

HARARI BASKETRY AN ART AND ITS FUNCTION IN HARARI SOCIETY

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Introduction¹

Harar, the capital city of the Administrative Region of Hararge in east Ethiopia, has a population of ca. 50 000 people, who belong to five different ethnic and language groups: Harari (ca. 20 000), Kottu-Oromo, Argobba, Somnali, Amhara. Only the Amhara are Christians. Harari (or Adarinya) and Amharinya are Semitic languages, Orominya and Somalinya are Cushitic languages: Argobbinya is extinct; the Argobba speak mostly Orominya.²

Basketwork is a refined art. It is practiced by the women of the Harari, the elite group within the town. That it has to be valued as an art proper is perhaps up to now only recognised by the African art market overseas. Distinct forms and shapes of baskets and distinct and complicated patterns were developed throughout probably several centuries, although we have material proof of basketmaking only for about a hundred years. The Paulitchke collection of 1884 in the Austrian Ethnographic Museum in Vienna has the earliest Harari baskets we have. The intricate patterns show a richness of color combinations for which already in the last century imported chemical dyes were used although natural dyes were known, and informants were still able to give me the recipes how to prepare them. Raw materials consist of several species of grass and straw, and for dyes minerals and organic substances are used.

The technique demands great skill, since foundation and oversewing coil often have to be composed with materials of several (not only two) contrasting colors.

The patterns reflect the cultural history of the town: for instance patterns with the names of "shield of the Amir" (indicating that there had been amirs ruling the city), "Mohammed Ali Gâr" (referring to an unusual and beautiful house, the Pakistani trader Mohammed Ali built at the turn of this century), "Servant of the Needle" (gäber märfi) - an Amhara term - (referring to the presence and influence of the Amhara conquerors). Other patterns have the name of the inventor of a particular pattern.

The greater number of baskets show that the "good side" is the decorative side - that is the outside - and not the functional side, the inside of a plate. (With a modern soup bowl the "good" side would be the functional inside). This shows that such baskets had much more a decorative function, namely, wall decoration. Only at rarer occasions such baskets were used for food presents or to serve special types of food to guests, for instance at a wedding.

Baskets had to be arranged in a Harari house according to prescribed rules. Mastership in basketmaking and in arranging baskets in a Harari house showed that the artist and housewife knew the skills and rules of this fine art, and

she thus indicated that she was a member of the elite group of the Harari. Also, every young woman had to have (and still must have) a basic outfit of baskets for her household when she gets married.

The art is still alive. A tourist trade and craft has developed which is of a simpler make and less fine quality. Here it is most often Kottu women who work for a Harari dealer.

Baskets in Harari Life.

The Harari have been an urban people for centuries, Harar having been the trade center for the caravan trade from the coast to the Ethiopian Highlands from the 16th century to the beginning of the 20th century. Luxury goods from the Near and the Middle East found and still find their way to Harar and have influenced the taste of the people. No longer was the purely functional simplicity of objects preferred; a refined taste was expected to be shown by the well-to-do in decorating objects that originally may have been purely functional. This is demonstrated by giving an object - in this case a basket - a higher decorative value while the functional value, although still there, rates second or even third.

Looking at a Harari basket, vessel, bowl, or plate, one will notice that normally the good side of the basket is always the outside, that is, the non-functional side of the basket; the inside, that is the functional side, is the bad one. Exceptions can always be found, however, where the inside is given a decorative value as, for instance, in the triangular shaped *shi'ishzi ma'ezän*. Harari women hang up their baskets on the walls of their houses, where it is the decorative outside which has to be admired by the visitor. Thus the outside of a basket gained a decorative value which is considered of greater importance than the functional inside. With baskets from other regions in Ethiopia it would in most cases be different: the functional side is also the good side.

Listing the various functions of Harari baskets according to their, range of importance, the following order could be set up:

1. For the women, a symbol of Harari identity.
2. Symbol of the Harari women's sphere of life. Men have nothing to do with baskets or basketwork, and although baskets may be handed from mother to daughter, they are not referred to in a will.³
3. Demonstration that luxury can be afforded (without being ostentatious) and demonstration of the distinct refined taste that proper Harari have, that is, for instance, the luxury of having many delicate baskets of the same type and same decoration.
4. Decorative value: demonstration that the housewife knows how to put up baskets on the walls in the proper Harari arrangements.
5. Distinct function in social activities, i.e. ceremonial exchange of gifts, in particular of food, during the life cycle festivities.
6. Objects of daily use.

