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Preface

It has been six and a half years now since the first volume of the *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica* saw light, and we have arrived to an important landmark: with the exception of approximately 350 remaining articles – most of those beginning with letters Y and Z – the main part of the entire work has been completed. The last outstanding volume, the fifth one, will, along with the aforementioned entries include addenda et corrigenda, overviews, a set of maps and a general index. Thus, the very final stage in the creation of the first ever academic lexicon for a large African cultural region is approaching. The lexicon will create a reliable basis for further research; the index in particular will provide targeted access to its over 4,300 articles.

The humanities – with topics from history and biography, ethnology and linguistics, literature and art history, historical geography and religion – remain at the centre of the *Encyclopaedia's* thematic scope. At the same time, abundant basic data on land and people, the region's resources, its flora and fauna as well as on the social, economic and political developments from the pre-Aksumite times well into the second half of the 20th century is provided. Some of the subjects have been so far little known even to experienced scholars of Ethiopian studies; in many cases extensive primary research had to be conducted for the articles to take their present shape. These new research results inevitably lead to the necessity to be confirmed and developed in the course of further study. The need of a lengthier profound research has in some cases forced us to postpone certain entries until the next volume.

These entry titles appear in the volume in alphabetical order with the endorsement “s. EAE vol. 5”.

I am particularly pleased to acknowledge the active participation of many young scholars in the authorship of the *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*. For some of them, this was an important step in their personal academic development. Supported by the Hamburg editorial team, they could thus acquire the important skills that will, among other things, enable them to advance Ethiopian studies. The fact that a considerable share of authors (ca. 20% in this volume) come from Ethiopia and Eritrea confirms the interest of scholars from the region in this international enterprise which has so far involved over 560 authors from 30 countries.

The *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica* provides a basic research tool for the students and scholars of Ethiopian Studies, more general African Studies or Oriental Studies. Its articles as well as bibliographies for further study make many research areas more easily accessible. Moreover, it has in the meanwhile advanced to become a reference work for those involved in economics, politics, diplomacy and development work. It is among the most consulted publications in many University libraries, including Ethiopian ones, as can be easily seen from the obvious signs of wear and tear.

Such positive feedback from colleagues and users motivates the editorial team, co-editors, advisors, field specialists and authors to bring the joint enterprise to a successful and speedy completion.

Acknowledgements

An international venture such as the *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica* can only succeed thanks to the generous cooperation and support of a large number of persons. In the first place, each and every of the authors should be thanked personally for their dedication. Notwithstanding numerous other commitments, they took the effort to deliver their contributions – and in most cases timely enough for the Hamburg team to have the space for providing the necessary editorial corrections, collecting feedback from reviewers and supplying the articles with maps and illustrations wherever needed. Many had to work under a particular pressure – whether for personal or health reasons, or because they were asked to replace another author – in order to ensure that Volume Four, with its 970 articles, can be completed. To all of them I would like to express my most heartfelt gratitude.

Since the appearance of Volume Three little over two years ago, several former contributors of the *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica* have been snatched by death. They were M. Lionel Bender, Stanisław Chojnacki, Abraham Johannes Drewes, Hussein Ahmed, Joanna Mantel-Niećko, Merid Wolde Aregay and Zewde GebreSellassie. We miss them as friends and colleagues, and we acutely feel the lack of their competence in the project. In one particular case, a text of a longer deceased colleague, Ernst Hammerschmidt (d. 1993), originally published in German, was translated and reused in the current volume (s. the entry Rüppele, Eduard).

The *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica* is a living body, and therefore from volume to volume and from year to year the responsibilities of persons may change. Thus, more often than not, older colleagues withdraw and younger scholars take their place. This development is true for the authorship but also for the peer reviewers, both Field Specialists and the Advisory Board members (s. lists p. x). The Field Specialists, who share the responsibility for the academic quality of the lexicon by assuring that no important scholarly aspect has been omit-

ted, deserve my special thanks. Some colleagues were ready to offer more than advice by correspondence and agreed to actively help the editorial team in its daily work by spending lengthy periods of time in Hamburg. They have therefore formed the Advisory Board for the current volume. Abbebe Kifleyesus, Jon Abbink, Ewa Balicka-Witakowska, Gianfranco Fiaccadori, Alessandro Gori, Jonathan Miran, Didier Morin and Witold Witakowski all found time and energy for this task.

Several scholars have been advising us on several occasions without being an official member of either of the aforementioned groups. Their help was of great value for the scholarly quality of the volume, and I would like to thank all those who have been responding to our queries. In particular, on this occasion I would like to express my gratitude to Gian Paolo Calchi Novati, Matthew Curtis, Eloi Ficquet, Fentahun Tiruneh, Ib Friis, Federica Guazzini, Jan Hultin, Wendy James, Mersha Alehegne and Walter Müller.

I would like to repeat my thanks to all those institutions, archives and private persons who have found it possible to place illustrative materials at the disposal of the *Encyclopaedia*.

As before, David Appleyard bore the main responsibility for the quality of the English used throughout the volume. He was strongly supported in this task by Joe McIntyre. To both colleagues I owe my most deepfelt gratitude. The standard in transliteration of Ethiopic terms was additionally controlled by Mersha Alehegne and Maija Priess.

Matthias Schulz was in charge of preparing the maps appearing in this volume, and his skillful work deserves much appreciation.

The main work load remained, however, on the shoulders of the members of the Hamburg editorial team at Hiob Ludolf Centre for Ethiopian Studies, as the former Research Unit Ethiopian Studies have been now renamed. Without their selfless commitment the appearance of this volume would have been impossible. Their efforts went far beyond formal corrections; they took active part in all important decision-