirmed by a famous Oromo mantiyya, a jarrii spirit expert, that Haile Selassie was himself possessed by a jarrii spirit.¹⁷ This

spirit was said to inhabit his dog, a Chihuahua with bulging eyes that often appeared with his master in official photographs and news broadcasts. Afran Qallo Oromo feared that the small dog was masterfully controlling Haile Selassie to tour the country to collect and consume the most attractive people.¹⁸ As a result, people believed that the most beautiful Oromo men and women were being confiscated by government troops and eaten by this insatiable ruler. Mothers began to hide their children and disfigure their faces to keep them from abduction. In this sense, excessive haaxixa was used as a means of marring beauty and keeping young men and women safe. While haaxixa was practiced much earlier than this, it was because of the harshness of the Amhara administration, especially from 1887 to 1936, that Oromo tradition emphasized the importance of heavy haax-ixa in the 1930s. This visual and oral evidence suggests that fear of buda and the foreign administration of the imperial Ethiopian governments was not prevalent in Oromo belief until the first reign of Haile Selassie, a time when the wearing of scars was on the increase. Nail polish operates both within this belief system as a way of diverting the gaze from the eye area but also as a beautifying agent intended to harness visual attention. Adorning the body to invite the attention of mates or to hide from those with buda speaks to issues of disclosure and concealment inherent in all of the body arts used by Oromo women. Women say they like nail polish for its impermanence, its color variety, and its foreign manufacture. While permanent scars and tattoos bleed, fade, and shift over time, nail polish can be applied quickly and painlessly, then scraped off and reapplied again. Applied polish also promotes personal expression. Dabs of polish allow a young woman creative space to articulate an individual style that subjects. This system requires the layering of old and new forms, intended to both catch and confuse the eye, simultaneously revealing and concealing, beautifying and repelling, personalizing and unifying to those that understand the language of dress. Throughout the historical period discussed, Oromo women have developed a clear, cultivated fashion sense that connects them to peoples and places beyond their region. As increasingly active agents, Afran Qallo women are creating new looks that draw from and resonate with historically relevant body art practices and which link them to a wider global world. Further, contemporary dress is a symbolic means through which Afran Qallo women come to understand and make sense of their socio-political and economic experiences and their identity as Oromo within the Ethiopian state today.

will catch the attention of potential suitors she might meet on her way to and from market or on wood gathering excursions (Fig. 5). Decorating with polish also suggests a high economic status. The price of an imported bottle of polish fetches the equivalent of four days work for a wood or coal seller. Despite the cost, women are reluctant to collectively buy a bottle since styles copied in a communal color from one face to another would not give the woman her unique look and promote her individual appeal. Polish is rarely wasted on the fingernails, since that is not an area that traditionally gets painted and thus, not a candidate for the dissemination of cultural meaning. Young men, however, who travel broader distances than women and come into contact with nail salons or fashion magazines, commonly wear polish on their nails. This again suggests women's astute decision to limit cosmetics to places on the body that continue to be decorated in traditional ways and whose decoration conveys important cultural meaning. Even though kula made with bright pink and red polish is becoming increasingly popular, the practices

of scarring and tat-toeing persist. As a personal art, polish can literally exist alongside or on top of other kinds of markings that make resonant connections with collective Oromo values and belief systems.

Women's' Participation in Oromo Nationalism

Turner writes, "every society is confronted by four tasks: the reproduction of populations in time, the regulation of bodies in space, the restraint of the 'interior' body through disciplines, and the representation of the 'exterior' body in social space" (1985:2). Among the Afran Qallo Oromo, a series of moral codes shaped through a shared past, common religious belief, and conditions of subordination dictate bodily restraints and determine which collective physical representations are withheld or reproduced at particular moments and within specific contexts. The collective presentation of the Afran Qallo female body "in social space" runs parallel today to the emergence of an Oromo national consciousness, one that extends beyond the borders of present-day Ethiopia into the surrounding nation-states that are also home to large Oromo populations. This consciousness is largely informed by a debate centered on whether the Oromo in their nation of Oromia should attempt to secede from the Ethiopian state or rally for equal treatment and self-determination as members of a unified Ethiopia. The cultural glue of this nationalist movement within Oromia, which is the Oromo regional state within Ethiopia, and the Oromo Diaspora is largely founded on the shared experience of language, history, and political domination. The historic gada or RabaDori system, common to all Oromo, is often promoted as a socio-political organizing ideology through which to mold an independent Oromo nation. While both Oromo men and women throughout Oromia can lay claim to a shared experience, including the move from the stratified grades of the RabaDori institution to the court system enforced by the Ethiopian state, the loss of rights to grazing and farm lands, and increased state-sponsored violence, Oromo nationalism has been most publicly formulated and articulated by educated Oromo men in a male-centered paradigm. Kuwee Kumsa reports that Oromo national movements, particularly the Oromo Liberation Front, have not adequately acknowledged the role of women in its formation and struggle nor has the organization included a (1998:155). Further, the place of women and the roles played by women's arts have not been formally acknowledged as a relevant component of nationalist sentiment. Yet, as these three examples have shown, women's bodies and their personal arts are instrumental in the production, albeit sub-tle and symbolic, of Oromo identity and Oromo consciousness. Further, Oromo society views women as the dominant creators and assimilators of cultural symbols.¹⁹ The reason the decorated body is left out of this debate has much to do with the ways in which Oromo nationalism was first conceptualized as an abstract ideal. The establishment of the Macha-Tuluma self-help organization among western Oromo in Ethiopia in the 1960s and the participation in government-sponsored programs under the Derg regime in the late 1970s, coupled with an increased exposure to secondary education and urban jobs, created a uniquely modern Oromo consciousness for young men. As Mekuria Bulcha has written, "the role of articulating, defining and promoting Oromo identity was assumed by a fledgling intelligentsia beginning in the mid-1960s" (1996:49). In this male-centered political climate, the expressions of rural women in localized areas went largely unnoticed. At