There are still a number of plain baskets, the primary function of which is the one of daily use, like the plate for winnowing grain *afūfiu*, the bowl *dārma dārāt*, or the grain measure *sugud*. However, most of the purely functional baskets have been give up today in favor of cheap enamel ware imported from China, which is easier to handle when serving and cleaning. On the other hand, decorative baskets, such as the bread plate *uxât môt*, are losing their functional value entirely.

The Material.

The materials for basketwork in Harar are several types of dried grass and straw, which can be obtained in the vicinity of the town up to *Jigjiga*. The basis of the technique is the simple oversewn coil⁴, which requires several types of material. *Kottu* women are often the ones who collect and sell the grass and straw in the big central market (*Gidir Mägâla*).

The coil fundation (*migir*), is made from a simple type of plain grass that grows around Harar and has also been given the term *migir*. A more speical type of grass, called *agärgära*, which can be dyed, is used as the basic material for oversewing the coil. This grass is rather thick and therefore has to be split into thinner pieces. This is done with the help of fingers and teeth.

Broader pieces of material are chosen among the *qärma*, the straw from the stem of wheat. This stem is also split and the pieces are pressed. This material in particular receives an additional treatment with *nächih gâz*, "white kerosene," to make it shiny. It is used for the decoration of the good side of the coil only, never for the wrapping of the whole coil, which would also wrap around the bad side.

Techniques

The basketmaker works from left to right with the good side facing her. while oversewing the coil, she has to add more grass to the coil from time to time, depending on the length of the material, in order to create a foundation of even thickness. The material for oversewing has to be split with a small nail, which also serves to pierce the coil for the *agärgära* thread. While doing so, she always has a small enamel bowl with water next to her, where from time to time she moistens her fingers and also the material she is working with.

The most simple technique is oversewing of the coil stitch by stictch and coil by coil. However, there are more intricate patterns. Many patterns demand that the coil itself be given a decorative function. The good side is covered with dyed pieces of straw (*qärma*), which are cut off from the whole stem and then split. These pieces are placed upon the good side of the coil, and fastened by the *agärgära* thread at certain intervals that allow the shiny straw material to be seen. Such colored pieces may alternate, and thus it may be that the *agärgära* thread is dyed violet, fastening a piece of purple straw, while the very next stitch has to fasten a piece of dark yellow straw. The stitches are counted. This type of technique is used only for baskets for the Harari clienttele and not for the tourist trade. Some patterns are achieved by oversewing several coils either in individual stitches or in broad spirals.

Dyes and Colors.

Imported chemical dyes which are available in the form of powders have been used for baskets for at least the last hundred years, although the natural dyes were still used occasionally, and objects made of material dyed in such manner are still available.

The local term for basketmaking *qêh-wa täy* ("red and black"), already indicates that baskets can only be imagined as having rich and colorful decoration. While the material for the foundation *migir* is never dyed, the material for the wrapping thread *agärgära* almost always is. To obtain fast colors, the dyeing process has to be repeated.

Natural Dyes.

Although artificial dyes were in use at least since the times of *Paulitschke*⁵, natural dyes continued to be in use for a long time. In addition to the natural color of the grass, black, red or red-brownish and yellow were known.

The material, some eighty years ago, was the grass for the foundation *migir* and the grass for sewing *agärgära* in addition to the risp of a palm leave called *müt*⁶ and to the dried plam leaves which are today used for the Somali mat *sêlän*.

To obtain a black color, the leaves of the tree *erät* (for black) were used.⁷ For red, the small red radish *qêh fujâl* was used, which - according to *Paulitschke*⁸ - had been introduced by the Egyptians. Yellow dye was obtained with the help of *hurdinchi*, a yellow spice.⁹

Types of Baskets.

As was said above, most baskets today have primarily a decorative function or play a prominent role in the ceremonial exchange of food presents during the life cycle festivities. A number of baskets have been given up like a rather large basket container with pointed lid, where clothes were kept. The most common ones are several types of plates of various size with a rather wide outflaring rim, conical lids with an elongated pointed top, small round basket containers with pointed lids for keeping mastix or incense, larger basket containers with pointed lids for keeping the hairnets of married women. These baskets have their fixed place in the arrangements in a Harari house. A number of baskets, however, have maintained their function as objects of daily use. Among them are a rather flat plate for winnowing grain and a basket used as a grain measure. These have most often little or no decoration and are of a simple make.

