

The Hiob Ludolf Centre for Ethiopian and Eritrean Studies at Universität Hamburg

cordially invites you to attend a Zoom talk on

Beta 'Āsrā'el manuscript tradition

by

Sophia Dege-Müller
Ruhr-University Bochum

Among the many groups of the Horn of Africa, the Beta 'Āsrā'el – the Jews of Ethiopia – have their own very unusual history. Since their emergence as a unified group around the 14th century CE, they have lived in close contact with their direct neighbours, mainly in the present-day regions of Amhara and Təgray. Their co-habitation was not always peaceful however, and during certain times in their history, the Beta 'Āsrā'el lived as secluded from their neighbours as possible – due to both political upheavals and their strict purity laws. By the 1990s, most of the community had migrated to Israel, creating a peculiar case of a lost culture that only few manage to keep alive in the group's new home.

In many ways, the Beta 'Āsrā'el traditions resemble those of their Christian neighbours; this is especially true for their manuscript tradition. However, as the lecture will show, through adaptation, modification and alteration, the group have created their own traditions, with unique scribal features.

The study of Beta 'Āsrā'el manuscripts is a new discipline, which has not seen a lot of attention yet. The lecture will therefore cover several unknown scribal features, while also treating some overall Beta 'Āsrā'el history.

Tuesday, 22 September 2020, 5.00 pm (GMT +2)

If you are willing to join the Zoom session, please send an email to aethiopistik@uni-hamburg.de.