

■ ETHIOPIA

**Ethiopian Archaeology: Retrospect and Prospect**

Getachew Meressa Nigus

Department of Archaeology and Heritage Management  
Addis Ababa University, POB 1176  
email: getachew\_meressa@yahoo.com

**Introduction**

A century and a half has elapsed since archaeology was firmly established as a distinct scientific discipline. It began with the work of antiquarians who were interested and fascinated by past human artifice. Their chief interest lay in collecting rare objects for its own sake. With time, this fascination led to the birth of archaeology, signifying a major paradigm shift, particularly after the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Ever since then, the subject has undergone further changes before it took its present shape as a full-fledged science in its own right. In this regard, the 1960s and 1970s in particular, can be considered as crucial periods in the history of this discipline. The field has refined its philosophy, methods, and techniques that consequently brought major shifts in goals and interpretations of archaeological findings (Ashmore 1988: 23-31).

Several descriptions of sites were made by explorers, adventurers, and travelers to Ethiopia from ancient times to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Nevertheless, archaeological investigations, particularly historical archaeology, began in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century by Henry Salt who provided us with the oldest documentation of Aksumite stelae by clearing the ruins and copying its inscription (Salt 1814: 404-418). The traveler was however, not a trained archaeologist. Like other travelers,

Salt’s interest was limited only to the description of monuments and architecture in the northern part of the country (cf. Alvarez 1961; Bruce 1790; Crindle 1897). It was only in 1906 that the first ever systematic archaeological investigation began in Aksum by German researchers. The establishment of the Institute of Ethiopian Archaeology, the involvement of the French government in 1952, and input from professionals with diverse research agendas helped the field to leap from mere description of Ethiopian sites to the construction of culture history and human behavior (Brandt 1997).

On the other hand, most of the research in those early days was not systematically organized owing to the absence of a strong institution charged with monitoring such activities. In addition, it is important to note that until very recently investigations were periodic and solely carried out by foreign scholars attached to institutions based abroad. Apparently, the sporadic nature of their engagement precluded the development of a well-established and sustainable research tradition, whereas the exclusion of local scholars from involvement made the research endeavor an exclusively foreign business. This in turn diminished local scholars’ aspiration to join the endeavor and develop a sense of belongingness to the research undertaking.

**Archaeological Research in Ethiopia**

In the Ethiopian context, investigation of prehistoric archaeology focused on three aspects: the study of stone tools, rock art, and the beginning of agriculture; historical archaeology of the country demands a separate discussion. The study of Stone Age sites commenced with the discovery and excavation of the Middle Stone Age site of Porc Epic Cave near Dire Dawa by Tielhard de Chardin and Henry de Monfried in 1929. Their excavation revealed Middle Stone Age tools and an early *Homo sapiens* mandible (Brandt 1997; Breul *et al.* 1951: 219-230).

In 1967 an international research expedition comprising professionals from France, America and Kenya conducted the first multidisciplinary research in the Omo Valley. A year later, the Kenyan team under the supervision of R. Leaky launched

investigations in the Koobi Fora Formation of northern Kenya. Under the supervision of Y. Coppens and C. Howell, respectively, the French and American scientists resumed their work in the Omo area until 1976. In 1969 the Omo investigation uncovered stone tools dated to c. 2.3 million years ago (mya) at the upper level of Member E of the Shungura Formation. Impressed by age of the discovered artifact, the investigators even suggested that the site might be “the oldest” prehistoric site found in Ethiopia, and perhaps in the world (Sileshi Semaw 1997: 6; Zelalem Assefa 1990: 263).

Melka Kuntre is another Stone Age site representing a long sequence of Stone Age technology in eastern Africa. The site was discovered accidentally by G. Dekker, a Dutch hydrologist, in 1963. While driving on the Addis Ababa-Butajira road in one of his weekends, wandering in search of archaeological sites, Dekker came across a large concentration of Acheulian hand axes, cleavers, and flakes at a site locally known as Kella. He then made some surface collections of the stone tools from the site and reported his discovery to the Institute of Ethiopian Archaeology. Following his report, the authorities of the Institute including Francis Anfray, G. Bailloud, and Dekker himself, visited the site in the same year. In 1964 the Institute assigned Bailloud, who had a plan of investigating rock art sites in eastern Ethiopia, to conduct investigation on the site (Alemseged Abay 1988: 4-5; Kassaye Begashaw 1994: 99; Yohannes Haile Selassie *et al.* 1990: 279).

