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ULRICH BRAUKÄMPER, Georg-August-Universität Göttingen

### Review

WOLBERT G.C. SMIDT, *Photos as Historical Witnesses: The First Ethiopians  
in Germany and the First Germans in Ethiopia, the History of a Complex  
Relationship. With an Introduction by Richard Pankhurst*

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by Alessandro Bausi

in cooperation with

Bairu Tafla, Ulrich Braukämper, Ludwig Gerhardt,  
Hilke Meyer-Bahlburg and Siegbert Uhlig

## Editorial

The present issue of AETHIOPICA, like the preceding one, is partly monographic, with a section containing the proceedings of the Panel on Islamic Literature in Ethiopia: New Perspectives of Research, from the '19<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Ethiopian Studies', held in Warsaw, Poland, on 24–28 August 2015.

Starting from this issue, the annual bibliography on Ethiopian Semitic and Cushitic linguistics held from its inception in 1998 for eighteen years by Rainer Voigt is handed over, on Voigt's own will, to a pool of younger scholars, with the substantial support of the AETHIOPICA editorial team. I would like on this occasion to express the deep gratitude of the editorial board of AETHIOPICA and of all scholars in Ethiopian Semitic and Cushitic linguistics to Rainer Voigt for his fundamental and valuable contribution.

### Bibliographical abbreviations used in this volume

- AE* *Annales d'Éthiopie*, Paris 1955ff.  
*ÄthFor* Äthiopistische Forschungen, 1–35, ed. by E. HAMMERSCHMIDT, 36–40, ed. by S. UHLIG (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner (1–34), 1977–1992; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz (35–40), 1994–1995).  
*AethFor* Aethiopistische Forschungen, 41–73, ed. by S. UHLIG (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1998–2011); 74–75, ed. by A. BAUSI and S. UHLIG (*ibid.*, 2011f.); 76ff. ed. by A. BAUSI (*ibid.*, 2012ff.).  
*AION* *Annali dell'Università degli studi di Napoli 'L'Orientale'*, Napoli: Università di Napoli 'L'Orientale' (former Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli), 1929ff.  
*CSCO* Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, 1903ff.  
*EAE* S. UHLIG, ed., *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, I: A–C; II: D–Ha; III: He–N; in cooperation with A. BAUSI, eds, IV: O–X (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010); A. BAUSI in cooperation with S. UHLIG, eds, V: Y–Z, *Supplementa, Addenda et Corrigenda, Maps, Index* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2010, 2014).  
*EI<sup>2</sup>* *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, I–XII (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1960–2005).  
*EMML* Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library, Addis Ababa.  
*JES* *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, Addis Ababa 1963ff.  
*JSS* *Journal of Semitic Studies*, Manchester 1956ff.  
*NEASt* *Northeast African Studies*, East Lansing, MI 1979ff.  
*OrChr* *Oriens Christianus*, Leipzig–Roma–Wiesbaden 1901ff.  
*PICES* 9 A.A. GROMYKO, ed., 1988, *Proceedings of the Ninth International Congress of Ethiopian Studies, Moscow, 26–29 August 1986*, I–VI (Moscow: Nauka Publishers, Central Department of Oriental Literature, 1988).  
*RSE* *Rassegna di Studi Etiopici*, Roma, 1941–1981, Roma–Napoli 1983ff.  
*ZDMG* *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, Leipzig–Wiesbaden–Stuttgart 1847ff.

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writing allowed him to reconcile past and present, the ancient and the modern, the sacred and the profane' (p. 114). This remarkable intellectual spent a creative life between writing and serving the monarchy. During Ḥaylā Šəllase's exile in Great Britain in 1936, and following the Italian conquest, Heruy joined the Emperor and assisted him. He died in Bath in 1938.

Chapter 5 'The Triumph of Historicism?' closes the volume; here the author poses many questions about the intersection of modernity and local 'vernacular' narratives in a changing Ethiopia, during the last decades of the twentieth century. De Lorenzi gives some insights into the contribution that these three writers offered to contemporary academic historiography which has developed according to new methodologies and new sources. Particularly during the 1970s–1990s, the Department of History, Addis Ababa University, was a relevant institution, collaborating in international research and, at the same time, contributing to a national historiography. Ethiopia and Eritrea were a part of this story, taking different positions and, at the beginning of this century, taking very different paths. This volume explores 'the changing nature of history in the Horn of Africa' and the 'non-Western effort to describe and understand the past' (pp. 137–138). An ongoing debate, a stimulating topic.

Irma Taddia, Università di Bologna

WOLBERT G.C. SMIDT, *Photos as Historical Witnesses: The First Ethiopians in Germany and the First Germans in Ethiopia, the History of a Complex Relationship. With an Introduction by Richard Pankhurst*, Afrika Visuell, 2 (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2015). 132 pp. Price: € 29.90. ISBN: 978-3-643-10195-2.

