

1. Key aspects of Ethiopianist research at the Frobenius Institute

DEFINITE SEGREGATION OR PERMEABLE BOUNDARIES?

Revisiting the Frobenius research on artisans, hunters and slave descendants in Ethiopia

Susanne Epple

INTRODUCTION

Previous writers tended to assume that segregation was rigid, impermeable and immutable (Freeman and Pankhurst 2001:21).

This paper discusses the dynamics around and across allegedly non-crossable and impermeable boundaries between hereditary status groups in Ethiopia. These status groups include craft workers, hunters and slave descendants. They exist in many Ethiopian societies and, where they are found, they usually have a special and often ambiguous status. Commonly, negative attributes are still associated with them, on the basis of which they are excluded from close contact with the dominant section of society, mostly farmers and/or herders. At the same time, many craft workers and hunters are believed to have special powers and they fulfil important ritual and social tasks in their respective societies.

During several expeditions to southern Ethiopia, members of the Frobenius Institute collected a vast amount of data on numerous ethnic groups. Much was also said about the above-mentioned categories of marginalized people and their alleged origins, characteristics and low status in local hierarchies. Many other researchers have subsequently studied these issues in more depth and recent studies have looked at the external influences that may have altered or influenced inequality. Yet, most scholars have directly or indirectly described the various status groups and social boundaries between them as rather static and hardly anyone has studied the culturally immanent possibilities for status change or boundary crossing.

The Frobenius expeditions came to southern Ethiopia when Amharization and modernization of the groups there were still limited. The Institute's publications and unpublished materials, therefore, provide a perspective on these societies before they were subject to strong interventions from the outside. While status change among artisans, hunters and slaves was in no way the explicit focus of the expeditions' research, a close inspection of this body of work reveals some indications that change was in fact possible.

What is the relevance of this topic today, and why does it make sense to review such old material? The position of marginalized groups has recently been gaining attention in Ethiopia. Despite the efforts of the present government and previous regimes to eliminate discrimination towards marginalized groups, it continues to exist. Indeed, some authors (for example, Aalen 2011, 2012; Tronvoll and Hagmann 2012) claim that the ethnic federalism that exists in contemporary Ethiopia has led to the revitalization of local values and cultural practices with the effect of a renewed marginalization of craft workers, hunters and slave descendants. Numerous awareness-raising programmes and the efforts of churches, national and international NGOs have not successfully established equality and integration. This analysis of archival material from the Frobenius Institute and the review of recent literature with its focus on culturally immanent options for status change are intended to inspire a different perspective in the study of so-called marginalized people in Ethiopia.¹

MARGINALIZED GROUPS IN ETHIOPIA

In the literature, ‘marginalized groups’² in Ethiopia include craft workers (such as potters, tanners, blacksmiths, weavers, and woodworkers), certain musicians, hunters and descendants of hunters, descendants of slaves and members of special clans. Such categories of people can be found in stratified and hierarchically ordered societies, as well as in more egalitarian, polycephalous societies, where the dominant majority are farmers or, in some cases, pastoralists or agro-pastoralists.

The marginalized groups usually have an ambiguous role. Locally, they are perceived as being fundamentally different from the mainstream society and various characteristics are attributed to them. Among their alleged negative attributes are: physical and/or ritual impurity; unsocial and disloyal character and/or behaviour; and, occasionally, racial differences. Their positive attributes include special powers and abilities to bless, curse, heal, and mediate, as well as, in some cases, an assumed closeness to the sacred king or creator. Their difference is explained and justified locally by their supposedly unclean activities, their professions or their contact with polluted materials, such as the impure meat of wild game and other unclean animals. Many of their origin

1 The archival research was made possible through a DAAD returnee programme that enabled me to return from Ethiopia to Germany and work in the library and the archives of the Frobenius Institute from November 2015 to April 2016.

2 In the existing literature a variety of terms is used for these groups, many of which point to their exclusion and discrimination, such as ‘avoided caste, pariah, outcast, marginalized groups, or depressed classes’. The term ‘caste’ used to be commonly employed but it has also been widely debated as it implies some similarity between the Ethiopian context and the Indian caste system (Todd 1977; Amborn 1990; Pankhurst 1999). Some authors have opted for more neutral terms, such as ‘status groups’ (Amborn 1990), ‘hereditary status groups’ (Ellison 2006) or ‘cultural strata’ (Braukämper 2014).

myths describe how marginalized groups fell from grace through improper or immoral behaviour for which they were cursed.

Slave descendants are likewise considered as unclean and polluting. Their pollution is stemming from the loss of proper humanity that occurred at the moment their ancestors turned into slaves. In southern Ethiopia this is the main difference between descendants of slaves and the free-born. In northern Ethiopia, however, slaves are also often associated with racial differences, as many slaves in northern Ethiopia originally came from the south, where people's skin colour is often darker. The status of marginalized groups is passed on through descent and in some cases through close interaction with others.