Recognizing the unique features and potential of the new site, Bailloud abandoned his rock art investigation project in eastern Ethiopia and devoted himself to the survey of the site. He made the first survey and found a long sequence of artifacts that range from the Early to the Later Stone Age. In addition, he uncovered two new sites: Gombore II and Garba I. Bailloud published the results of his survey in 1966 in a journal of the Institute of Ethiopian Archaeology called *Cahiers* (Yohannes Haile Selassie *et al.* 1990: 279). The first excavation on the site had to wait until another French archaeological mission was launched under the supervision of Jean Chavaillon in 1965. The team made several surveys and test excavations that led to the discovery of new sites including Gombore I, Garba IV, Simbro, Wofi, as well as others. Some

of these sites yielded Oldowan artifacts and faunal remains (Chavaillon and Piperno 2004: 19).

The French team pursued its investigation between 1965-1981 and 1993-1995 on the site until were succeeded by the Italian team. This new arrangement was made after the French government discontinued its funding of further activities on the site on the grounds that previous research had not been published. The investigation is currently being conducted under the directorship of Marcello Piperno in collaboration with French archaeologists. One of the great achievements of this collaboration is the publication of the research results in a monograph, *Studies on the Early Paleolithic site of Melka Kunture, Ethiopia*. This publication was followed by the establishment of an open-air museum at the site, in addition to major archaeological investigations (Chavaillon and Piperno 2004).

General archaeological surveys in 1971 led to the discovery of a new site complex near Lake Ziway (Wendorf and Schild 1974). Excavations and geochronological work were subsequently made in two major sites: Gademotta and Kulkuletti. The excavations produced a large number of artifacts from both areas that were attributed to the Middle Stone Age (MSA). The parallel dating of distinct ash layers likewise enabled temporal control on one of Africa’s early MSA sites (Morgan and Renne 2008; Wendorf and Schild 1974).

Archaeological survey at Gadeb prehistoric site was for the first time conducted in 1975 by a research team led by J.D. Clark. The excavation yielded developed Oldowan and Acheulian stone artifacts and faunal remains. In addition, earlier evidence for the use of fire was also noted at the site. The absolute dating (K/Ar and paleomagnetic reversal) results indicate Early Stone Age occupation of Gadeb could date 1.5 to 0.7 mya, which makes the site contemporary to Melka Kunture (Clark and Kurashina 1979: 36).

In the northeast, along the lower Awash basin is the Gona archaeological site, which has three major localities. The initial archaeological investigation was conducted at Kada Gona by archaeologists G. Corvinus and H. Roche in 1976. They found *in situ* Oldowan stone artifacts. The

age of the artifacts was not confirmed by means of absolute chronology, however. The second investigation was undertaken at the West Gona site, in 1983 by J. Harris. He made a survey and test excavation that yielded stone artifacts estimated at 2.5 mya. The artifacts were attributed to the Oldowan technology. The third was carried out at East Gona site between 1992 and 1994 led by an Ethiopian archaeologist Sileshi Semaw. His team discovered new sites that increased the number of Stone Age sites in the area. Most importantly, the investigation helped to discover the world's oldest stone tools dated to 2.6 mya (Sileshi Semaw 1997: 24-27; Sileshi Semaw *et al.* 1997: 333).

Rock art is another major aspect of prehistoric investigation in Ethiopia. It constitutes paintings and engravings on the walls and ceilings of suitable rock shelters and caves. The existence of rock art in Ethiopia was first discovered by Father T. de Chardin and H. de Monfreid at Porc Epic in 1929. Following this initial finding, Genda Biftou (Surre) and Laga Oda rock art sites were discovered by P re Azais in 1933 and 1934 respectively. The Porc Epic site depicts wild fauna and human figures while the Genda Biftou site depicts images of both categories (Azais and Chambard 1931; Breuil 1934; Carder 1988; Clark 1954). However, Abb  H. Breuil performed the first professional documentation of rock art in Ethiopia. He described and analyzed Porc Epic and Genda Biftou rock art sites of eastern Ethiopia discovered earlier by H. de Monfreid and by Father Azais. Breuil established the existence of eight distinct styles in three main periods. The three periods are represented by depictions of wild animal and humpless cattle, humped cattle and camel, and other schematic representations (Breuil 1934: 437-483). Following Breuil's work, other scholars interested in prehistoric art resumed investigations in Harar, Dire Dawa, and Sidama. One of these investigators was Bailloud who recognized two main styles: the Ourso style and Laga Oda style (Anfray 1967: 19-32, for the rock of Sidama region see Anfray 1976: 53-56; Clark 1954: xxi).

In addition to his earlier new discoveries in Eritrea, Graziosi made descriptions of sites recovered by A. Mordini at a rock shelter of Amba Fekada in 1941. In his syntheses of the rock art of Ethiopia and the Horn, he observed affinities in

style with the art in the Iberian Peninsula as well as with art in northern and southern Africa. He also emphasized the development of a peculiar "Ethiopian" art style and suggested an early age for the art (Graziosi 1941: 61-70, 1964: 93,189).

