WOMEN'S HOUSEWARES AND THEIR USAGE AMONG THE AARI

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ABSTRACT The Aari people have invented various objects for utilization in a variety of contexts in their daily lives by appropriating local materials to meet their wants and needs. The new road infrastructure has developed to link the area to the urban, which has increased the number of people travelling including traders, missionaries and government officials to the South Omo Zone and has contributed to the influx of industrial goods such as metal utensils and clothes. This paper describes the conditions surrounding the Aari women's use of exogenous objects used in their livelihood. It reports the results of the preliminary research conducted from August to November in 2010 and August to October in 2011. The survey focused on the lives of married women in Metser Village, South Ari District, South Omo Zone, Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region, Ethiopia. By focusing on women from five different backgrounds in terms of religion and age, three main points were revealed. First, food vessels and containers are generally appropriated from exogenous objects, whereas clay pots and agricultural tools are typically appropriated from indigenous objects. This finding implies that women select and utilize some objects in order to familiarize themselves with the objects for exogenous and indigenous use. Second, women of traditional religion and Protestant Christianity women differed in the ways in which they earn money. Women who believe traditional religion have a tendency to use indigenous objects in making alcohol. Third, women who cannot engage in making alcohol because they have converted to Protestantism engage in and sell a non-alcohol-type drink called *shaamata*, made of germinated maize. These findings imply that women subjectively structure their lives and respond flexibly to the flow of exogenous objects and Protestantism into their lives.

Key Words: Material culture; Utilization; Livelihood; South Omo; Ethiopia.

INTRODUCTION

Previous studies regarding objects were conducted primarily in museums from the beginning of the 19th century to the 20th century (Tokoro & Kawai, 2010; Furuya, 2010). In the 19th century, material cultural studies focused their research on rare objects, or "curio," unfamiliar to the West. These objects were exhibited in museums as a catalog. Starting in the 20th century, material cultural studies gradually began to be pushed aside as a minor discipline (Tokoro & Kawai, 2010). Anthropologists today have shifted their research from the object itself to the social, cultural, and environmental context in which it is used. In other words, recent research concerning objects is primarily interested in the materiality of the object (Tokoro & Kawai, 2010). To illustrate, as referred to in Preucel & Meskell (2004: 11), Furuya (2010) has defined materiality as a physical way to approach

the environment; it plays a role as a form of media to place people in a particular world, and we use its characteristics to construct our culture in a concrete way.

Previous studies of objects did not thoroughly investigate the appropriation of kitchenware in women's daily lives. Research has not been overly concerned with the daily usage of objects in relation to their material construction and the number of ways in which they are used. However, the type of information found in these researches should be regarded and appreciated as the basis of the object research. In Japan, Kon Wajirou, who advocated "modernologio," conducted research on objects appropriated for daily use by modern families in the 1960s. Modernologio is the study of modern social phenomena that analyzes and explains livelihoods by observing the daily behavior, housing, and clothes of modern people in conformity to objective fact (Kon, 1987). Specifically, to clearly understand the social facts, research takes the following three approaches: 1) Observe and record concerns about social phenomena, 2) Observe not only salient facts but also comprehensive facts, 3) Conduct research and compare the results using the same methods in every place, every time. The research methodology is the same as that used in modernologio also sheds light on the conditions in modern society, effectively considering and analyzing all of the abovementioned data.

The Aari people have appropriated objects for utilization in a variety of social contexts in their daily lives by using local materials to fulfill their daily needs and wants in a variety of social contexts. The new road infrastructure has developed to link the area to the urban, which has increased the number of people travelling including traders, missionaries and government officials to the South Omo Zone and has contributed to the influx of industrial goods such as metal utensils and clothes.

Some previous researches focusing on the changes in African rural areas have presented a more biased "traditional" view of societal changes. From her research of Indian cloth, from 1997 to 1999, Kanatani (2007) pointed out that anthropological researches tend to focus more on factors that are related to "traditional" elements. Nonetheless, anthropologists have reached a common understanding that "traditional" and "modern" are not contrapositive or non-historical. In this research, the focal point is to visualize the recent lives of women in rural Africa through modernologio, with primary focus placed on the object's significantly close relationship, and its past and present meanings, to women's daily lives. The research is also designed to draw a picture of the reality of women's lives in rural Africa by revealing the characteristics and usage of their kitchenware, which are embedded in their daily lives. In this research, in an effort to clarify the view of women's present lives, quantitative modernologio research was employed to argue that our preoccupied dualistic concept between tradition and modern might be less important in this matter.

OBJECTIVE AND METHOD

The village studied is Metser Village, South Ari District, South Omo Zone, Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region, Ethiopia. Metser village is located about 30 km to the north of Jinka City in the South Omo Zone. It is highland located 1,600 m above sea level, with a population of 5,570 (Central Statistical Agency, 2008). Approximately 130,000 Aari people live in southwestern Ethiopia, where agriculture is the main livelihood. Cultivated plants are primarily perennial crops such as ensete, taro and yam, cereal crops like maize, sorghum and barley, and other cash crops as coffee and corarima. Ensete, a Musaceae crop perennially grown only in southern Ethiopia, is used for food, material culture, and medicine. In Aari, the lowland is designated as *dawla*, while the highland is as *dizi* in their folk classification of environment. Members of the Aari people are categorized into two social groups: *kantsa* and *mana*. *Kantsa's* main livelihood is agricultural work while *mana* derives its income from metal work and pottery (Shigeta, 1988). Aari society has reportedly changed dramatically since 2003, in the wake of new all-weathered road construction (Kaneko, 2011).