this time, however, women were independently creating their own material expressions based on the emerging nationalist consciousness sweeping the Oromo countryside, and these practices continue today through the manipulation of new materials in the production of upper torso body art. In her comparative piece on gendered dress among Kalabari and Americans, Joanne Eicher finds that while the ideal body type in each case study is inherently different, in both the Nigerian and American examples, women are expected to display a sexed body through the exposure of skin (2001:246). She writes that to cover the genitalia, the reproductive site” (ibid., p. 242). Like the Oromo, Kalabari women’s dress is most closely associated with the lower body and its association with procreation. For the Oromo, the lower body is connected to the past through its link to the ground, to birthing, and to containment. This is a space where loose, layered skirts and a tight, cloth belt become metaphors for the opening and closing of the body. The upper body, on the other hand, is where the future rests, and a whole host of objects, including amulets, beadwork, and face paint, are brought together here to assert a national identity in anticipation of future encounters.

Conclusion

I have introduced three body art practices that underscore how fashion can be manipulated to resonate meaningful connections to indigenous notions of individuality, community, and memory. These beaded bands and color swatches celebrate the individual style of each young woman and therefore, no two should look identical. Yet, in this multiethnic environment, these body arts are clearly a communal Oromo visual expression. The beaded *ambarka* necklace and the beaded *qarma* headband are both patterned with the diamond—a shape that dominates older basket forms—while the *kula* face paint is modeled after older permanent facial markings. To be fashionable among the Oromo, then, carries with it the limitations imposed by a bounded aesthetic system, one that Afaan Qallo women are largely responsible for generations.

Peri Klemm is an assistant professor of art history at California State University, Northridge. Her research and writing focus on dress and identity in eastern Africa. peri.klemm@csun.edu.

Note

1 Harar is situated in the central highlands of Ethiopia, 340 miles east of Addis Ababa and 175 miles west of the port of Zeila on the Somali coast.

2 The category of “foreign scholar,” still in its infancy, has, as yet, no predetermined dress code.

3 The bodily alterations addressed in this paper fall under the rubric of “dress,” defined by Eicher and Roach-Higgins as “an assemblage of body modifications and/or supplements displayed by a person in communicating with other human beings” (1992:15).

4 The italicized words that appear throughout this text are in the Afaan Oromo language and appear with-out diacritic marks. Since there is, as yet, no standard transliteration for Afaan Oromo, and many variations exist, the spellings used were chosen by my primary research collaborator and me for the most accurate pronunciation for American English speakers. All sounds are pronounced as in English except the “x”, which represents an

explosive “t” sound, and the “q”, which is pronounced as a “a velar-palatal ejective, with a sharp sound in the throat” (Wood 1999:xv). When sounds are lengthened, vowels and/or consonants have been doubled. Any inconsistencies in the written pronunciation of Afaan Oromo are my own.

5 “Costume”, after all, is historically derived from “custom.” Both terms indicate that material culture and social forms are used contextually to construct identities through the medium of social relations.

6 For further discussion see Asmaron Legesse 2000, the collection of essays in Baxter, Hutlin, and Triulzi 1996, and Asafa Jalata 1998.

7 See for example, migration histories in Bahrey 1954, Paulitschke 1896, Haberland 1963, Braukamper 1986, and Mohammed Hassen 1990.

8 Among the Jarso beaded necklaces are called *chale atete* (‘the beads of atete’) and among the Nole and Ala, *qudhaaba* (ten).

