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Review

STEFFEN WENIG (Hrsg.), *In Kaiserlichem Auftrag: Die Deutsche Aksum-Expedition 1906 unter Enno Littmann*, Band 2: *Altertumskundliche Untersuchungen der DAE in Tigray / Äthiopien*

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Reviews

des Bedjas”, *Raydān* 4, 1981, pp. 97–116. – p. 148: concerning the inscription of Ham, the presence of biblical quotations in Aksumite inscriptions is not exceptional at all, as it is widely witnessed by several Ethiopic royal inscriptions.

After these remarks, it might be fair to add that the author will have occasion either to revise the present edition or to provide a better focused contribution on some specific aspects of the Aksumite civilization. He has actually succeeded in providing a comprehensive first-hand view on Aksum archaeological remains and to widely consider the vast range of related literature (a task greatly facilitated now by the existence of such syntheses as the *EAE*, which can also cause inconveniences). Essential aspects of the Christian Aksumite culture – monastic settlements, liturgical installations – related to archaeological remains have not yet been considered and the work focuses on the earliest and central phase of the Aksumite civilization. Less exciting aspects of archaeological research, such as non-monumental archaeological remains (ceramics etc.) or environmental investigation, that are so important to modern research, have not been sufficiently considered. Instead importance has been given to recent spectacular discoveries of further South Arabian sites in Ethiopia (in the nearby of Wəqro) and the author is certainly right – although without a perfect first-hand knowledge of the previous history of research – that this is an intriguing frontier of Eritrean and Ethiopian (and not only Aksumite) archaeology.

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STEFFEN WENIG (Hrsg.), *In Kaiserlichem Auftrag: Die Deutsche Aksum-Expedition 1906 unter Enno Littmann, Band 2: Altertumskundliche Untersuchungen der DAE in Tigray / Äthiopien* = Deutsches Archäologisches Institut. Kommission für Archäologie Außereuropäischer Kulturen. FAAK [Forschungen zur Archäologie Außereuropäischer Kulturen] Band 3.2, Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2011, 402 pp., 189 b/w figs., 9 colour figs. Price: € 79.00. ISBN: 978–3–89500–890–0.

This beautiful richly illustrated volume is the second of the originally planned two which were intended to celebrate the 1906 “Deutsche Aksum-Expedition” (henceforth: *DAE*), as well as to resume the whole range of topics dealt with by the historical epoch-making enterprise and its related publications. There will be, however, a third volume dedicated to churches, monasteries, and ethnographic researches, also furnished with a CDROM of all *DAE*-pictures and records to complete the series. The main focus of the present volume is the antiquities in Təgray and Ethiopia, that also include epigraphy and manuscript evidence.

Here is the content in detail: Note that three contributions by two authors (P.B. Henze and A. De Maigret) have appeared posthumously.

