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Review

GETACHEW HAILE, *A History of the First Ḥṣṭifanosite Monks*

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Editorial

The present issue of AETHIOPICA, like the preceding one, is partly monographic, with a section containing the proceedings of the Panel on Islamic Literature in Ethiopia: New Perspectives of Research, from the '19th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies', held in Warsaw, Poland, on 24–28 August 2015.

Starting from this issue, the annual bibliography on Ethiopian Semitic and Cushitic linguistics held from its inception in 1998 for eighteen years by Rainer Voigt is handed over, on Voigt's own will, to a pool of younger scholars, with the substantial support of the AETHIOPICA editorial team. I would like on this occasion to express the deep gratitude of the editorial board of AETHIOPICA and of all scholars in Ethiopian Semitic and Cushitic linguistics to Rainer Voigt for his fundamental and valuable contribution.

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.
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).
EI² *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, I–XII (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1960–2005).
EMML Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library, Addis Ababa.
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.
PICES 9 A.A. GROMYKO, ed., 1988, *Proceedings of the Ninth International Congress of Ethiopian Studies, Moscow, 26–29 August 1986*, I–VI (Moscow: Nauka Publishers, Central Department of Oriental Literature, 1988).
RSE *Rassegna di Studi Etiopici*, Roma, 1941–1981, Roma–Napoli 1983ff.
ZDMG *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, Leipzig–Wiesbaden–Stuttgart 1847ff.

Reviews

the Zag^we Dynasty and King Yəmrəḥannä Krəstos', must do so with mixed feelings. On the one hand it displays a typical example of Fiaccadori's unrivalled mastery of the sources and of his elegant presentation. Given the uncertainty that governs so much of what we think we know about the Zag^we, his decisiveness and breathe of knowledge can be said to be almost too clear. No one interested in this period in Ethiopian history or the legendary figure of Prester John can ignore his erudition. As is so often the case with the greatest of scholars, brief comments in notes (cf. 7, 64 and esp. 47 and 111) are as interesting as the longer discussions in the main text. And yet, as one reads, it is difficult to ignore the fact that there will be no further works from this distinguished author.

Taken as a whole the articles in this volume are of the highest quality. Their variety and breadth means that this volume will appeal to a varied audience. The authors and particularly the editor are to be congratulated.

Steven Kaplan, Hebrew University of Jerusalem

GETATCHEW HAILE, *A History of the First Ḥṣṭifanosite Monks*, CSCO, 635, 636, Sae, 112, 113 (Lovanii: in aedibus Peeters, 2011). vii, 109 pp., xii, 81 pp. Price: € 60.00, € 55.00. ISBN: 978-90-429-2512-0, 978-90-429-2513-7.

After publishing the *Vita* of Ḥṣṭifanos of Gundä Gunde (or Däbrä Garzen) for the same series, Getatchew Haile has now made available the text of a *codex unicus*, MS Schneider 63, paleographically dated to the late fifteenth century. The manuscript, briefly described in the introduction, was digitized in 2008 by the Hill Museum and Manuscript Library as HMML 17 (*olim* C-IV-152 according to the shelfmark of the Ethiopian Ministry of Culture). Editorial criteria are clearly assessed: the text is faithfully reproduced as it appears in the manuscript; scribal errors are minimally emended and recorded in the apparatus.

The narrative provides historical information on the dissident Stephanite (Ḥṣṭifanosite) movement during the life of their spiritual leader Ḥṣṭifanos (1397/1398–1444 CE) and following his death. A reasonable dating for the text is the mid-fifteenth century: the text was undoubtedly written after the composition of the *Gädlä Ḥṣṭifanos*, to which the author of our *History* frequently refers, and possibly when Ḥṣṭifanos' successor *abba* Abäkäräzun (1394/1395–1476 CE) was still alive. Some clues indicate a short interval between the events recorded and the composition of the text, e.g. which the almost systematic employment of the evasive formulas *əgäle* 'so and so' and

‘the founder/head of the Community’ in place of Ḥṣṭifanos and Abäkäräzun respectively. In this regard, in the passage where Ḥṣṭifanos compares himself to the first martyr of Antioch without naming him (ed. p. 60.6–7/tr. p. 43, n. 136), the proposed identification with St George is questionable, and the assumption that Giyorgis was another name for Ḥṣṭifanos is not supported elsewhere. The passage may well refer to Stephen of Antioch, commemorated in the *Sənkəssar* on 9 Ṭəqəmt as ቀዳሜ ፡ ሰማዕት ፡ ዘእንጾኪያ ፡.

