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Review

Diana Spencer, *The Woman from Tedbab*

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und eine verstärkte Rüstungskontrolle und 3. eine Dezentralisierung und Föderalisierung staatlicher Strukturen.

Alles in allem: eine ganz hervorragende Studie, die unsere Kenntnisse über das Kriegsgeschehen im Horn von Afrika sehr wesentlich vertieft und komprimierte Informationen durch Bilder, Schaubilder und Tabellen sehr anschaulich vermittelt. Vermisst habe ich außer dem oben angeführten Kritikpunkt nur einen Aspekt, nämlich eine intensivere Auseinandersetzung mit dem Engagement der deutschen Staaten im Horn von Afrika. Angesichts der Tatsache, dass die DDR das Mengistu-Regime sehr massiv durch die Lieferung von mehreren hunderttausend Maschinenpistolen des Typs AKM unterstützt hat und Minen aus der Bundesrepublik immer noch in weiten Teilen des Horns gefunden werden, wäre eine solche Auseinandersetzung eine nicht unwichtige Aufgabe für eine friedenswissenschaftliche Arbeit gewesen.

Harald Möller, Berlin

Diana Spencer, *The Woman from Tedbab*. Surrey, UK: Elizabeth Horne Publishing, 2003. 285 pages, 48 color figures. Price: GB-£ 35,-. ISBN: 0-9546386-0-3.

The first author of the early modern period to write of travels in highland Christian Ethiopia was Father Francisco Alvares, priest of the Roman Church and member of the official Portuguese delegation to the royal court of highland Christian Ethiopia between 1520 and 1526. His writings include observations about the land and people, the churches and monasteries as well as the royal court and its customs. The Scotsman James Bruce, who came to the northern Ethiopian highlands in his quest for the source of the Nile, visited the royal capital of Gondär between the years 1769 and 1771. Bruce published descriptions of the land, peoples, and the royal court which rise above the level of reportage produced by Jesuit visitors to Ethiopia of the 17th and early 18th centuries and which were not surpassed by European visitors to Ethiopia in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Diane Spencer figuratively follows the footsteps of Alvares and Bruce, although her book *Woman from Tedbab* differs from earlier accounts in its focus. Rather top-down descriptions focused upon ruling elites, her extensive travels into remote areas of northern Ethiopia led to numerous encounters with the rural peasantry, accounts of which enrich her descriptions of rural life during the last years of Emperor Ḥaylä Śəllase's reign. Spencer had come to live in Addis Abäba when her husband received an appointment in Addis Abäba at an agency of the United Nations. Her first attempt at exploring

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remote areas of northern Ethiopia, accessible only by mule or on foot, in order “to know what it felt like to live under those conditions”, ended in frustration. However, not until she was enlisted as member of a volunteer research team by Addis Ababa University to record and photograph historic religious art treasures, did her travel expeditions, over 20 in number, become missions supported by official letters of introduction by the university. The experience of participating in the monastic way of life, its liturgy and rituals during the course of her travel missions led to her study of Gəʿəz (she had already acquired some fluency in Amharic), and to an investigation of its theology. Although she received permits from the Crown Prince that provided her with a royal riding mule and an escort, Spencer’s encounters during her many expeditions were primarily with the rural farming peasantry and with priests and monks at the churches and monasteries that she visited.

Indeed, the title of her book, *The Woman from Tedbab*, was inspired by ties of friendship between Spencer and the people of Tedbab, a flat-topped mountain and site of an ancient monastery and church known as Tādbabä Maryam. Spencer describes her visits to ancient churches and monasteries that possessed relatively unknown manuscripts and icons, with a focus upon the ancient churches of Gəšän Maryam and Ahya Faḡḡ Qʷəsqʷam as well as Tādbabä Maryam. Her vivid and sympathetic descriptions, ranging from accounts of religious beliefs and rural folkways to the ceremony of revelation of the holy icon of the Virgin Mary at Tādbabä Maryam, an icon said to have been painted by St. Luke the Evangelist, make this gracefully-written book, illustrated with color photographs, an important contribution to the literature of highland Christian Ethiopia.

Marilyn E. Heldman, American University, Washington D.C.

MAGNUS TREIBER, *Der Traum vom guten Leben: Die eritreische warsay-Generation im Asmara der zweiten Nachkriegszeit*. Münster: LIT Verlag, 2005. 312 Seiten. Preis: € 29,90. ISBN: 3-8258-9054-6.

Die aus dem Promotionsprojekt Lebenswelt junger Erwachsener in der eritreischen Hauptstadt Asmara am Institut für Ethnologie und Afrikanistik der Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München entstandene Dissertation *Der Traum vom guten Leben: Die eritreische warsay-Generation im Asmara der zweiten Nachkriegszeit* von Magnus Treiber ist formell in fünf Abschnitte gegliedert.

Wie der Verfasser in den dem Inhaltsverzeichnis vorangestellten Erläuterungen zur Umschrift von Vokabeln, Eigennamen und Akronymen (S. 8) zur Feststellung gelangt, dass “Tigrinya nicht immer eindeutig standardisiert ist”