A pioneering work on the prehistoric cultural sequences of the Horn entitled *the Prehistoric Cultures of the Horn of Africa* was made by J.D. Clark based on unpublished reports and documents and his own fieldwork. In this major work, Clark analyzed the rock art and the Stone Age culture of the region. Unlike Breuil, Clark proposed the development of three main rock art styles (namely: naturalistic, conventionalized, and schematic) in Ethiopia (and the Horn). He not only identified similarities between the rock art of Ethiopia with those of the Sahara and the Nile Valley, but also the makers of the art were of "a similar race and practiced a similar pastoral economy" (Clark 1954: 311-315).

Cervicek (1979) identified a peculiar art style both in Ethiopia (and the Horn) and Arabia, hence the "Ethiopian-Arabian" Style. According to him, the common theme of the art is Bovidae. He distinguished two stages of development for this style: Surre-Hanakiya and Dahthami style. The stages got their name after typical sites from Ethiopia (Surre-Genda Biftou) and Arabia (Hanakiya and Dahthami) with their own distinct characteristics (Cervicek 1979: 5-12).

Food production is another fundamental aspect regarding Ethiopian prehistoric archaeology. It refers to the process of domestication of animals and plants intentionally and purposefully in a certain area (Marshall and Hildebrand 2002: 99-143). It is pointed out that in the 1950s, for unknown reasons, there was little fieldwork carried out in Ethiopia. Investigators diverted their attention to the formulation of theories on the origin of food production in Ethiopia and the Horn in general (Brandt 1997: 70).

In his book *Africa: Its People and Their Culture History* Murdock (1959) attributes the introduction of food production to the Horn from the Eastern Sudanic-speaking "Pre-Nilotes", who he claimed penetrated the Ethiopian highlands from the west

well before 3000 BC. “Pre-Nilotes” apparently introduced ‘Sudanic’ agricultural technology (cultivation of sorghum, cotton and other crops through the aid of the hoe and digging stick and animal husbandry) to the indigenous hunter-gatherers. He also states that Semitic-language-speaking peoples presumably brought with them wheat and barley.

Murdock’s hypothesis, however, was rejected by Simoons in the 1960s. Simoons objected an Arabian introduction of wheat and barley to Ethiopia. He states that there was a possibility of direct contact between the Ethiopian highlands and Egypt long before the arrival of the Semitic speakers from Yemen. This contact may have been the locus for the introduction of wheat and barley, and the plow from Egypt by other intermediates, most probably by Arkell’s ‘C-Group’. Simoons (1965: 1-13) states explicitly that wheat, barley, and the plow were present among Cushitic-language speakers of northern Ethiopia before the coming of the Semitic-speaking groups to the area.

Meanwhile, in the early 1960s Desmond Clark envisaged agriculture as being introduced into Ethiopia and the Horn through migration. He ascribes this migration to the Nubian ‘C-Group’ pastoralists who moved from the Sahara via Sudanese Nubia following the desiccation of their original homeland in the mid-Holocene, and continued into northern Ethiopia and all the way to the Somali Plateau. Clark suggests that these pastoralists had introduced the domestication of animals and the cultivation of plants to the then hunter-gatherer Cushitic peoples of the Horn (Clark 1962: 211-228). In his later work, Clark underpinned the idea of migration by enumerating and linking closer associations and similarities between agricultural implements of the Sudan and Ethiopia such as the hoe and the digging stick, the sickle and threshing sticks and winnowing baskets (Clark 1980: 268-270).

Unlike Murdock and Clark, C. Ehret formulated an indigenous hypothesis for the origin of food production in Ethiopia and the Horn. Based on linguistic geography and historical linguistic

data, Ehret proposes the 7<sup>th</sup> millennium BC as the beginning of food production in Ethiopia and the Horn. He suggests that by the end of the Pleistocene ‘proto-Afroasiatic’ speakers (ancestors of the Berber, Chadic, Semitic, Omotic, and Cushitic branches of today’s Afro-Asiatic language family), who occupied northeastern Africa, were engaged in intensive harvesting of wild grasses, which resulted in the domestication of these plants. He suggests that wheat, barley, and the plow were introduced to the people of the Horn from the Nile Valley. He postulates that cattle and ovicaprines were introduced into the Horn after the establishment of agriculture. He clarifies that sheep and goats were introduced to the region from southwest Asia through northeast Africa, whereas domestic cattle and donkeys may have been bred from local northeastern African stock. He further reveals that the development of agriculture in the Horn has no connection with south Arabian immigrants. He rather concentrates on the expansion of Afro-Asiatic language-speaking communities from the northern Horn, west of the Nile, and northward, from the Nile into their current settlement area: Ethiopia and the Horn (Ehret 1976: 85-96, 1979: 161-177).