9 J.A., interview, Jarso, Ethiopia, February 3, 2000 (this name is abbreviated to protect anonymity).

10 Paulitschke also finds it strange that the Somali, Afar and Oromo seem never to have tried to reproduce human images, animal figures, or vegetal forms in jewelry or on household objects (1896:162). The prevalence of Sharia Law in this region since at least the fifteenth century may have restricted women from producing iconic images on objects they created

11 While representational imagery rarely appears in personal arts, the tree shape is the central image on the flags of Oromia and the Oromo Liberation Front as well as patriotic manufactured items.

12 *Naannoo* is the braided hairstyle of an unmarried girl. This line refers to the movement of the *naan-noo*. If the head movement is abrupt, it makes the sound “fash.” If the head is gently rotated, the sound of the *naannoo* is referred to as wave-like and designated as “lash” or “raph” (Guutamma Ammallee, personal communication, March 1, 2002).

13 The singer is chiefly admiring the area between the eyes that is often scarred, tattooed, or decorated with dabs of nail polish.

14 The two meanings for *kula* apply here. *Kula* (‘to apply color’) can refer to the blue-black pigment used as eyeliner and as a tattooing substance or it may signify the threads or fibers worn around a woman’s forehead (Taman Youssoff, personal communication, February 26, 2002).

15 This refers to metal, crescent-shaped earrings.

16 This refers to a necklace made of circular-shaped metal beads.

17 A.S.J., interview, Harar, Ethiopia, February 25, 2000 (this name is abbreviated to protect anonymity).

18 M.M., interview, Harar, Ethiopia, March 10, 2000 (this name is abbreviated to protect anonymity).

19 S.A., interview, Harar, Ethiopia, April 4, 2000 (this name is abbreviated to protect anonymity).References citedAsafa Jalata, ed. 1998. *Oromo Nationalism and the Ethiopian Discourse: The Search for Freedom and Democracy*. Lawrenceville, NJ: Red Sea Press.Asmaron Legesse. 2000. *Oromo Democracy. An Indigen-ous African Political System*. Lawrenceville, NJ: Red Sea Press.Bahrey. 1954. "History of the Galla." In *Some Records of Ethiopia 1593–1646*, trans. C.F. Beckingham and G.W.B. Huntingford. London: The Hakluyt Society. Work origi-nally published 1593.Baxter, P.T.W., Jan Hutlin, and Alessandro Triulzi, eds. 1996. *Being and Becoming Oromo: Historical and Anthro-pological Enquiries*. Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet.Bedri Kabir. 1995. *The Afran Qallo Oromo. A History*. BA thesis, Addis Ababa University.Braukämper, Ulrich. 1986. "Oromo Country of Origin: A Reconsideration of Hypothesis." In *Proceedings of the Sixth International Conference of Ethiopian Studies*, ed. Gideon Goldenberg, pp. 25–40. Boston: A.A. Balkema.Brooke, Clarke Harding. 1956. *Settlements of the East-ern Galla, Hararghe Province Ethiopia*. PhD dissertatio,. University of Nebraska.Buschkens, Willem F. L., and L. J. Slikkerveer. 1982. *Health Care in East Africa: Illness Behaviour of the East-ern Oromo in Hararghe (Ethiopia)*. Assen, The Nether-lands: V. Gorcum.Eicher, Joanne B. 2001. "Dress, Gender and the Public Display of Skin." In *Body Dressing*, eds. Joanne Entwistle and Elizabeth Wilson, pp. 233–54. Oxford: Berg.Haberland, Eike. 1962. *Galla Süd-Äthiopiens*. Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer.Kassam, Aneesa, and Gemetchu Megersa. 1989. "Iron and Beads: Male and Female Symbols of Creation: A Study of Ornament among Booran Oromo." In *The Meaning of Things: Material Culture and Symbolic Expression*, ed. I. Hodder, pp. 23–31. London: Unwin Hymen.Klemm, Peri. 2002. "Fashioning History: Women's Costumes from Eastern Hararghe, 1850 –1886." In *Proceedings of the XIVth International Conference of Ethiopian Studies*, eds. Baye Yimam, et al., pp. 195–214. Addis Ababa: Institute of Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa University._____. 2006. "Two Corporeal Markers of Marriage among the Afran Qallo Oromo Women in Eastern Ethiopia." In *Proceedings of the XVth International Conference of Ethiopian Studies*, ed. Siegbert Uhlig, pp. 136–41. Wiebaden: Harrassowitz Verlag._____. 2007. "Leather Amulets in Ethiopia." In *Faith and Transformation: Votive Offerings and Amulets from the Alexander Girard Collection*, ed. Doris Francis, pp. 98–99. Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico Press.Kuwee Kumsa. 1998. "Oromo Women and the Oromo National Movement: Dilemmas, Problems and Pros-pects for True Liberation." In *Oromo Nationalism and the Ethiopian Discourse*, ed. Asafa Jalata, pp. 153–82. Lawrenceville, NJ: Red Sea Press. Mekuria Bulcha. 1996. "The Survival and Reconstruc-tion of Oromo National Identity." In *Being and Becoming Oromo*, eds. P.T.W. Baxter, Jan Hutlin, and Alessandro Triulzi, pp. 48–66. Lawrenceville, NJ: Red Sea Press. Mohammed Hassen. 1980. "Menelik's Conquest of Harar, 1887, and Its Effect on the Political Organization of the Surrounding Oromos up to

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Note: The pictures of the following 16 documents have not been included in this report.