The research was conducted in two sessions for a total of 163 days: August 2 to November 24, 2010, and August 1 to October 21, 2011. First, in the preliminary study, we researched women's ownership of kitchenware, and with the help of an Aari-English translator, we interviewed the women about the activities they engage in to earn cash. Second, we conducted research about the women's usage, manufacture, sales practices, and interactions with kitchenware using the local language of Aari. Research about ownership of Aari houses was based on five households in Metser and Shisher villages, while research on kitchenware and its usage was based on 29 households, mainly in Dumtseter location of Mester village. Research about lending and borrowing kitchenware primarily focused on the woman K in Metser by observing the frequency of her interactions for 10 days.

APPROPRIATED OBJECTS IN AARI PEOPLE'S DAILY LIVES AND THEIR CHANGES

This section primarily addresses two factors regarding the five households in Metser and Shisher village. The first is the Aari household's daily frequency of sharing utensils that have been brought from outside areas. The second is the changes that have occurred over 10 years regarding the utensils Aari people use daily. Specifically, we investigated these changes in three areas: 1) the number of a particular kind of utensil a household uses daily, 2) the sharing, material, and usage of exogenous and indigenous objects for all objects used, and 3) the variation in the kitchenware material compared to the research results recorded in 2000. We focus on households from five different backgrounds in terms of religion, age, and economic conditions and repeatedly confirmed that no information was leaked while the research was being conducted.

Outline of the Five Households Surveyed

Members of the "WO" household are WO and his spouse, who have two houses with thatched roofs and eat food in both houses, depending on the circumstances. WO is an eighth-grade student. His spouse was also a student but had not attended school since marrying WO. They have 2 *timad*(1) (unit of farmland in the Aari language) of cultivated acreage. To earn money, WO's wife makes and sells injera (called *bulshi* in Aari; it is made mostly of maize), Ethiopian bread made of fermented tef, an indigenous grain of Ethiopian origin and goes to the market place in Shisher village three times a week. The couple has been married for less than five months (Table 1).

Members of the "W" household are W, his spouse, and two unmarried children, who live in two houses with thatched roofs, and they use each, respectively, for eating food and daily living. W belongs to a social group called *kantsa* and has 1 *timad* of cultivated acreage and a cattle. To earn money, W's wife makes and sells local beer, called *gola*, three times a week in the market place of Metser village. The couple has been married for about six years (Table 1).

Members of the "S" household are S, his first wife (he has two spouses), and three unmarried children, who all live and cook in a house with a thatched roof. S belongs to a social group called *gashi-mana*. He has 1 *timad* of cultivated acreage and a cattle. To earn money, S's wife makes and sells *gola* once or twice a week in a market in Metser village. The couple has been married for more than 10 years (Table 1).

Table 1. General information of five households

Household	The member of household			House		Livestock	
	Husband	Wife	Unmarried children	Thatched roof	Corrugated iron roof	Cattle	Sheep
WO	1	1	0	2	0	0	0
W	1	1	2	2	0	1	0
S	1	1	3	1	0	1	0
K	1	1	4	3	2	6	5
AL	0	1	0	1	0	1	0

Household	Husband		Wife		
	Age	Occupation	Life stage*	Religion**	The way of earning cash
WO	20s	Student	A	P	Selling injera
W	20s	Farmer	B	T	Selling *gola*
S	40s	Farmer	B	T	Selling *gola*
K	50s	Farmer	C	P	Selling crops and *shaamata*
AL	–	–	D	P	Selling crops

(Latest information recorded in August 2011)

– : Not known.
* Life stage, A: *uuta* married less than two years, B: *ma* have a children, C: *akin* have a grandchildren, D: *galta* more than 60 years old.
** P: Protestant, T: Traditional religion.

Members of the "K" household are K, his spouse, and 4 unmarried children. They have 2 corrugated-roof houses and 3 houses with thatched roofs. K belongs to a social group called *gashi-mana*. He is a farmer who has 7 *timad* of cultivated acreage, 6 cattles, and 5 sheep. To earn money, K's wife makes and sells crops and a local drink called *shaamata* in a market in Metser village. They have been married for more than 30 years (Table 1).

The sole member of the "AL" household is an elderly woman who has lived alone since her husband passed away. She moved from a neighboring village to Metser village more than 10 years ago. She lives in a house with a thatched roof and cooks in it. She earns money selling crops once or twice a week in a market in Metser village (Table 1).

The Number of Items and Kinds of Utensils Used Daily in a Household

In regard to the utensils used daily by households WO, W, S, K, and AL, we recorded the types of utensils by referencing the research conducted by Kaneko in 2000 (Kaneko, 2011). In this article, kind and item refer to the utensils of same name and to the individual utencil number respectively. The average of kind and item in five households was 76.4 same kinds of items totaling 165.2 items (Table 2). The least number of kind and item was found in the youngest household WO as 66 kinds of items totaling 120 items, while the highest was in the household K as 120 kinds totaling 340 items (Table 2).

Usage and Materials of Exogenous and Indigenous Origin

We first classified the utensils used daily by the five households into utensils that had been made using local materials and those that been brought from outside the area (Table 2).

