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Sophia Dege-Müller, Karin Ghion-Hamadu

Editorial

The present issue marks a turning point for AETHIOPICA. After having served as editor-in-chief of the journal for over fourteen years, Alessandro Bausi has moved to new challenges, concomitant with his transition from the University of Hamburg to ‘La Sapienza’ Università di Roma. It would be difficult to overestimate the service that Bausi has performed in his editorship over these years. The role of editor-in-chief of a journal, especially one as wide-ranging as AETHIOPICA, is not easy, and yet Bausi handled it with aplomb. Over the years, the editorial standards of the journal steadily improved thanks to Bausi and the team that he assembled around him. Over his tenure, the workflow of AETHIOPICA was regularly adjusted—sometimes with minor tweaks and other times with major innovations, such as the introduction of Zotero to handle bibliography—to result in a publication of the highest editorial quality. One can hardly find a comma out of place in recent issues! More importantly, however, the content of the journal has under his editorship consistently been at the pinnacle of the field of Ethiopian and Eritrean Studies, alongside several other journals. As anyone who knows him or is familiar with his scholarship can attest, Bausi is truly an extraordinary reader. He readily spots mistakes in Gə‘əz as well as in at least a dozen other languages; he can recall a footnote from a decades-old publication that is precisely relevant to the matter at hand; he can zoom out to see the big picture and crucially encourages others to do the same. These skills—and countless others—are evidenced in the pages published under Bausi’s remarkable editorship. As a final point, I would like to stress that one of the most difficult aspects, though almost always hidden, that any editor-in-chief of a journal faces are the many delicate issues and problems, from small to large, that arise, it seems, more or less constantly. Here again Bausi excelled: with years of judicious and reasonable decisions, Bausi underwrote the success of the journal. On behalf of readers of AETHIOPICA and, more generally, of scholars and students in the field of Ethiopian and Eritrean Studies, I would like to express profound gratitude to our dear colleague Alessandro Bausi for his years of service as editor-in-chief.

Over the course of the past year, my transition to editor-in-chief has been greatly facilitated by the support of the editorial board and the editorial team. I am grateful to the editorial board for agreeing to continue their important service under my editorship: their work ensures the quality of the journal and even more its wide scope. Moreover, I would especially like to thank the editorial team, Sophia

Dege-Müller and Karin Ghion-Hamadu, who have made the transition as seamless and efficient as possible. These two are not only the institutional memory (together with Susanne Hummel) but also the day-to-day labourers in the vineyard, so to say, who ensure that an issue of AETHIOPICA actually appears each year. In this particular year, Dege-Müller's and Ghion-Hamadu's tasks were especially onerous given the change in editorship: thanks to both for their support as well as for their patience with me. Finally, new in support of the journal are Michael Hensley and Magda Krzyżanowska, the former for correcting English language and the latter Ethiopian Semitic languages. I am grateful for their work, which has undoubtedly improved the current issue.

One of the challenges for AETHIOPICA continues to be that the costs for printing and for part of the editing and production are not regularly supported by any *ad hoc* funding body; thus, these essential costs must be covered by the support of research projects and foundations. In this regard, I am happy to acknowledge the support of the Langzeitvorhaben im Akademienprogramm (long-term project in the program of The Union of the German Academies of Sciences and Humanities), through a project of the Academy of Hamburg, 'Beta maṣāḥəft: Die Schriftkultur des christlichen Äthiopiens und Eritreas: Eine multi-mediale Forschungsumgebung', at the University of Hamburg (2016–2040) and of the European Union, through the project 'BeInf—Beyond Influence: The Connected Histories of Ethiopic and Syriac Christianity' (ERC, consolidator grant agreement no. 101044300), at the University of Hamburg (2022–2027). Moreover, it is my happy duty to acknowledge the generous support of the DeutschÄthiopischeStiftung and of its director Siegbert Uhlig.

The field of Ethiopian and Eritrean Studies, like many in academia (especially among the so-called 'Kleine Fächer' of the Humanities),¹ is undergoing a number of seismic shifts, which at the very least will bring change and possibly drastically so. Nevertheless, with this, my first issue of AETHIOPICA as editor-in-chief, I have aimed to maintain, as much as I could, the *status quo* of my predecessors. Bausi and Uhlig before him have set the journal on a strong trajectory, and I now endeavour to hold that course.

Aaron M. Butts

¹ See <https://www.kleinefaecher.de/beitraege/blogbeitrag/aethiopistik>.