Arrangement of Baskets in a Harari House

The arrangement of baskets serves to decorate the big livingroom *gidir gâr*. It is the meeting place of the family with their guests and friends, a place for the men to get together to chew *chât* in a sedate atmosphere, while the women have to remain in the sideroom *kirtär*. Occasionally guests may sleep there on the carpets, which often have been brought along from a *hajj* to *Mecca*, or the master of the house may have his bed put up on the small, somewhat recessed raised seat.

the *sutri nädäba* opposite the *amir nädäba*. This room is the central room for the life in a Harari home. Women show by their artful arrangements of baskets that they know the rules of how to do it.

Most of the traditional types of baskets, which are to serve as a distinct wall decoration, have to be worked in pairs. It is then, as was said above, the outside which is to be seen as the good side.

If one looks at the central wall, baskets are arranged in the following manner:

Above the big raised seat, the *gidir nädäba*, two pairs of the big plates *lêmât* are put up in horizontal order, first the plate with pattern I, followed by the plate with pattern II, then the second plate with pattern I, and then the second plate with pattern II. The smaller plate *lä'ay môräja*, which is put on top of the *lêmât* and is also worked in pairs, may have different patterns from the *lêmât*, but follows the same rule. That is, *lä'ay môräja* 1 is placed on top of *lêmât* I, *lä'ay môräja* 2 covers *lêmât* 2, then the second *lä'ay môräja* 1 is placed on top of the second *lêmât* I, and then the second *lä'ay môräja* 2 on top of the second *lêmât* II. The space above the *lêmât - lä'ay môräja* series is covered by the *mihkâk series* - a plate of the size of the *lä'ay môräja* - with the pointed lid *wâskämbây*. Both have different patterns from the series below, and both follow the same rules.

At both upper corners of the central wall, the basket containers with lid *sini-wa berelle* are hung up. Between the two square central niches in the central wall, which were originally meant to keep holy books, the three small basket plates with lid *sägâri-wa wâskämbây* are hung in vertical order. Two of them have to be of the same pattern while the middle one may be of a different pattern.

The basket plates at both side walls, *maxazu* and *duldula*, which have a choice in pattern, must also be worked and hung up in pairs. The same applies to the *hamât môt* basket plates, which are hung up at the *maxazu* wall, and at the wall of the hidden raised seat, the *sutri nädäba*, opposite the *amir nädäba*.

Modern baskets, like the traingular *sh'ishti ma'ezän*, can be hung up wherever preferred. This is also true for the modern imported Chinese enamel ware, while the traditional wooden food bowls *gäbata* are put up in the upper part of the side walls.

KEY - View into the main livingroom (*gidir gâr*).

niches	<i>tâqêt</i>	1, 2, 5, 6, 16
shelves	<i>mârârâba</i>	3
built-in cupboard	<i>nâdâba dâra</i>	4
raised seats	<i>nâdâba</i>	7, 8, 9, 10, 11
floor (to be stepped on with shoes)	<i>dâchi</i>	12
pillar of the house	<i>maxazu</i>	5
pillar of the house opposite the mzxaxu	<i>duldula</i>	6
ceiling	<i>qerar</i>	14
place for the spear built-in niche for	<i>wârâm môrâja</i>	15
	<i>aflâla</i>	17
windows	<i>shubbax</i>	19
staircase to first floor	<i>qala mäsäl</i>	20
small window-hole	<i>nudul</i>	21