Steffen Wenig, "Einführung zum vorliegenden Band", pp. 9–10; Teil 1: Äthiopien / Tigray; Fritz Haubold, "Äthiopien im Spiegel von historischen Karten", pp. 13–28; Asfa-Wossen Asserate, "Äthiopien vor 100 Jahren", pp. 29–34; Wolbert G.C. Smidt, "Tigray – eine Erinnerungslandschaft als Netzwerk von Bauern, Fürsten und Kriegsherren: Die äthiopischen Nordprovinzen in der lokalen Tradition", pp. 35–63; Alfons Ritler, "Fotografische Einblicke in die Landschaften Tigrays (Nordäthiopien) um 1900 – der Beitrag der Deutschen Aksum-Expedition 1906", pp. 65–86; Louise Lätt, "Landschaft Eritrea: Zum Beitrag der DAE-Fotografien zur Landschaftsgeschichtsforschung in Eritrea", pp. 87–105. – Teil 2: Die Expedition; Rainer Voigt, "Enno Littmanns Tagebuch der Abessinischen Expedition (Deutsche Aksum-Expedition) 7.–26. April 1906 und der Heimreise", pp. 109–134; David W. Phillipson, "An evaluation of the archaeological and ethnographic work of the 1906 Deutsche Aksum-Expedition at Aksum and Yeha", pp. 135–150; Hans v. Lüpke, "Die Zeit in Aksum – Innenansichten", pp. 151–168; Steffen Wenig, "Addendum zu Hans v. Lüpkes *Die Zeit in Aksum*", pp. 169–176. – Teil 3: Archäologie und Geschichte; Paul B. Henze (†), "Aksum. From City State to Empire", pp. 179–182; Alessandro de Maigret (†), "Some new Considerations on the Great Temple of Yeha", pp. 183–194; "Appendix: Photographs from the DAE", pp. 195–201; Pawel Wolf – Ulrike Nowotnick, "Ein neuer äthio-sabäischer Fundplatz in Tigray/Äthiopien – Der Almaqah-Tempel von Meqaber Ga'ewa", pp. 203–219; Rodolfo Fattovich, "From Monuments to Landscape: Archaeology at Aksum, 1905/1906–2005", pp. 221–236; Jacke Phillips, "Aksumite archaeology at Aksum, and in Ethiopia and Eritrea: the legacy of the DAE", pp. 237–247; Peter R. Schmidt, "New Light on Ancient Eritrea: Local Variations during the 1st Millennium B.C.E.", pp. 249–270; Paul B. Henze (†), "Exploring unexcavated Aksumite and pre-Aksumite sites", pp. 271–284; Klaus Domisch, "Der Löwe von Kombolcä. Ein Reflex minäischer Kunst in Äthiopien?", pp. 285–319. – Teil 4: Materialien; Inschriften, Texte und Sprachen; Manfred S. Kropp, "Schriften und Sprachen im Kontakt: Sabäisch in Äthiopien und die ersten Zeugnisse der äthiopischen Sprache und Schrift", pp. 323–337; Francis Breyer, "Die Inschriften 'Ēzānās", pp. 339–352; Anais Wion, "Collecting manuscripts and scrolls in Ethiopia: The missions of Johannes Flemming (1905) and Enno Littmann (1906)", pp. 353–362; Gianfrancesco Lusini, "Enno Littmann, scholar of the Tigre language", pp. 363–364; Numismatik & Kleinfunde: Peter Kowalewski, "Aksumitische Münzen aus dem Nachlass von Enno Littmann", pp. 367–372; Wolfgang Hahn, "Eine Fundmünzstatistik der Grabungen in Aksum bis 2008", pp. 373–377; Jacke Phillips, "The DAE Small Finds: A Centenary Postscript", pp. 379–399. All contributions, apart from that by Voigt containing Littmann's *DAE* journal, are furnished with an English summary.

The book is opened by a first introductory part with contributions of various and general scope, intended to specify the context: Haubold on historical cartography; Asfa-Wossen Asserate on the historical condition of Ethiopia at the time of *DAE*; Smidt with the concept of Təgray as a "mnemonic landscape", that is, I think, easily applicable to other areas outside of Təgray marked by a prominent oral culture and traditional land tenure exploitation; Ritler and Lätt use the rich and high-quality *DAE* photographic documentation to approach detailed questions of environmental history

respectively in Ethiopia and Eritrea, the latter, interestingly, challenging the assumed paradigm of Eritrea as a land extensively covered with vast forests before the colonisation, and proposing instead more complex dynamics.

The second part details more precisely on the *DAE* activities, with the publication of the second and last part of Littmann's *DAE* journal edited by Voigt; a balanced and complex evaluation by Phillipson of the archaeological work carried out by *DAE*, stressing that the by far most exceptional character of the enterprise was the fast and impeccable publication of the scientific results, more than the in-depth and methodologically innovative investigation; v. Lüpke and Wenig provide data on the practical organization of the work of the expedition, for which, unfortunately, the most important document – the journal by Daniel Krencker – has gone lost.

