

A Reply and Refutation to Appleyard

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Recently, I've read your "Afro-asiatic and the Nostratic Hypothesis" [/www.academia.edu/4166944/Afroasiatic_and_the_Nostratic_hypothesis/](http://www.academia.edu/4166944/Afroasiatic_and_the_Nostratic_hypothesis/). You have laid claim to being an expert in Ethiopian languages. Your deliberate distortions especially upon Amharic and Ge'ez (Ethiopic) need rectification. No wonder, being the student of the late Edward Ullendorf, one of the many proponents of the south Arabian origin of Ethiopian civilization, culture, religion, agricultural practices, languages, and history, you are there for sure to reiterate and perpetuate without valid evidence whatsoever. This non-African dogmatic paradigm of Semitic speaking colonial settlers in Ethiopia is the most pervasive Eurocentric fabrication in 19th century. All of the subsequent treatises are based upon the conjectural imported Semitic languages. The assumption of Cushitic, Nilotic and Omotic languages have influence on Amharic and Ge'ez is a fable.

The invention of South Arabian Semitic has the main objective of detaching Ethiopia from its African root and to downgrade its ancient black civilization in the Nile Valley. The independent existence of Ethiopia since time immemorial, above all its resistance and repulse the Europeans' scramble for Africa has indeed become an anomaly to be explained away. Therefore, so many assertive scholars (Eduard Glaser, Leo Reinsch, E. Littman 1913; Conti Rossini 1928; Enrico Cerulli 1941; Neville Chittick 1974), archaeologists, ethnographers, anthropologists and historians have manufactured voluminous falsified narratives.

Arabian Peninsula was part of Africa, an extension of the Sahara desert across the Red Sea. It was first conquered by Egyptian Pharaohs and later by Ethiopian Emperors. Ethiopia is the cradle of mankind and civilization. Ancient Egyptian Pharaohs regarded **Punt**, Taneter- God's land as their ancestral homeland. During the reign of the greatest Pharaoh Thotmes III (1479-1425 BC), Ethiopia was incorporated with Egypt. Hence the name Abasha is mentioned on the walls at Karnak among the 628 nations under his domain and he called himself the royal son of the land of the South. His visit to central Ethiopia in the region of Kalu is recorded. In the ancient region of Qohito, in northern Ethiopia, one can see a grave alleged to be the tomb of a pharaoh and Murno-Hay (1991) has also published a picture of a Stela with *ankh* sign engraved. Moreover, the deposit at Haoulti has contained two earthenware amulets representing a Ptah-patec and a Hathoric head. Hathor, goddess of love music and beauty (*nbt pwn*), was Lady of Punt.

The throne at Haoulti-Melazo 8 km south of Axum has two lateral bas-reliefs. These are similar to the ones at Deir el Bahri the memorial temple of Queen Hatshepsut (1479-1457 BC), where one of the chiefs of Punt named, Perehu and his wife Atiya, have been depicted. The statue of the seated woman with her hand on her knees, dressed in a long robe and wearing a wide necklace composed of three thick ringed strands does resemble ancient Egyptian and Meroitic queens rather than any Semitic Asians and south Europeans.

Ancient Egypt (*Rmt kmt*) and *Pwnt*-Punt, Da'amat and Axum-Ethiopia have cultural, geographical, historical and racial relationships ever since the pre-dynastic era. Egyptians have subjugated their neighbors in the South (Nubians and Cushites) in the West (Libyan Berbers) and in the Northeast the various Semitic nomads of Asia. Ancient Egyptians had a clear difference between the Nubians and the Puntites. Egyptians classified **four** types of human races: red, yellow, black and white (H. Brugsch 1858).



The four races of the world according to ancient Egypt: a Libyan (Themehu), a Nubian (Nehesu), an Asiatic Aamu), and an Egyptian (Reth). An artistic rendering by Heinrich Menu von Minutoli based on a mural from the tomb of Seti I.

All contacts with the Punites have been peaceful. Quite contrary to these historical facts, the Semitic nomads of the Arabian Peninsula and the Middle East have been considered to be in the Ethiopia plateau for their civilizing mission in Africa.

