



Aethiopica 1 (1998)

International Journal of Ethiopian and
Eritrean Studies

BAIRU TAFLA

Article

*Production of Historical Works in Ethiopia and Eritrea : Some Notes on the
State of Recent Publications 1991-97*

Aethiopica 1 (1998), 176–206

ISSN: 1430–1938

Published by

Universität Hamburg

Asien Afrika Institut, Abteilung Afrikanistik und Äthiopistik

Hiob Ludolf Zentrum für Äthiopistik

Production of Historical Works in Ethiopia and Eritrea Some Notes on the State of Recent Publications 1991–97

BAIRU TAFLA

N.b.: Articles mentioned in the text are put in inverted commas while book and journal titles are in italics. Previously published related books are listed in as much detail (including publishers and printers) as those under consideration except when they are mentioned to substantiate a particular point. Works published in Təgrəñña usually bear the Gregorian calendar and, hence, they are not marked with “YG” or any other symbol unless of course they are dated otherwise. Ethiopian and Eritrean names and technical terms are transliterated if they have been written in Gəʿəz script in the *Vorlage* whereas those originally in Latin script are rendered verbatim. Similarly, the so-called complex names (e.g., Kidanä Maryam) are written together (e.g., Kidanämaryam) if the authors have written them so on the title page. The following abbreviations are used in the footnotes:

- APEth = ABEBE ZEGEYE and SIEGFRIED PAUSEWANG (Eds.), *Ethiopia in Change. Peasantry, Nationalism and Democracy* (London, British Academic Press, 1994);
- Ed. = editor;
- Eds. = editors;
- JES = Journal of Ethiopian Studies;
- nd= no date of publication;
- np= no publishers or no printers (as the case may be);
- npp = no place of publication;
- YG = Year of Grace [“amata mehrat”].

1. Introduction: “Ethiopians are more anxious than ever to know their history.” (Mulugeta Lule 1992)

Three and a half decades have elapsed since the appearance in print of RICHARD PANKHURST’s informative article – “The Foundations of Education, Printing, Newspapers, Book Production, Libraries and Literacy in Ethiopia”¹ – appeared in print. Many changes have taken place in the region since then, but an attempt to update or supplement it all round from outside Northeast Africa is impossible. It would have required a full-fledged research project that would have entailed a tour of the two countries, as no written reports on printing houses, libraries, or educational institutions seem to be available. Evidently, printing houses, if not publishers, have increased in number by leaps and bounds, but hardly any statistical data on their number, size and mode of production could be obtained in spite of an inquiry with the most likely institutions. Under these circumstances, one can at best assess the products of those enterprises which are in any case of special interest to academics.

The aim of this paper is on the one hand to provide a bird’s-eye view of historical and related works produced primarily by Ethiopians and Eritreans in their native languages and on the other hand to assess the trend, progress and growth of historical writing in the two countries. The first is essential not only as a source of information for scholars and students abroad who, in the absence of smart publishers and bookshop catalogues, may not be aware of newly published books in Gəʿəz, Təgrəñña or Amharic which are anyhow issued in a very limited number of copies, but also as a reminder to international bibliographers who have consistently ignored such works unless published in a European language.² The second aspect must be of interest to Ethiopian and Eritrean intellectuals who, from

¹ Cf. *Ethiopia Observer. Journal of Independent Opinion, Economics, History and the Arts* 6.3 (1962) pp. 241–90.

² An exception to this negligent practice is the work of PAULOS MILKIAS, *Ethiopia: A Comprehensive Bibliography* (Boston 1989). The Institute of Ethiopian Studies in Addis Abāba has compiled a bibliography under the title, *Ethiopian Publications*, in a dozen or so volumes since the mid-1960s, but it seems that the work has not been widely distributed for some obscure reason. A gratifying bibliography of books and booklets in Təgrəñña has been compiled by a learned Catholic priest, Abba AGOSTINOS-TÄDLA, under the title: *La Lingua Abissina. Edizioni «Adveniat Regnum Tuum»* (Asmāra, Franciscan Printing Press, 1994) 506 + 34 pages.

time to time, may give thought to what has been done and what is yet to be accomplished.

An appreciative, retrospective, occasional review of developments must gratify the hard-working ones and boost their efforts to achieve more. This is all the more true when we think in terms of the difficulties a writer or researcher resident in the region faces when trying to collect material or publish the results. Perhaps the most conspicuous problem is the lack of funds. There are as yet very few publishers or supporting foundations other than the external ones, to which only the few chosen ones have access. Even some journals, attached to reputed institutions, have not been able to survive. *Annales d'Éthiopie* of the Institute of Archaeology in Addis Abäba and the *Ethiopian Journal of African Studies* of the Institute of Social Science Research in Asmära, for example, seem to be gone for good; the *Quaderni di Studi Etiopici* published by the Ethiopian Studies Centre in Asmära also appears to have died out. In spite of the tremendous hurdles, however, a considerable amount of published material has been produced in both countries. The *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, *Ethiopian Journal of Education*, *Ethiopian Journal of Economics* and *Ethiopian Medical Journal* appear to be still doing well. Books and brochures of all types are being produced by individuals, church organizations and government departments.

It is precisely this unmanageable volume of publications that has limited the scope of this article to scanning a particular area of study for a particular period of time. Even so, one must do with an arbitrary sample of historical titles only, as in central Europe there scarcely exists an accessible collection of the type of works considered here. The samples given are from my own collection as well as those of my colleagues and friends who kindly availed me of access.

The reader may legitimately pose the question whether there has been a boom in the production of historical works during this decade. In so far as no statistics on the production of books in Ethiopia and Eritrea is available, neither the affirmative nor the negative answer would bear the truth. The general impression is, however, that there is a positive development in the field. At least one journalist, Mulugeta Lule, voiced this opinion: "Ethiopians are more anxious than ever to know their history. Where did I come from? Who am I? What is my basis?"