The marginalization of such groups is manifested at various levels. Pankhurst (Pankhurst 2001:2–7) has identified five main domains of marginalization for craft workers and hunters, which can also be applied to slave descendants (Haberland 1992; Bosha 2013): spatial, economic, political, social and cultural. Spatial exclusion refers to the fact that many craft workers or hunters live outside, or at the edges of, the farmers' villages, often close to the forest/bush or in infertile places. Economically they are denied access to certain activities and resources, such as land and animals, and are confined to the production of certain products. Often, they have to sell their products for a low price and traditionally many are poor. Politically, members of low-status groups are denied access to any political offices, expression of views or any other active participation in public decision making. Social exclusion entails daily avoidance by the members of the mainstream farming community, who do not eat or drink with them, do not use plates or cups touched by them, in extreme cases avoid touching them, and expect to be greeted in very submissive ways (bending down, leaving the road, expressing low status verbally). Where social relations exist, these are usual non-reciprocal. In almost all cases intermarriage is strictly forbidden. Culturally, their marginalization is expressed through oral history and myths of origins as well as proverbs and stories that express and justify their subordinate position.

Craft workers and hunters, however, also have important roles in the societies they are part of. Craft workers play an indispensable economic role in the mostly agrarian or agro-pastoral communities, but they also undertake important ritual tasks, for example, acting as ritual assistants during initiations, as birth attendants, circumcisers, musicians, conveyers of news and morticians (Pankhurst 2001:2). The same is true for hunters who, in some former kingdoms, were close to the sacred king and acted as his guards and servants. They also buried the king, initiated the new one, and executed people he had condemned to death (Haberland 1964). In some places they served as ritual assistants and mediators in conflict resolution. Slaves also used to play an important economic role in certain societies, but slave descendants lack this kind of ritual or social responsibility.

The ambiguous role of these groups has been described in numerous case studies including, increasingly in the last two decades, in those by Ethiopian scholars. Among the earlier publications from the Frobenius Institute were those by Adolf Ellegard Jensen

(Jensen 1936, 1959), Helmut Straube (Straube 1963) and Eike Haberland (Haberland 1963) on the expeditions to southern Ethiopia in 1934–35, 1950–52 and 1954–56. In these four voluminous books, the history and culture of many groups are described and, in many cases, chapters are dedicated to the description of marginalized subgroups and clans. Haberland was particularly interested in the topic and later published several articles and books on the status of craft workers, hunters and slaves and the connection between sacred kingdoms and special castes (Haberland 1961, 1962, 1964, 1972, 1979, 1984, 1992, 1993). His student Werner Lange wrote about divine kingship and the special position of bards in Kaffa (Lange 1976, 1979/80).

Monographs and articles by international scholars on various ethnic groups that had marginalized subgroups followed in the 1950s, 60s and 70s. Among the groups studied were the Gurage people and their Fuga minority (former hunters now partly engaged in craftwork) (Shack 1966; Teclehaimanot 2003), the Konso people and the Hauda craft workers (Hallpike 1972), the Kaffa people and the Manjo hunters (Huntingford 1955), the Wayto (formerly hippopotamus hunters) of Lake Tana in Amhara region (Gamst 1979) and the Beta Israel Ethiopian Jewish community that lived among the Amhara and Tigray people (Pankhurst 1977; Quirin 1979).

With Dena Freeman and Alula Pankhurst's volume on marginalized groups in southern Ethiopia (Freeman and Pankhurst 2001), emphasis was laid on the experiential world of the minorities themselves. The numerous case studies in their book also gave a first insight into social change triggered by external factors. Before them only a few had explicitly studied change (for example, Amborn 1990), now the issue of change and chances for more integration have become a centre of interest for other researchers. More recent publications – many by Ethiopian scholars – have looked at the effects of religious conversion, modern education, changes in the economic environment and new legal frameworks.³

*THE RESULTS OF THE FROBENIUS EXPEDITIONS TO ETHIOPIA
IN THE LIGHT OF RECENT PUBLICATIONS*

Ethnological research in southern Ethiopia owes much to the research tradition of the Frobenius Institute, and especially to Jensen, Haberland and Straube, as well as some of their students (Bustorf 2015:185). Leo Frobenius, the founder of the Institute, had a great interest in East Africa and he initiated the first expedition to southern Ethiopia in 1934–35, without ever travelling there himself. As the second director of the Frobenius Institute, Jensen led two more expeditions after World War II, in 1950–52 and 1954–56.

3 For example Aneesa 2000; Belete 2012; Bosha 2013, 2014; Ellison 2006, 2012; Epple, 2005; Gemed 2016; Gezagn 2003; Samuel 2016; Wolde-Selassie 2001; Yoshida 2008, 2009.

Haberland, the third director, organized three further campaigns in 1967, 1970–71 and 1972–74.

As we saw above, the first three expeditions visited numerous ethnic groups and published their results in four volumes and several articles.⁴ Subchapters were dedicated to the description of craft workers, hunters and slave descendants, indicating their alleged origins, their livelihood activities, their relationship with the dominant sections of their societies, as well as their ambiguous roles and duties. Haberland's deeper study of the subject covered, for example, the special relationship between what he called pariah groups and sacred kings (Haberland 1964), hunters and special castes (Haberland 1962), slavery in Woleyta (Haberland 1992), and the highly stratified society of the Dizi people (Haberland 1984, 1993).

The Frobenius research demonstrated that the southern Ethiopian societies are internally very differentiated. Many consist of numerous sub- and sub-sub-categories of people, who are mostly hierarchically ordered. Despite many commonalities, the categories and hierarchies vary from place to place. In the following, the results of the Frobenius expeditions to Ethiopia will be presented, along with some of the more recent research, with a focus on the dynamics around the social boundaries between the different categories of people.

CATEGORIES AND HIERARCHIES

In the various publications by the Frobenius Institute on southern Ethiopia, the following categories and subcategories of the people studied are mentioned.