Among the five households researched, four households had greater number of utensils made of local materials than those from outside the area. Five households used pots, ironwork, and woodwork at a high rate for indigenous utensils, while for exogenous utensils, people used plastics objects at a high rate (Table 2).

We classified the K household's utensils for daily use into five categories; kitchenware, agricultural tools, furniture, clothes & accessories, and others, and addressed each according to its use. Kitchenware accounted for the bulk of utensils intended for daily use. Agricultural tools and furniture tend to use indigenous materials, whereas clothes and accessories tend to use exogenous materials. Kitchenware solely tends to use both exogenous and indigenous materials. The category of "others" includes mats made of phoenix leaves, cattle skin, and sheepskin from the area, as well as books and electrical items from outside (Table 3).

Change of Kitchenware Material During the 10 Years From 2000 to 2010

We compared the variety of kitchenware materials used in the 10-year period from 2000 to 2010, using survey results in 2000 (household A and B) and 2010 (household K and W).

Table 2. The number of daily utensils used by Aari people

Daily utensils made of indigenous materials									
		Materials							
Household		Clay	Iron	Wood	Bamboo	Phoenix	Calabash	Others	Total
WO	Kind	6	4	10	2	3	1	1	27
	Item	10	4	14	2	4	1	1	36
W	Kind	11	7	10	4	3	2	4	41
	Item	14	11	17	7	3	8	8	68
S	Kind	6	6	13	5	3	2	3	38
	Item	8	10	18	7	8	12	8	71
K	Kind	15	8	21	6	2	2	6	60
	Item	22	12	49	13	6	2	11	115
AL	Kind	8	5	11	2	1	5	3	35
	Item	10	5	12	4	1	5	3	40

Daily utensils from outside area								
		Materials						
Household		Plastics	Earthenware	Glass	Metal	Clothes	Others	Total
WO	Kind	6	1	2	7	9	14	39
	Item	9	4	7	7	34	23	84
W	Kind	6	1	1	4	7	6	25
	Item	26	6	1	10	15	8	66
S	Kind	11	1	1	4	7	4	28
	Item	28	4	2	9	13	4	60
K	Kind	14	1	4	13	14	14	60
	Item	41	10	10	21	106	37	225
AL	Kind	9	2	1	3	10	4	29
	Item	26	3	3	8	15	6	61

(Latest information recorded in August 2011)

Table 3. Origin and usage of K's daily utensils

		The category of use				
Household	Origin of materials	Kitchenware	Agricultural tools	Furniture	Clothes & Accessories	Others
K	Indigenous	30	7	10	16	13
	outside	24	1	0	0	19

(Latest information recorded in August 2011)

Both of the households K and W had nearly identical household members, farming areas, and livestock numbers respectively to the households A and B researched by Kaneko in 2000 (Kaneko, 2011). Household A includes the householder, his spouse, and 6 unmarried children. They had farming areas of 10 *timad*, 9 cattles, 6 sheep, 2 houses, and five chickens. Household member B includes the householder, his spouse, and two unmarried children. They had farming areas of 1 *timad*, 2 cattles, and 10 sheep.

There were 46 kinds of items out of a total 124 items in household A, while in B, there were 23 different kinds of items out of a total of 26 items in 2000. On the other hand, in household K, there were 57 kinds of items out of a total of 137 items, while in W, there were 38 similar types of items out of a total of 77 items in 2010. Generally the total number of kinds and items are increasing in 10 years (Table 4).

The study reveals that the use of kitchenware made from local materials such as clay, iron and bamboo, are largely unchanged while wood and calabash are decreasing in comparison with the previous research conducted in Aari (Kaneko, 2011).

Summary

After reviewing the Aari people's utensils for daily use and the changes, the following three results were revealed. First, there are more numerous kinds of indigenous utensils used, while exogenous utensils include more number of items with lesser kinds. Second, Aari people have kitchenware made by both local materials and outside materials, while they have more agricultural tools and furniture made by local materials, and more clothes and accessories made by outside materials. Finally, the materials used for kitchenware have remained largely unchanged in comparison with the previous research conducted in Aari (Kaneko, 2011).

Table 4. Kitchenware materials in 2000 and in 2010

Household		Materials								
		Clay	Iron	Wood	Bamboo	Calabash	Metal	Plastics	Others*	Total
A(2000)	Kind	9	5	15	4	2	4	3	4	46
	Item	18	10	36	6	5	6	25	18	124
K(2010)	Kind	15	6	9	4	2	8	7	6	57
	Item	21	10	15	8	2	14	33	34	137
B(2000)	Kind	10	1	4	2	1	0	2	3	23
	Item	11	1	5	2	1	0	3	3	26
W(2010)	Kind	11	6	5	3	2	3	5	3	38
	Item	14	8	6	4	8	3	26	8	77

* glass, stone, earthenware etc.

THE USE OF KITCHENWARE

In this section, we describe how Aari women use kitchenware, based on surveys conducted on 29 households (28 households in Dumtseter location, Metser village, and a household in Shisher village) from different backgrounds in terms of religion, age, and economic conditions. First, it looks at the number and use of kitchenware items made with local materials and brought from outside the area. Second, the household situation is investigated. Third, people's daily discourses about kitchenware are examined. Regarding the household situation, we surveyed the number of members of each household, the husband's type of work, the possession of land and livestock, and the wife's type of work, life stage and religion.