What kind of historical processes has my country undergone throughout the ages?”³

There is, as implied in the above quotation, a cluster of historical explanations why so many historical works have been issued in the last seven years. In the first place, historical consciousness has increased tremendously especially since the late 1950s when Sven Rubenson and Richard Pankhurst firmly established historical studies of Ethiopia in the then University College of Addis Abäba. Many have graduated from the Department of History and become teachers and researchers of Ethiopian history, spreading the interest in and technique of writing history to the whole region. The Institute of Ethiopian Studies has also become the unparalleled shrine of meticulous collection and preservation of published and unpublished documents. The newly reformed Asmära University has incorporated in its structure the National Museum of Asmära and the Institute of Social Science. A department of history is also in the process of being organized. It is of course logical to expect that the more people are educated, the more contributions should come forth, and this has no doubt been the case.

It also seems to be a regular pattern that periodic events of national magnitude boost the production of publications related to the event itself, the country concerned and related phenomena. At least in the Western world, this was the case with Ethiopia regarding the British expedition to Mäqdäla in 1867–68, the Italo–Ethiopian conflict of 1887–96, the Fascist invasion of Ethiopia in 1935–41, the Eritrean war of independence of 1961–91 and the outbreak of the Ethiopian revolution of 1974–75. The pending crises were accompanied by publications of all kinds providing historical background and conjectures on how they might develop. Very few assessed the events themselves while in process, but the aftermath brought about again a flood of books of all sizes and qualities, though usually these tended to attract scholars and memoirists more than journalists and money-makers.

On the Ethiopian–Eritrean side, the tendency is apparently to write in the aftermath rather than before, or during the course of events. This may have to do with the restriction of the freedom of the press available at the time. None would dare to publish an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the country, government or army before an imminent invasion or revolution, lest he/she would

³ From the cover comments of the book: *Balätarik Ityopäya* [= “Historic Ethiopia”] by NÄGGA WÄLDÄ ŠĪLLASE (Addis Abäba Hädar 1985 YG = November–December 1992). The translation is mine.

be incriminated of betrayal or demoralizing propaganda. The free remarks contained in the memoirs of Ato Haddis Alämayyāhu, for example, might have been seen in quite a different light in the 1930s with consequences which would have negatively influenced his future career, to say the least.

The aftermath is slightly different: the enemy is vanquished; the regime is gone, or the situation has so drastically changed that the opinion of a citizen has scarcely any impact on it. Thus, the victory of ʿAdwa gave impetus to the production of historical and literary works for decades thereafter. Similarly, the Fascist occupation of 1936–41 provided themes for novels, plays, poetical works and historical writings in the 1940s and 50s. The era of the monarchy was to some extent a subject of focus in the 1980s, though not as dramatically as the scrutiny of the Marxist period itself in the following decade.

All these historical epochs and the personalities pertaining to them have remained active in the mind of the Ethiopian and Eritrean writers. They were further enriched in this decade by the development of dramatic changes in the political and economic arena: the fall of the Marxist regime, the end of the war which shook the country for thirty or more years, the realization of Eritrea's sovereignty, the introduction of a decentralized system of government and the initiation of a free market economy.

The last two have indeed generated intensive discussions expressed in newspaper and magazine articles, but, unlike the Red Terror or the storming military expeditions of Māngəstu Ḥaylä Maryam, they have so far stimulated no novel or significant treatise, probably because their results are not so predictable.⁴ On the other hand, a significant increase is noticeable in the areas of documentation, biographies, autobiographies and memoirs, all of which must be of special interest to scholars. There is also a significant continuity in relatively new spheres – social, economic and health studies – which, however, cannot be looked into in this paper any more than literary or linguistic contributions.

Finally, it should be mentioned with satisfaction that the readership has also increased immensely. One of the few merits of the Marxist regime in Ethiopia has been its intrepid pursuit of the noble project known as the literacy campaign initiated by secondary school and college students in the late 1950s. The Eritrean

⁴ An attempt to assess the political and constitutional developments of the post-Marxist period has been made by a lawyer living abroad, TECOLA W. HAGOS, in a book: *Democratization? Ethiopia (1991–1994): A Personal View* (Cambridge, MA, 1995). Unfortunately, the work is marred by personal emotion and lack of objective analysis.

Peoples Liberation Front (EPLF) also rated education highly, particularly in the 1980s when schools were established under shelters for children, and adults (including those abroad) were encouraged to acquire at least the rudiments of reading and writing. If supply is a reflection of demand, I have had the pleasure of witnessing during my trips in the last few years that there have been more bookshops in Ethiopia and Eritrea than ever. The number and geographical distribution of printing houses shows a marked change. There is also a noticeable presence of publishers, though their output has yet to increase greatly before their impact can make itself felt. The Ministry of Education is apparently concerned about this problem; it organized a major symposium in Addis Abäba in May 1996 to consider ways and means for the promotion of “the publishing industry”.⁵ The works mentioned here are produced not only in Addis Abäba and Asmära as in earlier decades, but also in Awasa, Mäqälä and in other centres.

Before concluding this introductory note, it may be necessary to add a word on the scope of these notes. It has been stated above that the point of concentration would be historical and related works produced primarily by Ethiopians and Eritreans in their native languages. Unfortunately, there are inevitable exceptions to this self-imposed rule. There are Ethiopians and Eritreans who publish in foreign languages, and foreigners who reside and publish their works in their adopted countries and, hence, these contributions cannot be ignored even if they may be in foreign languages. The works of those who reside abroad are (particularly if published in Europe or North America) often included in the international bibliographies and, hence, there is no need to include them here. Nonetheless, it has proved technically difficult to distinguish between those writers who live in their respective countries and those who live abroad, whether or not as exiles. To complicate matters further, there are cases of Eritreans and Ethiopians who live abroad, but publish at home and vice versa. There are also those who live alternately in their native as well as their adopted countries. Wherever possible to confirm their location, they are mentioned in or excluded from the article, as the case may be. Hence, the article is by no means comprehensive in its coverage, and should for all practical purposes be seen not as an end in itself, but rather as a stimulator to bibliographers and writers to take more interest in materials produced in the countries they study.

⁵ Cf. ATAFU WASE, “*Mäṣḥaf Pablišing Bä’ityopəya*” [= “Book-Publishing in Ethiopia”] in: *Educational Journal. Semi-Annual Bilingual Journal of the Ministry of Education* 3.5 (June 1997) pp. 5–24.

