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Editorial

The present issue of AETHIOPICA is the twentieth since its foundation in 1998 by Siegbert Uhlig: this ‘new’ international journal for Ethiopian and Eritrean studies has established itself as one of the leading voices in the field along with other established journals. It has tried to maintain a profile of its own, with the aim of covering all the traditionally established disciplines in the vast and fast-growing field of Ethiopian and Eritrean studies. Continuity, completeness, reliability, balanced variety, and academic correctness have been—in the intention of the editors at least—its constant guidelines. The development of a series of Supplements has tried to answer to the more specific needs emerging over the course of time, with special, but not exclusive, attention given to the research carried out at the Hiob-Ludolf-Zentrum für Äthiopistik, where AETHIOPICA is presently based.

During the last years, the journal has gradually been made freely accessible online, thanks to the considerable efforts of the editorial team (Thomas Rave, Angela Müller, and Susanne Hummel), supported by the generous funding of the DFG. In the end, quite paradoxically, the success of the open-access platform and the unavoidable uncertainty of how to guarantee its continuity has led to the decision of the DFG to cease funding the journal as from the present issue, given the fact that the journal has definitely developed into an online journal. This decision must be accepted, but I feel that the peculiarity of the field and the special needs of a hybrid form of publication (on paper and online) in this particular case were not evaluated in all their implications.

We were all very saddened this year by the passing away—among other remarkable scholars in Ethiopian studies—of Richard Pankhurst. This marks the end of an epoch. Richard Pankhurst was an exceptional scholar and an exceptional man. He dedicated not only his research, but his entire life, tirelessly and totally, to Ethiopian Studies and Ethiopia. Among his many academic and editorial positions, he was also a member of the International Editorial Board of AETHIOPICA. He will be sorely missed.

It is then my pleasant duty to welcome a new member to the editorial team of AETHIOPICA, Francesca Panini, who has very competently replaced Thomas Rave—on leave for two years, starting from 2016—for the preparation of the present issue of AETHIOPICA as well as of the last Supplement. Finally, warm thanks, as usual, are due to Joe McIntyre for taking care of the linguistic revision.