KEY - Arrangement of Baskets in the Libingroom

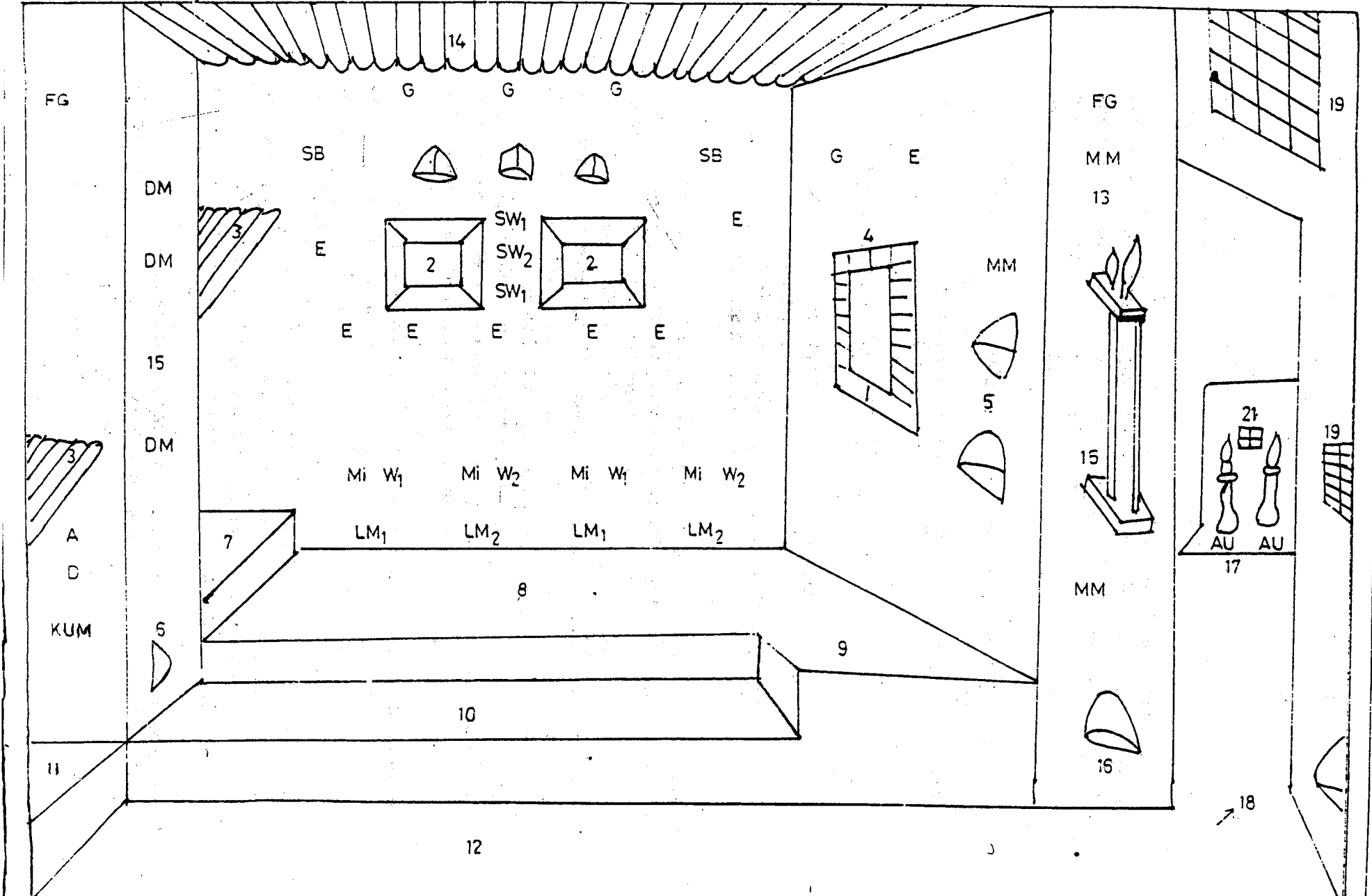
LM 1 and LM 2 *lêmât* and *lä'ay môrâja* patterns 1 and 2 (may be replaced by the *hamât môt*)

MiW1 and MiW2	<i>mihkâk</i> and <i>wâskâmbây</i> with patterns 1 and 2
MM	<i>maxazu môt</i>
DM	<i>duldula môt</i>
A	<i>afûftu</i>
D	<i>dârât</i>
KUM	<i>kûya uxât môt</i>
SB	<i>sini-wa berelle</i>
FG	<i>finjân gâr</i>
AU	<i>aflâla uffâ</i>
SW	<i>sâgâri-wa wâskâmbây</i>
G	<i>gâbâta</i> (wooden bowls)
E	imported enamel ware plates

Patterns.

Patterns are achieved by a number of techniques and color compositions.

Thus the *âlâbâsa*¹⁰ pattern, which consists of broad spirals, each in a different color, is achieved by weaving the basket first in plain coil technique in natural color and then covering several of the coils - two or three, or even the whole body of the basket - on the good side again with dyed, shiny *agârgâra* material, so that the basket appears on the good side to consist of a few broad shiny coils instead of many small ones.