2. Historical Works

The writing of history is deeply rooted in the Ethiopian and Eritrean tradition. It is one of the most dominant components of the countries' culture. This tradition has been well represented, though not particularly promoted, in the three recent political periods – the eras of the monarchy, Marxism and federalism. The emphasis is, as in the old tradition, predominantly on epochal accounts and biographical descriptions. However, three other components, introduced in the twentieth century, have featured well among the publications: autobiographies/memoirs, ethnic/regional history and documentary compilations. These and other aspects will be briefly reviewed in the following sections.

2.1. Comprehensive History

Historical works which cover all periods and all aspects of Ethiopian history are very limited in number, but they are apparently on the increase. The four volumes of the diplomat and lifelong government official, Ato TÄKLÄ ŞADEQ MÄKWƏRIYA, were followed in the late 1980s and '90s by the three books of the historian, LAPPƏSO G. DƏLEBO, a graduate of Howard University and a consultant at the Institute of Nationalities in the 1980s. In LAPPƏSO's books, southern Ethiopia is integrated into the historical writing for the first time. All three books are obviously based on the Marxist interpretation of history.

The first book⁶ outlines the history of Ethiopia beginning with pre-historic times. The emphasis is on the Aksumite and Agäw periods. Archaeological and palaeontological sources are used. A year or so later followed the second book⁷ which describes the socio-economic developments of the 19th and 20th centuries, including the outbreak of the revolution. The third one,⁸ which appeared in print some years later, is devoted to the economic and social factors that led to the

⁶ *Yä'ityopəya Rägğəm Yəhəzbənnā Yämängəst Tarik* [= "The Long History of the Ethiopian People and Government"]. Book I (Addis Abäba, Commercial Printing Press, 1st impression 1982 YG = 1989–90) 302 pages.

⁷ *Yä'ityopəya Yägäbbar Şər'atənnā Ğəmmər Kapitalizm 1900–1966* [= "The Ethiopian Feudalism and the Incipient Capitalism"]. Book II (Addis Abäba, Commercial Printing Press, 1983 YG = 1990–91) 332 pages.

⁸ *Yä'ityopəya Yämäkära Şər'atənnā Yä'erətra Təyyaqe* [= "The Oppressive System of Ethiopia and the Question of Eritrea"]. Book III (Addis Abäba, Commercial Printing Press, 1985 YG = 1992–93) 193 + 10 pages.

revolution including the question of Eritrea. Special emphasis is placed on the analysis of the historical developments which governed the blood-stained relations between Ethiopia and Eritrea. It concludes with a recommendation that efforts should be made to revive and rehabilitate Eritrea, but fears that political separation may forestall the expected good relations.

Several other writers have also contributed to the assessment of the political and cultural history since early times. Under the title *Ethiopian Civilization*, the economist, BĀLAY GĒDĀY,⁹ dealt with the legacy of Aksum. Political and religious developments as well as trade, economy, architecture, music, etc. are surveyed. The last chapter sums up the living heritage of Ethiopia which can be traced back to the Aksumite kingdom. A journalist who lived in exile in Canada during much of the Marxist era, NĀGGA WĀLDĀ ŚĒLLASE¹⁰, also surveyed Ethiopian history from ancient times to the present after the fashion of Jones and Monroe, but with more emphasis on the cultural and historical integrity of the country.

Perhaps the most interesting work on cultural history is that of the prominent lawyer and writer HĀBTĀMARYAM ASĀFFA¹¹ who had already made an original contribution to Ethiopian Studies through his dissertation by inferring Aksumite criminal law from epigraphic sources. He has also penned some 30 or more novels, anecdotes and legends. The book in question reviews prehistoric and historical developments, but places more emphasis on the legacy of Aksum and the origins of various cultural institutions. Its conspicuous shortcoming is that the point of concentration is only the traditional Christian kingdom whereas Ethiopia of today connotes a complex of cultures. To these must be counted ADHANA HAILE ADHANA's article, "Mutation of Statehood and Contemporary Politics"¹² which strides back and forth in time to survey Ethiopian politics in the light of history.

2.2. Epochal Studies

Almost all the authors who chose to write on historical topics in the 1990s concentrated on the so-called modern period of Ethiopian history, i.e. the last 150

⁹ *Yä'ityopäya Sälätane* (Addis Abäba, Bərhanəmma Sälam Printing Press, Mäggabit 1983 YG = March–April 1991) 196 pages.

¹⁰ Cf. note 3 supra.

¹¹ *Yä'ityopäya Tarik Təyyaqewoččəmma Bahloč* [= "Ethiopian Historical Questions and Cultures"] (Addis Abäba, np, 1986 YG = 1993–94) 752 pages.

¹² In: APEth pp. 12–29.

or so years or a part of it, while Eritrean writers invariably focused on the war of independence. The period referred to as the modern period of Ethiopian history has been summed up in a most scholarly way by BAHRU ZEWE¹³ of the Department of History of the University of Addis Abäba. Using most of the major research works, this book brings together the main political, economic and intellectual developments and traces the roots of the various challenges the country was facing in the second half of the twentieth century. An Amharic version with additional documents has recently been issued by Addis Abäba University Press.¹⁴ One of the challenges – the issue of leadership – was taken up shortly thereafter as a conference paper by a former faculty member of Addis Abäba University, TSEHAI BERHANE-SELASSIE.¹⁵

The tradition of the chroniclers recording individual royal eras has been accepted as a convenient division of periods, and quite a few Ethiopian writers produced monographs on each of the rulers from Tewodros II to H̄aylā Šöllase I. The prolific writer Ato TÄKLÄ ŠADEQ MÄKWƏRIYA, revised his first historical work *From Emperor Tewodros to Emperor H̄aylā Šöllase*, which had served for decades as a textbook in Ethiopian schools, producing three major monographs on the periods of Tewodros II (1855–68), Yoḥannəs IV (1872–89), and Mənilək II (1889–1913) with particular emphasis on “the unity of Ethiopia”.¹⁶

His example was in part followed by the famous journalist, now dead for some years, PAWLOS NŌNŌ who published one monograph respectively on Tewodros, on Mənilək and on the Italian invasion which falls within the general context of the

¹³ Cf. *A History of Modern Ethiopia 1855–1974* (London – Addis Abäba, James Currey Ltd., 1991) 244 + 10 pages.