From an archaeological point of view, only eight sites have been investigated that have offered direct evidence for the domestication of plants and animals in Ethiopia. These are Lalibela and Natchabiet in Begemder, Gobedra rock shelter in Aksum, Laga Oda in Hararghe, Quiha rock shelter near Mekele, Lake Beseka around Metehara, Tembén to the northwest of Mekele, and Yabello in Borena (Agazi Negash 2001; Barnett 1999; Brandt 1982; Clark and Williams 1978: 19-45; Dombrowski 1971; Girma Hundie 2001; Phillipson 1977). Recent ethnoarchaeological inquiries have also deepened our understanding of the onset of early food production in Ethiopia. So far investigation has focused on *enset* and yam cultivation in southern Ethiopia (Hildebrand 2003), and traditional practices related with domesticated cereals and legumes in the northern highlands of the country (D’Andrea *et al.* 1999: 101-122; Lyons and D’Andrea 2003: 515-530).



Research on historical archaeology in Ethiopia has also spawned its own history. Until very recently, historical archaeology basically aimed at investigation of monuments in the north and megalithics in southern Ethiopia. In 1906, the German Aksum Expedition (DAE) under the supervision of Enno Littmann, conducted the first modern and systematic archaeological research. The expedition took more than three months and included surveying, documenting, and mapping pre-Aksumite and Aksumite sites located between Aksum and Adigrat, and other sites between Asmara and Senafe. The finding of this expedition was published in four volumes in the German language (Phillipson 1997, 2000). Many scholars consider these volumes to be the founding material of the Institute of Ethiopian Archaeology (Michels 1979:3).

In the 1920s investigation of historical archaeology shifted towards the documentation of the megaliths of southern and eastern Ethiopia. It began with the works of two Frenchmen: P. Azais and R. Chambard who were both sponsored by the French government. During their five-year fieldwork, numerous important megalith sites were discovered and investigated. Similarly, R. Joussaume documented, excavated, and classified the megaliths of eastern Ethiopia stylistically in the 1960s and 1970s (Brandt 1997: 72)

Once established by a joint partnership with the Ministry of Culture and Le Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS), the Institute of Ethiopian Archaeology contributed significantly to a broader understanding of Aksumite archaeology and to the study of megalithic sites in southern Ethiopia. In this regard the establishment of the Institute can be considered as a landmark in the history of archaeological study in the country. The Institution undertook several excavation works at Yeha and Aksum between 1954 and 1974. It was during its early years that archaeological work gained proper attention. A group of French archaeologists under the direction of Jean Leclant were assigned to organize the Institute. Leclant was succeeded by Jean Doresse. In 1955 the Institute

launched the publication of its scientific papers and archaeological expedition results in a journal known as *Annales d'Ethiopie*. Based on its investigation, the Institute recognized two main periods for the cultural development of northern Ethiopia. These are the pre-Aksumite period that covers the period from 800 BC to 50 BC, and the Aksumite period that spans the time between 50 BC and the 8<sup>th</sup> century AD. The Institute also proposes that Aksumite civilization was an outcome of contact and links between South Arabian immigrants and indigenous northern Ethiopians (Aalund 1985:17; Brandt 1997)

Another team from the British Institute in Eastern Africa (BIEA) initiated its excavation project in 1973 in Aksum under the direction of H. Neville Chittick. The excavation uncovered several new stelae. This shed new light on the age and function of the monumental architecture of northern Ethiopia. Later on the direction of investigation shifted from elite sites to the study of environment and settlement patterns with the involvement of two scholars. One of these scholars was K.W. Butzer. In 1971 and 1973 he conducted surveys in Aksumite sites with the aim to examine the role of geomorphology and environment in the development of the Aksumite kingdom. J. Michels was another scholar who made a survey of Aksumite kingdom sites between Shire and Yeha in an attempt to reconstruct ancient settlement patterns. His survey indicates differences not only in settlement patterns but also in political and economic networks within Aksumite society (Brandt 1997: 73; Michels 1979: 21-22).

During the 1970s and 1980s archaeological research was interrupted for political reasons (the 1974 Revolution). The 1990s marked the revival of archaeological work in the country. In this regard, the works of the BIEA under D. Phillipson and the Italian and American Archaeological Mission under R. Fattovich and C. Bard (Brandt 1997: 74) are worth mentioning. Moreover, professionally trained Ethiopian archaeologists from abroad have played a pivotal role.

The Authority for Research and Conservation

of Cultural Heritage contributes a lot to the development of archaeological research in the country. The precursors of the Authority were the museum that was founded in 1944 as part of the National Library, the Ethiopian Antiquities Administration, and the Center for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage (CRCCH), respectively (Aalund 1985; Antiquities Proclamation, No. 229/ 1966 published in *Negarit Gazetta* No.7 of 29 January 1966, 1989; Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage Proclamation No. 209/2000 published in *Negarit Gazetta* No. 39 of 27 June 2000).