The *tilfi* ("embroidery") pattern requires a similar technique. The basket is woven first in simple plain coil technique with natural *migir* and *agärgära* material. The second step of the work is then to oversew several coils again with dyed or natural yet shiny material, the delicate pattern being achieved by covering the good side of the coil with *agärgära* material of a different color, and while oversewing, leaving small intervals for the colored material to be seen. Color plates of the different patterns and their local names are given at the end. These ultimately reflect part of the cultural history of the city.

One combination of patterns, however, has to be described: this is the *mäsob* series of patterns, which appears on several baskets. It has to be used always on the *hamât môt* ("basket for themother-in-law"), very often on the plate *mihkâk*, on the basket for hairnets *gufä mudây*, on the small plate with lid *sägâri-wa wâskämbây*, and some others.

The term *mäsob* is originally an Amharic word referring to their high-footed *injera-table*. As the Harari have taken over the term, its original meaning has been extended to include a particular basketry pattern as well as certain combinations of patterns within one basket.

Let us look at a basket of the *mihkâk* type as consisting of

- the plate proper, which covers the central part up to the footring, and of
- a very broad outflaring main body covering the part from the footring up to the rim.

The idea is that the major part of the plate as well as that of the main body is divided by the vertical pattern *buruq mälâya* (pattern for dividing) into a number of fairly square to rectangular fields. Each field must then be composed in a different pattern. The rule is that every pattern has to appear twice on the plate as well as on the main body. The ones on the plate are shorter because less space is available there than on the main body. Patterns of the same design, however, must not be next to each other. Each pair of patterns in the plate is identical in all respects except for the color composition. The pairs, must differ from each other in color, yet at the same time must duplicate the color composition of their corresponding patterns in the main body of the basket.

Wherever the *mäsob* series is used, there are also some standard patterns which must appear on the basket: The central coils of the plate, which mark the beginning of the basketwork, have pattern *bitti buruq* (small pattern). The good side of the footring always consists of the pattern *sägâri buruq* (pattern of the small plate *sägâri*). In addition, the *mäsob* series of the plate as well as of the main body are framed by either one or several uni-colored coils - each of a different color - as well as by the small *habu gâr mäläbash* pattern (pattern of the bone with the marrow). That is, this pattern turns up four times on the whole basket.

The rim consists of several uni-colored coils, each in a different color, and of the outermost coil which is fastened with leather, or, very recently, with red plastic foil. The same applies to the rim of the footring.

Basketry in Olden Times.

One elderly informant, a lady in her seventies, who had already two times made the hajj to Mecca, told me about the baskets in Harari houses in olden times. She herself was of the noble families *amir gârach*, the descendants of the former emirs. She lived in an 18th century house, which at one time had belonged to *Amir Yussuf* (1747-56).

The techniques of preparing natural dyes have already been mentioned. With regard to the types of baskets, most of the baskets of today were known. The *lêmâti* (a big basket plate) was known under the name of *ahmâra-wa hinâch*, "non-Muslims and arrows," which was also the name for a basketry pattern used for the *lêmât*. She herself told us that during her own grandmother's time, which must have been about a hundred years ago, the house was richly decorated with the *sini-wa berelle* (lit. "cup and flask:") baskets into which porcelain bowls were placed. These had been - as she said - "imported from Arabia." They had baskets with names like *ässu qulu'* (lit. "gourd for the spice *ässu*"), and *bisha sähna* (lit. "plate for mastix").

A number of patterns existed under the following names: *harir qalam* (lit. "writing reed of silk"), *wâsfi niqi* ("the new awl for making baskets"), *dîrî*, which was a zigzag pattern, the term probably taken from the Amharic *deir* for necklace.

A technique similar to the modern *tilfi* ("embroidery") pattern was known under the name of *särgu*, which is said to mean "plain" or "natural" color. The foundation coil was given a decorative value, however not by covering it with shiny pieces of straw in striking colors, but rather by making the oversewing stitches in large intervals. A lid, very probably seventy years old, was shown to me as an example for this technique.

