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by Alessandro Bausi
in cooperation with
Bairu Tafla, Ludwig Gerhardt,
Susanne Hummel and Alexander Meckelburg

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Vignette:

Gold coin of King Aphilas, early third century CE, as drawn by A. Luegmeyer after the coin in Rennau collection. Weight 2.48 grams, diameter 17 mm.

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The journal focuses on philology, linguistics, archaeology, history, cultural anthropology, religion, philosophy, literature, and manuscript studies with a regional emphasis on Eritrea, Ethiopia, the Horn of Africa, and related areas. The editors welcome contributions on relevant academic topics as well as on recent research in the respective field. Each issue of AETHIOPICA contains reviews of books which form a substantial section of the journal.

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Editorial

The present issue of AETHIOPICA is the twenty-fifth since the journal's founding in 1998. It is also the thirteenth issue I have worked on as editor-in-chief, one more than that of founder Siegbert Uhlig. The present time, however, does not lend itself to celebrations of any sort. The global political crisis and the situation in the Horn of Africa are having a deep impact on the scholarly community, which appears divided and radicalized on opposite or increasingly diverging positions as never before. The growing influence of diaspora communities is at times marked by waves of resurgent nationalism. The challenge posed by main-stream policy in countries of established scholarly traditions gives less and less space to small fields—as is the case of Ethiopian and Eritrean studies. The consequent lack of resources triggers the fragmentation of the scholarly scene. New balances based on mutual legitimation and acknowledgement of a common scholarly method are not obvious. The consequence of this complex situation, which reflects global changes, is that scholarly and academic freedom can be put at risk. Of all priorities envisaged in the mission of AETHIOPICA, preservation of academic freedom along with scholarly quality has been, is, and will remain the top priority of the journal.

I regret that in the past, and still now, the lack of available qualified authors has prevented AETHIOPICA from duly commemorating distinct colleagues and researchers recently passed away who were more than deserving of an obituary. I would like to remember at least some of them here, by name, as a very modest tribute to their work and memory: Johannes Launhardt (1929–2019), Mesfin Wolde Mariam (1930–2020), Steffen Wenig (1934–2022), Girma Fisseha (1941–2020).

To end on a positive note, three colleagues active in Ethiopian and Eritrean studies have received important awards this year, and we would like to mention them here: Samantha Kelly (Professor of Medieval History at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, also on our International Editorial Board), has won the Choice Outstanding Academic Title 2020, and the African Studies Review Prize for the Best Africa-focused Anthology or Edited Collection 2021, for her *A Companion to Medieval Ethiopia and Eritrea* (Leiden–Boston, MA: Brill, 2020); Verena Krebs (Junior-Professorin für Mittelalterliche Kulturräume at Ruhr-Universität Bochum) has received the Dan David Prize for her *Medieval Ethiopian Kingship, Craft, and Diplomacy with Latin Europe* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021); and Massimo Zaccaria (Professore Associato in Storia e Istituzioni dell'Africa at Università degli Studi di Pavia) has received the Giorgio Maria Sangiorgi award of the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei 'per la Storia ed Etnologia dell'Africa'. To all of them—the warmest congratulations from AETHIOPICA!

Dissertation Abstracts

HAGOS ABRHA ABAY, *Critical Edition (with translation) and Textual Analysis of Gädlä Yəmṣatta*, PhD Dissertation in Gəʿəz Philology, College of Humanities, Language Studies, Journalism and Communication, defended on 7 July 2014.

Yəmʿatta is one of the Nine Saints (Roman-Byzantine monks, according to local tradition) who came to Ethiopia at the end of the fifth, beginning of the sixth century CE, after the Council of Chalcedon in 451. This period is known as the second, climax point of the evangelization of Ethiopia, initiated by the conversion of King ʿEzana around 325 CE. The Nine Saints, individually and collectively, contributed a great deal to the dissemination of Christianity throughout the northern parts of Ethiopia. Each of the Nine Saints has his own hagiographical tradition, and Gəʿəz manuscript hagiography has largely been edited by Italian philologists. *Gädlä Yəmʿatta* is among the few unedited and unpublished hagiographies of those saints.

Gädlä Yəmʿatta, which according to the text itself is said to have been written by St Yared of Aksum, narrates the life of Yəmʿatta himself, the Nine Saints, and the Aksumite Church and State. According to the text, Yəmʿatta, ‘whose original name Al-troman and whose place of origin Qusya’, stems from the tribe of Moses via his mother from Rome named Qusṭintinya, with his father being from Alexandria. His relatives had proposed marriage to the daughter of the king of Antioch, which he refused, going instead to ‘Ethiopia, administration of Aksum in Təgray, which is beneath to Armania’ along with a few of his relatives. When he left Rome, he met all the other seven saints save Gärīma (who arrived in Aksum at a later date). Discussing between one another they all decided to leave their home countries quoting the Bible (Matt. 16:26; Mark 8:36) to travel from Rome to Jerusalem, whereupon Jesus revealed to them their destination was to be Ethiopia: ‘where Jesus himself was hosted during his exile to Egypt’. Following the arrival of the Nine Saints to Aksum after crossing the Red Sea and staying for a while in Däbrä Bizän of Eritrea, they departed from their respective vicinities in today’s Təgray. Yəmʿatta established the monastery of Guḥ, in Gärʿalta, a rock-hewn church said to have been built and painted by Biniami the Church Builder—his very own nephew. Gubba, Yəmʿatta’s confession father, has (as well as in other locations) a hagiographic tradition in Gärʿalta, at ʿAddi Bälāw, not far from Guḥ. Yəmʿatta Christianized the district of Gärʿalta and Wägğärat largely by means of miracles involving a wild boar being compelled to preach the Gospel. Yəmʿatta’s evangelical mission was sup-