'Original/real' and 'assimilated' members of society

Many African societies are not homogenous but consist of a mixture of migrants to a specific place, often giving first-comers a special position and high status (Kopytoff 1987). In southern Ethiopian societies, the concept of first-comers is understood to mean the first of what is considered one's own cultural group to arrive in a new place. Any alleged original inhabitants – often hunters and gatherers – do not have this status, but rather form a marginalized subgroup. In Jensen's words, they form a different cultural layer and represent a subordinated pariah-like group (Jensen 1959:13, 16).

In the publications of the Frobenius Institute, various Oromo groups (such as, Borana, Arsi, Guji) are said to differentiate their population into 'real/original' and 'assimilated' members. The Borana distinguish the *gona*, i.e. the real Borana, from the *sabbu*,

4 Some of the names used in the older literature for ethnic groups are designations by others groups and/or names nowadays considered as outdated or derogatory. In this article, therefore, I have decided to use the currently acceptable names.

assimilated strangers from areas conquered by the Borana. The Shoa-Oromo, the Guji and the Arsi call their original members *akako* and assimilated strangers *dalata* (lit.: adopted), *gabaro* (lit.: vassal) or *hadya* (lit.: adopted strangers) (Haberland 1963:127). The Gede'o and the Yem, two non-Oromo groups, distinguish between *akaku* (original) and *dalata* (assimilated)⁵ or *tessamangu* (old layer) and 'immigrants' (Straube 1963:305ff.). Intermarriage between original and assimilated members of society was originally forbidden and assimilated members were also not allowed to take any public office. By the 1950s, however, these rules had already been weakened or lifted completely in some places.

Craft workers

In most Ethiopian societies a clear distinction is made between craft workers and farmers. In some places, craft workers engage in several crafts and also in trading. Most craft workers are considered to be unclean and polluting and are, thus, avoided. However, not all crafts are considered equally polluting. Potters and blacksmiths, for example, are among the most commonly despised along with, in many places, tanners and weavers. Rules of endogamy and avoidance do not only exist between farmers and craft workers, but also among the various craft workers themselves, as well as towards hunters and slave descendants (see Jensen 1959; Haberland 1963; Freeman and Pankhurst 2001). Eating together, sometimes entering each others' houses, touching each others' objects or bodies and, in most cases, intermarriage are forbidden. In the literature on Ethiopia, the peoples most commonly known for this behaviour are the Hadicho in Woleyta (Aalen 2011), the Manni in Ari (Jensen 1959; Schulz-Weidner 1959; Straube 1963), the



Fig. 1: "weaver in Baka, 1950–52"

5 Unpublished manuscript *Die Darassa* by Jensen, archive of the Frobenius Institute, register number EH70:18ff.



Fig. 2: "potter in Woleyta, 1967"

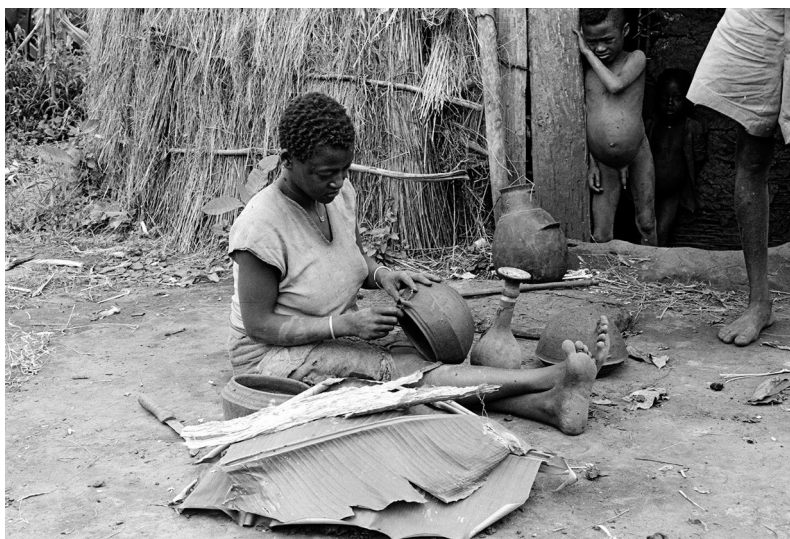


Fig. 3: "blacksmith in Hamar, 1950-52"

Manna among some neighbouring groups (see Straube 1963 on Amarro; Behailu and Barata 2001 on Dawro; Dereje 2001 on Oyda) and the Hauda in Konso (Hallpike 1968; Amborn 1990; Watson 2006).

Hunters and descendants of hunters

In several studies, many groups of hunters (and tuber farmers) are described as being physically similar, having more negroid features and darker skin than the farmers of the majority group (Jensen 1959:12–13; Straube 1963:3–5). These similarities have been interpreted as proof that the hunters were related to the original population of the area, which had supposedly scattered when cattle herders and farmers entered their territory and onto which an inferior status had been forced (Jensen 1959:15ff).⁶ Due to their consumption of wild game and other ‘unclean’ meat, hunters are thought of as impure and close interaction with them is avoided. This attitude was most often observed among the Fuga in Gurage (Shack 1966; Teclehaimanot 2003), the Weyto in Amhara, Manjo in Kaffa (Huntingford 1955; Gezaghni 2003), the Wata in Borana (Haberland 1963) and among other Oromo groups. Hunters usually have additional social roles and responsibilities that are related to activities considered as impure (for example, washing corpses and digging graves) and to the performance of rituals and services for the mainstream society or the king/ritual leaders (for example, as assistants in rites of passage and purifying rituals) (Haberland 1962, 1964).