1. An Afran Qallo Oromo woman transports water in jerry cans with the help of her donkey to the market. She wears a beaded bracelet and a series of thin beaded necklaces along with the large beaded ambarka necklace. Fedis, Ethiopia. Photo: PErI KIEmm, 2000

2. The beaded ambarka necklace is created with a network of seed beads. Oromo women take pride in beading their own necklaces with specific color schemes and design choices. All necklaces, however, are divided into registers that frame a divided diamond shape. As a cultural symbol, this divided diamond is a metaphor for “the four sons of Qallo,” to whom all Oromo in the harar region trace their line of descent. Photo: ryAn BurnEtt, 2007

3 the metal qarma headpiece exists within the continuum of forehead jewelry. it became popular during harar’s Egyptian Occupation, when Oromo women gave up their leather dresses and forehead ornaments for cloth dresses and metal jewelry with which to decorate the head and hair. today, the locally produced qarma forehead pieces have largely been replaced by pre-made industrial chain and, most recently, beaded headbands. Photo: ryAn BurnEtt, 2002

4 the application of nail polish to the face is a recent invention, less than a generation old. its placement and patterning are based on an older system of permanent facial marks made with tattooing and scarification. Fedis, Ethiopia. Photo: PErI KIEmm, 1999

5 An Afran Qallo Oromo woman wearing an accumulation of fashionable adornment including beaded necklaces of seed and plastic beads, a choker of imitation amber, a chain holding a key, beaded and buttoned headbands, a headscarf, butterfly hairclips, patterned nail polish marks on the face, and a nose ring. Fedis, Ethiopia. Photo: ryAn BurnEtt, 2000

6 An Afran Qallo Oromo woman wearing the headband called qarma loti, or chain headband, which consists of a silver, metal mesh strand along with the regional Oromo dress called saddetta. Awadday, Ethiopia.

7. In the last fifteen years the metal head-piece, qarma loti, has been transformed again through a network of colorful seed beads that is either worn with the spool qarmaa loti, as seen here on this married Oromo woman, or has replaced it entirely. Jarso, Ethiopia. Photo: PErI KIEmm, 2000

8 this modern beaded band called challee qarmaa, or 'beaded headpiece', is beaded to produce a series of diamonds, a pattern also found on beaded necklaces and woven baskets. Fedis, Ethiopia. Photo: PErI KIEmm, 1998

9 Oromo girls first learn to bead simple necklaces like the two thin strands of beads in this image before attempting their first ambarka necklace, like the one in the middle. the young women who make these necklaces bead imported seed beads onto twine in diamond shaped patterns framed within broad registers of a single color. Photo: ryAn BurnEtt, 2007

10 the beaded ambarka necklace is constructed either of two thick, single beaded bands joined at the bottom in a series of beaded rows that end with fringed beaded strands or two double beaded bands connected at the bottom and fringed. Fedis, Ethiopia. Photo: PErI KIEmm, 2000

11 Fine Oromo baskets made by Afran Qallo women resemble harari baskets in their shape and construction, but Oromo baskets have less intricate patterns and use different materials. today Oromo baskets are less frequently woven but the diamond pattern seen here continues to be the dominant pattern in beadwork. Photo: ryAn BurnEtt, 2008

12 Afran Qallo Oromo women in the town of Jarso carry baskets of food during wadaajaa, a prayer ceremony. When not in use, these baskets will be displayed in their homes. Jarso, Ethiopia. Photo: PErI KIEmm, 2000

13 Oromo male youths wearing beaded necklaces. unmarried beaders advertise their skills and mark their interest in future mates through the necklaces they bead for young men. Fedis, Ethiopia. Photo: PErI KIEmm, 2004

14 A detail of the ambarka divided diamond pattern. Photo: ryAn BurnEtt, 2000

15 A young Oromo woman with kula (color) made with nail polish. nail polish is today applied to the bridge of the nose, between the eyebrows, and to the cheeks—places that historically were tattooed. And like beadwork and basketry, each woman has her own style and color set. Fedis, Ethiopia. Photo: ryAn BurnEtt, 2000

16 A young Oromo woman wearing ambarka and chokers with minor facial scars and facial tattoos. Baabile, Ethiopia. Photo: PErI KIEmm, 2000

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