In fact the Arabian Peninsula and Mesopotamia were originally inhabited by black Africans same as ancient Egypt and Ethiopia (Lenormant, 1890; Diop 1974; Asres Yenesewu 1943; Du Bois 1970; Keto 1989; Ani 1991, Asante 1991). According to Runoko Rashidi, the civilization of Sumerian was founded by Nile valley migrants from Africa. The Sumerians called themselves the black-headed people and spoke a language branch which rose initially from Ethiopia. That is why ancient Akkadian, Amharic, Ge'ez and Elamite are cognate languages. We have very abundant evidence from various cranial, skeletal, sculptural and textual sources which have confirmed the racial origins of Sumerians as Nile valley Africans that migrated to Mesopotamia. Elam was a black Ethiopian colony which has a direct relationship with the Dravidians of Indian sub-continent. Elamite language has the same phoneme and word order (SOV) as AKkadian and Amharic.

Ge'ez, Amharic, Gurage and all other so-called Ethiosemitic languages did not originate from the Arabian Peninsula but in Ethiopia in the heart of Africa. Geez and Amharic are even older than Akkadian, Aramaic, Hebrew and Arabic in Asia. Ge'ez (Ethiopic) and Amharic are two **sisterly** languages. This has been ascertained by many genuine linguists such as Roediger and Dillmann. Both of them were spoken by Punt-Abesha people in Northeast Africa, Ethiopia. Historical records for over nineteen centuries (2647-664 BC) from ancient Egypt bear witness to the existence of a region and people in Northeast Africa. Egypt and Punt or **Taneter** (God's land) had bilateral trade. The Punites

Abesha people used to export items such as leopard skin, Ostrich plums and egg, live animals (cattle, baboons, ibex, giraffe, gazelles, and cheetah), ebony, electrum, myrrh, etc. (K.A Kitchen, 1993).

Geez became a literal language of the Ethiopians since 1700 BC. While Amharic like so many other languages such as Agaw, Beja, Noba, Nubian, etc. was unwritten language of Africa for centuries. The absence of any literary source material in any language does not prove either the non-existence of it or its origin with respect of location and time.

Modern linguistic studies have shown that Afro-Asiatic language phylum originated in the Nile valley. The existence of Semitic languages in pre-history Ethiopia is even prior to the human settlement of the Arabian Peninsula.

The classification of the so-called Ethiopian Semitic with South Semitic family is a very controversial issue. Since neither Ge'ez nor Amharic cognate with South Arabian languages such as Sabaeen, Himyaritic and others. On the other hand, Ethiopian languages such as Amharic, Argoba, Ge'ez, and the various Guraghe languages, Hareri, Tigre and Tigrigna are rather directly related to **East Semitic** languages of Mesopotamia. Disregarding these facts, Bender (1976); Ehret (1980); Gragg Gene (1991); Crass (2002), Crass, Joachim and Ronny Meyer (2011) and others have gone so far by stating the process of Pidginization and Creolization in the formation of Amharic language in the 4th century AD during the climax of the Aksumite Kingdom. How can the subjugated Cushitic, Nilotic and Omotic people influence the Semitic speaking Axumites? This is paradoxical in the history of the world. Do the languages of the black indigenous people of Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand etc. have influence on English language? Is English influenced by the languages of Native Americans in the USA? Is Portuguese influenced in Brazil by native Indios? Is the Spanish language influenced by the indigenous people of Latin and Central America? Have Hindi, Bengoli, Tellgue, Arabic, etc. influenced the morphology and phonology of the English language? The truth of the matter is that both English and French languages evolved through the very long processes of Pidginization and Creolization. In case of English, it began as a dialect of West Germanic people such as Angels, Frisii, Jutes and Saxons. In the 6th century AD the Saxons of North West Germany conquered Britain. These invaders settled by displacing the native Celtic inhabitants. Subsequently the Normans invaded in 11th century and their settlement gave also an impulse to the process of Creolization and ultimately developed the English language. It changed enormously from the 12th to 15th century, both in grammar, in vocabulary and an extensive sound changes too.

The French language developed also by a long process of pidginization of Vulgar Latin with the languages of the invading Vandal Germanic tribes from north and east such as Franks, Allmans and other Celtic speaking original inhabitants.

