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## Article

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The teaching of Amharic enjoys a long history in Germany (100 years at Universität Hamburg) and other countries but this large number of years does not translate into a correspondingly large number of educational publications that keep up with advances in foreign language pedagogy. As a result, what we have at our disposal at the moment are mostly outdated materials, both methodologically and content-wise which, in and of themselves, do not ensure a decent level of teaching. Notwithstanding this initial criticism I dare to hope that the current proceedings are a definite sign that we are moving in a new direction. This publication would not be possible without the firm support of the members of the editorial team of *Aethiopica*, especially Prof. Dr Alessandro Bausi, who gave us not only space in this journal, but also, as the head of the Hiob-Ludolf-Zentrum für Äthiopistik, space for holding the workshop itself. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to him and the whole team.

This section of *Aethiopica* is the result of የአማርኛ ቋንቋ ትምህርት አሰጣጥ በጀርመን አገር—ዓውደ ጥናት/Workshop: Amharisch Unterrichten in Deutschland/Workshop on the Teaching of Amharic in Germany held at the Universität Hamburg on 1–2 February 2018. The organizing team consisted of Getie Gelaye and Magdalena Krzyżanowska. The main goal of the workshop was to bring together teachers of Amharic in Germany, discuss new pedagogical methods, and present efficient and meaningful teaching activities. We especially welcomed papers dealing with the practice of teaching Amharic, which is well reflected in the character of the core articles contained in the proceedings. In the call for papers, some of the ideas suggested to the participants were to present new syllabi and explore new methods of teaching a certain grammatical item, vocabulary, or a particular linguistic

skill. Additionally, each participant was invited to present at least one Amharic teaching activity which was to be discussed in plenary. Because of the practice-oriented nature of the workshop, it must be emphasized here that some of the articles may not meet the usual expectations of a journal like *Aethiopica*. The reader is asked to treat the contributions in this section in their own right and to appreciate their value as the first such attempt to challenge the old ways of teaching the Amharic language and to propose new approaches.

There were ten papers presented at the workshop, three of which were delivered by our special guests as accompanying papers—outside the practicalities of pedagogical instruction, but nonetheless tightly connected to the topic of Amharic and teaching. These are ‘Some Brief Remarks on Teaching Amharic: A Personal View’ by Alessandro Bausi (presented as an opening paper), ‘100 Jahre Amharisch-Unterricht in Hamburg’ by Ludwig Gerhardt, and ‘Some considerations on premodern written Amharic poetry’ by Denis Nosnitsin. The first two are published in these proceedings while the paper by D. Nosnitsin will appear in the proceedings of the 23. Afrikanistentag, held on 25–26 May 2018 in Hamburg. Two other papers, not published here, depict Amharic as one of the African languages taught in Germany: ‘Teaching African languages in Germany, the case of Amharic’ by Andreas Wetter and ‘Teaching Amharic as a foreign language at universities—where are we today?’ by Ronny Meyer. In the course of their presentations it became clear that, at present, Amharic is taught at only two institutions in Germany, Universität Hamburg and the Bundessprachenamt in Hürth, while some ten years ago it was offered in many more places, such as Universität Leipzig and Freie Universität Berlin. The remaining papers were more closely devoted to the concrete issue of language pedagogy. Petra Kellerman and Seid Ahmed talked about their experience in teaching at the Bundessprachenamt in Hürth. Their report, authored by P. Kellermann, appears here under the title ‘Entwicklung von Unterrichtsmaterial—Erfahrungen aus Amharisch-Intensivkursen’. Three other contributions published here tackle the issue of teaching some troublesome parts of Amharic grammar: Marlene Guss-Kosicka’s ‘Amharisch lernen mit Montessoris Wortartensymbolen’, Iosif Fridman’s ‘Reliance on Predicative Units as a Method of Analysing and Translating Amharic Written Texts’, and Magdalena Krzyżanowska’s ‘How to Start Teaching Amharic Verbs?’. Although I. Fridman, our colleague from St. Tikhon’s Orthodox University in Moscow, could not attend the workshop, he still sent us his contribution which was included in these proceedings. Two further presentations that were given at the workshop are not published here: ‘Teaching Amharic using songs and

poems' by Getie Gelaye and 'Amharisch-Expresskurs im Internet' by Maija Priess.

We hope the reader will enjoy reading the six articles comprising the present section. They represent an attempt to provide learners with efficient and meaningful activities crafted with, on the one hand, a considerable knowledge of both Amharic and the culture of its speakers, and, on the other hand, with sound pedagogical expertise.