ported by four local disciples: Zämaryam, Gäbrä Pēṭros, Gäbrä Aṣbəha, and Gäbrä Adonay. Finally, Yəm'atta, who had strong connection with Gubba, Şəḥma, and Mammās (a martyr whose rock-hewn church is found in Nābālāt, west of Gär'alta), was killed by *fäyat şälliman* (lit. 'back bandits') in Gär'alta during his evangelical mission in connection with Şəḥma. *Gädlä Yəm'atta* is full of biblical allusions emphasizing Coptic monkhood tradition, and the glory of Aksum Şəyon and its kings. The scribe situated himself in the Aksumite time spirit, and all the kings mentioned in the manuscript are Aksumite; some narrative variation of this text regarding the story of the other Nine Saints will also help to triangulate and present another means for understanding the hagiographic traditions of the Nine Saints.

The objective of this dissertation has been to make a critical edition, English translation, and textual analysis of *Gädlä Yəm'atta*. As a result, eleven manuscripts of Saint Yəm'atta have been digitized from Gär'alta (eastern Təgray), and Wägğärat (south-eastern Təgray), and were named and given sigla after the names of the churches where they were found: 'Addi 'Ag'wa (A), 'Addi Bälāw (BW1), 'Addi Bälāw (BW2), Maryam Bäraqit (BR), Abunä Yəm'atta Guḥ (G), 'Addi Hiza (H), 'Addi Mäyda (M), 'Addi Yə'olo (Y), 'Addi Batti (BT), Qirqos Hala (K), Eyyäsus Warän (W). Eight manuscripts (A, BW1, BW2, BR, G, H, M, and Y) were collected from Gär'alta, and the other three (BT, K, and W) from Wägğärat. Nine of the manuscripts were collated, taking into consideration both conjunctive and polygenetic variations; manuscripts Bw2 and W have been eliminated after their *Vorlagen* (BW1 and W respectively) were clearly sorted out. However, their variants were included in the textual apparatus to document the history of the manuscript transmission.

The physical and internal philological features of the manuscripts have been discussed. The critical edition has been produced using the Neo-Lachmannian method, supported by cladistics software: dendrogram and correlogram software programs were employed during the reconstruction of the *stemma codicum*. Discovering the archetypal variant/error to assure the manuscripts belong to the same Ur-text, 232 binary *largely* conjunctive variants have been selected randomly from approximately three hundred, based on the contextual meaning and sense, which can affect the corruption (shared innovation) and transmission of the manuscripts. These variants have been coded into a 0/1 matrix as required by the software program. The software produced a binary-branching dendrogram (family tree), with the contamination of a single manuscript A with manuscript 'γ', hypothetical *Vorlage* of H and BW; the textual correlation of the manuscripts was also produced through correlogram. The produced correlation and dendrogram stemma reflected the geographical location of the manuscripts' distribution. The (lost) ancestor of all the families, which is the archetype, is represented by the capital Greek letter Omega (Ω), and the (lost) ancestors of the individual

families, which are sub-archetypes, by lower-case Greek letters: alpha (α), beta (β), gamma (γ), and so on. Finally, a stemma has been reconstructed; both the nodes for hypothetical archetypal and sub-archetypal *Vorlage* and the sigla of the actual manuscripts (including those eliminated during collation) were shown in the family tree. The variants/errors were also divided into two based on archetypal (or top-level) and sub-archetypal variants/errors. Using the term ‘variant’ is assumed more neutral than ‘error’ for the textual innovations. During the emendation, variants were treated through the criterion of ‘ambiguous reconstruction’ but when there are equal families, which makes any decision difficult, the variants were handled implementing the criterion of *ope ingenii* (by means of intelligence, judgment, or internal criteria). An edited Gə‘əz text of *Gädlä Yəm‘atta* has been produced and translated into English, faithfully, with annotations. Textual analysis of the manuscripts was carried out after the translation. This edition helps gain a fuller understanding of the hagiographic tradition of the Nine Saints; eastern Təgray (specially Gär‘alta) has been referred to as the southern extremity of the evangelical mission; however, the hagiographic tradition of Yəm‘atta and his confession father Gubba reveal Christian expansion to have extended ever further to the south: Wägğärat and Rayya. The manuscripts do not feature colophons; the sixteenth-century Portuguese traveller Francisco Alvares mentioned both the monastery of Guḥ and Saint Yəm‘atta; however, the hagiographic tradition appears to be far younger as the place names date only from later periods. Nonetheless, the text is more focused on the Aksumite period beginning with King Sä‘aldoba (r.469–477), the supposed father of King Əllä ‘Amida.

CARSTEN HOFFMANN, *Das geographische Traktat in der Weltgeschichte des Wäldä ‘Amid – Text, Übersetzung und Kommentar*, PhD Dissertation in Semitic Studies, Faculty of Foreign Languages at Philipps-Universität Marburg, defended on 21 October 2021.

In my dissertation I deal with the geographical treatise in the *Universal History* of Giyorgis Wäldä Amid, known in Ethiopic literature as *Tarikä Wäldä Amid* and by the name of its author Ğirğis al-Makīn Ibn al-‘Amīd or as *al-Mağmū‘ al-mubāarak* (‘The blessed collection’) in its Arabic version. In my partial edition I collected all available manuscripts that contain the geographical treatise, provided a translation to German and a commentary on its geographical content as well as linguistic peculiarities.

Ğirğis al-Makīn Ibn al-‘Amīd the Elder was born in 1206 CE in Cairo in a respected Christian family. Like some of his ancestors, Ğirğis was member of the Dīwān of the army and thus held an important function in the military admin-