Slave descendants

Slavery existed in various parts of Ethiopia and, even though it was abolished in the 1930s under Haile Selassie, the descendants of slaves continue to have a very low status in many places. Descendants of slaves are clearly differentiated from those of free birth and intermarriage with them is prohibited and close contact avoided. Endogamy and clear separation from other marginalized groups (e.g. craft workers) are common. Slave identity is passed on through descent and, in some places, through close contact. The most prominent example of this is found among the Woleyta people whose slaves, who at times consisted of around 30 per cent of the total Woleyta population, and who were differentiated into numerous subcategories (Haberland 1992). Some records also exist on the Gamo (Olmstead 1973) and Ganta (Bosha 2013).

6 Haberland disagreed with this theory, stating that the origin of so-called pariah groups was mostly mixed and varied from place to place. He assumed that in many cases they consisted of a mixture of excluded members from neighbouring groups (Haberland 1962:138). He also observed that hunters did not show racial differences everywhere (Haberland 1962:142). In the 1950s this racial approach was already rather out-dated and coming under criticism from other scholars too (see Abbink, this volume).

Special clans/members of religious groups

The Ethiopian Jewish community, called the Beta Israel (also Falasha) provide a special case of a group of people despised for its religious beliefs. They were displaced from their land in the sixteenth century and thereby forced to engage in craftwork to survive. They are commonly considered to be *buuda*, i.e. to have the evil eye, and cause harm to others (Haberland 1962; Quirin 1979).

CULTURALLY IMMANENT OPTIONS FOR BOUNDARY CROSSING

In the Frobenius Institute's publications it is stressed repeatedly that individuals are born into their status group and that moving to another is impossible. Yet, a close study of the specific descriptions of the various ethnic groups reveals that options for change do exist for both individuals and subgroups. In the following, examples from the Frobenius findings will be presented and complemented by more recent work by other researchers.

Marriage and adoption

Although the literature stresses that intermarriage between the various status groups was prohibited, exceptions were made under certain circumstances. For example, a girl or woman belonging to the dominant section of society could be given as a wife to a man from a marginalized group if she had lost her own respected status. Guji-Oromo girls who lost their virginity before marriage were given to the neighbouring Bayso or Boroda people or to the Wata, a group of hunters with whom intermarriage was otherwise unthinkable (Haberland 1963:328). A widowed or divorced Borana woman could also choose a second husband from the Wata (Haberland 1963:135). The strict boundaries between marginalized groups were also crossed. When Haberland visited Ethiopia in the early 1950s, the Wata-hunters had started to marry blacksmiths (Haberland 1963:135) and the southern Guji allowed marriage with slaves who were bought from Burji or Amarro (Haberland 1963:348).

In recent publications on Konso, it has been indicated that a prohibition on marrying artisans only applies to first or second born sons; subsequent sons are much more free to marry across status boundaries (Ellison 2006; Amborn 1990) and powerful economic drivers have turned wealthy craft workers, who were formerly despised, into attractive marriage partners (Ellison 2006; Belete 2012). Among the Dirassa, meanwhile, the members of the priests' lineage do not have to observe any endogamy rules and prefer craft workers as marriage partners, as they are said to have 'good and light blood' (Amborn 1990:295).

Haberland mentioned adoption as another way of turning strangers into full members of society. Among the Arsi, for example, slaves could be adopted by the families they worked for (Haberland 1963:131). Adopted strangers among the Alabdu-Guji people could also become full members of society, although the right to assume political office was regulated and restricted. If someone was adopted by the *akako* ('original' Guji), that person's descendants could take over important ritual or political offices after five generations but adoption by the *dalata* ('assimilated' Guji) did not confer the same rights (Haberland 1963:294).

Changing professions

Both the Frobenius publications and more recent works have indicated that, despite the strict division between farmers and craft workers, under certain circumstances a change of profession or adoption of a secondary occupation were possible. In times of drought or when population pressure became too much, farmers tended to adopt additional activities, often craft work. Craft workers started farming or engaging in a secondary craft when they experienced a decline in economic opportunities and could not cover their expenses anymore. Hunters became craft workers when wild game became scarce or hunting was persecuted.

Straube, for example, showed how the Bandu – a group of marginalized hunters living among the Sheko – along with some of the dominant farmers' women – became potters (Straube 1963:41). Among the Gede'o, tanners became weavers⁷ and farmers worked as blacksmiths (Jensen 1936:105), while in Shangama (part of Ari) some craft workers became farmers (Schulz-Weidner 1959:139). Hallpike (Hallpike 1968:269) mentioned the orientation of craft workers towards farming as a source of additional income among the Konso, but stressed that it did not imply any change in status. Amborn showed that most tanners lost their income and became weavers when the Amhara occupants forbade leather clothing (Amborn 1990:210) and interpreted the move towards craftwork by farmers as a creative way for society to adapt to a change in economic or social environment (Amborn 1990; also Watson 2006). Similarly, Smith (Smith 2013) has interpreted 'caste formation' as a kind of mostly economic crisis management.

Recent studies have shown how tourism has augmented the demand for crafts (Belete 2012), but at the same time has led to new forms of envy and marginalization of the producers (Ellison 2006). So, while the increase in production capacity and demand has led to an increase in the status of artisans (Ellison 2006:212), it is seen as a sign of softness and weakness for a blacksmith to give up his profession (Ellison 2006:87).

