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Review

DENIS NOSNITSIN, ed., *Ecclesiastic Landscape of North Ethiopia: Proceedings of the International Workshop Ecclesiastic Landscape of North Ethiopia: History, Change and Cultural Heritage. Hamburg, July 15–16, 2011*

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Bibliographical abbreviations used in this volume

- AE* *Annales d'Éthiopie*, Paris 1955ff.
- ÄthFor* Äthiopistische Forschungen, 1–35, ed. by E. HAMMERSCHMIDT, 36–40, ed. by S. UHLIG (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner (1–34), 1977–1992; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz (35–40), 1994–1995).
- AethFor* Aethiopistische Forschungen, 41–73, ed. by S. UHLIG (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1998–2011); 74–75, ed. by A. BAUSI and S. UHLIG (*ibid.*, 2011f.); 76ff. ed. by A. BAUSI (*ibid.*, 2012ff.).
- AION* *Annali dell'Università degli studi di Napoli 'L'Orientale'*, Napoli: Università di Napoli 'L'Orientale' (former Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli), 1929ff.
- BSOAS* *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (London, 1917ff.).
- CSCO* Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, 1903ff.
- EAE* S. UHLIG, ed., *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, I: A–C; II: D–Ha; III: He–N; in cooperation with A. BAUSI, eds, IV: O–X (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010); A. BAUSI in cooperation with S. UHLIG, eds, V: Y–Z, *Supplementa, Addenda et Corrigenda, Maps, Index* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2010, 2014).
- EMML* Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library, Addis Ababa.
- JAH* *The Journal of African History*, Cambridge 1960ff.
- JES* *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, Addis Ababa 1963ff.
- OrChr* *Oriens Christianus*, Leipzig–Roma–Wiesbaden 1901ff.
- PdP* *La Parola del Passato. Rivista di studi classici*, Napoli 1946ff.
- PICES 8* TADDESE BEYENE, ed., *Proceedings of the Eighth International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, University of Addis Ababa (26–30 November) 1984*, I–II (Addis Ababa: Institute of Ethiopian Studies–Frankfurt am Main: Frobenius Institut, Johann Wolfgang Goethe Universität, 1988–1989).
- PICES 10* C. LEPAGE and É. DELAGE, eds, *Études éthiopiennes: Actes de la Xe Conférence internationale des études éthiopiennes, Paris, 24–28 août 1988* (Paris: Société française pour les études éthiopiennes, 1994).
- PO* *Patrologia Orientalis*, 1903ff.
- RIÉ* É. BERNAND, A.J. DREWES, and R. SCHNEIDER, *Recueil des inscriptions de l'Éthiopie des périodes pré-axoumite et axoumite*, I: *Les documents*, II: *Les planches* (Paris: (Académie des inscriptions et belle-lettres) Diffusion de Boccard, 1991).
- RRALm* *Rendiconti della Reale Accademia dei Lincei, Classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche*, Roma, 1892ff.
- RSE* *Rassegna di Studi Etiopici*, Roma, 1941–1981, Roma–Napoli, 1983ff.
- SAe* *Scriptores Aethiopici*.

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exploring the hypothesis already advanced by Conti Rossini of possible Tigrinisms in the text.⁶

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DENIS NOSNITSIN, ed., *Ecclesiastic Landscape of North Ethiopia: Proceedings of the International Workshop Ecclesiastic Landscape of North Ethiopia: History, Change and Cultural Heritage. Hamburg, July 15–16, 2011*, Supplement to *Aethiopica: International Journal of Ethiopian and Eritrean Studies*, 2 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2014). xviii, 188 pp., 130 ills, 4 maps, 6 tables. Price: € 36.–. ISBN: 978-3-447-10102-8.

This book is a collection of papers presented at a workshop held in Hamburg on July 15–16, 2011. Edited by Denis Nosnitsin, it has been published as a supplement to *Aethiopica. International Journal of Ethiopian and Eritrean Studies*. After the ‘Preface’ (pp. vii–x) and a ‘Presentation’ by Gianfranco Fiaccadori (pp. xi–xvii), one finds three sections. The first part is introductory, the second focuses on monastic networks and the last concentrates on case studies. Following the index, colourful plates give a picture of the various sites described in the articles.

