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Review

HUGUES FONTAINE, *African Train/Un train en Afrique, Djibouti-Éthiopie: ኢትዮጵያ የባቡር ወጎች/African Train*

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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 XVth 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 16th 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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verse in another couplet. Therefore, the consistency of a song is ensured by interwoven rhymes and patterns.

If the Betä ʿĪsraʾel share many aspects of their musical culture with other Ethiopians, *Aliya* songs are definitely peculiar to them. *Aliya* is the Hebrew word for “emigration” of Jews to Palestine-Israel. Thus, Amharic *Aliya* songs tell Ethiopian Jews’ “return” to Israel and the hope placed in their promised land, but also the suffering to attain it and the loss of their native land.

Herman concludes her book with the *Aliya* songs, because they are praises to the earth by those who were called *Falasyan* in Ethiopia, that is to say “stray”, “landless”.

In the end, *Gondar’s Child* is a readable narrative, a book accessible to non-musicologists, which provides a good introduction to Ethiopian music. Moreover, audio recordings are freely available on the publisher website: www.africaworldpressbooks.com/gondars-child.html.

Nevertheless, one may challenge the representativeness of the sample, insofar as it consists of one band, Porachat HaTikva, and not of the entire community of “Ethiopian Jews in Israel”, to quote the subtitle’s words.

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HUGUES FONTAINE, *African Train/Un train en Afrique, Djibouti~Éthiopie: ኢትዮጵያ ላይ የሰላም ወገን*/African Train, Addis Ababa: Centre français des études éthiopiennes – Shama Books, 2012. 309 pp. Price: € 39.90. ISBN: 978-99944-867-1-7.

Hugues Fontaine is a French photographer and documentary film maker and has published several books in which he presents his photographs of Egypt, Yemen or Eritrea. To my knowledge, the present book is his first one about Ethiopia and Djibouti. *Un train en Afrique* is not a scientific book about the Addis Abāba–Djibouti train and its history, but a photo book that presents the photographic work of the author. Fontaine went to Dərre Dawa in autumn 2010, and while there he made a series of portraits of railway workers and photographed railway workshops. The author focuses on workers’ faces and details of machinery, with some larger views of the workshops. The aim of the book is obviously to document an industrial heritage and to highlight the role of railway workers in its development and its conservation. The informative aspect of the photos becomes less important than the author’s ability to share the atmosphere of places and the feeling of individuals portrayed. His photos reflect the pride of the railway

workers, but at the same time gives the impression of moving within an open air museum and transmitting the nostalgic atmosphere of the place.

The photographic work of the author represents only a part of the book (his own photos are mainly gathered from page 147 to page 210, but many are dispatched throughout the book). The present book presents also photographic works of Matthieu Germain Lambert (pp. 211–228) and of Pierre Javelot (pp. 291–303), two French photographers who both had the chance to capture images of the train and of its passengers while it was still running. *Un train en Afrique* presents superb photographic works. Instead of “only” presenting a beautiful photo book, Hugues Fontaine was able to collect an impressive amount of iconographic material about the Addis Abäba–Djibouti train. The historical dimension of the book is real and makes up the most important part. A huge amount of photos, both from institutional and private collections has been published here with postcards, train tickets or letters that complete the impressive iconographic panorama of the history of the Addis Abäba–Djibouti train, from its beginning to the Ḥaylä Šällase’s period.

The book is divided in several chapters and unfortunately the chapter division is not really clear: the author chose to divide his book according to historical events, locations or individuals. At times the reader is lost and can also wonder about why the chapter on Griaule’s Dakar–Djibouti expedition of 1930 comes after the author’s photographic work in Dərre Dawa in 2010. However, texts in French and English bring clear information and explanations. Of course some details can be criticized and vagueness can be highlighted. For example, the battle of ʿAdwa did not “federate Ethiopian tribes” as the author wrote on page 52. The translation of the official title of Queen Zäwditu was not “Queen of kings”, as written on page 104 (but “Queen of Queens”). And it is difficult to understand why the name of the train station of Addis Abäba (in Amharic directly from the French “la gare”) is transliterated as “Lagahar” rather than “lagar” (p. 264). Nevertheless, the amount of the iconographic material, the beauty of photographic works and the quality of the edition outshine minor problems posed by the text or the chapter division. This book is particularly well done and extremely pleasant to read. Obviously intended for a large audience, this book will be appreciated by scholars too.

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