The work enriches our knowledge of the literary heritage produced by the Stephanite movement at the time of *ase* Zär’a Ya’qob’s fierce persecution. Besides the *Vita* of the spiritual leader (whose authorship is in our text attributed to Tāwäldä Mādḥən and *abunä* Gäbrä Krəstos, ed. p. 19.27–28/tr. p. 15.31–32), MS EMMML no. 4, partially edited by Robert Beylot,¹ and the *Gädlä Abäkäräzun*, published by Carlo Conti Rossini has also to be mentioned.² The correlation with the latter deserves a remark: some of the parallel passages are almost identical, e.g. the account of Ḥṣṭifanos’ imprisonment (ed. pp. 2–3/tr. p. 2, cp. *Gädlä Abäkäräzun*, ed. pp. 10–11/tr. p. 10), the chronological formula referring to 1428/1429 CE (ed. p. 5/tr. p. 4, cp. *Gädlä Abäkäräzun*, ed. p. 13/tr. p. 12), and the journey to Mätära (ed. p. 66/tr. p. 47, cp. *Gädlä Abäkäräzun*, ed. p. 19/tr. p. 17), and may ultimately involve some sort of textual dependence that future investigation will hopefully be able to assess.

A number of passages will capture the attention of specialists in several fields. Historians will not fail to underscore the information that the king was secretly deposed and a nobleman was held power in the absence of a newly crowned ruler (ed. p. 23/tr. p. 18), a narrative which substantiates the analogous account reported in a manuscript from Däbrä Wärq (eastern Goḡḡam).³ Nevertheless, it seems unlikely that the next king, who issued a favourable verdict for Ḥṣṭifanos, was Yəṣṣḥaq (as claimed by the editor, tr. p. 19, n. 76): at the time Yəṣṣḥaq was crowned (1414 CE), Ḥṣṭifanos was not even a deacon. The obscure takeover must have occurred between 1429 and

¹ R. Beylot, ‘Actes des Pères et Frères de Debra Garzen: introduction et instructions spirituelles et théologiques d’Estifanos’, *AE*, 15 (1990), 7–43.

² K. Conti Rossini, ed., tr. 1910. *Vitae sanctorum indigenarum*. I: *Acta S. Abakerazun*. II: *Acta Takla Hawaryat*, CSCO, 56, 57, SAE, 25, 26 (Parisiis: C. Poussielgue–Lipsiae: Harrassowitz, 1910).

³ Tadesse Tamrat, ‘Problems of Royal Succession in Fifteenth Century Ethiopia: A Presentation of the Documents’, in *IV Congresso Internazionale di Studi Etiopici (Roma, 10–15 aprile 1972)*, *Problemi attuali di scienza e di cultura*, 191 (Roma: Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, 1974), I, 501–535, especially pp. 512–513.

1434, when four barely known kings succeeded to the throne: ʾEndrəyas, Tāklä Maryam, Śərwä Iyäsus, and ʿAmdä Iyäsus.⁴

Codicologists will focus on ʾEṣṭifanos' parable on the parchment-making process, which tallies with present-day observations: 'you brought the goatskin from the markets; after it was brought (to you), did you soak (it) in water? After it was soaked, was it beaten with a stick? After it was beaten, was it hung? Was it flattened and scrubbed? Having been scrubbed, was it washed and did it become clean?' (ed. pp. 39–40/tr. p. 29). That the production of books played a significant role among the Stephanites comes to light in a further passage where the author states that, out of the nine abodes into which the brothers were divided, one was dedicated to 'writing books' (ወጳዘ ይጽሕፍ ፣ መጽሐፈ ፣, ed. p. 18.4/tr. p. 14.19). Specialists of literary studies will not overlook the dispute around the status of the 'Book of Monasticism' (*Mäṣḥafä mənkwəsənnä*, ed. pp. 10–11/tr. p. 9), which saw ʾEṣṭifanos' fervent defence of its authority controverted by those who rejected the book as non-canonical. A reference to the 'Book of Monasticism' is also found in the *Gädlä Abäkäräzun*.⁵ Lexicographers will record entries unattested so far, such as *mäggälä* 'to post something as a shield' (tr. p. 31, n. 103), which parenthetically clears up an ambiguous passage in the *Gädlä Fiqtör* of Däbrä Maryam Q^wäḥayn.⁶ Finally, historical geographers will come across a further occurrence of the mysterious place-name *məsk^w a^c məḥyakä mäla²əkt* (ed. p. 78.2–3/tr. p. 56.10), which complements other references in Stephanite hagiographical works. The site, designated as a place of detention for political opponents, seems to be G^wəṅṣ in northern Śäwa.⁷

The appendix, containing biographical data on ʾEṣṭifanos, 'must have been added later' (ed. p. 73, n. 242), although no explanation is given as to whether it is written in a different hand or not. Therefore, the conclusive sentence 'we send this to you', noticeably involving an epistolary purpose, leaves open the question as to whether it was the original text (as maintained by the editor, tr. p. vii) or a particular *testimonium* written in order to be delivered to another monastery.