¹⁴ BAHRU ZÄWDE, *Yä’ityopəya Tarik kä1848 əskä1966* [= “History of Ethiopia 1855–1974”] (Addis Abäba 1989 YG = 1996–97) 263 + 12 pages.

¹⁵ Cf. “Warriors on the Ethiopian Landscape: the Process of Local Leadership, Belai Zeleke to Meless Zenawi” in: *Preproceedings of the Sixth Michigan State University Conference on Northeast Africa* (Holiday Inn, East Lansing, April 23–25, 1992) pp. 379–394.

¹⁶ Cf. *Aše Tewodros ənna Yä’ityopəya Andənnät* [= “Emperor Tewodros and the Unity of Ethiopia”] (Addis Abäba, Kurraz Publishers / Artistic Printing Press, 1981 YG = 1988–89) 514 pages; *Aše Yoḥannes ənna Yä’ityopəya Andənnät* [= “Emperor Yoḥannes and the Unity of Ethiopia”] (Addis Abäba, Kurraz Publishers / Bole Printing Enterprise, 1982 YG = 1989–90) 578 pages; *Aše Mənilək ənna Yä’ityopəya Andənnät* [= “Emperor Menilek and the Unity of Ethiopia”] (Addis Abäba, Kurraz Publishers / Bole Printing Enterprise, 1983 YG = 1990–91) 708 pages.

era of Ḥaylā Śəllase.¹⁷ The interesting aspect of PAWLOS' work is that a number of rare internal documents and reminiscences of elders are reproduced, though the sources are mostly not clearly acknowledged.

The famous Emperors received extensive treatment not only from their own chroniclers, but also from later compatriot and foreign writers, however, justice has at long last also been done recently to the uncrowned "Emperor", Ləḡ Iyyasu, the grandson of Mənilək II who had chosen him to be his successor. Much of what was hitherto published in Ethiopia about Iyyasu was brief and biased, though a better but as yet unpublished work by the deceased educator, Blatta MÄRSE ḤAZĀN WÄLDÄ QIRQOS is known to exist.¹⁸ Two works appeared in print almost simultaneously in the mid-1990s – Aläqa GÄBRÄ ƏGZI'ABḤER's chronicle¹⁹ of Iyyasu and Zäwditu and GOBÄZE ṬAFFÄṬÄ's biographical study²⁰ of the Prince published by the Maison des Études Éthiopiennes. The former writer devoted at least 20 chapters to a fair assessment of the Prince's years of rule, while the latter dedicated a monograph to his centenary which incidentally was also the 80th birthday of the author himself. The work is rather defensive and apologetic, but it contains a fair amount of new material and provides a new insight into the era of Mənilək's successor to the throne.

The victory of Adwa, celebrated annually on the second of March, gave a new impetus to authors and institutions in the centenary year of 1996 to review and glorify its history at least as much as did the centenary of Dogali in 1987.²¹ The centennial celebration included an international conference of scholars organized by the Institute of Ethiopian Studies in which this epoch of African pride was analysed more than ever. Over fifty papers were presented on the military, social,

¹⁷ Cf. PAWLOS NÖNNO, *Aṭe Tewodros* (Addis Abäba, 1st edition, Gənbot 1985 YG = May–June 1993) 336 pages.

¹⁸ *History of Leḡ Iyyasu's Reign, 1913–1916* (Amharic Text) 46 + 7 typewritten pages; deposited with the library of the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), London.

¹⁹ Cf. REIDULF K. MOLVAER (Ed.), *Prowess, Piety and Politics. The Chronicle of Abeto Iyasu and Empress Zewditu of Ethiopia (1909–1930)* [recorded by Gebre-Igziabiher Elyas] = *Studien zur Kulturkunde* 104 (Köln, Rüdiger Köppe Verlag, 1994) pp. 310–89.

²⁰ Cf. GOBÄZE ṬAFFÄṬÄ, *Abba Tena Iyyasu* (Addis Abäba 1996) 154 pages.

²¹ For contributions to the study of the Battle of Dogali, see TADDESSE BEYENE, TADDESSE TAMRAT, and RICHARD PANKHURST (Eds.), *The Centenary of Dogali. Proceedings of the International Symposium*, Addis Abäba – Asmära, January 24–25, 1987 (Addis Abäba, 1988) 344 pages.

cultural, legal, diplomatic and ecological aspects of the campaign. The proceedings must be of considerable interest when they appear in print.

At the time of the conference, three monographs were published in Amharic and English: The Institute of Ethiopian Studies prepared a monograph entitled *Yä'adwaw Wəlo. Yä'adwa Zämäčanna Torrännät Bäsost Yä'ayn Məsəkəroč Sitärak* [= “The Campaign of °Adwa: The Expedition and Battle of °Adwa as Narrated by Three Eyewitnesses”].²² The book contains excerpts on the war from various works by national and foreign authors, the most original of which is an account written by Grazmač YOSEF NĒGUŠE, Mənilək's interpreter and court official, which had apparently not been published before.

A certain ABBÄBÄ HAYLÄMÄLÄKOT also produced a treatise²³ on the events immediately preceding the campaign of °Adwa, the battle itself and the aftermath. The author, about whom scarcely anything is known, is praised for his effort in the epilogue by the ageing writer, Ato TÄKLÄ ŠADEQ MÄKWƏRIYA.

Finally, a new aspect – the victory of °Adwa and the role of the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwaḥdo Church – until recently neglected by historians, was treated by a group of writers who apparently authored the work on behalf of the patriarchate.²⁴ It is an assessment of the historical role of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church in the campaign of °Adwa from the point of view of the patriarchate. A message from His Holiness Abuna Pəwlos, as well as a few photographs, have been included. An English translation paginated independently is included in the same volume.

