

About Ethiopia & Amharic

Ethiopia is one of the oldest locations of human existence. Scientists consider it the region from which *Homo sapiens* first set out for the Middle East and points beyond. Ethiopia traces its roots to the Aksumite Empire circa 300BC-800AD. It has been a monarchy for most of its history. Alongside Rome, Persia, China, and India, the Kingdom of Aksum was one of the great world powers of the 3rd century and the one of the first major empires in the world to officially adopt Christianity as a state religion in the 4th century.

Amharic is a Semitic language spoken in Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Djibouti. It is the second-most spoken Semitic language in the world after Arabic and is the language of some 2.7 million emigrants, including people in Europe, the US, and Canada.

Amharic has a growing body of literature in many genres: novels, poetry, government proclamations and records, educational books, religious material, proverb collections, dictionaries, technical manuals, and books about medical topics.

For more
information

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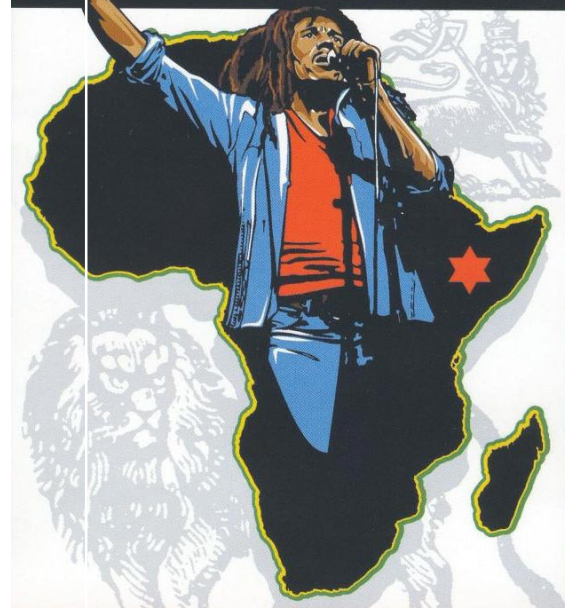
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AMHARIC

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Did you know?

Jamaica has an Amharic connection! Roots of the word “Rastafari” actually come from Amharic, and many Rastafarians learn Amharic because they consider it a sacred language. After Ethiopian emperor Haile Selassie visited the island of Jamaica in 1966, Jamaicans organized study circles in Amharic—a parallel of sorts to the contemporary movement for civil rights in the United States. Several roots reggae stars have written songs in Amharic, thus introducing this language to a wider audience.

There are 86 languages spoken in Ethiopia.



From Wikipedia commons: Photo of Bet Giyorgis Church, Lalibela, Ethiopia



Photo clipped from Fun with Phonics on Ethiopia TV

Courses & Minors

BU's program in Amharic is rare. All language courses use the communicative approach and develop proficiency in the four skills—oral expression, listening comprehension, reading, and writing—while also emphasizing cultural understanding. Amharic language courses can be used to meet the CAS language requirements.

LD 111 -112 First Year Amharic
LD 211-212 Second Year Amharic
LD 311-312 Third Year Amharic
LD 491/492 - Directed Study: Amharic

Two Minors: African Studies or African Languages & Literature

Each semester more than 75 courses are offered across campus with at least 25% Africa content. Consider a few options:

ID 116 - Africa Today: The Beat of Popular Culture
AN 312 - Peoples & Cultures of Africa

MU 340 - Musical Cultures of the World
HI 348 - Colonialism in Africa: Impact & Aftermath
IR 351 - Africa in International Politics
PO 378 - International Human Rights: Applying Human Rights in Africa
AH 429 - Photography & Africa: Race & Representation
AA 588 - Women, Power, & Culture in Africa
AN 524 - Language & Culture Contacts in Contemporary Africa
AN 532 - Literacy & Islam in Africa
AN 593, 594 - Seminar: Topics in Cultural Anthropology

Foreign Language Area Studies Fellowships for Undergraduates (FLAS)

Get paid to study Amharic or any other African language at BU! FLAS awards cover \$10,000 tuition and \$2500 stipend per semester. Applicants are eligible after their first year of language study. Applications are due annually on February 15th.