Archives of the Ministry of National Defense indicate that the building that was later transferred for the National Museum and Library was built by the Ministry of National Defense to document the military history of Ethiopia. The building that was dedicated to house collections of the military history of the country was moved to the compound of the present National Bank of Ethiopia. However, the idea of displaying military collections never materialized due to the dissatisfaction of the Ministry of Defense with the quality of the building. However, the same building, which was considered unsuitable to house heritage, was turned into a museum by the Ministry of Education and Fine Arts and by the Institute of Archaeology at various times. The two groups merged in 1966 to form the current National Museum of Ethiopia. The Institute of Archaeology continued to house its collections in the building from 1957 to 1966. All these changes represent a layered history of modern museum development in Ethiopia. These layers include period one: the building of the museum by the Ministry of National Defence; period two: subsequent use by the Museum of Ministry of Education and Fine Arts until 1957; and the last period: the building was used as the museum of the Institute of Archaeology from 1957 to 1966 (Getachew 2011: 1-2).

The 1966 Proclamation set up the Ethiopian Antiquities Administration by bringing together archaeological research, monuments and antiquities, as well as museums under one authority. It was organized under four sections: 1) archaeology,

anthropology; palaeontology section; 2) monument and object preservation section; 3) museums section; and 4) a service section with a photographic unit. In 1974 the administration was raised to the ministry level as the Ministry of Culture by incorporating arts and traditional culture. The Antiquity Administration was set up to monitor the country's cultural heritage (historical and archaeological artifacts) produced prior to 1850 in the Ethiopian calendar. After two years, major structural reorganization was made that led the Antiquity Administration to be a semi-autonomous institution and renamed the Centre for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage (CRCCH) under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture. In 1978 an Inventory and Inspection Section was established with the aim of building up the country's cultural heritage. As a result, the structural organization of the Center grew into five sections (Aalund 1985: 15-16, 19).

The 1966 Proclamation continued to function even after the 1974 Revolution. As mentioned above, following the outbreak of the revolution archaeological research was interrupted but some paleontological research was carried out in the Middle Awash area in the late 1980s. This scenario compelled most researchers to concentrate their activities on laboratory investigations. The outcome of the interruption was the development of the current paleontology and archaeology laboratory. In fact, the idea of establishing the conservation laboratory for cultural heritage goes back to 1975 when UNESCO produced a proposal to set up a laboratory in Addis Ababa. The laboratory was intended to provide professional staff and laboratory facilities for works of art at the national level and eventually to expand the laboratory into a training institution for technicians who would be recruited from East African countries (Aalund 1985:17, 20).

The Center for Conservation of Cultural Heritage transformed into the Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage (ARCCH) under the 209/2000 Proclamation. The new proclamation has made several amendments in the structure and activities of the Authority

(Proclamation 209/2000). For instance, during the Imperial and the Derg eras, the Head of the CRCCH acted as the Head of the CRCCH as well as the Head of the Division for Research of Cultural Heritage (Aalund 1985:16). Currently, the Authority is now led by a director with the aid of heads of department, and section heads responsible for supervising other staff. Another significant change that took place is the transformation of the Authority itself from the antiquity office into a research center and facilitator. It became the regulatory for and center of cultural heritage investigations in the country. This helps to widen its scope of archaeological research in terms of themes and areal coverage, to maintain strong relationships with regional and international institutions, and to provide an environment conducive for researchers and the public (Kebede 2008: 70-71).

However, the previous trend of Ethiopian archaeology as a foreign dominated field of investigation, has participated in another development following the establishment of the Department of Archaeology and Heritage Management in Addis Ababa University. The idea of establishing the department in Addis Ababa University dates back to the 1960s when the Department of History introduced some archaeology courses for its undergraduate program with an employment of the British archaeologist Richard Wilding. Following the return of Wilding to Europe in the 1970s, the department employed two French archaeologists, Francis Anfray and Roger Schneider, who were members of the Institute of Ethiopian Archaeology, on a part-time basis. The department introduced archaeology courses, having a vision of establishing a full-fledged archaeology department that would help shed light on the ancient and medieval history of Ethiopia (Bahru 2000).

The process of establishing a full-fledged department, however, gained impetus in the late 1990s. The Department of History launched an MA program in Archaeology creating an Archaeology Unit that enjoyed the support of the Italian University Collaboration Project. The fund obtained from the project was used to purchase

vehicles, field equipment, computers, books, and to cover other running costs. The Unit became the only venue for training in archaeology at the postgraduate level in the country. It gained assistance from the Italian, British, American, Canadian, and Norwegian archaeologists who had conducted their archaeological investigations in the country. They assisted the Unit by reviewing the curriculum, engaging in the teaching and learning process in the form of block teaching, and by providing PhD scholarships to young scholars who had Master's Degrees.