The dubious plan of classification of Ethiopian Semitic languages into north and south (Hetzron, 1972, 1977) has been at last discarded by the great works of M. Bulakh and Kogan (2010, 2013) and R. Voigt (2010). Furthermore, the immigration of South Arabian Semites into Ethiopia plateau is also disproved. In this regard, the contributions of Rodolfo Fattovic, 1977, 1978, 1989; Roger Schneider (1976) and Jacqueline Pirenne (1987) are very significant.

Ethiopic inscriptions found in Axum and Jeha area are older than the inscriptions found in Yemen. Even without applying scientific methods of determining the chronology of Pre- Aksumites' civilization very low dates are assigned to comply with their hypothesis of two different waves of immigration out of the Arabian Peninsula. According to Jacqueline Pirenne and Asres Yenesewu, the reverse is true. South Arabia was a part of Ethiopia and the inscriptions found there were inscribed by Ethiopians.

Ethiopic script evolved from the ancient Egyptian hieroglyphic pictographical writing system. The proto-Sinaitic script which was first discovered by Sir Flinders Williams Petrie in Serabit al – Khadem, in the Sinai region of Egypt and more recently the discovery in 1999 of the “ Wadi el-Hol Inscriptions” found in Middle Egypt near the Nile River by John and Deborah Darnel and published in 2005 was developed sometime between about 1900 and 1800 BC. Sir Alan Gardiner has proved that Semitic alphabet is derived from Egyptian hieroglyphic writing system. Proto-Sinaitic script has a direct link with Ethiopic writing system. The order of the alphabet ሀለሐመሠረሰሸቀበተቶኅነኘእከኸወዐዘዣደደገጠጢጸጸፀፈፒ- HL---p is unique to all others abgebe including Greek, Latin Hebrew and Arabic .

Indeed Ethiopia has influenced the civilization of south Arabian inhabitants and beyond.

1. Phonetic

The existence of labio-velars (ቁ ከ ባ ገ) or diphthongs in Ge'ez and Amharic is very wrongly considered to be **Cushitic influence** (Leslaw 1955; Ullendorff 1955). Due to their dogmatic belief of South Arabian origin of Ge'ez, they have given an explanation whereupon "there is no evidence in **unvocalized** Ge'ez inscriptions and Semitic languages spoken in Asia." What a worst reasoned statement! Why do they expect Ge'ez and Amharic to conform to the Semitic languages in Asia? However, the ancient and the first "Semitic" language in Asia, Akkadian, has two diphthongs (aw and aj) and vowels (a, i, u, ā, î, and û).

Ge'ez (Ethiopic) in Africa is more ancient and more grammatically sophisticated than Aramaic, Arabic, Hebrew and Greek etc. languages. In regard to phonetic, it must be first and foremost noted that Ethiopic is the first language to create vocalization in the first half the 3rd century AD. Ethiopic script has seven vowel-sounds. On the other hand, Arabic using a Nabatean-Aramaic script has begun with the three simple vowels (a, o, u) only after the establishment of Islamic religion in 8th century. Hebrew followed up very lately in 10th century AD.

2. Syntax/Morphology

Every time many "experts" echo that the word order in so called modern Ethiosemitic languages especially of Amharic is due to the **contact** with Cushitic and Omotic languages. Besides, they allege Geez is not a "pure Semitic". They do perplex the issue by stating the non-Semitic characteristic of Geez is because of its intermix with Cushitic languages. The word order in Ge'ez is the same as the Egyptian documentations of pre-dynasty, Old-Dynasty and Middle-Dynasty of ancient Egyptian hieroglyphic script. Moreover, Egyptian Pronouns, pronominal suffixes, numerals and common vocabularies have been attested in Amharic and Ge'ez.

The Amharic syntax (SOV: Subject Object Verb) is similar to Akkadian, Elamite, Sumerian, Hindi, Telugu, Parisian, etc. The „Cushitic influence“ on Amharic morphology is a myth of Orientalists. It does seem to go along with their fabrication of Indo-European phylum during the colonization of the Indian sub-continent by the British East Indian company (Tony Ballantyne, *Orientalism and Race Aryanism in the British Empire* (2002). The Cushitic and Semitic divisive category of occidentals is not at all accepted in Ethiopian history. According to the age old tradition, Ge'ez is a language of the house of **KA'AM** (ከሞ) . Ge'ez means also number one, prior to, and the language of free people. Other "Cushitic, Nilotic and Omotic" languages of Northeast African region have borrowed from Amharic, Egyptian and Geez. Since these languages were very dominant in the region since pre-history. Therefore, the lists of some words in Geez and Amharic vocabulary which have been very wrongly attested to be loanwords (Praetorius, 1889, 1893, Leslaw Wolf 1987, 1988, 1991; Appleyard 1977, 1978, 2006; Gregg Gene 1991; Paul D. Fallon 2015, Blaz'ek Va'clav 2007) from Cushitic has to be dismissed.