In the preface, Denis Nosnitsin describes the workshop as part of a project called Ethio-SPaRe, which stands for ‘Cultural Heritage of Christian Ethiopia – Salvation, Preservation and Research’. The project aims at studying Ethiopian manuscripts in the light of their ‘historical, geographical and social context’ and the concept ‘ecclesiastic network’ is used and explained in this connection. Following this Gianfranco Fiaccadori gives a summary of the various articles and an explanation of Ethio-SpaRe’s significance.

The main subject of the book is introduced by two articles. The first, by Denis Nosnitsin, ‘Ecclesiastic Landscape of North Ethiopia: Methodologies and Types of Approach’ (pp. 3–13), deals with practical issues for the study of historical Christian sites in northern Ethiopia. Valuable information in this field is given in a brief summary of previous research on the same geographi-

⁶ In keeping with the *Aethiopica* policy, I will limit myself to the minimum with regard to typos and minor errors: note however that on p. 19 (315) (also p. 43 (339), n. 48) the right name is (Ruffillo) ‘Perini’, not ‘Perilli’; and that some names are frequently misspelt, for example (p. 5 (301)) ‘Nāwayā’, instead of ‘Nəwayā’, ‘Dāmyanos’ instead of ‘Dəmyanos’; there is also an extensive vocalization of sixth orders (‘Barākənaha’, *passim*, instead of ‘Barāknaha’, etc.), including laryngeals in final position (‘Ḍgzi’ə’, etc.) that is not justified.

cal area, including approaches and methods. The second article by Kebede Amare, called 'Churches and monasteries of Təgray: Cultural Heritage' (pp. 15–21), sketches the background of the cultural heritage of northern Ethiopia, including the history of Christianization in northern Ethiopia and monasticism. It also clarifies procedures and prospects concerning the cultural heritage of the region.

Part 2, labelled 'Monastic Networks', begins with the article of Antonella Brita and is titled 'Ecclesiastic sites of the Nine Saints and Monastic Networks' (pp. 26–47). The article identifies two stages in the veneration of the Nine Saints in the Ethiopian tradition, the first being close, in terms of time, to the period in which the Nine Saints lived. The characteristics of this first stage are found in biographies of the Nine Saints, based on oral traditions. The second stage is an expansion and amplification of the stories related to the saints. Brita suggests various internal (e.g. theological controversies) and external (e.g. the spread of Islam) reasons for the evolution of these traditions and argues that the later stage itself may be divided into two sub-stages; in the first, from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century, one finds the emergence of biographies (*gädlät*). The second stage, extending from the nineteenth to the twentieth century, makes a second group of biographies, consisting of more new material reflecting the more recent context.

The next article of Part 2, 'Finding the Ewoṣṣateans', is written by Michael Gervers (pp. 49–59). After comparing the two Ethiopian saintly figures, Ewoṣṣatewos (1273–1352) and Täklä Haymanot (1215–1313), Gervers lists the main sources of information concerning the *Ewoṣṣateans*, explaining why the group expanded into other regions, especially to Eritrea but also to the west, more precisely, to the region of Lake Ṭana and to southern Təgray. Among these biographies of the founder and his followers, iconography and the dedication of a *tabot* in the name of one of Ewoṣṣatewos' followers are described. Unlike the oft mentioned theory of persecution, Gervers suggested that the spread of the movement to today's Eritrea can be traced to a missionary thrust from the epicentre, the monastery of Däbrä Ṣärabi, in Təgray.

The third article of Part 2, 'New Branches of the Stephanite Monastic Network? Cases of Some Under-Explored Sites in East Təgray' (pp. 61–88), by Nosnitsin, focuses on the monasteries that seem to have had a link with that of Gundä Gunde. He also describes in detail the sites and the collections of manuscripts found in the various monasteries in eastern Təgray, with special attention to references to Stephanite movements. Thus two monasteries, namely Maryam Ḥarenät Gäbäzäyiti and Kidanä Məḥrät Däbrä Gännät Mäḵod'ä were seen to have a historical relationship with the Gundä Gunde monastery. Monasteries that show historical links were closer to the centre and further from royal sites. A change must have taken place after a

few centuries, especially at the end of the seventeenth century, due to the growing influence of the saintly figure, Mäzğäbä Šəllase.