The treatment of the next traditionally popular era – the years of Fascist occupation of Ethiopia, 1936–41 – has apparently been considered rather marginally in the recent years, and I have come across too few other works beside that of PÄWLOS NÖNÖ which has been mentioned earlier in this article and the

²² (Addis Abäba, Täklä Haymanot Printing Press, 1996) 117 pages.

²³ *Yä'adwa Dälanna Yä'ityopəya Gägnoc Wäläta* [= “The Victory of Adwa and the Heritage of the Ethiopian Heroes”] (Addis Abäba Yäkkatit 1988 YG = February–March 1996) 119 pages.

²⁴ GETAČČÄW GWADE et al. (Eds.), *Bä'adwa Torrännätanna Dəl Yä'ityopəya Ortodoks Täwaḥdo Betä Krəstyan Dərša* [= “The Role of the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwaḥdo Church in the Battle and Victory of °Adwa”] (Addis Abäba, The Patriarchal Head-Office, Yäkkatit 1988 YG = February–March 1996) 131 pages.

memoirs of HADDIS ALÄMAYYÄHU recorded below.²⁵ Two interesting studies are AHMED HASSEN OMER's article, "Italian Local Politics in Northern Shäwa and its Consequences 1936–1941"²⁶ and RICHARD PANKHURST's assessment of the material culture the Italians left behind and the damage caused by another European power immediately following the defeat of the Fascists.²⁷

The period of Ḥaylä Šəllase I as a whole has in fact been more or less ignored²⁸ except in connection with the background to the revolution of 1974 and the Marxist military regime brought to power by that very uprising. TÄSFAYE MÄKWÄNNÄN²⁹ is one of the few who deal with the recent history of Ethiopia: the era of Ḥaylä Šəllase I and the revolution. As a background, a couple of chapters are devoted to reviewing the whole history of Ethiopia: ancient, medieval and the nineteenth century. As a Marxist interpretation of history, only selected topics are of course dealt with. It includes also the history of the Eritrean liberation movements. The book was originally published in the Netherlands in 1990.

²⁵ Two historical novels dealing with the period have, however, been published in the present decade: one which characterizes the events on the eve of the Italo–Ethiopian war of 1935–36 and the Fascist rule that followed it, TADDÄSÄ ZÄWÄLDE and GÄBÄYYÄHU AYYÄLÄ, *Rämät. Tarikawi Ləbolläd* [= "Hot Ash. A Historical Novel"] (Addis Abäba, Kurraz Publishers, 1983 YG = 1990–91) 303 pages; and the other which describes the struggle of the resistance fighters against the Fascists was written by WÄND'AFFÄRAW BÄQQÄLÄ, *Yännaw Näš Məngizem* [= "You are Ours Forever"] (Addis Abäba, Artistic Printing Press, 1984 YG = 1991–92) 172 pages.

²⁶ *JES* 28.2 (1995) pp. 1–13.

²⁷ "Post-World War II Ethiopia: British Military Policy and Action for the Dismantling and Acquisition of Italian Factories and other Assets, 1941–2" in: *JES* 29.1 (1996) pp. 35–77. An economist, BEFEKADU DEGEFE [Bäfäqadu Däggəfe], also surveyed the economic situation in the aftermath of the Italian occupation: "The Making of the Ethiopian National Currency 1941–45" in: *JES* 26.2 (1993) pp. 23–51.

²⁸ This applies of course mainly to local publications. Scholars of Ethiopian origin living abroad and international academics still deal with various aspects of the period, though there again not all can be regarded as serious. Mention should be made of the work of YOḤANNES MÄŠÄŠA, *Ityopəya: Astädadär ənna Politikawi Hidät* [= "Ethiopia: Administration and Political Process"] (Los Angeles, Fidal Publishers, Mäskäräm 1989 YG = September–October 1996) 471 + 5 pages – which may not appear in the international bibliographies in spite of its publication abroad. It surveys the whole history of Ethiopia with particular emphasis on the Italian invasions of 1884–96 and 1935–41 as well as on the reign of Emperor Ḥaylä Šəllase.

²⁹ *Yədräs Ləbalätariku* [= "May it Reach the Owner of History"] (Addis Abäba, Artistic Printing Press, 2nd impression, Ṭəqqəmt 1985 YG = 1992) 332 pages.

Another work which concentrates on a particular episode of Ḥaylā Śəllase's era – the abortive coup, the first major attempt to remove Emperor Ḥaylā Śəllase from power, – is that of YƏHUN ALÄMSÄGGÄD whose title *Fana Wägi*³⁰ has been borrowed from a descriptive phrase traditionally used for a group of servants in the Imperial palace whose duty it was to carry torches and provide the royal chambers with light. Obviously, the coup attempt of the Imperial Guard in December 1960 is presumed to be the torch which provided the future brightness of the revolution.³¹

At least a few other writers, however, see the dark side of the same revolution: under the title *Yäqatätäč Ḥeywät*³² [= “The Wanton Life”], GÄBRÄ IYYÄSUS ḤAYLÄ MARYAM ascribes to the seventeen years of Marxist military rule in Ethiopia numerous atrocities and disasters. This critical review of the Marxist era is allegedly intended to be a warning to the transitional government as well as to the expected democratically elected government. The book was apparently published around 1992.

YOḤANNƏS MULUGETA³³ also characterizes Mängəstu's era with the phrase “Destroy and Perish” which forms the title of his book. This work is a commentary (or a kind of memoirs, though the author does not characterize it as such) on the Marxist era with many references to the personal experience of the author himself. Apparently, the author enjoyed a high position in the government and had access to a great deal of information. BABILE TOLA (probably a pen-name) further pinpointed a particular episode within the Marxist era as most disastrous, because a generation has been annihilated, as the Amharic title alleges. The book³⁴ was originally published in English in 1989, but it is said to have been

³⁰ (Addis Abäba, Bole Printing Enterprise, Nəḥase 1984 YG = August–September 1992) 144 + 8 pages.

³¹ A novel which characterized the end of the monarchy also viewed the outbreak of the revolution optimistically: LÄMMA MÄNGÄŠA, *Yänəšannät Däwäl* [= “The Bell of Freedom”] (Addis Abäba, Addis Printing Press, Miyazya 1968 YG = April–May 1976) 180 pages.