For example, the word in Ge'ez for chicken ዶርኮ/dorho is derived from ደውርኮ which means to reproduce in great numbers. Thus it has nothing to do with Cushitic loan word. So also the word for water *wiha*/ Wuha ውሃ in Amharic is derived from ውህህ ምህው ውሂህ here too no Cushitic but only Amharic and Ge'ez.

There is not a drop of truth in what Appleyard has written as follows:

"items denoting universal features of the environment such as 'moon', cloud, stone, day (time), salt and water, or name of body parts such as tongue, brain, knee, ear, lung and hair would not be likely to be borrowed, but all of these items in Amharic, a Semitic language of **Ethiopia have indeed been borrowed from various of the neighboring Cushitic languages**, whilst other Ethiopian Semitic languages retain items inherited Semitic origin."

As a result here is the rectification of his mistakes.

The word for the **moon** in Amharic ጨረቃ - *Che'reqa* is derived from the verb ጨረቀ (ጸለቀ ዐለቀ) , it does clearly signify the process whereby the moon light decreases from a full moon to no moon, the phases such as the crescent, half-moon and full moon as well.

The word for **cloud** in Amharic and Ge'ez ዳመና/ ደመና is not a loanword. It is indeed attested in the Ge'ez Bible Gen.9.11-17 ቀስተ ደመና since the 4th century AD. Qesit (ቀስተ) in Amharic and Ge'ez cognates with Akkadian *qestum*.

Stone in Amharic and Ge'ez derives from the root **denega'**/ደነጋ (አበነ) to become a stone. Nomads of the region such as Beja, Afar, Somali and Gallas (Oromo) and other neighboring sedentary nations to have borrowed the word *dengayi* from Amharic. All these so called Cushitic and Omotic language speaking people such as Agawu, Bilen, Kunama, Kimant, Bejas, Afars, Somalis, Sidama, Hadya, Welayita, Kefichos, Gongas, etc. were all **subjects** of the Ethiopian state from the 3rd millennium BC to the decline Axumite Empire in the middle of seventh century AD. Due to the invasion of Beja Zanafidj and Noba groups from northwest and above all the rise of Islam in Arabia across the Red sea resulted in the gradual declination of Axumites Empire. The rulers were forced to abandon their ancient city, Axum, and move towards the south in the Amhara regions. Amharic speaking Agawu dynasty has then succeeded and ever since Amharic has become the official language of the state.

Not only the Amharic words ጧት /morning/, ምሽት/ evening/, ማግኦት/ ma 'gist (the next day) but also so many other items such as T'ena (ጠና)- become old), መራ(lead), ከመረ(Pile up), አወደ(proclaim), ነገደ(trade), ሾመ(appoint), ምንጭ(source), አለቃ (Chief), ዐረፈ(rest, die), ቢቃ(sufficient), አጤ(King of kings), ጋን(big jar), ዐቀደ(make plan), መቀየር(to modify), መትከል(to plant), ሐቅ(reality, truth), ደረቅ(dry), ቅን(honest), ተነተነ(analyse), ፈተሽ(inspect, examine), ገመገመ(gemegeme-investigate), አጥቢያ/At'biya-county, parish, ድንክ/*Dink* (dwarf), ሽፍታ Shifta (bandit) etc. are attested in Egyptian pyramid texts. This negates decisively all the fabrications of modern Ethiosemitic languages and their origin in the Arabian Peninsula.