Outline of the 29 Households Surveyed

Of the 29 households surveyed, the average number of people in 27 households was 3.4. The average size of farming areas was 2.2 *timad*, excluding four households, which suggested that the average size of farming areas has been reduced considerably in comparison with 10 *timad* reported by Gebre in the 1990s (Gebre, 1995).[2] The average number of cattle was 1.5 ranging from 0 to 6[3] (Table 5). Most householders were engaged in farming, specifically, there were twenty two full-time farmers, one student farmer, and one cattle trader, respectively (Table 5). Women's life stage is divided into the following: *Uuta* refers to a new wife who has been married for less than two years; *ma* indicates that she has unmarried children; *akin* establishes that she has grandchildren; *galta* refers to elderly women approximately 60 or older. *Uuta*, *ma*, *akin*, and *galta* accounted for two[4], seventeen, three, and seven households, respectively, while five of seven *galta* households were headed by elderly widowed women living alone[5] (Table 5). Protestant Christianity and traditional religion constituted sixteen and thirteen people, respectively. The highest livelihood activity for women was making and selling *gola*. Only the women who practiced traditional religion engaged in this activity.

The Use of Pottery

Aari pottery made by women belongs to a social group called *tila-mana*. According to Kaneko (2011: 40), who has been conducting surveys on Aari pottery since 1998, the characteristics of the pottery show that Aari people do not use a small number of pottery for several purposes but have many different types of pottery for each individual use. She also reported that Aari pottery is primarily named for each of their four shapes 1) *til*, 2) *aksh*, 3) *disti*, 4) *jebena*. All 24 kinds of pottery we observed in 2010 were also named and adopted for each particular use.

1) The Number of Pottery Items in Each Household and Their Situational Use

The average number of pottery items a household owns is 12.9, made up of 7.8 different kinds. The kinds of pottery a household owns range from a minimum of 2 to a maximum of 15. The total number of items a household owns ranges from a minimum of 4 to maximum of 27 items. From these Tables, we can see that

Table 5. General information in 29 households

Household	The number of household member	Farm Size (*timad*)	Livestock			Husbands			Wives
			Cattle	Sheep	Chicken	Occupation	LS*	Religion**	The way of earning cash
1	2	2	1	0	0	Student	A	P	Selling injera
2	2	0	0	0	0	Farmer	A	T	not engaged
3	5	4	4	0	0	Farmer	B	P	Selling *shaamata*
4	4	3	0	2	0	Farmer	B	P	Selling injera
5	3	4	4	0	0	Farmer	B	P	Selling *shaamata*
6	3	–	–	0	0	Farmer	B	P	–
7	4	1	0	1	9	Farmer	B	P	Selling crops
8	3	–	4	0	0	Farmer	B	P	–
9	4	2	–	0	0	Farmer	B	T	Selling *gola*
10	8	2	0	0	0	Farmer	B	P	not engaged
11	5	1	0	0	0	Farmer	B	P	–
12	3	1	1	0	0	Farmer	B	P	–
13	–	1	1	0	2	Farmer	B	P	–
14	4	–	0	0	0	Business	B	T	Selling *gola*
15	4	0	3	0	0	Farmer	B	T	Selling *gola*
16	–	–	3	0	0	Farmer	B	T	Selling *gola*
17	3	1	–	5	0	Farmer	B	T	Selling *gola*
18	5	1	1	0	0	Farmer	B	T	Selling *gola*
19	4	1	6	0	0	Farmer	B	T	Selling *gola*
20	4	0	0	0	0	none***	C	P	Selling *shaamata*
21	4	15	1	0	0	Farmer	C	T	–
22	6	7	6	5	0	Farmer	C	P	Selling crops & *shaamata*
23	5	4	1	0	0	Farmer	D	P	–
24	1	0	0	0	0	none***	D	T	none
25	1	0	0	0	0	none***	D	T	Selling *gola*
26	1	0	1	0	0	none***	D	P	–
27	2	5	0	0	1	Farmer	D	T	Selling *gola*
28	1	0	3	0	0	Farmer	D	P	Selling crops
29	1	0	0	0	6	none***	D	T	–

(Latest information recorded in August & September 2011)

– : Data not available.
* LS (Aari women's life stage) A: *uuta* married less than two years, B: *ma* have a children, C: *akin* have a grandchildren, D: *galta* more than 60 years old.
** P: Protestant, T: Traditional religion.
*** none: Husbands passed away.

Aari people use more than 4 pottery items, regardless of the condition of each household (Table 6).

The pottery that is used most often is a kind of pottery for cooking ensete, called *mosa-til*. Every household surveyed has it. The average number of *mosa-til* per household is 2.7 (the range is from 1 to 6). The second most frequently used kind is *bilki*, owned by nineteen of twenty eight households; the average number per household is 1.4 (The range is from 0 to 7) (Table 6). The remaining order is *wotsi-disti* for cooking side dishes, *buna-aksh* for roasting coffee beans and maize, *bulshi-aksh* for cooking injera, *jebena* used as a coffee pot, and *bun-til* a pot for the soup of the coffee leaves (Table 6). While *daatsa-disti* for cooking porridge, *roqa-til* for boiling water, *itan-aksh* for burning incense, and *agemi-til* for steaming ensete, were used by particular households. Those households who

