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## Personalia

*In memoriam Paul Trevor William Baxter (30 January 1925–1 March 2014)*

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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 X<sup>e</sup> 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*.

Ezra Gebremedhin

from near and far. Sven loved Ethiopia but was very cosmopolitan in his outreach and contacts. Those of us who knew him closely remember him with love and respect. His research will surely continue to bear fruit, not least among those engaged in the history of Ethiopia and related subjects.

**In memoriam Paul Trevor William Baxter  
(30 January 1925–1 March 2014)**

HECTOR BLACKHURST, University of Manchester

P.T.W. (Paul) Baxter, who has died aged 89, was an English social anthropologist who contributed greatly to our knowledge of the culture and social organisation of the Oromo peoples of Ethiopia and northern Kenya. Born in 1925 in Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, Paul was the son of a primary school headmaster who also served as Mayor of Leamington. He was educated at Warwick School and from there won a scholarship to Cambridge. However, like many of his generation, Paul found his education interrupted by the Second World War. He joined the marine commandos and saw service in Holland and occupied Germany. In 1946 Paul took up his place at Cambridge and entered Downing College to study English under the renowned and revered academic and critic F.R. Leavis. A relaxation of the regulations in the immediate post-war years made it possible for a first degree to be awarded after two rather than three years study and Paul was awarded a first class honours degree in English in 1948. However, he continued his studies into a third year and spent his final session reading anthropology. The subject fascinated him but, like a number of his contemporaries, he found the then Cambridge Department wanting and moved to the Institute of Social Anthropology at Oxford, then under the leadership of E.E. Evans-Pritchard. He completed a B.Litt in 1951 and then began to turn his attention to further research and the question of fieldwork. His initial preference was to work in Somaliland but, according to Paul, was blocked by the then Governor who had little time for anthropologists meddling in 'native' affairs. The more enlightened attitude of Richard Turnbull, Governor of Kenya, meant that Paul was able to take up a Colonial Office post and begin research on the Boorana of the Northern Frontier District about whom at that time little was known. He left for Kenya in 1951 accompanied by his wife, Patricia, and their young son Timothy. After two years fieldwork the family returned to Oxford and Paul completed his thesis on the Boorana and was awarded a D.Phil. in 1954. Immediately afterwards Paul

and family left for Uganda where he conducted fieldwork among the Kiga as a Research Fellow at Makerere College. On his return to the UK in 1956 Paul found the employment opportunities for academics were limited but he was fortunate in securing a post teaching anthropology in the University of the Gold Coast. The family spent the next five years in Ghana returning to the UK in 1961. Once again unemployed, Paul was recommended for a temporary post standing in for an absent V.W. Turner in the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology at the University of Manchester founded and, at that point, still led by Max Gluckman. After a year there the family moved to University College Swansea for two years before returning to Manchester in 1964. Paul spent the rest of his professional life there, retiring as Senior Lecturer in 1989.

Two themes have dominated Paul's professional interests: the culture and social organisation of the Oromo and the nature of and possibilities for humane development of pastoral societies. Both clearly derive from his early and influential encounter with the Kenyan Boran, but his interests in pastoralists extended to any part of the world where men and animals lived in that close symbiotic relationship called pastoralism, and his delight in the nuances and complexities of Oromo culture to communities anywhere in Africa as well as the large Oromo diaspora. Paul published substantially in both these areas. He did not, it is true, write the big book on which to build a reputation, but taken as a whole his contribution to his chosen areas of interest has been weighty. On pastoralism, he engaged with debates on pastoral development, frequently exasperated by and, no doubt, exasperating, economists who seemed unable to grasp the subtle interdependencies of pastoral life. His output in this area included journal articles and conference contributions as well as the two edited volumes *Property, Poverty and People: Changing Rights in Property and Problems of Pastoral Development* (1990) and *When the Grass is Gone: Development Intervention in African Arid Lands* (1991).

His work on Oromo culminated in the celebrated volume *Being and Becoming Oromo* (1996) which he edited with Alessandro Triulzi and Jan Hultin. This volume brought together many of the themes then current in Oromo scholarship, many of which are still topical. The conference from which that volume derived was a warm and inspiring meeting in no small measure because of Paul's undisguised pleasure at meeting fellow Oromo scholars and discussing matters of mutual interest with them. This openness and enjoyment of scholarly community was a key characteristic of Paul. It remains a source of puzzlement to many of Paul's friends and associates why another significant contributor to Oromo studies, Asmarom Legesse, should have published in his *Oromo Democracy* (2000) such an intemperate and ill-mannered attack on Paul and his ideas. This went far beyond anything that

might reasonably be called scholarly debate and was utterly incongruous in its deployment of such viciousness against a truly humane and generous man.

Paul was not an Ethiopianist in the true meaning of that term. He was drawn to Ethiopia by the Oromo rather than Ethiopia drawing him to the Oromo. Indeed, he, like many social scientists, was somewhat bemused by the obsessions and assumptions of Ethiopianist scholarship, not least the apparent inability to accept that a non-literate people could have a 'culture'. Ullendorff's now infamous remark about the Oromo rankled then but the same attitude is still encountered today. Paul came to Ethiopia in 1968 to study the Arsi Oromo, an agro-pastoral Muslim people. He quickly established himself, Patricia and his second son, Adam, in Kofele. He was soon aware of many differences between the Boorana and the Arsi Oromo but the one that struck him most forcefully was the political and cultural oppression experienced by the Arsi even though he had worked with the Boorana in 'colonial' Kenya. His observations of Ethiopian oppression were set out in his 1978 article in *African Affairs*. This was not an anthropological treatise but the response of a humane man to what he saw as inexcusable degradation of one people by another. The essay struck a chord with the many politically aware Oromo inside and outside Ethiopia and the article has become a canonical item in the literature of Oromo liberation. Paul himself was also lionised by many Oromo. He was never comfortable with this and has always tried to emphasise the importance of understanding the objective situation of the Oromo not his own personal contribution to analysing this. The publication also aroused the ire of some Ethiopians who threatened to assassinate Paul, along with Richard Greenfield, Basil Davidson and Neil Kinnock, the so-called running dogs of the British Government—distinguished company indeed. Fortunately the would-be hitmen failed in their objective. Believing Paul was actually called Buxter probably did not help their cause.

Paul lived unharmed to a ripe old age. He left behind him many generations of students to whom he had given unstintingly of his help and encouragement. The contributors to his Festschrift, *A River of Blessings* (1994), are testimony to the warmth and high regard he is held in by those who have known him. His life was not without tragedy. His elder son, Timothy, died in 2005 but Paul lived to enjoy the love and companionship of his wife Patricia, his younger son Adam, his grandchildren and great grandchildren, all of whom survive him.