³² Addis Abäba, Commercial Printing Press, nd, 466 pages.

³³ *Atfəto Mätfat* (Addis Abäba, Branna Elektro Publishers / Commercial Printing Press, Ṭər 1984 YG = January–February 1992) 292 + 2 pages.

³⁴ *Yätəwəld Əlqit. Qäy Šəbbər Bə'ityopəya* [= “The Annihilation of a Generation. Red Terror in Ethiopia”]. Translated by AWGƏČČÄW TÄRRÄFÄ (Addis Abäba, Commercial Publishing Enterprise, nd) 214 pages. The book was originally published in English under the title, *To Kill a Generation: The Red Terror in Ethiopia*. The same work has been translated into Amharic allegedly by ŠÄGGAYE GÄBRÄMÄDḤƏN, a leader of the EPRP, under the title, *And*

censored under the Marxist regime. Hence, its Amharic translation could follow only some years later.

Among the most strongly hit groups at the time of the so-called Red Terror of 1977–78 was the Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Party (EPRP). The history of this political movement of young intellectuals has been accounted for at least in part by KƏFLU TADDĀSA’s work *The Generation. The History of the Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Party. Part I: From the Early Beginnings to 1975*.³⁵ In the words of its publishers, “This is a book about a generation of Ethiopians who embarked on an arduous struggle to transform its country ... The history of the EPRP is a complex wave of events where the economic, political and social forces are inextricably linked. It is an event that would cover major socio-economic transformations and this book tries to reflect that reality, sometimes side-tracking to recount events pertaining to incidents that could express the human aspect of the struggle.”

The Amharic version³⁶ was published in 1995 or 1996. A chapter reviews the reign of Emperor Ḥaylā Śəllase, and another the student movement. The remaining five deal with the struggle of the EPRP up to the declaration of land reform of March 1975.

Perhaps the most detailed and scholarly assessment of the Marxist period as a whole is the work of ANDARGACHEW TIRUNAH (who was working in Addis Abāba at the time it appeared in print), entitled *The Ethiopian Revolution 1974–1987: A Transformation from an Aristocratic to a Totalitarian Autocracy*³⁷, which was originally presented as a doctoral dissertation at the University of London.³⁸

Təwlad Lämāmtār Qäyyu Šəbbər Bă’ityopəya [= “Red Terror in Ethiopia to Nip off a Generation”] and published in 1997 by an unlocated press given as “Free Ethiopia Press”; 244 + 16 pages.

³⁵ Silver Spring, MD: The Independent Publishers, 1993, 266 + 9 pages.

³⁶ *Ya Təwlad. Yă’ityopəya Həzbəwi Abyotawi Parti Tarik. Kəfl I: Kă’ aġġāmamāru əskä 1967 YG Də’äs* (Addis Abāba, Independent Publishers / Bole Printing Enterprise, nd) 390 + 8 pages.

³⁷ = LSE Monographs in International Studies (Cambridge University Press, 1993) 452 pages.

³⁸ To the above works can be added DĀBBĀBĀ ƎŠƏTU’s translation of DAWIT WĀLDĀ GIYORGIS’s account – *Yädām Ǝnba* (Addis Abāba, Bole Printing Press, nd) 353 pages – which was originally published by the Red Sea Press under the title of “Red Tears”. There are also a few historical novels on the period, two of which should be mentioned here on account of their quality: KEVIN O’MAHONEY, “*Meaza*” of Ethiopia. *An Historical Novel of the Ethiopian Revolution* (Addis Abāba 1991) 178 + 14 pages; and, BEREKET HABTE

Finally, a few writers came to ponder on the post-Marxist period which ended the harrowing wars under which Ethiopia suffered for years, but which, at the same time, brought with it new circumstances and policies with which not all groups could agree. Hence, the retired university professor MÄSFĒN WÄLDÄ MARYAM posed the question “Ethiopia: From Where to Where?” as a title of a booklet³⁹ in Amharic. With a more explanatory title,⁴⁰ DÄRÄĞĞÄ MÄRŠA assessed the transitional period, as the years 1991–94 were referred to, from the points of view of the provisional government and the various opposition groups. In an article entitled, “The End of Crises? Or Crises Without End? The Evolving Dynamics in Post-Därg Ethiopia”, DAWIT ABATE reviewed critically the political development in Ethiopia after the fall of the Därg and the performance of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE).⁴¹

2.3. Eritrea

As a subject of study, the question of Eritrea has been of special interest among both Ethiopians and Eritreans in the last five decades. However, it was regarded as too sensitive a matter under the monarchy and the Marxist military regime and, hence, nobody dared to speak openly, let alone write about it. The few publications that saw the light of day came mainly from the governmental sphere. For example, *Eritrea: Then and Now*⁴² was produced by the Press and Information Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs while the unsigned so-called *Call of the People of Eritrea*⁴³ which was allegedly written by representatives of labour unions, youth and women associations, etc. to condemn the fronts and endorse unity with Ethiopia is very reminiscent of the booklets issued by the Ministry of Information. A few intellectuals nonetheless dealt with one or the other aspect of

SELASSIE, *Riding the Whirlwind. An Ethiopian Story of Love and Revolution* (Trenton, N.J., The Red Sea Press, 1993) 331 pages.

³⁹ *Ityopäya Käyät Wädet?* (Addis Abäba, Guramayle Printing Press, 1986 YG = 1993–94) 88 pages.

⁴⁰ *Yä'ityopäya Äta. Bäšägəgəru wäyäm Bä'ihadäg Mängəst Ayyayazəmma Bätəqawamiwoč Iyyita Wäqtəwi Gəmgäma* [= “The Lot of Ethiopia. A Tentative Assessment of the Performance of the Transitional or EPRDF Government and the Views of the Oppositions”] (Addis Abäba, Artistic Printing Press, 1987 YG = 1994–95) 281 pages.

⁴¹ Cf. APEth pp. 280–308.

⁴² (Addis Abäba, May 1976) 31 pages.