7 Unpublished manuscript Die Darassa by Jensen, archive of the Frobenius Institute, register number EH70.

Differentiation at the family level and contextual behaviour

Seniority and primogeniture play a role in most Ethiopian societies. It is important in matters of marriage, the performance of rituals, the inheritance of social positions and property, but it also plays a role in determining interactions with members of other status groups.

Among the stratified Dizi, for example, Haberland showed that only the first-born sons within a rank could achieve a high position. First-born sons of a lower rank could also achieve certain high positions and even marry members of the highest rank, though only those from families with no high position (Haberland 1993:228). Food prohibitions, meanwhile, applied to nobles of the highest, but also of the second and third ranks (Haberland 1993:232).

Similar observations were later made by Amborn (Amborn 1990:295) and Ellison (Ellison 2006:847–848, 882 footnote 24), who found that while the first-, second- and, sometimes, third-born sons of farmers were prohibited from marrying craft workers, later sons would marry rather freely. In general, the further away from the main lineage the less strictly the rules applied (Amborn 1990:295). Among the Dirassa, the rule of sticking to the family profession was less strictly applied to junior members of the family, who were allowed to give up their craft and farm while the senior members continued the tradition. Likewise, junior sons of farmers sometimes became artisans (Amborn 1990:296).

Amborn (1990:304) also observed that interaction between farmers and craft workers in Konso was mostly regulated in ritual contexts, but that they frequently ate and drank together in everyday life.

Loss and repurchase of status

In some societies freeborn farmers could lose their status and become slaves. In Woleyta, for example, rich and respected strangers from other groups were simply incorporated, but poorer ones became slaves. Occasionally, volunteers were made slaves of the Woleyta king and the king could also turn his own people into slaves if they transgressed norms or failed to perform ritual/religious duties. Poor and lazy farmers became slaves if a respected warrior asked the king for it (Haberland 1961:161).⁸ In a recent study, Bosha (Bosha 2013) showed how, among the Ganta, free farmers could become slaves to their own neighbours and relatives through sudden impoverishment. The slave status, which was strongly associated with pollution and de-humanization, was transferred like a virus not only to their descendants, but also to others who came into close contact with them.

8 The king could turn ordinary people into slaves but never craft workers, who were considered to be too different to become slaves (Haberland 1961:162).

For some societies it was reported that slaves could purchase their free status. Among the Zala,⁹ slaves could buy their freedom with seventeen oxen (Schulz-Weidner 1959:239). Old slaves among the Woleyta could purchase their freedom with a substitute slave (Haberland 1961:168).

The only recent study on this (Bosha 2013, 2014) shows that descendants of slaves among the Ganta are still despised for their alleged impure and low status, but can redeem themselves and regain full free status through a costly and complex ritual.

Outward adaptation and the formation of new status groups

Some marginalized groups have adapted to the dominant majority to such an extent that outsiders can hardly distinguish them. Adaptations range from copying jewellery, clothing and hairstyle, to the imitation of social practices and the complete adoption of the dominant language. The Manni (craft workers) among the Baka (Ari) copied the marriage rules and classes of Baka farmers in places where they lived among them. Since those Manni living in remote villages without farmers had no marriage classes, Jensen (Jensen 1959:62) assumed that marriage classes constituted an innovation for the Manni, which was based on the desire to adapt to the farming community. The Wata hunters completely adopted the language of the Borana. They also adapted to their dress code to the extent that Haberland, who lived with a Wata family for several weeks, did not notice that they were not Borana (Haberland 1959:13). The hippo-hunting Haro of Lake Abbaya seem also to be in the process of adapting to the dominant Bayso, with whom they share Gidiccho Island (Epple and Braukmann, in preparation). They have copied cultural practices and ritual offices and it has become fashionable for young Haro to speak the Bayso language.

However, according to the Institute's research, adaptation does not always result in a lifting of social boundaries. Instead, it may lead to increased differentiation among the marginalized groups. Haberland (1963:135), for example, recounted that those Wata hunters who had adapted to the Borana called themselves now *warana*-Wata (lit.: spear-Wata) – referring to the fact that they had abandoned their traditional weapons in favour of the Borana spear – while those Wata who continued to hunt with bow and arrow called themselves *tiya*-Wata (lit.: arrow-Wata). Moreover, while the social boundaries between both Wata-groups and the Borana persisted, new boundaries were created and intermarriage restricted between the two Wata sub-groups. Similarly, when some Zala blacksmiths completely abandoned their craft and engaged only in farming, they were no longer allowed to marry those who continued with their craft (Schulz-Weidner 1959:240).

9 Schulz-Weidner spells their name Sala. Today, they are not considered an independent group but are classified as part of the Gofa people.

Formation of a new identity

A few cases were reported where marginalized subgroups distanced themselves from the dominant majority. Haberland (Haberland 1963:143–144) mentions that the Gabra of northern Kenya were formed an inferior part of the Borana until they emancipated themselves and split from them. Creating their own ethnic identity, they remained culturally very similar but were independent. Even though the ethno-genesis of the Gabra was later questioned and described in a much more differentiated way (see for example Schlee 2008), it is worth mentioning Haberland's observation since similar dynamics seem to be at work today among the Sidama, where the Hadicho – a group of craft workers – have recently formed their own district and founded their own political party. Today, their name is well known and, though they are still part of the Sidama, they have their own distinct political voice (Aalen 2011).

