

Editor's Foreword

I am pleased to present this volume honoring Rainer Voigt on the occasion of his 70th birthday on the 17th of January, 2014. This *Festschrift* focuses on his multifaceted interest in the studies of the history, the languages, the religions and various cultures in the geographical territory from Egypt to Somalia on the African continent as well as the southern areas of the Arabian Peninsula (*i.e.* broader Horn of Africa region in the sense of the volume). These disciplines benefit from the intense research and teaching tradition in Germany, especially in Berlin, and considerably, from Rainer Voigt's tenacious efforts and academic contributions (*cf.* both *Schriftenverzeichnisse* of the Jubilee: Bogdan Burtea, "Schriftenverzeichnis Rainer (M.) Voigt (1974–2003)", in: *Studia Semitica et Semitoamitica: Festschrift für Rainer Voigt anlässlich seines 60. Geburtstages am 17. Januar 2004*, ed. by Bogdan Burtea, Josef Tropper und Helen Younansardaroud, Münster 2005, pp. 1–20 and, in the following, „Schriftenverzeichnis Rainer Voigt (2004–2014)“ on pp. xxv–xxxvi).

Though the Horn of Africa region enjoys a progressive interest in the public awareness due to geopolitical developments, the respective institutional conditions have proven to be increasingly difficult. Nowadays, the discontinuation and closing of academic posts hinder concentrated long-term scientific pursuit. Hence, junior scholars experience a lack of prospects. In view of this distressing trend among academic circles dealing with the Horn of Africa, the *Arbeitskreis Äthiopistik*, led by the Jubilee and coordinated by the editor, has been established at the *Freie Universität Berlin* (FU) in order to perpetuate and promote scientific exchange in Germany and beyond. The objective is to exceed mere disciplinary related discussions and individual results. For this purpose, manifold courses, lectures, interdisciplinary workshops and international conferences on regional studies have been offered by the *Arbeitskreis* members of the FU's Department of History and Cultural Studies (*Fachbereich Geschichts- und Kulturwissenschaften*) since 2009. The volume at hand is comprised of contributions and aspects of three international research colloquia on the Horn of Africa, hosted by Rainer Voigt's Chair of Semitic Studies, which were kindly funded by the *Innovationsfond* of the FU's Presidency, its International Affairs Division and the Center for International Cooperation, as well as a conference on the Horn of Africa in Antiquity and the lecture series on the Horn's history and present, funded by the Chair for "Historical Geography of the Ancient Mediterranean" (Klaus Geus) at the Friedrich Meinecke Institute. In addition, ambitious students of my courses,

Law and Society on the Horn von Africa I–III, were able to use this publication platform for their first scientific treatises.

The wide-ranging spectrum of participants and themes of the publication project could, of course, not have been possible without the extraordinary time, effort and patience of the authors. I would also like to thank the reviewers for their undivided attention: first and foremost, Rainer Voigt for his treasure trove of experience which has enriched the academic exchange leading to the volume's productive outcome. Likewise, I appreciate the help provided by the reviewers such as Bogdan Burtea, Marlene Guss, Ya'ar Hever and Zeus Wellnhofer of the *Arbeitskreis* for their crucial critic. And, the realization of the volume would surely have been impossible without the editorial assistance of Markus Falk who has been of invaluable importance to the success of this undertaking. I offer my sincere gratitude for his careful and conscientious editorial work as well as those of Vanessa Macco, Christoph Bechtel and Salim Akkari, interns of the publishing house, for their initial formatting work and Cristal Dunkin (Columbia University) for her meticulous English proofreading. That leads to an immense appreciation directed to the Köppe-Verlag, specifically to Andrea Sick and Rüdiger Köppe, for their professional guidance at every stage of the publication procedure. Special recognition has to be made for Sina Nikolajew's untiring, thorough and thoughtful energy and assistance. Mrs. Nikolajew has contributed to every aspect of the project from its layout to its content; and for that, I am extremely grateful. Last but not the least, I owe a great debt of gratitude to the department's managing director and head of the administration, Michael Vallo, for his enabling the funding process to proceed unencumbered.

Hatem Elliesie

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