Part 3 of the book includes three case studies. The first case study by Stéphane Ancel is dedicated to a ‘Historical Overview of the Church of ʿAddiqäharsi Päraqlitōs (Gulo Mäḳäda): Site, Traditions and Library’ (pp. 91–105). According to the article, the site has historical remains both from the pre-Aksumite and the Aksumite period. Maps are given depicting the sites. Archaeological remains such as pillars are identified and their association with the Christian or the pre-Christian era is discussed. Ancel focuses on the manuscript collection of the Church of ʿAddiqäharsi Päraqlitōs, dividing the manuscripts according to both their content and their dating. Attention is also given to the biographies of the seven ‘Righteous Ones’ (*Gädlä Šadqan zä-Päraqlitōs*) represented in six manuscripts whose characteristics are illustrated in the table on page 101; differences of a textual and a non-textual nature are exposed in the following pages. The transmission history of the biography of the ‘Righteous Ones’ is illustrated in table 2 (stemma codicum, p. 104).

The second case study is presented by Vitagrazia Pisani and deals with ‘Manuscripts and Scribes of the Church of Däbrä Gännät Qəddəst Šəllase Mədrä Ruba (Gulo Mäḳäda)’ (pp. 107–117). About sixty manuscripts are identified, of which fifty have been digitized by the project team. After explaining their classification, some manuscripts are described based on content, on codicological and paleographic observations. Pisani also describes the characteristics of Wäldä Muse’s writing, the scribe responsible for many of the manuscripts of Mədrä Ruba Šəllase, written during the second half of the nineteenth century. Comparison is made with older styles of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

The same scribe Wäldä Muse is given prominence in the last case study written by Denis Nosnitsin on ‘The Charters of the Four Gospels Book of Däbrä Mašo’ (pp. 119–131). Attention is given to a manuscript displaying five documents and dealing with ecclesiastical issues such as prayers and dedications, some of which go back to the fourteenth century. On the one hand, the documents recognize one sovereign, but they also seem to make a false distinction between King ʿAmdä Šəyon and Gäbrä Mäsqäl as if they were two different persons. The charters reveal the importance and antiquity of Däbrä Mašo.

The contributions give an interesting panorama of the monastic activities, relationships and movements in northern Ethiopia. As affirmed more than once in the conclusions of the papers, further investigations are required to deepen the knowledge of that area where Christianity was introduced into Ethiopia.

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The studies offer a deeper understanding of the complexity of the issues, but much remains to be explained. Besides political and strategic questions, one may also think of theological, religious, artistic or other factors.

In this connection, one might explore further aspects of life in these ancient monasteries. The role of community life versus eremitic, issues of diet, types of prayer, missionary activity, time-table and other similar questions would enhance studies on history, geography and social context, already enriched by Ethio-SPaRe's valuable and significant contribution.

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PREDRAG BUKOVEC, ed., *Christlicher Orient im Porträt – Wissenschaftsgeschichte des Christlichen Orients. Kongreßakten der 1. Tagung der RVO (4. Dezember 2010, Tübingen)*, I–II, Religionen im Vorderen Orient, 2, 3 (Hamburg: Verlag Dr. Kovač, 2014). 1131 (680 (1–680) + 451 (681–1131)) pp. Price: € 259.60 (129.80 + 129.80). ISBN: 978-3-8300-7813-5; 978-3-8300-7812-8.

This massive two-volume work of 1,131 pages contains the proceedings of the first conference of the series 'Religionen im Vorderen Orient', held in Tübingen in 2010 and devoted to the history of Christian oriental studies seen through the biographies of several outstanding personalities in the field during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. To my knowledge, no such attempt has yet been made, and this work is more than welcome. It should be said that 'Christian Orient' is understood here in its broader sense, so as to encompass—besides the traditionally established 'six languages' (namely, Syriac, Coptic, Ethiopic, Arabic, Armenian, and Georgian) corresponding for example to the six linguistic subseries of the *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium* or to single chapters in M. Albert et al., *Christianismes orientaux. Introduction a l'étude des langues et des littératures*, Initiations au christianisme ancien (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1993)—the Byzantine and particularly the Slavonic area. These latter fields—the 'Byzantine and Slav(on)ic area'—are more commonly considered to be a branch in their own right and previous attempts in the golden age of Christian oriental studies between the end of the nineteenth and especially in the earliest decades of the twentieth century did not yet include Georgian.¹ As a matter of fact, however, one can confidently

¹ See for example the interesting passage from C. Brockelmann, ed., *Geschichte der christlichen Litteraturen des Orients*, Die Litteraturen des Ostens in Einzeldarstellungen (2nd edn, Leipzig: C.F. Amelangs Verlag, 1909), including only Syriac together with Christian Arabic, Armenian, Coptic, and Ethiopic, to A. Baumstark, *Die christ-*