The unit has received between five and eight students each year since 2002. The number of students is limited in order to adequately utilize the resources. The curriculum is comprised of archaeology and heritage management courses including fieldwork aimed at the acquisition of practical knowledge. In the earlier years, students were required to take audit classes in history and geology to supplement their training. They also participated in some archaeological projects with foreign archaeologists who conducted archaeological investigations in the country. This kind of scenario enabled some of the students to get academic and logistical assistance while preparing their Master's theses.

It is also important to recognize the contribution of graduates in conducting research activities in the field and offering archaeology and heritage management courses at various universities in the country. Recently, the archaeology program at Addis Ababa University made changes to their curriculum. As a result, many history departments at various universities of the country have become "Department of History and Heritage Management". Moreover, graduates of the Unit were instrumental in creating the Archaeology Department at Aksum University and the School of Conservation at Mekelle University.

Since the opening of the MA program in archaeology, a total of 35 students have graduated. These graduates are currently employed in several higher education institutions, the

Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage, and regional Cultural and Tourism Bureaus (see “Official launching of the Department of Archaeology & Heritage Management” a bulletin prepared on the occasion of the launching ceremony of the Department of Archaeology and Heritage Management at Addis Ababa University, October 2011).

The accomplishment of the Unit’s postgraduate program encouraged Addis Ababa University to develop the Unit into a full-fledged Department of Archaeology and Heritage Management. The undergraduate program was launched in 2009/10. The new Department began its undergraduate program with the enrolment of 24 students. The curriculum of the program includes archaeology, heritage management, museum, and tourism courses. The first batch of the undergraduate program will graduate this year.

Another development that deserves mention with regard to archaeological work in the country is the establishment of the Ethiopian Archaeologists’ Association. The alumni of the Department in collaboration with other Ethiopians trained abroad established the Ethiopian Archaeologists’ Association (EAA) in July 2008. As stated in its Code of Ethics, the mission of the Association is to “empower stakeholders in their efforts to enhance research, protection and promotion of cultural heritage of Ethiopia.” So far, the association has conducted four General Assemblies and two annual workshops. The theme of the First Annual Workshop that took place in 2009 was “Archaeology in Ethiopia: From where to where?” The papers presented at the workshop were finally published as *Proceedings of the First Annual workshop of the Ethiopian Archaeologists’ Association (EAA)* on December 26, 2009.

Moreover, the Association organizes a number of public lectures in archaeology, paleontology, and the heritage of Ethiopia by inviting various guest scholars in those fields. Another landmark is the transformation of the association from the

Ethiopian Archaeologists’ Association (EAA) to the Archaeology and Paleontology Association-Ethiopia in 2011. This transformation occurred following the decisions made at the Second Annual Generally Assembly held on 27 December 2009. The reason for the change of the association’s name is stated in its Code of Ethics as: “the General Assembly entertained an active discussion on the request made by paleontologists to join the association as members and the assembly endorsed their proposal. The General Assembly also endorsed the vision, mission, and strategic plan of the association (Code of Ethics of the Archaeology and Paleontology Association - Ethiopia (APAE), June 2011: 3).

The publication of the Code of Ethics was the result of discussions held during the Third General Assembly. The significance of the Code of Ethics is unequivocal. It will play an important role by providing basic guideline to regulate archaeological and paleontological investigations and protect the heritage of the country. Most events and activities organized by the Association enjoy sponsorship by the Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage (ARCCH), the Spanish International Development Cooperation Agency, the French Center for Ethiopian Studies (CFEE), and the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

## Conclusion

The development of archaeological research in Ethiopia has passed through several phases fraught with challenges. First, archaeological investigation was for years the preserve of foreign scholars, an only recently have local scholars appeared. As important as it was in pioneering archaeology in Ethiopia, the preponderance of foreign scholars has its downside. First, this situation hindered the sustainability of research and capacity-building in the field. Second, the absence of a strong institution has hampered the development of the profession in the country as directives often failed to be properly enforced. Research projects, for



instance, have not contributed enough in terms of supporting capacity-building endeavors aimed at providing professional training to young nationals.

On the other hand, despite challenges, the research endeavor has spurred several positive outcomes. Significant in this regard is the shift away from the focus on ancient elite structures such as monuments, temples, and mortuaries, to the study of ordinary people, economic and settlement patterns, etc. This research also gained publicity for Ethiopia as a depository of a rich ancient culture. This has in turn attracted more international researchers to the country, resulting in greater media coverage and publication of scientific journals highlighting the significance of Ethiopia's heritage to humanity. In no small measure the archaeological findings have been helpful in changing Ethiopia's image and attracting an increasing number of international tourists. Currently, the country has a good number of sites registered in UNESCO's World Heritage List.

### Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Dr. Agazi Negash, who encouraged me to write this paper and for his valuable comments. I also want to thank Ato Genew Assefa, who read the earlier version of the paper.