*EXTERNAL FACTORS FOR BOUNDARY CROSSING AND
MARGINALIZED GROUPS TODAY*

The writings of the Frobenius Institute also mention several external factors motivating or enabling status change and the redefinition or crossing of social boundaries. These mostly concur with those later listed by Freeman and Pankhurst (Freeman and Pankhurst 2001) and studied by other researchers in more detail. Among them are: 1) changing economic conditions produced by things such as new markets for crafts, new or scarce raw materials, the prohibition of certain materials (such as hippo skin) or products (leather clothing); 2) political intervention by the government, such as the prohibition of slavery under Haile Selassie I, the land reform of the *Derg* regime, the prohibition of discrimination and the guarantee of equal treatment for all Ethiopian citizens; 3) the spread of particular religions, especially orthodox and protestant Christianity; 4) cultural influences and interventions, such as the respect accorded to crafts by the Amhara in the early twentieth century, and by tourists and foreign visitors in the late twentieth century; 5) modern education and NGO awareness-raising programmes; 6) urbanization, especially the blurring of boundaries in the urban context.

Some of the most recent publications have looked at the effects of ethnic federalism on the status of craft workers and hunters. Generally, a revitalization of traditional practices has been observed, which has in some places led to a strengthening of traditional leaders (Tronvoll and Hagmann 2012) but, at the same time, to the renewed exclusion of marginalized groups (see Aalen 2011, 2012 for a comparative study on the Woleyta and Sidama; Barata 2012 on the Dawro).

Other research has shown that some marginalized groups are taking legal action to fight for more equality and political participation (see Yoshida on the Manjo 2008).

Studies from neighbouring countries show similar dynamics (see for example Aneesa 2000; Aneesa and Ali 2004 on the Wata in northern Kenya). In Somalia, for example, the deliberate formation of a new identity is being used to increase the chances of being acknowledged as a persecuted refugee (see Höhne 2014 on Somali occupational groups in Somalia).

CONCLUSION AND OUTLOOK

This library and archival research into the work of the Frobenius Institute's researchers has shown that they did observe the dynamics around social boundaries between marginalized groups and mainstream society. However, their focus on cultural history (Jensen 1936, 1959; Straube 1963) and their efforts to reconstruct some of the cultural practices (Haberland 1963, 1992, 1993) meant that they had no explicit interest in cultural change and any information on this issue is, consequently, rather scattered in their texts. Their data was also, in most cases, produced during short stays of between four and six weeks among the different groups and was based primarily on interviews with knowledgeable male elders, so that the voices of younger people and women remain broadly unheard and many of the descriptions relate to the cultural ideal rather than to daily practice. As they also took a rather comparative approach, working among many neighbouring groups, conclusions on commonalities between the groups may also have been exaggerated (see also Abbink and Bustorf, this volume). Nevertheless, the researchers of the Frobenius Institute were pioneers in the, until then, mostly unexplored lands of southern Ethiopia and their studies were undertaken in a time before major changes occurred. Some of the works, such as Haberland's study of slavery in Woleyta, remain the only studies of their kind. Their findings also provide inspiration for further research that could help fill some of the gaps in our current:

- 1) Culturally immanent mechanisms for status change.
On this topic, little has been done and even less with specific focus. The results mentioned above could be used as starting point for a new project that would consider culture as the source, of and resource for, rather than as an obstacle to, change and more equality in Ethiopia. Bosha's study (Bosha 2013; 2014), which shows how the legacy of slavery was successfully overcome by a directed application of the traditional *wozzo* ritual in Ganta, suggests that this could be a valuable approach. Through my own research I have observed how, among the Bashada, the Bajje clan was at least partly successfully integrated through the intervention of the local ritual leaders.
- 2) Differentiation of ideal and real behaviour.
Only Amborn (Amborn 1990:304) and Ellison (Ellison 2006) have indicated, with their studies on the Konso, that there can be a great discrepancy between

real and ideal behaviour towards craft workers. Further research would help clarify if the same is true in other societies.

3) The legacies of slavery.

The research on slavery in Ethiopia is scarce and its effects on the social status of slave descendants and slave owners today have hardly been studied.

4) Gender, marginalization and integration.

Few authors have touched the question of whether there are great differences in the marginalization of men and women of different status groups and whether attempts at integration have touched them differently.

5) Sustainability of change.

Even though there are an increasing number of studies on the integration of status groups through external factors, the question of how sustainable they are still needs to be answered.

REFERENCES

AALEN, Lovise

2011 *The politics of ethnicity in Ethiopia: Actors, power and mobilization under ethnic federalism*. Leiden: Brill

2012 "Revival of tradition? The power of clans and social strata in the Wolayta elections", in: Tobias Hagmann and Kjetil Tronvoll (eds.) *Contested power: Traditional authorities and multiparty elections in Ethiopia*, 111–135. Leiden: Brill

AMBORN, Herrmann

1990 *Differenzierung und Integration: Vergleichende Untersuchungen zu Spezialisten und Handwerkern in südäthiopischen Agrargesellschaften*. München: Trickster

ANEESA Kassam

2000 "When will we be people as well? Social identity and the politics of cultural performance: The case of the Waata Oromo of east and northeast Africa", in: *Social Identities* 6 (2):189–206

ANEESA Kassam and ALI Balla Bashuna

2004 "Marginalisation of the Waata Oromo hunter-gatherers of Kenya: Insider and outsider perspectives", *Africa* 74(2):194–216