⁴³ (Asmära 5 October 1987) 22 pages.

the question in the course of their academic studies abroad,⁴⁴ though apparently none dared to publish such a work until the 1980s when all hopes of reconciliation seemed to have been dashed.

The political changes of the 1990s undermined the taboo of treating Eritrea as a subject of historical study, and quite a few works have appeared in print within a short time, though the old theses and the preference for some aspects of study lingered on both sides at least in the early years of the decade. For the first time, an Ethiopian writer by the name of °ALÄMSÄGGÄD BOGGÄLÄ ADAL reviewed the recent history of Eritrea in a book entitled *The Eritrean Riddle*⁴⁵ with special emphasis on the war of independence. He outlines the origin and activities of the Eritrean liberation fronts and the policies of the Ethiopian regimes and concludes with a remark that it is his hope that Ethiopia and Eritrea will one day be reunited. About the same time, the Eritrean novelist and fighter, Abba YƏSƏḤAQ GÄBRÄ IYYÄSUS, produced a small book entitled *Judge – in Truth, Who and Where are Ethiopia and Ethiopians? And What About Abyssinia? The Consequences of Ethiopia’s Malady*⁴⁶, an acrimonious work which discusses the etymological origins and different uses of the terms Ethiopia and Abyssinia as well as the legend of the Queen of Sheba.

Not all works are rancorous, however. A good example is the work of ADANE TAYE⁴⁷ which appeared in print in 1991, but which was probably written much earlier. It traces the development, extent and quality of schooling in Eritrea with a gratifying objectivity. In a lengthy essay entitled “Eritrea: Evolution Towards Independence and Beyond”⁴⁸, another Ethiopian, MELAKOU TEGEGN, reviewed the Eritrean question in the light of history and pleaded for liberalism and a better understanding between the Ethiopian and Eritrean peoples. An attitude of

⁴⁴ For a review of studies on Eritrea, see BAIRU TAFLA, “Interdependence through Independence: The Challenges of Eritrean Historiography”, in: HAROLD G. MARCUS (Ed.), *New Trends in Ethiopian Studies – Papers of the 12th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies*, Michigan State University, 5–10 September 1994 (Lawrenceville, N.J., The Red Sea Press, 1994) vol. I pp. 497–514.

⁴⁵ *Yä’erətraw Ənqoqläš* (Addis Abäba, Bole Printing Enterprise, 1985 YG = 1992–93) 215 pages. In appendices, the founding members of the ELF are listed. A short bibliography is also provided.

⁴⁶ *Fərädu – Nay Bäḥaqqi İtyopəyan İtyopəyawəyanən Abäyan Mänən İyyom? Ḥabäšakä? Ḥəmamä–İtyopəya Zəkättälo Sa’əben* (Asmära, Franciscan Printing Press, 1992) 136 + 8 pages.

⁴⁷ *A Historical Survey of State Education in Eritrea* (Asmära 1991) 146 + 10 pages.

⁴⁸ APEth pp. 45–76.

reconciliation and collaboration is also demonstrated in a book containing a collection of essays by a group of Eritrean intellectuals and edited by AMARE TEKLE, *Eritrea and Ethiopia. From Conflict to Cooperation*.⁴⁹

An urgent appeal for a systematic study of Eritrean history and the preservation of archaeological sites has been made by Abba YƏSƏHAQ GÄBRÄ İYYÄSUS in a booklet entitled *Panorama of Heritage: Touring Historical Ruins, Temples, Monuments, Stone-Inscriptions, Tombs and Caves of Eritrea*.⁵⁰

There are also specialised studies related to particular aspects of Eritrean history. ZÄMƏHRÄT YOĦANNƏS⁵¹, now one of the leading officials in Eritrea, assessed the Italian colonial rule in Eritrea in a booklet published immediately after the victory of May 1991. Another fighter, SÄLOMON DƏRAR,⁵² gives a vivid eyewitness account of an episode in the war of liberation around 1980 in which a particular contingent of fighters achieved an astounding feat. Perhaps the most extensive and well-written account of struggling Eritrea is that of AL'AMIN MÄĦAMMÄD SÄ'ID,⁵³ one of the high officials in Eritrea, which describes the history of the liberation fronts and their conflicts as well as the war.

2.4. Biographies

One of the features of historical writing in the Ethiopian–Eritrean tradition is the biographical aspect. Until the early decades of the twentieth century, the focus was on two groups of personalities: firstly, the saints whose life history was given in the individual *Gädlät* (hagiographies) or in the *Synaxarium* compiled chronologically according to the days of their celebrations; and secondly, the rulers in the chronicles. Perhaps the first to initiate biographical study after the western fashion was the talented Ethiopian writer, AFÄWÄRQ GÄBRÄ'İYYÄSUS, who wrote a monograph on Mənilək II in Amharic. The analysis of the merits and demerits of

⁴⁹ (Lawrenceville, N.J. The Red Sea Press) 1994, 229 + 10 pages.

⁵⁰ *Afäfat–Qəyya. Koläla Fäqädo Tarikawi 'Onatat, Mäqdäsät, Ħawəltətat Əmmä–Səhufat, Bə'atətat, Mäqəbərət Erətra* (Asmära, Franciscan Printing Press, 1993) 86 + 4 pages.

⁵¹ *Mäkäätä Anšar İtaləyawi Mägza'etti ab Erətra* (Asmära 1991) 71 + 5 pages.

⁵² *Erətrawiyən Komando. Ħaqqänña Zanta* [= “An Eritrean Commando. A True Story”] (Asmära, Ħədri Publishers, 1996) 304 pages + a map.