### Bibliography

Aalund, F.

1985 *Master Plan for Preservation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage.*

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Paris: Technical Report /RP/1984:1985/X1.1.

Agazi Negash

2001 *The Holocene prehistoric Archaeology of the Tembien Region, Northern Ethiopia.* Unpublished PhD Dissertation: University of Florida, Gainesville.

Alemseged Abay

1988 Early Stone Age Cultures in Ethiopia. In Taddese Beyene, editor, *Proceedings of the Eighth International Conference of Ethiopian Studies*, Vol. 1. Addis Ababa: Institute of Ethiopian Studies, pp. 1-8.

Alvarez, F.

1961 *Narratives of the Portuguese Embassy to Indies*, Volumes 1 and 2. Cambridge: Hakluyt Society.

Anfray, F.

1967 Les sculptures rupestres de Chabbé dans le Sidamo. *Annales d'Ethiopie* VII: 19-32.

1976 Les sculptures rupestres de Galma dans le Sidamo. *Annales d'Ethiopie* X: 53-56.

Antiquities Proclamation, No.229/ 1966. Published in *Negarit Gazette* No.7 of 29 January 1966.

Ashmore, W. and R. J. Sharer

1988 *Discovering Our Past.* Mountain View: Mayfield.

Azaïis, P.R. and R. Chambard

1931 *Cinq années de recherches archéologiques en Ethiopie-Province du Harar et Ethiopie méridionale.* Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner.

Bahru Zewde

2000 A century of Ethiopian historiography. *Journal of Ethiopian Studies* 33(2): 1-26.

Barnett, T.

1999 Quiha Rockshelter, Ethiopia: Implications for Domestication. *Azania* 34: 11-24.

- Brandt, S.A.
- 1982 *A Late Quaternary Cultural/ Environmental Sequence from Lake Basaka, Southern Afar, Ethiopia.* Unpublished PhD Dissertation: University of California, Berkeley.
- 1997 Horn of Africa: history of archaeology. In J.O. Vogel, editor, *Encyclopedia of Pre-Colonial Africa: Archaeology, History, Languages, Cultures, and Environments.* Walnut Creek: Altamira Press, pp. 69-75.
- Breuil, H.
- 1934 Peintures rupestres préhistoriques du Harar (Abyssinie). *L'Anthropologie* XIV: 437-483.
- Breuil, H., P. Teilhard de Chardin et P. Wernert
- 1951 Le Paléolithique du Harrar. *L'Anthropologie* 55: 219-230.
- Bruce, J.
- 1790 *Travels to Discover the Source of the Nile in the Years 1768-1773*, Volumes 1-3. Edinburgh: J. Ruthven.
- Carder, N.
- 1988 Modeling the Evolution of Pastoral Rock Art in the Horn of Africa. Unpublished M.A. Thesis: University of Florida, Gainesville.
- Cervicek, P.
- 1979 Some African affinities of Arabian rock art. *Rassegna di Studi Ethiopici* 27: 5-12.
- Chavaillon, J. and M. Piperno
- 2004 History of excavations at Melka Kunture. In J. Chavaillon and M. Piperno, editors, *Studies on the Early Paleolithic Site of Melka Kunture, Ethiopia.* Florence: Istituto Italiano di Preistoria e Protostoria, pp. 3-23.
- Clark, J.D.
- 1954 *The Prehistoric Cultures of the Horn of Africa.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- 1962 The spread of food production in sub-Saharan Africa. *Journal of African History* 3(2): 211-228.
- 1980 The origins of domestication in Ethiopia. In L.S.B. Leaky and B.A. Ogot, editors, *Proceedings of the 8<sup>th</sup> Pan-African Congress of Prehistory and Quaternary Studies.* Nairobi: International Louis Leakey Memorial Institution for African Prehistory, pp. 268-270.
- Clark, J.D. and H. Kurashina
- 1979 Hominid occupation of the East-Central Highlands of Ethiopia in the Plio-Pleistocene. *Nature* 282 (5734): 33-39.
- Clark, J.D. and M.A.J. Williams
- 1978 Recent archaeological research in southeastern Ethiopia (1974-1975): some preliminary results. *Annales d'Ethiopie* 1: 19-45.
- Crindle, J.W.
- 1897 *The Christian Topography of Cosmas, an Egyptian Monk.* London: Hakluyt Society.
- D'Andrea, A.C., Diane E. Lyons, Mitiku Haile, and E.A. Butler
- 1999 Ethnoarchaeological approaches to the study of prehistoric agriculture in the Ethiopian Highlands. In M. van der Veen,

editor, *The Exploitation of Plant Resources in Ancient Africa*. New York: Plenum Publishers, pp. 101-122.

Department of Archaeology & Heritage Management. *Official Launching of the Department of Archaeology and Heritage Management*. Addis Ababa: n.p., 2011.