BARATA, Data Dea

2012 "Family connections: Inherited status and parliamentary elections in Dawro, southern Ethiopia", in: Kjetil Tronvoll and Tobias Hagmann (eds.), *Contested power in Ethiopia. Traditional authorities and multi-party elections*, 89–110. Leiden, Boston: Brill

BEHAILU Abebe and Data Dea BARATA

2001 “Dawro”, in: Freeman Dena and Alula Pankhurst (eds.) *Living on the edge: Marginalized minorities of craft workers and hunters in southern Ethiopia*, 108–140. Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa University Press

BELETE Dawit

2012 *The commoditization of culture: The effects of tourism on cultural heritages and the status of artisans in Fasha, Dokatu and Karat of Konso Woreda, southern Ethiopia*. M.A. thesis. Addis Ababa University

BOSHA Bombe

2013 *Social exclusion and integration in Ganta (Gamo) of southwestern Ethiopia: A study of descent-based slaves*. MA thesis. Addis Ababa University

2014 “Reclaiming lost identity: Redemption of slave descendants among the Gant”, in: Susanne Epple (ed.), *Creating and crossing boundaries in Ethiopia. Dynamics of social relations*, 73–89. Münster: Lit

BRAUKÄMPER, Ulrich

2014 *A history of the Hadiyya in southern Ethiopia*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz

BUSTORF, Dirk

2015 “Adolf Ellegard Jensen, Eike Haberland and the Frankfurt research tradition in southern Ethiopia”, in: Wolbert G.C. Smidt and Sophia Thubauville (eds.), *Cultural research in northeastern Africa. German histories and stories*, 185–195. Frankfurt am Main: Frobenius Institute

DEREJE Feyissa

2001 “Oyda”, in: Freeman Dena and Alula Pankhurst (eds.), *Living on the edge: Marginalized minorities of craft workers and hunters in southern Ethiopia*, 159–180. Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa University Press

ELLISON, James

2006 “Everyone Can Do as He Wants: Economic Liberalization and Emergent Forms of Antipathy in Southern Ethiopia”, *American Ethnologist* 33 (4):665–686

2012 “The Intimate Violence of Political and Economic Change in Southern Ethiopia”, *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 54 (1):35–64

EPPLE, Susanne

2005 “Missionary work and cultural change among the Bashada and Banna of southern Ethiopia. An emic perspective”, in: Verena Böll *et al.* (eds.), *Ethiopia and the missions. Historical and anthropological insights*, 153–170. Münster: Lit

EPPLE, Susanne and Fabienne BRAUKMANN

(in prep.) “Overcoming layers of marginalization: The adaptive strategies of the Bayso and the Haro people of Lake Abaya”, in: Susanne Epple (ed.), *The state of status groups in Ethiopia. Recent observations on slave descendants, hunters and craftworkers*. Berlin: Reimer

FREEMAN, Dena and Alula PANKHURST

2001 *Living on the edge: Marginalized minorities of craft workers and hunters in southern Ethiopia*. Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa University Press

GAMST, Frederick C.

1979 "Wayto ways: Change from hunting to peasant life", in: R. Hess (ed.), *Proceedings of the fifth International Conference of Ethiopian Studies*, 233–238. Chicago: University of Chicago

GEMEDA Hunde Wordoffa

2016 *Documentation of the endangered cultural traits of the Waataa community: Chopha village in focus*. PhD dissertation, Addis Ababa University

GEZAGHN Petros

2003 *Differentiation and integration: Craft workers and Manjo in social stratification of Kaffa minorities of craft workers and hunters in southern Ethiopia*. MA Thesis. University of Bergen, Norway

HABERLAND, Eike Friedrich Georg

1959 "Die Ubamer"; "Die Basketto"; "Die Dime"; "Die Bodi"; "English summary", in: A. E. Jensen (ed.), *Alt-Völker Süd-Äthiopiens. Ergebnisse der Frobenius-Expeditionen 1950–52 und 1954–56*, 20–28, 167–187, 189–226, 227–262, 399–417, 419–431. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer

1961 "Eisen und Schmiede in Nordostafrika. Beiträge zur Völkerforschung", in: Dietrich Drost und Wolfgang König (eds.), *Hans Damm zum 65. Geburtstag. Veröffentlichungen des Museums für Völkerkunde zu Leipzig*, 1(1):191–210. Berlin: Akademie Verlag

1962 "Zum Problem der Jäger und besonderen Kasten in Nordost- und Ost-Afrika", *Paideuma* 8:136–155

1963 *Die Galla Süd-Äthiopiens*. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer

1964 "König und Paria in Afrika", in: Eike Haberland, Meinhard Schuster, and Helmut Straube (eds.), *Festschrift für Ad. E. Jensen*, 155–166. München: Renner

1972 "Sakralkönigtum in Äthiopien. Geschichte und Verfassungsgefüge", in: Walther Lammer (ed.), *Festgabe für Walther Schlesinger*, 250–265. Wiesbaden: Steiner

1979 "Special castes in Ethiopia", in: Robert L. Hess, *Proceedings of the 5th International Conference on Ethiopian Studies, Chicago 1978*, 29–132. Chicago: University of Illinois

1984 "Caste and hierarchy among the Dizi (Southwest Ethiopia)", in: Sven Rubenson (ed.), *Proceedings of the 7th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, Lund 1982*, 447–450. Addis Ababa, Uppsala, East Lansing: Institute of Ethiopian Studies, Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, African Studies Center, Michigan State University