Table 6. The number of pots in each household

Household no.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	27	28	29
mosa-til	3	1	5	5	4	2	5	2	1	1	1	1	2	2	5	2	2	6	2	3	2	2	1	4	2	5	2	3
wotsi-disti	0	0	2	2	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	3	2	1	4	4	2	5	2	3	1	2	2	2	0	2	1	3
bilki	0	1	0	2	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	3	3	3	1	5	1	3	1	2	0	7	2	2	0	0
buna-aksh	1	0	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	0	0	1	1	2	1	1	0	1	1	1
jebena	0	1	0	2	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	2	2	1	2	2	1	0	0	2	0	1
bulshi-aksh	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	3	1	0	1	1	1
bun-til	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	2	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	–	2	2
gabi-til	0	1	1	3	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1
mataja	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ekena-til	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1
bacha-disti	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	0	0
asni-til	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	1
tim-til	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1
kodda-bilki	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
raatsi-til	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
gabi-bilki	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
madofa	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
giini-til	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
antsi-til	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
itan-aksh	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
inkilt	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
agemi-til	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
roqa-til	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
daatsa-disti	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
total number of items	7	4	11	18	10	8	19	7	18	6	9	9	10	13	27	12	9	24	15	16	10	22	12	19	4	16	10	15
total number of kinds	5	4	6	8	7	6	11	4	11	6	9	7	7	10	10	6	7	8	8	9	8	15	9	9	2	8	8	10

(Latest information recorded in August & September 2011)

–: Data not available.

do not have a *daatsa-disti* for cooking porridge use *wotsi-disti* instead. The *roqa-til* for boiling water can be replaced by iron kettle in some households. K's wife stated that water boils more quickly in a metal pot.

Mosa-til

Mosa is the name given to food for which the roots of ensete are steamed.(6) *Til* is round bottomed and has a handle and neck. It was sold from 4 to 10 birr in the Mester village market. The people in household K ate *mosa* two or three times a week. We never observed them use the pot for anything other than cooking during our survey period. They described *mosa-til* as follows:

> "We like *asni* (yam in Aari language), *mosa*, and *washi* (fermented ensete bread in Aari). They taste more delicious when cooked in *asni-til* and *mosa-til*." (Unmarried women; preteens and teens)
>
> "*Asni* and *mosa* are not as tasty when they are cooked in a metallic pot. Metal pots break easily. They are very delicious when cooked in *asni* and *mosa* to make *asni-til* and *mosa-til*." (Married women, 40s)

Bilki

Bilki is a large, round-bottomed pot with a handle. It is used primarily to make *gola* and a drink called *shaamata*. Some people used it to store and carry *gola*, *shaamata*, and other drinks. It was sold in a wide range of prices, from 10 to 30 birr. Some women made *gola* three times a week using *bilki*. *Gola* is drunk in a variety of situations, such as after communal labor party, at wedding ceremonies, funerals, and in daily life.(7)

Wotsi-disti

Wotsi refers to a side dish. *Wotsi-disti* is pottery with a round-bottom shape, similar to Japanese earthenware; the pot has a handle and lid and is used for cooking side dishes. We frequently observed it being used for the following side dishes in household K: 1) Stewing salted Ethiopian kale, and 2) stewing onions, cabbage and potatoes. It was sold in a wide range of prices, from 3 to 20 birr, and in the case of household K, it was occasionally used for the lid of *bilki*.

Buna-aksh

Buna refers to coffee. *Aksh* is pottery in the shape of a disc that measures 50–100 cm in diameter (Kaneko, 2011). *Buna-aksh* is used for roasting coffee beans, maize, and barley. Of those surveyed, twenty four out of twenty eight people had it.

Bulshi-aksh

Bulshi refers to injera in the local language of Aari. *Bulshi-aksh* is used primarily for making injera; unleavened bread, known as *qitta*; and leavened bread called *dabbo* that is eaten at the new year celebration.

2) The Connection between the Use of Pottery and Household Conditions

Women who have the most pottery are in their 20s (married less than five years), whereas elderly women have the least pottery. Women who used numerous potteries used 8–13 kinds.

On the other hand, households that have fewer than the average number of pottery items use from 2 to 9 kinds; all of the women surveyed use at least 2 kinds of over 4 pottery items (Table 6). With regard to the numbers of household members, those of five households having the largest number of pottery ranged from 1 to 6 persons per household, whereas those of sixteen households with less than the average number od pottery ranged more extensively from 1 to 8 (Tables 5 & 6).

In regard to religion, it has been found that religion has little to do with the usage of pottery (Tables 5 & 6). To illustrate, both types of households that used a large number of pottery items and those that used fewer items consisted of people who believe in either traditional religion or Protestantism. Concerning the number of householders, farmland, and livestock, one of five households that used a greater number of pottery have 7 *timad*, respectively, whereas one of them has 1 *timad*, and the other two households did not have farmland, respectively. It can be said that their possession has little to do with the use of pottery (Tables 5 & 6). One of three households that have less number of pottery items have 2 *timad*,

and the other two households have none. Therefore, it can also be said that their possession has little to do with the use of pottery (Tables 5 & 6).

The following two conclusions summarize the data presented thus far:

(1) Women who have been married for less than two years, *uuta* tend to have less than the average number of pottery items; however, they use more than four items each time they cook.

(2) No elderly households use a large number of potteries, but some young households do use a great number of potteries.