German *ethiopicants* like to emphasize the time-depth of the scholarly relations between their country and Ethiopia particularly with reference to the pioneering relationship between Hiob Ludolf and Abba Gorgorios in the second half of the seventeenth century.<sup>1</sup> Portraits of this two men, presented in the first chapter of the book under review, seem to have been indispen-

<sup>1</sup> See e.g. E. Hammerschmidt, 'A Brief History of German Contributions to the Study of Ethiopia', *AE*, 6 (1965), 255–277; E. Haberland, *Three Hundred Years of Ethiopian-German Academic Collaboration*, Sonderschriften des Frobenius Instituts, 2 (Frankfurt a.M.: Frobenius Institut, 1986); U. Braukämper, 'Der Beitrag der deutschen Ethnologie zur Äthiopien-Forschung', in P.O. Scholz, ed., *Von Hiob Ludolf bis Enrico Cerulli, Halle/S. 3.–5. Oktober 1996*, Bibliotheca nubica et aethiopica, 8 (Warszawa–Wiesbaden: Zakład Graficzny, 2001), 159–170; cf. also Bairu Tafla, *Ethiopia and Germany: Cultural, Political and Economic Relations, 1871–1936*, *ÄthFor*, 5 (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1981).

sable, painted some two hundred years before photography was invented. The compilation of photographic materials provided by Wolbert Smidt for the field of Ethiopian–German relations presents photographic materials from the 1860s to the end of the twentieth century and contains an astonishing wealth of themes. The forty chapters generally follow the path of historical chronology, although, depending on the topics, overlapping sometimes occurs. Some of the contents of the book are briefly sketched here.

The earliest and obviously very rare photos showing German travellers and missionaries, and the craftsmen cooperating with them date back to the 1860s and 1870s. Up to this time, most illustrations in their works, e.g. in the book of Gerhard Rohlfs, were obviously based on paintings. Photographic materials considerably increased following a German diplomatic mission headed by Friedrich Rosen in 1905 and the establishment of a German embassy at Addis Abäba in the following year. From now onwards an increasing amount of photographic images were taken in the capital, showing prominent persons and buildings, and, to a lesser extent, landscape, people and cultural items in other parts of the country. A special highlight of Ethiopian–German relations was the sending of an envoy, *däggazmač* Mäsäša Wärqe, by Emperor Mənilək II to Berlin in 1907 and the visit of the Ethiopian scholar *aläqa* Tayyä Maryam to the Department of Oriental Studies in Berlin from 1905–1907.

Photographic documentations were also provided by German agents involved in espionage missions in and around Ethiopia during the First World War, particularly by Arnold Holtz, Leo Fröbenius and Salomon Hall. Although Empress Zäwditu and *ras* Täfäri Mäk<sup>w</sup>ännən sympathised with the Allied powers after the fall of Prince Iyasu Mika'el in 1916, they granted freedom of movement to German diplomats, a fact which is clearly revealed in the photographic materials. After the war, numerous diplomatic and economic relations between the two countries were documented. A series of photos reveals the important role of German ladies-in-waiting in the family of the later Emperor Həylä Šəllase I, in whose coronation in 1930 David Hall played a prominent part in manifold ceremonies. Another series depicts the construction of the mausoleum for Emperor Mənilək by the Master Builder Carl Haertel in 1927. David Hall, the German advisor to Həylä Šəllase I, negotiated Hitler's consent to the delivery of weapons to Ethiopia in the war against Italy 1935. However, photographic evidence is not provided.

After World War II Həylä Šəllase I was the first foreign head of state to visit the Federal Republic of Germany in 1954. A series of photos show him with leading political representatives. Ethiopian–German relations in the field of Fine Arts were established in the late 1950s and culminated in the works of Gäbrä Krəstos Dästa mainly trained in Cologne. Some examples of his work are given in the book. To this day, the German school at Addis Abäba which

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started as an evangelical missionary endeavour continues to be a success in the relations between the two countries. A special chapter is devoted to the relations of the German Democratic Republic with Ethiopia. There are pictures showing a statue of Karl Marx opposite the Faculty of Humanities of Addis Ababa University; other photos show examples of industrial aid. The last panel entitled 'Ethiopia – Germany today' is illustrated by a photo showing President Roman Herzog surrounded by high clergy officials at Aksum in 1996.

The book, for which Richard Pankhurst as a leading authority of Ethiopian history provides an introduction, is presented in three languages, German, English and Amharic. There are appendices listing the German diplomatic representatives in Ethiopia, a chronological table of events from 1855 onwards, a report on the Rosen mission of 1905, diplomatic notes and a bibliography of primary and secondary literature.

Although the chronological data of the photos could not always be precisely identified, the book is a useful collection of photographic 'historical witnesses'. Unfortunately, a technical detail for which the publishing house must take responsibility, the reproduction of the photo materials is far from satisfactory. Moreover, the layout is well below standard, with parts of the text often incomplete at the right edge. This publication urgently calls for an improved reprint.

Ulrich Braukämper, Georg-August-Universität Göttingen

DONALD N. LEVINE, *Interpreting Ethiopia: Observations of Five Decades* (Los Angeles, CA: Tsehai Publishers, 2014). 498 pp. Price: US-\$ 39.95. ISBN: 978-1-59907-096-4.

Donald Levine, who died in 2015, had one of the longest relationships to Ethiopia and Ethiopian studies of any social scientist. With a new PhD degree in sociology in hand, in 1958 Levine began intensive research in Ethiopia which resulted in the single most discussed and debated work about Ethiopian society and culture, *Wax & Gold: Tradition and Innovation in Ethiopian Culture* (1965). He was still writing about Ethiopia and its peoples as late as 2014, building on, correcting, and updating the same subjects that interested him many years earlier. His five decade-long love affair with Ethiopia was cruelly interrupted, first by the ire of Emperor Ḥaylā Śəllase I and then by the rule of the Marxist-Leninist 'Därg', but he returned to write about that country's intellectual and political problems with renewed vigor after the fall of that regime in 1991.