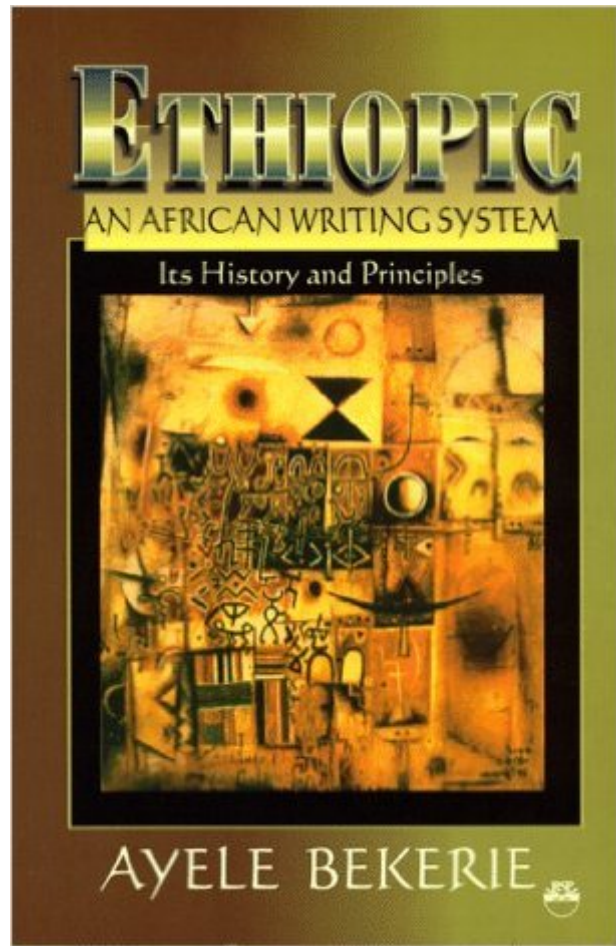


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Ethiopic An African Writing System: Its History And Principles



Synopsis

This is a groundbreaking book about the history and principles of Ethiopic (Ge'ez), an African writing system designed as a meaningful and graphic representation of a wide array of knowledge, including languages. In this important and unique study, Ayele Bekerie argues that Ethiopic is a component of the African knowledge systems and one of the major contributions made by Africans to world history and cultures. The author further elaborates that Ethiopic is a knowledge system which is brilliantly organized to represent philosophical features, such as ideography, mnemonics, syllography, astronomy, numerology and grammatology. Ethiopic is not only a cultural agency, but also a foundation to a great literary tradition in Ethiopia, which, for instance, has made a critical contribution to the history of Christianity by organically preserving The Book of Henok, widely believed to be a precursor of Christianity. In a sharp departure from the established view of most Ethiopianists of the old school, Ayele Bekerie contends that the Ethiopic writing system is much older than it has been previously thought, tracing back its origins to as far back as 2,000 B.C.E. This study also explores the dynamic linkages between the Ethiopic and Egyptian writing systems, suggesting the possible relationship between all African writing systems of the Nile Valley.

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Customer Reviews

This book is excellent, for not only educating the masses of Africa's indigenous genius, but exposing prior African scholar's unquestioning trust in the opinions of scholars from outside the continent as truthful. The author exposes the biases that European scholars had when examining African genius. The underlying theme of these biases is that African genius comes from outside of

the African continent. Mr. Ayele Bekerie represents the new African scholar that not only exposes distortions, but provides you insight into the politics of European and European trained scholars that have used unscientific methods, and terminology to discredit indigenous African genius. His dissecting of the term "Semite" is thorough. He provides sources, proof and examples to back up his work and analysis. Mr. Bekerie's detractors have reviewed his work and criticized it without providing any evidence, only opinions, and these opinions are no longer accepted as truth as they once were. This practice of making statements such as "it is believed", or "it is thought" is no longer accepted without scientific proof. Mr. Bekerie's book provides scientific proof. This is a must read!

This is a groundbreaking study about the history and principles of Ethiopic (Ge'ez), the language and writing system of present-day Ethiopia and Eritrea. The author argues that Ethiopic is a knowledge system which is brilliantly organized to represent philosophical features such as ideography, mnemonics, syllography, astronomy, numerology and grammatology. The ancient mysteires of books such as KIBRA NAGAST and THE BOOK OF HENOK [ENOKH] are also dealt with in-depth. This study explores in a very original and interesting approach the dynamic linkages between the Ethiopic and the ancient Egyptian writing system. In a sharp departure from the established view of most Ethiopianists of the old school, Ayele Bekerie contends that the Ethiopic writing system is much older than has been previously thought, tracing back its origin to around 2000 BC. This is a work of Africanist scholarship in the tradition of Cheikh Anta Diop that will have significant impact in the study of African linguistics and philosophy.

If you are trying to master Ge'ez, this book has background information to help you understand the philosophy behind the words. You will absolutely obtain a new respect for this ancient language, and learn of its beauty and charm.

Very good book -- helps to bring to light some of the ancient christian history that has existed in Ethiopia for 2000 years! It also does a good job of explaining Ethiopia's traditional writing system (called Ethiopic). This way, Westerners (the ones who tend to deny Africa's high civilization, often) can see that Sub-Saharan Africans (and not just Egyptians) actually DID have a WRITING SYSTEM, and that not all history on the continent was "oral". The book gives one a good look into the ancient "Church Culture" of Ethiopia as well, and how things have functioned over the last 2 millennia (one of the few places in Africa that was Christianized so early). One sees that Christianity (and Judaism, which is even older in Ethiopia) has been "interwoven" into the fabric of Ethiopian

culture, because it has existed in the country for so long, and has now become part of it's folk or "traditional culture".

I agree 100% with Elias's review of Ayele's book. In "Ethiopic" Ayele proves beyond any doubt that, that writing system is indigenously African, contrary to western assertions about its "Southern Arabian origin." Moreover, the author shows the connection between some of the ideographic characters of the system, and the African-American political and religious expressions. The fist-looking character is one example, signifying "Black Power." Another is the "third hour" time reckoning of the African American tabernacle in South Philadelphia. I recommend this book whole-heartedly. It may shake some established "africanist" stereotypes. But that's good too. The Publisher Africa World Press is to be congratulated for a job well done.

Dr. Ayele's work is a passionate contribution for African history, African culture, and African consciousness. Dr. Ayele's special approach is the origins, history and nature of the classic Ethiopian writing system. It is made very clear how the origin of the Ethiopian writing in Western, Europaeen studies regularly is explained by a "South Arabian" immigration into Ethiopia at some point in history importing a "superior" (over Africa) culture and a writing system as well (that will later be known as the Ethiopian). Much of the book is devoted to questioning this dominating account of early Ethiopia. Dr. Ayele discusses thoroughly the basic assumptions involved here: Why is not the origin of Ethiopian writing looked for in Ethiopia but outside of Ethiopia and outside of Africa? Why is it almost an axiom that a "superior" civilization always is imposed upon Africa? The book really exposes this basic set-up concerning the study of African history and culture. On the other side, what positively is contributed on the actual history and evolution of Ethiopian writing, I sometimes feel that interesting new tracks are not followed very far. Perhaps the book shall be understood as opening a bridge-head from where other researchers can continue. Along the way many interesting details of Ethiopian culture are offered.

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