We can generally say that the women who have different backgrounds in terms of religion, age, and the number of household members use kitchenware in the same manner.

The Use of Ironware

Ironware in Aari is made by men who are professional ironworkers called *faka-mana*.[8] A total of eight kinds of ironware were made.

1) The Number of Ironware Items in Each Household and Their Use

As a result of researching a total of twenty seven households, the average number of ironware items owned by a household is 8.0, with households owning a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 16 items (Table 7). The ironware that is used most often is *gosha* (a hand-hoe) for cultivating. Following used ironware is *wali* (a sickle), which is used in a variety of situations. Every household surveyed had *gosha* and *wali*. Following is a description of ironware such as *gosha*, *wali*, *siiri*, *alfa*, and *fuda*, which were used most often by households.

Gosha

Gosha is a hand-hoe with an 21 cm metal blade and a 45 cm length handle (measurement obtained from household K). It sold for 12–15 birr in the Metser village market. It is used by both men and women for gardening and cultivating maize field. In Aari, people perform collaborative and cooperative farm work, such as seeding, weeding, and harvesting (Gebre, 1995).

Table 7. The number of iron items in each household

Household no.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	27	28
gosha	1	1	4	3	1	1	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	5	2	3	2	2	4	3	3	1	2	4	1
wali	1	1	1	3	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	0	2	0	2	2	2	3	2	1	4	2	2	1	2	1	1
siiri	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	2	1	2	1	3	2	0	1	2	2	1	1	1	2	1
alfa	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1
katsumi	1	0	0	2	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	2	0	1	2	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	0
fuda	1	0	1	2	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	0	2	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	0
wokka	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	0
boila	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	2	1	0	1	0	0
total	5	4	7	14	3	5	10	3	8	10	5	3	10	4	12	9	9	16	5	7	16	13	10	4	9	10	4

(Latest information recorded in August & September 2011)

Wali

Wali is a sickle with an 18 cm wide blade and a total length of 50 cm (measurement obtained from household K) with a unique curve-shaped handle. It sold for 10–13 birr in the market. We often observed Aari men and women carrying it. It was used for processing both bamboo and wood. Gebre (1995), who conducted anthropological research in Aari in the early 1990s, mentioned that *wali* had been used as a weapon, as well as for farming and plant processing. We never observed these situations with the *wali*. However, other ironware observed in 2010 had been used in the same manner as in 1990s.

Alfa

Alfa is a knife with about a 30 cm blade with a handle of about 22 cm in length (measurement obtained from household K). Household K explained that the more the knife is used, the smaller the edge becomes. It was sold from 10 to 13 birr in the Metser market. Many women explained that it is used for removing the fiber from fermented starch called *washi*.(9) We often observed it being used to cut cabbage, Ethiopian kale, various fruits, corm and leaves of ensete, and yam, and to turn over bread.

Regarding the above mentioned ironware, we listened to the following narratives:

> "This knife (*siiri*) cannot be bought in the market or in shops. If the seller offers the knife for sale in the market, he or she will be taken to the police station." (Man, 50s, from Metser)
>
> "Anyone who is not a householder does not have *gosha*, *alfa*, and *wali*. Aari people certainly have them." (Man, 10s, from Metser)

2) Connection between the Use of Ironware and Household Conditions

With regard to age, the top four holders of ironware include two ma and 2 akin women. All age categories of women are found in the households having fewer than the average number (8.0) of ironware (see Table 7 by referring the age of wife in Table 5).

In regard to household members, it can be said that the number has little to do with ironware. To illustrate the number of households that have used ironware, more than 13 items were used in households with four to six people; whereas, eight of eleven households having less than three people use less than the average number of ironware (see Table 7 by referring the number of household member in Table 5).

With regard to religion, it seems the same results of age and the number of households. Both types of households have used a greater number of ironware items and fewer people in these households believe in traditional religion and or Protestantism.

As for the number of the householders farmland and livestock, four households have used a greater number of ironware items: 1, 15, 3, and 7 *timad*, respectively, whereas two households have used a lesser amount of ironware than average have farmland of 4 and 1 *timad*, respectively.

To summarize the data presented thus far, women who have different backgrounds in terms of religion, age, and the number of household members used kitchenware in the same manner as they used pottery.

The Use of Wooden Utensils

Wooden utensil is made by men who belong to a social group known as *kantsa* or *faka-mana*. Most *kantsa* men can make woodwork for kitchenware for sale while engaging in farming. Some of their items are also used by their wives. A total of thirteen kinds of woodwork were used for kitchenware. Many of them were made of woods called as *asha (Cordia africana)*. The observed woodworks are as follows: stirrer (unknown vernacular name); stirrer for yogurt (unknown vernacular name); a small mortar called *dil* used to crush coffee leaves and a variety of herbs; a large mortar (*dil*) used for finely crushing beans, coffee leaves, and grain like barley; a boat-shaped container called *ganda*; and a bowl with legs for kids called *wochiti*.

1) The Number of Woodworks and their Use in Households

In the results of the research conducted on a total of twenty seven households, the average number of woodwork items owned by a household was 7.0 with a range of 1 to 21 (Table 8). The woodwork used most often is a bowl called *gonga*, which is utilized in a variety of situations; it was often ordered from the *faka-mana* and was made to the same shape but used in the various manners regardless of its size. Some *gonga* for eating were only decorated with drawings called *bartsi*.