1992 "Sklaverei im alten Wolayta", *Jahrbuch des Museums für Völkerkunde zu Leipzig* 39:157–173

1993 *Hierarchie und Kaste: zur Geschichte und politischen Struktur der Dizi in Südwest-Äthiopien*. Stuttgart: Steiner

HALLPIKE, Christopher Robert

- 1968 "The status of craftsmen among the Konso of south-west Ethiopia", *Africa* 38(3):258–269
- 1972 *The Konso of Ethiopia*. Oxford: Clarendon Press

HÖHNE, Markus Virgil

- 2014 "Continuities and changes regarding minorities in Somalia", *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 38(5):792–807

HUNTINGFORD, George Wynn Breerton

- 1955 *The Galla of Ethiopia: The kingdoms of Kafa and Janjero*. London: International African Institute

JENSEN, Adolf Ellegard

- 1936 *Im Lande des Gada. Wanderungen zwischen Volkstrümmern Südabessiniens*. Stuttgart: Strecker & Schröder
- 1959 *Altvölker Süd-Äthiopiens*. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer

LANGE, Werner Jürgen

- 1976 *Dialectics of divine kingship in the Kafa highlands*. Occasional Papers, No. 15. Los Angeles: UCLA
- 1979/80 "Status and functions of Kafa bards in feudal Ethiopia", *Northeast African Studies* 1:85–90

KOPYTOFF, Igor (ed.)

- 1987 *The African frontier: The reproduction of traditional African societies*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press

OLMSTEAD, Judith

- 1973 "Agricultural land and social stratification in the Gamu highland of southern Ethiopia", in: Harold Marcus (ed.), *Proceedings of the first United States Conference on Ethiopian Studies*, 223–234. East Lansing: African Studies Center, Michigan State University

PANKHURST, Alula

- 1977 *The Beta Israel (Falasha) in Ethiopian history: Cast formation and culture change*. PhD Dissertation, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN
- 2001 "Introduction: Dimensions and conceptions of marginalization", in: Freeman Dena and Alula Pankhurst (eds.), *Living on the edge: Marginalized minorities of craft workers and hunters in southern Ethiopia*, 1–23. Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa University Press
- 1999 "Caste in Africa: The evidence from south-western Ethiopia reconsidered", *Africa* 69 (4):485–509

QUIRIN, James

- 1979 "The process of caste formation in Ethiopia: A study of the Beta Israel (Felasha), 1270–1868", *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 12(2):235–258

SAMUEL Tibebe

2016 *Conversion to Evangelical christianity and its implications on the stratified society of Dawro, southern Ethiopia*. PhD dissertation, Addis Ababa University

SCHLEE, Günther

2008 *Ethnopolitics and Gabra origins*. MPI for Social Anthropology, Working Paper No. 103. <http://www.eth.mpg.de/pubs/wps/pdf/mpi-eth-working-paper-0103.pdf> [last accessed 15 March 2017]

SCHULZ-WEIDNER, Willy

1959 “Die Schangama”, in: Adolf Ellegard Jensen (ed.), *Altvölker Süd-Äthiopiens*, 107–166. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer

SHACK, William

1966 *The Gurage. A people of the ensete culture*. London, New York, Nairobi: Oxford University Press

SMITH, Monica

2013 “Caste as a cooperative economic entitlement strategy in complex societies of the Indian subcontinent and Sub-Saharan Africa”, in: David M. Carballo (ed.), *Cooperation and collective action. Archaeological perspectives*, 275–297. Boulder Colorado: University Press of Colorado

STRAUBE, Helmut

1963 *Westkuschitische Völker Süd-Äthiopiens*. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer

TECLEHAIMANOT Gebreselassie

2003 “The low-caste Fuga occupational group under the Italian administration in the Horn of Africa”, *Northeast African Studies*, New Series 10(3):33–44

TODD, David M.

1977 “Caste in Africa?”, *Africa*: 47(4):398–412

2012 *Contested power in Ethiopia: Traditional authorities and multi-party elections*. Leiden: Brill Publisher

TRONVOLL, Kjetil and Tobias HAGMANN (eds.)

2012 *Contested power in Ethiopia: Traditional authorities and multiparty elections*. Leiden: Brill Publisher

WATSON, Elizabeth E.

2006 “Making a living in the postsocialist periphery: Struggles between farmers and traders in Konso”, *Africa* 76(1):70–87

WOLDE-SELASSIE Abbute

2001 “Kambata”, in: Dena Freeman and Alula Pankhurst (eds.), *Living on the edge: Marginalized minorities of craft workers and hunters in southern Ethiopia*, 61–72. Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa University Press

YOSHIDA, Sayuri

2008 “Searching for a way out of social discrimination: A case study of the Manjo through the 2002 incident in Kaffa”, *Nilo-Ethiopian Studies* 12:47–60

2009 “Why did the Manjo convert to Protestant? Social discrimination and coexistence in Kafa, southwest Ethiopia”, in: Svein Ege, Harald Aspen, Birhanu Teferra and Shiferaw Bekele (eds.), *Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, Trondheim 2009*, 299–309. Trondheim: NTNU

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig. 1 “weaver in Baka, 1950-52”, FoA-23-Pa26-20a © Frobenius Institute

Fig. 2: “potter in Woleyta, 1967”, FoA-23-Pa47-07 © Frobenius Institute

Fig. 3: “blacksmith in Hamar, 1950–52”, FoA-33-Ha02-16 © Frobenius Institute