The Tourist Trade

The tourist trade was first developed by a certain Harari woman, who is still remembered as an outstanding innovator in basketwork. Her name was *Husseina Nâr Murâd*. Not only are a number of intricate patterns attributed to her, but she is also said to have first started something like the mass production of baskets for sale. That is, it was she who started to make baskets not only to order but also to have a small stock on hand, and she had other Harari women work in her employ. The cruder work of the tourist trade of today, which is also directed towards the Amhara client, has necessitated the choice of simplified Harari patterns, the use of pure dyes instead of the carefully mixed ones preferred by the Harari, a simple oversewn coil technique instead of the variety of intricate wrapping techniques found in Harari baskets, and the manufacture of non-Harari types of baskets, like the Amhara type of high-footed *injera* basket which is used as a table and which tourists as well as Amhara clients are fond of. The Harari traditionally did not use the *injera* table. Simple coil technique is employed, yet with the colorful Harari patterns. In addition, large colorful flat plates to be hung up at the wall, small simple decorative bowls with or without the *uzun* fringe, and small flat basket plates for the use as plates for beer mugs or wine glasses are produced. Small to medium size basket bowls with a rather flat or slightly rounded lid are made with an intricate pattern which is called *tilfi* ("embroidery:). This type of basket is as often offered in the tourist market in Addis Ababa - and then claimed to be of Harari origin - as it is in the tourist market in Harar; the rather

fine delicate pattern, though often in striking artificial dyes, is appealing to the eye. In particular the *injera* baskets are so much in demand that the Amhara in Addis Ababa themselves, where the highfootd *injera* table originally came from, have started to copy Harari patterns in the tourist trade of their own. The colors are always obtained from pure dyes and not from mixed dyes. In Harar the manufacture of the baskets for the tourist trade is left to the Kottu (Oromo Cultivators) women, although these may work on a contract basis for a Harari dealer.

The Basketmaker.

The maker of Harari basketwork was and is a Harari lady. We may very well compare her to a European lady of the Victorian age, rich or poor, who was expected to know how to do delicate needlework, embroidery in particular. A Harari lady as a member of the élite was expected to know how to weave delicate baskets according to the concepts of refined taste the women of the city had developed, and to know how to arrange them properly in her home.

A girl had to start at an early age to make baskets, and the first plates she successfully completed were hung up at the *maxazu* pillar, the wall next to the *amîr nädäba* raised seat, which may either be at the left or at the right of the living-room in her parents' house.

Within the first year after her wedding, which in olden times took place just after the beginning of puberty¹¹, she was expected to work two plates of exactly the same size and pattern, the *hamât môt*, and to present them to her mother-in-law. These basket plates, too, were hung up at the *maxazu* pillar.

The functions that baskets have within a Harari home and within the social activities of the women, as well as the traditional concepts about types and patterns of baskets, restricted their forms and decorative patterns. There was sufficient allowance, however, for the creative mind of a basketmaker to invent new patterns, to take over non-Harari patterns (i.e. the *gäber märfi* from the Amhara), and even non-Harari types of baskets. At the same time a certain refinement in color compositions, alteration of patterns within a basket, and delicate plaiting were always expected.

The present financial situation of the basketmaker.

Due to the loss of her husband, a Harari woman may find herself in a situation where she has to support her family herself. She often accomplishes this by weaving baskets. Yet Harari women say that on basketmaking alone they cannot subsist; they have to have an additional income if they have to support their families alone. For a woman who is supported by her husband basketmaking may give her an extra income. Most often a woman works to order for Harari families only. She does not work for the tourist market, nor does she sell her products in the open market. She also very often prepares the carefully dyed material of the baskets herself, which she may sell at her home to other Harari women. However, she will never offer her dyed material in the market. This would not be becoming to a Harari lady. A basketmaker has to calculate how much she has to spend on the material, how many working hours are required to finish a basket and how much cash she can obtain. The cost/prices given below are those of 1985.¹²

The *agärgära* material for oversewing the foundation coil is imported mostly from Jigjiga.

<i>agärgära</i>	natural color		
ca. 50 pieces			0.50 - 1.-Birr. ¹³
	dyed (except for the complicated <i>tequr täy</i>)		
25 pieces		1.	Birr
<i>migir</i> grass for the foundation coil			
ca. 250 - 300 pieces		0.50	Birr
<i>qärma</i> straw natural color			
1 bundle (about 2 handful)		0.25	Birr
dyed 25 pieces		0.25	Birr

The prices a Harari basket maker can obtain once she works upon order are:

- 1 *mihkâk* are ca. 240 working hours 500. - Birr
 - 1 *wâskämbây* at ca. 240 working hours 500. - Birr
- For smaller objects, the prices and working hours would be less.

The large plate *lêmât*, however, is said to be priceless.