The wives of households K, S, W, and WO described the *gonga* as being not

Table 8. The number of woodworks in 27 houseolds

Household no.	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
dil (big)	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0
dil (small)	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	1
zanzana	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1
stirrer (unknown local name)	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1
gonga	1	0	4	1	2	0	1	1	2	0	0	1	5	5	3	2	6	3	4	5	2	0	1	1	4	4	1
haga-saafa	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
wachiti	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	2	1	1	3	0	0	2	1	0	0
ganda	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
*	0	1	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	2	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	0
*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
haga-chilfa	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
sini	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
stirrer for yogurt	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
total	1	4	10	3	6	1	3	5	8	4	3	5	13	12	6	6	21	12	11	11	9	2	4	6	10	10	4

(Latest information recorded in August & September 2011)

*: Local name not identified.

better than plastic and metallic bowl which is beautiful for serving foods. On the other hand, only AL's wife preferred to use the *gonga* (wood bowl) during dinnertime. She said that it is not as good as a plastic bowl because it breaks fairly easily. The name of the woodwork often comes from Amharic due to the introduction of exogenous utensils which are creatively re-made by using the locally available materials.

Gonga

A *gonga* is a bowl made of wood. It can range in size from a big bowl that cannot be held in both hands to a small one that can be placed in one hand. Many people in these households had ordered large *gonga* from the ironworkers in the area. *Gonga* are divided into three main types according to size and use. The smallest are used as bowls for cooking and eating. Medium-sized *gonga* are used for washing one's feet. The largest *gonga* is used for making *gola*, injera, and some types of livestock feed. The wife in household K told me that their *gonga* of this type has been used for 25 years, it seems clear that *gonga* are durable, and their status as wooden goods means that they do not melt in the fire, unlike plastics.

2) The Connection between Wooden Tool Use and the Condition of the Household

The six households using more than 11 wooden tools contain three middle-aged women in *ma* stage and three elderly women in *akin* stage, whereas the households with less wooden tools than average are found all the age categories except *akin* stage (Table 8). Thus, it can be said that the size of a household and its level of wooden tool use are not correlated. Religion (whether traditional or Protestant) and wooden tool use were also not related. With regard to farmland and livestock ownership, similarly, no pattern was seen. Various levels of ownership were seen among both heavy users and non-heavy users of wooden tools. One woman, a *shaamata* seller, used plastic bowls for making *shaamata*.

To summarize the data so far, women who have different backgrounds in terms of religion, age, and household composition use pottery, ironware, and wooden tools in the same manner.

Kitchenware Made of Other Plants

1) Phoenix (*metser*)

We observed mainly following three products made of phoenix (genus Phoenix, a group of palm species). They were mainly made by farmers (men) on the side of their main work.

Zambul

A *zambul* is a bag of varying size depending on desire and use that can be undyed or dyed red, blue, green or purple.

Table 9. The number of other utensils in all households

Household no.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
(bamboo)																												
kambara	0	0	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	0	1	1	1	1
raitsa	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	1	3	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	2	1	1	0	0	1	0	1
raitsa (big)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
bulshi-raitsa	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	–	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
kamtsa	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	3	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	0	2	3	2	1	1	1	1	1
masaba	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(phoenix)																												
zambul	2	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	3	3	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	3	1	4	4	3	1	1	1	2	0	0
wonfit	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	–	1	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	1
gasa	1	0	2	1	1	3	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	–	1	1	1	3	2	2	4	3	1	1	0	2	1	0
(calabash)																												
gushi	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	0	0	0	10	3	6	3	51	6	0	2	1	6	2	0	10	1	0
raatsi-gushi	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
gola-gushi	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
sook-gushi	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
daatsa-gushi	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
sholka	1	1	0	0	1	0	3	0	0	2	0	0	0	10	2	2	2	13	2	0	0	5	9	9	0	0	0	1

(Latest information recorded in August & September 2011)

–: Data not available.

Wonfit

A *wonfit* is a sifter. It takes great skill to make and only one person in Metser could make it. It is uncolored.

Gasa

A *gasa* is a reclining mat big enough for adult males to lie on. They are usually undyed but occasionally dyed red, blue, green or purple. They are sold in the market of Metser.

In addition to these items, women make and use utensils to roast grain, called *shoosha haga*, out of the stalks of phoenix tree. Of all these items, *zambul* are the most common item, present in twenty six of twenty eight households. Some two households have up to 4 *zambul*. *Gasa* were used by every household and *wonfit* by twelve (Table 9).

2) Bamboo (*oishi*)

In all, six kinds of bamboo products were observed: three utensils, called *kamtsa*, *kambara*, and *raitsa*. *Kamtsa* is a stirring stick for cooking ensete corm. *Kambara* is a lid for making injera. And *raitsa* is a winnowing basket. These bamboo products were made and sold mainly by farmers as their side work and were made out of phoenix as well as bamboo.

Across the twenty eight households, *kamtsa* was used in the most twenty seven, followed by *kambara* in twenty five, and *raitsa* in seventeen (Table 9). Large bamboo *raitsa* for preserving injera, called *bulshi-raitsa*, were used by particular households. They could be bought from the makers once or twice a week or directly ordered from the maker.

