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**Review**

ANDREA NICOLOTTI, *Esorcismo cristiano e possessione diabolica tra II e III secolo*

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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, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2003; II: D–Ha, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2005; III: He–N, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2007; (in cooperation with A. BAUSI), IV: O–X, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010; A. BAUSI (ed. in cooperation with S. UHLIG), V: Y–Z, *Supplementa, Addenda et Corrigenda, Maps, Index*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2014.
- EFAH* Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Orient-Abteilung, Epigraphische Forschungen auf der Arabischen Halbinsel, herausgegeben im Auftrag des Instituts von NORBERT NEBES.
- EMML* Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library, Addis Ababa.
- IJAHS* *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Boston, MA – New York 1968ff.
- JAH* *The Journal of African History*, Cambridge 1960ff.
- JES* *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, Addis Ababa 1963ff.
- JSS* *Journal of Semitic Studies*, Manchester 1956ff.
- NEASt* *Northeast African Studies*, East Lansing, MI 1979ff.
- OrChr* *Oriens Christianus*, Leipzig – Roma – Wiesbaden 1901ff.
- OrChrP* *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, Roma 1935ff.
- PICES 15* S. UHLIG – M. BULAKH – D. NOSNITSIN – T. RAVE (eds.) 2005, *Proceedings of the XV<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, Hamburg July 20–25, 2003* = *AethFor* 65, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- PICES 16* H. ASPEN – BIRHANU TEFERRA – SHIFERAW BEKELE – S. EGE (eds.) 2010, *Research in Ethiopian Studies: Selected papers of the 16<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, Trondheim July 2007* = *AethFor* 72, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- PO* *Patrologia Orientalis*, 1903ff.
- RIÉ* É. BERNAND – A. J. DREWES – R. SCHNEIDER 1991, *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.
- RSE* *Rassegna di Studi Etiopici*, Roma 1941–1981, Roma – Napoli 1983ff.
- SAe* *Scriptores Aethiopici*.
- ZDMG* *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, Leipzig – Wiesbaden – Stuttgart 1847ff.

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durchaus geeignet für deutschsprachige Leser, die sich einen ersten Eindruck von den Christen in Äthiopien verschaffen wollen. Es ist eine interessante Lektüre mit vielen Anekdoten im Stile Friedrich Heyers, die auf persönlichen Erfahrungen und Eindrücken in Äthiopien sowie auf Gesprächen mit Äthiopiern beruhen.

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ANDREA NICOLOTTI, *Esorcismo cristiano e possessione diabolica tra II e III secolo* = *Instrumenta patristica et mediaevalia*. Research on the Inheritance of Early and Medieval Christianity 54, Turnhout: Brepols, 2011. 808 pp. Price: € 160.–. ISBN: 978-2-503-53193-9.

This voluminous contribution by Andrea Nicolotti stems from his Ph.D. work at the University of Turin, supervised by Giovanni Filoramo, Claudio Gianotto and Adele Monaci, and defended in 2005. So far it is the most comprehensive, rich and substantial study of the origin and development of the practice of Christian exorcism and treatment of diabolic possession in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries A.D. After a presentation of the state of the art (ch. 1, pp. 23–29) and the outline of a comprehensive interpretation of the practice (ch. 2, pp. 31–101), the largest part of the work is devoted to the examination of the relevant sources, extensively quoted and commented in detail. The sources are arranged in chronological order (chs. 3–23, pp. 103–584), from the Old Testament premises up to 3<sup>rd</sup>-century witnesses, and include patristic authors (Justin the Martyr, Tatian, Theophilus of Antioch, Theodotus the Gnostic, Irenaeus, Celsus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Tertullian, Minucius Felix, Cyprian, Firmilianus, Cornelius and Novatianus) and apocryphal literature (*Acts* of John, Andrew, Paul and Thomas), while mentioning many more authors. As the author acknowledges (p. 19), neither the New Testament nor the pseudo-Clementine romans (the Greek *Homiliae*, the Syriac and Latin *Recognitiones*) were considered: exorcism in the New Testament is a well studied topic, whereas the latter pseudo-Clementine dossier will be the subject of a separate contribution by the author. Two appendixes are devoted to the *Traditio apostolica* (App. 1, pp. 585–620) and the pseudo-Clementine *Epistle to the Virgins* (App. 2, pp. 621–626). The unfortunately brief “Conclusion” (pp. 627–629) is followed by a useful summary in English (pp. 631–682), a substantial bibliography (pp. 683–788) and an index of names of ancient and modern authors (pp. 789–808).

The interest of this contribution for the Ethiopianists is twofold. On the one hand, the author does consider certain Ethiopic texts: falling within the scope

of the book, once more they demonstrate the importance of the Ethiopic written tradition for research, not only of the Christian Oriental world, but also of the ancient Christian practice. With respect to this, the older Ethiopic version of the *Traditio apostolica*<sup>1</sup> is of particular importance. This text is crucial in defining the liturgy of the exorcism of the elect (catechumens), the baptismal exorcism, the nudity of the exorcized, the exorcized oil and the oil of exorcism, the exorcized bread, and the sign of the cross as instrumental in carrying out the exorcism (see pp. 593–620). On the other hand, the same contents transmitted within the *Sinodos* – in a similar, although at a later point and revised, actually new independent version of the *Traditio apostolica* – have been widely disseminated and accepted as an authoritative heritage in the Ethiopian Church up to the present: aspects of Ethiopian Christian Orthodox practice, for example, about the usage and the meaning of the cross and the healing of the diabolic possession through exorcism, has to be ascribed to a direct ancient Christian background, that has been wonderfully explained in this book.