Most often relatives work for the outfit of a bride, for which work then no pay would be expected. If, however, a professional basketmaker is given an order to make the outfit for a bride with the minimum of baskets required, the calculation is as follows:

- 2 *bisha mudây* baskets for mastix
- 2 *etân mudây* baskets for incense
- 4 *sähna sägâri* plates
- 4 *aflâla uffä* lids
- 4 *finjân gâr* baskets

Total: 1300. __ 1500. - Birr

For the material she has to pay ca. 200. - Birr. She has to work about 165 days for this outfit, which would give her a montly income of 200.- Birr.

Notes

1. The orthography of Harari terms is based on the dictionary prepared by Leslau (1963; 1965). I use a more simplified transliteration. For mistakes and shortcomings I myself am responsible.

ch	=	ch
ch	=	glottal ch
j	=	as in Italian giardino
x	=	hard ch, as in German mach <u>e</u> n
h	=	soft ch, in German <u>ich</u>
q	=	glottal k
ñ	=	as ñ in Spanish

s	=	as in <u>say</u>
sh	=	as in <u>shine</u>
t	=	glottal t
w	=	as in <u>well</u>
y	=	as in <u>yes</u>
z	=	as in <u>horizon</u>
ž	=	as in French <u>journal</u>
â ê î ô û	=	long vowels
e	=	very short, as in German <u>machen</u>
ä	=	as in German <u>Fässer</u>

2. Pers. communication Waldron, June 1975
3. Pers. communication Volker Stitz, summer 1975.
4. In Ethiopia, baskets in coil technique are always worked by women, while larger woven vessels and pieces of furniture, which are made by crossing rods over stalks are made by men. Matting also is most often done by men and not by women.
5. The baskets in the Paulitschke collection in Vienna are already worked with grass for which chemical dyes have been used. I am indebted to the Museum für Völkerkunde in Vienna to let me have access to this collection.
6. *Mîf* is today the term for the metal embroidery on the inside seam of the trousers for women, the *gê gännâfi*.
7. I did not receive further information of how and whether a black powder was prepared from *erät* leaves before soaking the material into this mixture.
8. Paulitschke: 1888, p. 248, refers to the German *Rettich* (Engl. radish), not to the German *Radieschen* (in English also radish). Leslau; 1963 translates radish with *fujûl*. Harari informants maintain that *qêh fujûl* was used. This suggests that they used the smaller red radish (*Radieschen*) and not the larger white one.
9. lit. "yellow wood". A spice which gives a yellow color to a soup.
10. I was unable to identify the terms *âlâbâsa* and *mâlâbash*.
11. One of my informants told me that at the time of her wedding she was still playing with dolls. She could have been not older than thirteen years of age.
12. I am indebted to Ato Ahmed Zekaria for this information
13. In 1985 the value of the Ethiopian Birr, which is a "local currency", was 1.- US\$ = 2.05 Birr.

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Glossary

- Aflâla black pottery jar with globlular body and elongated rigged neck; these jars are used to keep family jewels.
- aflâla uffâ elongated basketry lid for the aflâla. This lid was used to keep the umbilical cord of a newly-born infant of a family.

afûftu	flat basketry plate, coil technique, no decoration; used for winnowing grain.
agârgâra	grass used for oversewing a coil, natural color. (<i>Eleusine floccifolia</i>).
ahmâra	non-Muslim.
âlâbâsa ¹⁰	basketry pattern; said to come from the Oromo language with the meaning "to put something outside."
âssu	pepper; the Ethiopian hot spice; prepared of chili, ginger, etc.
berelle (Amh.)	flask for honey mead.
sini-wa berelle	basket with lid, into which a procelain or enamel cup was placed for food presents; reserved for amir gârach families.
bisha	mastix (mustaka), type of incense for chewing.
bitti	small and circular thing.
buruq	pattern, embroidery pattern, ornament.
buruq mâlâya	the first coil of a new pattern separating it from the previous one.
chât (<i>catha edulis</i>)	narcotic leaf plant; the leaves are chewed.
dâchi	that part of floor in the living room which may be stepped on with shoes.
dârât	large basketry bowl, the outside covered with leather.
dârma	young man.
dârma dârât	medium size basket bowl, the outside is covered with red-brown leather.
dêra	storeroom on the groundfloor in a Harari house.
dîri (from Amh.deri)	necklace; also an older basket pattern in zigzag design.
duldula	wall opposite the maxazu wall. It may be at the right or at the left side of the living room.
duldula mô't	basket plate put up at the duldula wall.
erât	tree, the leaves of which were used to produce a black dye.