Dombrowski, J.

1971 *Excavations in Ethiopia: Lalibela and Natchabiet Caves, Begemedet Province*. Unpublished PhD Dissertation: Boston University.

Ehret, C.

1976 Cushitic Prehistory. In M.L. Bender, editor, *The Non-Semitic Languages of Ethiopia*. East Lansing: Michigan University Press, pp. 85-96.

1979 On the antiquity of agriculture in Ethiopia. *Journal of African History* 20: 161-177.

Archaeology and Paleontology Association—Ethiopia (APAE) (2011) *Code of Ethics of the*

*Archaeology and Paleontology Association - Ethiopia (APAE)*. Addis Ababa.

Getachew Meressa

*Forthcoming* The rise and demise of Haile Selassie I Military Museum (1972-1991).

Girma Hundie

2001 The Emergence of Prehistoric Pastoralism in Southern Ethiopia. Unpublished PhD Dissertation: University of Florida, Gainesville.

Graziosi, P.

1941 Le pitture rupestri dell'Amba Focada Eritrea. *Rassegna di Studi Etiopici* 1: 61-70.

1964 New discoveries of Rock paintings in Ethiopia. *Antiquity* 38: 91-98, 187-194.

Hildebrand, E.

2003 *Enset, Yams, and Honey: Ethnoarchaeological Approaches to the Origins of Horticulture in Southwest Ethiopia*. Unpublished PhD Dissertation: Washington University in St Louis.

Kassaye Begashaw

1994 Archaeological research in Ethiopia progress and current situation. In C. Lepage, editor, *Études Éthiopiennes*, vol. 1. Paris : Société Française pour les Études Éthiopiennes, pp. 95-103.

Kebede Geleta

2008 The Evolution of Archaeological Research & Research Monitoring Institute in Ethiopia: The Case of ARCCH. Unpublished MA Thesis: Addis Ababa University.

Lyons, D. and A.C. D'Andrea

2003 Griddles, ovens, and agricultural origins: an ethnoarchaeological study of bread baking in Highland Ethiopia. *American Anthropologist* 105 (3): 515-530.

Marshall, F. and E. Hildebrand

2002 Cattle before crops: the beginnings of food production in Africa. *Journal of World Prehistory* 16(2): 99-143.

Michels, J.W.

- 1979 Axumite archaeology: an introductory essay. In Yuri M. Kobishchanov, *Axum*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, pp. 1-34.

Morgan, L.E. and P.R. Renne

- 2008 Diachronous dawn for Africa's Middle Stone Age: new 40Ar/39Ar ages from the Ethiopian Rift. *Geology* 36(12): 967-970.

Murdock, G.P.

- 1959 *Africa: Its People and Their Culture History*. New York: McGraw Hill.

Phillipson, D.W.

- 1977 The excavation of Gobedra Rock-shelter, Axum: an early occurrence of cultivated finger millet in Northern Ethiopia. *Azania* 2: 51-82.
- 1997 *The Monuments of Aksum*. Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa University Press.
- 2000 *Archaeology at Aksum, Ethiopia, 1993-97*, 2 vols. London: British Institute in Eastern Africa.

Salt, H.

- 1814 *A Voyage to Abyssinia and Travels into the Interior of that Country*. London: Frank Cass.

Sileshi Semaw

- 1997 *Late Pliocene Archaeology of the Gona River Deposits, Afar, Ethiopia*. Unpublished PhD Dissertation: Rutgers University.

Sileshi Semaw, S., P. Renne, J.W.K. Harris, C. Feibel, R. Bernor, N. Fesseha and K. Mowbray

- 1997 2.5 million-year-old stone tools from Gona, Ethiopia. *Nature*, 385: 333-338.

Simoons, F. J.

- 1965 Some questions on the economic prehistory of Ethiopia. *Journal of African History* 6: 1-13.

Wendorf, F. and R. Schild

- 1974 *A Middle Stone Age Sequence from the Central Rift Valley, Ethiopia*. Warsaw: Institute of the History of Material Culture, Polish Academy of Sciences.

Yohannes Haile Selassie, Tekle Hagos and Girma Hundie

- 1990 An Overview of the Stone Age Sites of Gadeb, Melka Konturé and Beseka: Ethiopia. In Richard Pankhurst, Ahmed Zekaria and Taddese Beyene, editors, *Proceedings of the First National Conference of Ethiopian Studies*. Addis Ababa: Institute of Ethiopian Studies, pp. 273-287.

Zelalem Assefa

- 1990 An Overview of Archaeological Occurrences from the Lower Omo Basin, Ethiopia. In Richard Pankhurst, Ahmed Zekaria and Taddese Beyene, editors, *Proceedings of the First National Conference of Ethiopian Studies*. Addis Ababa: Institute of Ethiopian Studies, pp. 261-272.