The third part, with the exception of two minor contributions by Henze, provides substantial scientific contributions on the archaeology of Ethiopia and Eritrea; de Maigret details the excavations of the temple of Yəḥa, which he has personally taken part of in 1998; Wolf and Nowotnick report on the spectacular discoveries of the excavation campaigns carried out since 2007 at Mäqabər Ga'əwa, in the nearby of Wəqro, with the emergence of a temple dedicated to Almaqah and new Sabaen inscriptions, the most southern known so far; in the respective contributions, Fattovich, Phillips, and Schmidt make the point of archaeological research on Ethiopia and Eritrea, with different views and within a broader perspective; Domisch approaches the question of the possible connection for the enigmatic representation of the so-called “lioness of Kombolčā” (quite astonishingly, the author seems to ignore two relatively recent contributions strictly related to his topics, i.e. A. Manzo's “Riflessioni sulle sfingi etiopiche e il loro significato culturale”, *RSE* 38, 1994 [1996], pp. 119–138, and “Doccioni con decorazione a protome leonina nell'Etiopia antica”, *ibid.* 43, 1999 [2000], pp. 113–131, probably an evidence for the existence of linguistic barriers which prevents progress in research).

The fourth and last part of the volume is mainly devoted to textual and written documentation: Kropp provides a summary of the history of research on the Sabaeen inscriptions of Ethiopia, also with edition, translation and systematic commentary of *RIÉ* nos. 1–10, looking at them as a result of interference between languages and cultures, and concluding that “they were produced by local rulers over the first political unities on Ethiopian soil to have a written historical documentation”; Breyer's contribution on ʿEzana's inscriptions attempts at explaining placenames, ethnonyms and titles (among which the famous **አገገቤናዌ** *ʾangabenāwe*, occurring in the inscription *DAE* no. 11 [= *RIÉ* no. 189], but also in others, as well as in numerous Ethiopic literary texts) by adducing parallels from non-Semitic languages, Cushitic and Nubian in particular: while only a few of them

seem to be possible, it is obvious that this obscure epigraphic evidence still needs a closer examination and a satisfactory explanation (note that there are too many errors in the transcriptions, for example p. 342, ተቡቶ, for ተቢቶ; ፍርቶቱ, for ፍርቶቲ; *ba=ma^cadoa*, for *ba=ma^cadota*; ዘከሱ, for ዘካሱ; p. 344, ኖቢ, for ኖባ; ኅሳ, written twice, for ካሱ; p. 345, ቅሞደ, for ቅዳደ; መገጽት, for መገብት; p. 347, አዕይብተ, for አዕይንተ; *γᾶσα^canu*, for *γᾶσσα^c(^c)anu*; p. 348, ወለደ, for ወለደ; p. 347 00ፈፈ, for አፀፈፈ; p. 348, etc.; many errors also in the Greek, for example ἀτακτῆσάντου, that does not exist, for ἀτακτῆσαντος; Ἄρεης, for Ἄρεως; unfortunately, many errors also occur in the bibliography, s. under Borello, Cerulli, Conti Rossini, Guidi); Wion gives a detailed, interesting, first-hand presentation of the manuscripts collected by Flemming and Littmann in Ethiopia (it is only to be regretted that a few data are unreliable, for example p. 353, “At the beginning of the 20th century, the Royal Library in Berlin had fewer than nineteen manuscripts”, but actually they were 87 in August Dillmann’s 1878 catalogue, and so the estimation of a total of 120 manuscripts and 30 scrolls after the contribution by Flemming and *DAE* is definitely too low); Lusini’s two-page note summarizes the main points of Littmann’s contribution on the Tigre language; Kowalewski approaches the numismatic importance of Littmann’s collection, while Hahn’s contribution puts it into the broader context of the overall findings; finally, Phillips reports on the “small – yet not at all neglectable – finds” of *DAE*.

While waiting for the third volume and the completion of this important and highly commendable editorial enterprise, as a final remark, we can say that still after more than one century the thematic scope embraced by the *DAE* expedition and publication shows to be extremely consistent and coherent. The overall investigation of the kingdom of Aksum and its legacy, in the town as well as in the related areas, through archaeology, epigraphy, philology, linguistics, ethnology, still appears a worthwhile, substantial and unitary field for scholarly investigation.

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MERSHA ALEHEGNE, *The Ethiopian Commentary on the Book of Genesis: Critical Edition and Translation* = AethFor 73, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2011. xix + 722 pp. Price: € 138.00. ISBN 978-3-447-06430-9.

The last two decades have brought a sea change of unprecedented proportions in the publication of Ethiopian religious texts, namely: the Bible, Liturgy, Patristic, Hagiography, Canon Law, Computus. It is in this context of editorial revival that the re-edition and fresh publication of many *andamta*