The words for salt in Amharic Che'wu ጨው which has so many synonyms such as *ganfer* (ጋንፈር), *Imedewu* (ልመደው), *amole* (አሞሌ), *ashebo* (ዐሽቦ) and *ashel* (አሽል) and in Ge'ez ዴው (*Tseewu*) are not loan words from any Cushitic language. Quite the contrary, these Amharic and Ge'ez words have been borrowed by all so called Cushitic, Nilotic and Omotic speaking people in Ethiopia. Ashebo is derived from Amharic word አስብ meaning very valuable. Since salt is a valuable product for every household. Another word for dry season in Amharic and Ge'ez is Bega (በጋ). The word is derived from በግዐ / በግዖ/በግዖት to become dry season, to form a herd, i.e. the number of 9 months of dry season (በጋ) from September to July. Thus Bega is not a loanword from Oromo. Appleyard is so confused with his speculation of **Ashebo** to be a loanword exclusively from so-called lowland East Cushitic Galla (Oromo) language. However, Galla and Somali nomads have a very recent contact with Amharic, Geez, Guraghe, Harari and Tigrigna languages. Amharic replaced Ge'ez as the language of the Ethiopian state since the 9th century AD. Not only in lexicon but also in morphology and phonology Amharic language has become a passing fancy. The various nominal and adjective formation in Amharic with suffixes such as -ኛ, -ማ, -ና, -ዬ, -ያ, -ላ, -ጌ, etc. and its word order SOV (Subject Object Verb) have been featured as "Unsemitic" and borrowed from Cushitic, Nilotic and Omotic languages such as Oromo and Wolayita respectively. This is completely incorrect. Appleyard asserts Oromo language is a lingua franca in Ethiopia. It is not. He echoes what ethnic entrepreneurs such as the so-called Oromo Liberation fronts are propagating. Amharic is spoken by more than 85% of the Ethiopian population (Ronny Meyer, Renate Richter: *Language use in Ethiopia from a network perspective*, 2003).

Appleyard's flaws regarding the body parts such as tongue, brain, knee, ear, lung and hair have to be treated very thoroughly.

In Amharic the word for tongue is *milas* ምላስ/ምልሐስ which is derived from the root *la'se* ላስ / ለሐስ (lehase) to lick which cognates with Arabic, Ge'ez, Akkadian, Hebrew and Aramaic. Amharic uses also the word ልሳን same as Ge'ez and Akakadian ሊሻኑም *lishanum*. In Amharic if someone says: ልሳኑ

ተዘጋ it does mean he is dead, he can't more speak. Moreover, ልሳን does mean name of any language. *Lisane Amhara* (ልሳነ ሰምሐራ), *Lisane Arabia* (ልሳነ አረቢ) , *Lisane Ferensayi* (ልሳነ ፈረንሳይ) , *Lisane Ge'ez* (ልሳነ ግእዝ), *Lisane Tigrigna* (ልሳነ ትግርኛ), etc.

The word for hair in Amharic is t'egur/ጠጉር. It is derived from Ge'ez and Amharic word ጨጉረ፣ (ጸጉረ) to grow hair, to become hairy, fibrous (ጭገራም).

The Word for knee in Amharic is *gulbet* ጉልበት. It is derived from the root ጉለበተ-become stronger, powerful and forceful. A synonym to this is the word birk/ብርክ (አብራክ) which directly cognates with Akkadian *birkum*.

The so-called lexicostatistical discourses and the very speculative reconstruction of proto-Afro-asiatic language are all jumbled up together in the field linguistics.

Conclusion

Amharic, Egyptian and Ge'ez are cognate languages. The overblown influence of Cushitic, Nilotic and Omotic languages on so called Ethiopian Semitic languages such as Amharic, Ge'ez, Gurage, Argoba, Harere' Tigre and Tigrigna is categorically dismissed. Amharic did not lose its pharyngeal and glottal sounds as it has been wrongly propagated. For example, ጎ, ሽ are pharyngeal and its palatal sounds such as ሽ, ቸ, ኘ, ጅ ጨ and ገፍ are its own unique characteristics. It must be noted that some of the phonemes in Amharic are similar to Akkadian and other languages including ancient Egyptian. Monosyllabic, bisyllabic and trisyllabic words of ancient Egyptian Pyramid texts have survived in Amharic, Ge'ez, Gurage, Tigre, Tigrigna, etc. Ethiopian languages spread to the Arabian Peninsula and the Near East. Thus Akkadian is related to Amharic and Ge'ez. Akkadian-Amharic common vocabulary will be published as soon as possible.

This paper shed light on the heaps of distortions and does rectify errors.

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