3) Calabash (*gushi*)

Calabash products are made and sold by all classes of people. Some are decorated with drawings, made by pressing hot iron rods firmly against the calabash. This work can be done by both men and women, as a prestigious cultural practice. Eight kinds of calabashes were observed, used for pouring *gola*, porridge, and coffee-leaf soup and for keeping salt and spices. Each type of calabash is individually named.

Gushi used for *gola* were the most common, with up to 51 in one household (Table 9). Of the thirteen households that used *gushi*, nine cases were used by the women having traditional faith. Many Protestant women said that they did not have *gushi* because they did not drink alcohol due to their faith. In Aari society, *gushi* are closely associated with drinking *gola*.

The Use of Metal and Plastic Products

Ten kinds of plastic and seven kinds of metal kitchenware were respectively observed. Five of ten plastic products were used for dining, and the others were water containers, whereas the metal products were used either as cooking utensils (three items) or for miscellaneous uses (four). The average household had 6.7 plastic cups (*bulchiko*), and the most in a household was 16 (Table 10); for plastic dishes (*saafa* and *sahan*), the numbers were 3 and 7 respectively. All names of metal and plastic products were Amharic.

Table 10. The number of plastic and metal products in all households

Household no.	1	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	16	18	22	23	25	27	28	29
(plastics)																				
saafa	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	1	0	0
sahan	0	6	2	4	0	4	2	5	2	3	1	0	4	0	4	2	0	4	5	5
bulchiko	0	7	2	11	0	4	2	7	6	13	5	10	16	10	6	6	6	10	8	4
sini	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
a type of container*	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
total	1	1	2	4	0	1	2	4	2	1	1	2	2	2	4	0	4	3	5	4
baaz	1	0	2	4	0	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	6	0	1	1	2	0
jokki	2	2	2	2	0	2	0	2	2	0	0	4	0	3	4	2	1	1	1	1
manqworoqworo	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
mastaataba	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1
(metalic)																				
chilfa	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1
mankya	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	1
bled-disti	1	0	1	0	1	1	3	3	1	1	0	0	0	2	3	1	1	0	1	1
kodda	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
manqworoqworo	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
wonfit	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	1	0
telmos	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0

(Latest information recorded in August & September 2011)

*: Local name not identified.

Summary of the Section

Four aspects of Aari kitchenware use are especially interesting. First, with the exception of calabashes, all households used all items more or less equally. Calabashes are used less by Protestant women because of their association with alcohol use. Second, Aari people use kitchenware in different ways depending on size and not shape, with the exception of kitchenware brought from outside. Third, people evaluate kitchenware the same regardless of their material—cooking utensils by use and dishes by appearance. Some indigenous crops are closely associated with Aari. Some people can cook well only using local kitchenware. Finally, Aari people create new kitchenware using local materials. These are ordered from the makers and preferred by some women.

SUMMARY AND BRIEF DISCUSSION

This short article has described the daily items used in securing livelihood, in terms of materials and their uses among Aari people in southwestern Ethiopia, a rural area that has seen a rapid influx of people and tools from urban areas.

We have revealed two aspects of daily kitchenware use. First is that Aari people usually have kitchenware made of both local and outside materials. Second, in the decade from 2000 to 2010, these materials have not changed significantly in prevalence.

The article also addressed the usage of kitchenware focusing on 29 households. Our findings can be summarized in four main points. First, all households use kitchenware of all sort of materials in the same proportions as all other households, with the exception of calabashes, which are used less by Protestant Christians because calabashes are associated with drinking *gola*, an alcoholic beverage. Second, Aari people choose kitchenware for its size, regardless of shape. This is true particularly of pottery, calabashes, and woodenwares, but not items brought from outside. Third, people evaluate kitchenware the same regardless of material—cooking utensils based on utility and dishes on appearance. Fourth, some crops can only be cooked on local kitchenware, and wares are created locally using various materials and bought from the makers.

This article is a part of comprehensive research on the Aari people's livelihood in a rapidly changing local area of southwestern Ethiopia, focusing on the usage of kitchenware. Our record made in the recent decade from 2000 to 2010 showed no significant change in the breakdown of kitchenware materials while the acceptance of outside materials has continued to coexist with the creation and acceptance of wares made from local materials. Although we are not in a position to foretell the future scene of Aari women's housewares, it will be our greatest pleasure if we could contribute the comparative historical account in this genre in a coming future. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to all who helped us during the survey.

NOTES

(1) According to Gebre (1995), 1 ha is equal to about 8–10 *timad*. According to Kaneko (2011), 1 *timad* is equal to the area that can be cultivated using two mature oxen in about half a day.
(2) The finding of Gebre (1995) does not clearly state the sample size.
(3) The average data based on 25 households.
(4) One of these two *uuta* women had married and came from the highlands to Metser three months ago, but has children and grandchildren.
(5) We have not come across any elderly men living alone.
(6) The narrow meaning of *mosa* is a "part above the corm which is clogged with white crude starch in the cell-like structure of the base of the pseudostems" (Shigeta, 1988: 221).
(7) An alcoholic drink made from fermented maize and other grains. The Protestant church in Metser discourages drinking and making *gola*.
(8) Traditionally *faka-mana* people make only ironwares. Recently, however, they have begun making wooden products and engaging in agriculture (Gebre, 1995).
(9) *Washi* is the name of foodstuff referring both to the fermented ensete starch and its roasted one. It is the one of the most favorite ensete food for Aari people (Shigeta, 1988).

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