etân	incense.
etân mudây	small basket for incense.
finjân	small jar of pottery.
finjân gar	coffee cup; also small basket with lid.
fujûl	radish.
qêh fujûl	small red radish.
gäber märfi (Amh.)	"servant of the needle"; also a basketry pattern taken over from the Amhara; used for the <i>injera</i> table <i>mäsob</i> and for the plates placed at the <i>maxazu</i> , the <i>maxazu môt</i> .
gäbäta	wooden bowl, black or red, polished.
gännâfi	trousers.
gê gännâfi	trousers for women; with tight leggings made of embroidered silk or of artificial silk
gâr	house, room place, location; also pattern, design.
gidîr gâr	large and main living room in a Harari house.
gê	place, location, in a narrower sense the city of Harar.
gidîr	large, spacious
gufta	hairnet for a married woman; the net covers the hair and the chignons at both ears.
gufta mudây	small basket for hairnets.
habu gâr mälabash ¹⁰	basketry pattern.
hajj	pilgrimage to Mecca.
hamât	mother-in-law.
hamâ môt	basket plate made by a young wife during the first year of her marriage for her mother-in-law; size of a breakfast plate; they must always be made in pairs of the same size and same pattern.
harîr	silk
harîr qalam	lit. silk writing reed; also a basketry pattern.

hinâch	arrow; something that makes angry,
hurdinchi	spice giving a yellowish color; also yellow wood.
injera	flat bread of the amhara made of tef, a type of millet, <i>eragrostis teff</i> .
kirtât	small side-room within a Harari house, often towards the right of the entrance; considered a room for the women.
kirtärt nādäba	raised seat in the kirtât.
lây, lä'ay	on top, above.
lä'ay môräja	basket plate put on top of a larger one; not a lid.
lêmât	large, rather flat basket plate.
ma'ezän	angle.
mägâla	market.
Färâz Mägâla	"horse market"; market at Mädhane Alâm Church.
Gidîr Mägâla	Main market in the centre of Harar.
mälâya	separation, dividing.
mäsob (Amh.)	high-footed basket table for the Amhara bread <i>injera</i> ; the same term is also used for a basketry pattern.
maxazu	"pillar of the house", wall at the side of the amîr nādäba oppsite the duldula wall.
maxazu môt	basket plate placed at the maxazu wall.
migir	foundation coil for basketry.
mihkâk	medium-size basket plate.
mîti	embroidery on the inner seam of gê gännâfi trousers, mostly of metallic thread.
mudây	small basket with conical lid.
bisha mudây	small basket for mastix.
etân mudây	small basket for incense.
gufta mudây	basket for hairnets and shawls; often workde with strap leather handles decorated with cowries.
irâz mudây	large basket for keeping colthes (no more in use).

nāchîh	white.
nāchîh gâz	kerosene.
nādāba	raised seat, bench.
amîr nādāba	raised seat at the right (sometimes left) of the living room; reserved for respected guests.
gidîr nādāba	big raised seat in the living room.
sutri nādāba	raised seat behind the pillar to the left of the entrance.
qalam	writing pen of reed.
harîr qalam	lit. silk writing reed; a basketry pattern.
qârma	stem of barley used for basket weaving.
qêh	red.
qêh-wa tây	lit. red cap; a basketry pattern.
qulu'	gourd for hot spice.
sâgâri	very small basket plate.
sâgâri-wa wâskâmbây	sâgâri with lid.
sâhna	plate for mastix.
sâhna sâgâri	basket plate.
sârgu	plain, natural color.
sêlân	mat made of palm leaves
shîshti, shi, ishti	three.
sini-wa berelle	basket with lid, into which a porcelain or enamel cup was placed to carry food presents; reserved for the amîr gârach families.
sugud	basketry measure for grain and coffee; plain weave, the outside is covered with leather.
tâqêt	niche.
tây	black.

tequr (Amh.)	
täy (Har.)	lit. Black; dark violet; mixed dye for basketry material used for baskets for Harari.
tilfi	embroidery; also a basketry pattern.
uffa	elongated basketry lid for the pottery jar aflâla; it is used to keep the umbilical cord of an infant of the family.
uzun	ear, handle; fringe for baskets like the sägâri or the aflâla uffa.
-wa	and.
wâsfi	awl used for basket weaving.
wâsfi niqi	weaving baskets; also an older basket pattern.
Wâskâmbây	basketry lid.