⁴ The *aše* in ʾEṣṭifanos' time was perhaps Tāklä Maryam (1430–1433), see 'ʾEṣṭifanos', *EAE*, II (2005), 390a–391b (S. Kaplan and D. Nosnitsin).

⁵ C. Conti Rossini, *Notice sur les manuscrits éthiopiens de la collection d'Abbadie* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1914), p. 115, no. 78.

⁶ The phrase ወልታ ፣ ሃይማኖት ፣ መገለ ፣, translated 'lo scudo della fede il vangelo' with tacit emendation of መገለ ፣ into ወንጌል ፣, is rather to be rendered 'he took up the shield of faith', see Tedros Abraha, ed., tr., *I Gädl di Abunä Täwäldä-Mädehn e di Abunä Vittore: Edizione del testo etiopico e traduzione italiana*, *Patrologia Orientalis*, 51/2 (227) (Turnhout: Brepols, 2009), 124.10/125.11.

⁷ See 'G^wəṅṣ', *EAE*, II (2005), 944b (Getatchew Haile).

Reviews

The text is edited with accuracy: misprints are scarce (e.g., p. 8.3: ረከብዎ ሙ ፣ instead of ረከብዎሙ ፣; p. 27.13: ያአማሩ ፣ instead of ያአምሩ ፣; p. 33.18 and 33.21: ከፍለ ፣ and ከፍል ፣ instead of ከፍለ ፣ and ከፍል ፣ respectively; p. 39.21: አነደ ፣ instead of አነዳ ፣; p. 49.21: ከሳዱ ፣ instead of ከሳዱ ፣; p. 54.6: እስዩ ፣ instead of ርእስዩ ፣). The emendation of አማዕዋቲሁ ፣ ‘intestines’ into አማዑቲሁ ፣ (p. 54.11) seems unnecessary: the word is attested in the dictionaries. The translation is likewise accurate and misprints are of very minor significance, e.g.: p. 13, n. 56: ‘Həllawəyat’ instead of ‘Həlluna’; p. 15.4: ‘Mdāḥ ən’ instead of ‘Mādḥən’; p. 27.14: ‘lived’ instead of ‘lives’. Biblical quotations and allusions are detected throughout. Among the non-biblical sources references are made to Pāntālewōn of the cell (tr. p. 31, n. 102), the Martyrs of Nagran (tr. p. 68.14–15), Ḥmrayəs (tr. p. 68.22), and Peter Archbishop of Alexandria (tr. p. 69, n. 236).

In conclusion, scholars can be sincerely grateful to Getatchew Haile for presenting a new historical source that opens new possibilities for our understanding of an indisputably intriguing chapter of medieval Ethiopia.

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GETATCHEW HAILE, *Voices from Däbrä Zämäddo: Acts of Abba Bärtälomewos and Abba Yoḥannəs. 45 Miracles of Mary*, *Aethiopistische Forschungen*, 79 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2013). xii, 273 pp., index. Price: € 64.00. ISBN: 978-3-447-10068-7.

With his first publication in the series *Aethiopistische Forschungen* Getatchew Haile offers an edition and an annotated translation of the unpublished hagiographical texts (*Lives* and hymns) of St Bärtälomewos and St Yoḥannəs, two abbots of the famous monastery of Däbrä Zämäddo,¹ Lasta, Ethiopia, who lived during the first half of the fourteenth century (St Bärtälomewos) and the second half of the fifteenth century (St Yoḥannəs); i.e. Part One of the book. In Part Two, the author provides the edition and translation of forty-five local miracles worked by St Mary, mainly for the different members of the community of Däbrä Zämäddo (during the tenures of various abbots) but also at neighbouring places (e.g. in the region of Šəmratä

¹ The monastery with its rock-hewn church is also known as Čämäddo (p. 1), and Žämmädu Maryam or Čämmädu Maryam (‘Žämmädu Maryam’, *EAE*, V (2014), 133a–135b (E. Balicka-Witakowska)). According to the *Gädlä Bärtälomewos* (ed. p. 21, tr. pp. 147, 148), the monastic community of Zämäddo was founded by Bärtälomewos (who placed the *tabot* of St Mary in the cave), and the church was constructed ‘in form of a cross’ during the tenure of Yoḥannəs. For the construction date of the church see also *ibid.* 134b.