In this sense, it is highly regrettable that the recent bibliography of the Ethiopian liturgy by Habtemichael-Kidane<sup>2</sup> does not include an entry on “exorcism” (Ethiopic *rəqet*) in the detailed index (“Indice delle materie”, pp. 113–120). Among the extensive bibliography available to scholars on healing, magico-religious and demonological practices and texts in Ethiopia, the reconnection to exorcism is explicitly stated only in the pioneeristic study by the great scholar B. Turaiev “Efiopskija orationes falsae y exorcismi”.<sup>3</sup> This is in keeping with an approach to exorcism quite common in Ethiopian studies, where it belongs to the comprehensive category of “healing” in anthropology, or that of “baptizing” in liturgy (quite erroneously, since apart from pre-baptismal exorcism, other kinds of exorcisms exist and are to some extent liturgically regulated), or that of “saintly activity”, commonly performed by saints, monks, etc., in hagiography respectively; in the latter case, however, exorcism is exclusively researched as a hagiographic *tópos*. In a strictly Christian liturgical perspective the integration of exor-

<sup>1</sup> See now the new edition by the present reviewer, A. BAUSI, “La ‘nuova’ versione etiopica della *Traditio apostolica*: edizione e traduzione preliminare”, in: P. BUZI – A. CAMPLANI (eds.), *Christianity in Egypt: Literary Production and Intellectual Trends. Studies in Honour of Tito Orlandi* = *Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum* 125, Roma: Augustinianum, 2011, pp. 19–69.

<sup>2</sup> HABTEMICHAEL-KIDANE, *Bibliografia della liturgia etiopica* = *Orientalia Christiana Analecta* 280, Roma: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 2008.

<sup>3</sup> B. TURAIEV, “Efiopskija orationes falsae y exorcismi”, in: לחם חמדות לדניאל איש חמדות / *Recueil des travaux rédigés en mémoire du jubilé scientifique de M. Daniel Chwolson, 1846–1896*, Berlin: S. Calvary & Co., Éditeurs, 1899, pp. 242–267 (not in the bibliography by Habtemichael-Kidane).

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cism into a broader anthropological, magico-religious perspective has probably been detrimental to a more technical appreciation of exorcism practice. The “charismatic” character of Ethiopian exorcism, not necessarily performed by a clergy specifically ordained for exorcism (as it was, for example, the case in the Catholic Church until 1972, when the ordination of the exorcists was abolished, see p. 627 of the book here reviewed), has contributed to this understanding. Within the broader analysis it is desirable that Ethiopian healing practices,<sup>4</sup> and the liturgical aspects of exorcism gain the appreciation and acknowledgement they deserve.

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GETATCHEW HAILE (ed.), *The Homily of Zär'a Ya'eqob's Mäṣḥafä Bərhan on the Rite of Baptism and Religious Instruction* = CSCO 653/SAe 114, Louvain: Peeters, 2013. xix, 117 S. Preis: € 79,-. ISBN: 978-90-429-2752-0. – GETATCHEW HAILE (tr.), *The Homily of Zär'a Ya'eqob's Mäṣḥafä Bərhan on the Rite of Baptism and Religious Instruction* = CSCO 654/SAe 115, Louvain: Peeters, 2013. viii, 85 S. Preis: € 69,-. ISBN: 978-90-429-2753-7.

Die Bedeutung des äthiopischen Königs *aṣe* Zär'a Ya'eqob (reg. 1434–68) liegt nicht nur in seinen militärischen und außenpolitischen Erfolgen, sondern auch in den umfangreichen Reformen, denen er die äthiopische Kirche unterzog, und deren Auswirkungen z.T. bis heute andauern. Zu seinen Zielen gehörte die Vereinheitlichung der religiösen Praxis, um Kirchenspaltungen vorzubauen, die Gläubigen zu verstärktem Gottesdienst anzuhalten, um die Basis der Kirche zu verbreitern, und die Kirche stärker an die eigene politische Führung heranzuführen, um so letztlich einem theokratischen Ideal zu genügen. Dazu wurde von ihm selbst oder unter seiner Anleitung ein umfangreiches theologisches Werk in Angriff genommen, um die angesprochenen Ideale theoretisch und theologisch zu untermauern und zu propagieren. Eines der bedeutendsten Werke aus diesem opus ist die Homiliensammlung *Mäṣḥafä Bərhan*, das ‘Buch des Lichtes’. Das *Mäṣḥafä Bərhan* wurde schon vor langer Zeit durch Carlo Conti Rossini und Lanfranco Ricci herausgegeben (CSCO 250–251, 261–262/SAe 47–48, 51–52). Die hier von Getatchew Haile herausgegebene Homilie war in den von Conti Rossini und Ricci zugrunde gelegten Hand-

<sup>4</sup> See for example J. MERCIER, *Art that Heals: the Image as Medicine in Ethiopia*, With an essay by Henry Maldiney, München: Prestel, The Museum for African Art, 1997.