⁵³ *Səwra Erətra: Məsəgwamən Mənquqwalən – Mäsərəb Wəstəwi Məfəhəbat Səwra Erətra* [= “The Eritrean Revolution. Progress and Retrogress – the Mechanism of the Internal Friction of the Eritrean Revolution”] (Asmära, Red Sea Press, [1993]) 276 + 12 pages.

that work lies beyond the scope of this survey. But it must be said that in part his example was eventually followed in Ethiopia and Eritrea. Another prominent writer, Blattengeta HĒRUY WÄLDÄ ŠĒLLASE, introduced the first biographical lexicon miniature by issuing a small biographical dictionary in 1929. Pursuance of such a compilation was unfortunately not attempted for decades until the *Journal of Ethiopian Studies* published a quick compilation by Blattengeta MAḤTÄMÄ ŠĒLLASE WÄLDÄ MÄSQÄL⁵⁴ who had kindly accepted my request to produce one. This was followed by the first of four planned volumes of a biographical lexicon compiled by the Institute of Ethiopian Studies. So far, only the first volume⁵⁵ has appeared in print; the remaining volumes are expected to follow. A young artist, TAYE TADESSE,⁵⁶ produced a biographical compilation of Ethiopian artists in two parts, a useful work of its kind; but it is not clear whether he continued further before his untimely death in 1995. Similarly, the learned Qäysis KÄFYALÄW MÄRAHI outlines the historical role of a group of saintly women in the church in a short booklet.⁵⁷ The same author published a few years later another book⁵⁸ on *Women in Ethiopia* in which successful women in Ethiopian history are described.

As in the earlier decades, quite a few biographical studies of individual persons have been published in the 1990s in the form of monographs and journal articles. If we consider the persons studied in chronological order, the famous Ras Alula, whose life has already been studied by so many, comes first. A faculty member of the newly developing institution of higher learning at Mäqälä, MULUWÄRQ KIDANÄMARYAM,⁵⁹ published in Təgrəñña the latest biography of the notable on

⁵⁴ “Če Bäläw: a Study of the Ethiopian Culture of Horse-Names” in: *JES* 7.2 (1969) pp. 195–303.

⁵⁵ BELAINESH MICHAEL, S. CHOJNACKI, and RICHARD PANKHURST (Eds.), *The Dictionary of Ethiopian Biography*. Volume I: *From Early Times to the End of the Zagwé Dynasty c. 1270 A.D.* (Addis Abäba, Institute of Ethiopian Studies, 1975) 218 + 11 pages.

⁵⁶ *Short Biographies of some Ethiopian Artists. Part I: 1869–1957* (Addis Abäba, Kurraz Publishers, 1984; revised edition 1991); part II (ditto, 1991).

⁵⁷ *Yäsetoč Mänfasawi Həywat* [= “The Spiritual Life of Women”] (Addis Abäba, Tənša’ə Zäguba’ə Printing Press, 2nd impression 1983 YG = 1990–91) 43 pages.

⁵⁸ *Setoč Bä’ityopəya* (Addis Abäba, T.Ma.Ma.Ma., Säne 1988 YG = June–July 1996) 129 + 10 pages.

⁵⁹ *Mäwa’äl. Ra’əssi Alula Īngəda (Abba nägga). Nəmmäbbäl 100 ‘Amät Bä’äl ‘Awät Kwīnat ‘Adwa Zətädaləwä* [= “...: Prepared for the Celebration of the Centenary of the Campaign of ‘Adwa”] (Mäqälä, Zämānawi Təkkal Hətmät, 1988 YG = 1995–96) 256 pages. It should also be mentioned that a historical novel in which Alula played a role has been published by the prominent writer MAMMO WUDDENÄH, *Yohannes. Bätarik lay*

the occasion of the centenary of the victory of ʿAdwa to which the Ras had contributed significantly. His contemporary, Ras Mäkwännən Wäldä Mikaʿel, mentioned by almost every history book on the period, was a subject of study already in the 1950s when ḤAYLÄ GIYORGIS BÄLLÄTÄ⁶⁰ published a monograph on his life in Gəʿez. Its Amharic translation has appeared in print recently. Another contemporary, the talented Muslim poet – Sheikh Ḥusən Ğəbril, has also been a subject of study in recent years. His biography, written by a graduate of the Addis Abäba University, includes a collection of witty poems and anecdotes attributed to the Sheikh and, hence, the work is as much a documentary evidence as it is a biography.⁶¹ PAWLOS NÖNÑO’s book on Mənilək and GOBÄZE TÄFFÄTÄ’s monograph on Iyyasu – both mentioned above – are also biographical works as much as they are expositions of their respective eras.

A few resistance fighters – the leading one of them being Däggäzmač Gäräsu – received attention when several decades after their death TABOR WAMI,⁶² attached to the Ministry of Education, produced a biographical monograph in Amharic. The book is mainly a detailed life history of the patriotic leader Gäräsu Dukki, though a number of short biographies of other resistance fighters, as well as an assessment of sources are also given. About thirty photographs and genealogical charts are reproduced. Another writer, Mämhər KÄNÄFÄRĒGB MARƏQOS,⁶³ produced a short biography of Abunä Marəqos, one of the dignitaries consecrated under the influence of the Italians, but who was confirmed by the Ethiopian government as metropolitan of Eritrea. He was killed in a car accident in November 1960.

Yätämäsärrätä Ləbwälläd [= “...: A Novel Based on History”] (Addis Abäba, Commercial Publishing Enterprise, 1985 YG = 1992–93) 340 pages.

⁶⁰ *Yäləʿul Ras Mäkwännən Tarik* [= “A History of His Highness Ras Mäkwännən”]. Trans. Liqä kahnat Kənfä Gäbrəʿel Altayyā. (Addis Abäba, Commercial Publishing Enterprise, Mäskäräm 1989 YG = September–October 1996) 149 pages.

⁶¹ Cf. BOGGALÄ TÄFÄRI BÄZZU, *Tənbita Šəb Ḥusən Ğəbril* [= “The Prophecy of Sheikh Ḥusən Ğəbril”] (Addis Abäba Commercial Printing Press, Miyazya 1985 = April–May 1993) 123 pages.

⁶² *Yädäggəzmač Gäräsu Dukkanina Yäleloč Arbäoč Tarik* [= “Biographies of Däggəzmač Gäräsu Dukki and other Resistance Fighters”] (Addis Abäba, Educational Materials Printing and Distribution Agency, 1986 YG = 1993–94) 171 + 8 pages.

⁶³ *Bəşuʿə Abunä Marəqos* [= “His Grace, Bishop Marəqos”] (npp, Tər 1987 YG = January–February 1995) 35 + 1 pages.

In contrast to the above personalities, Emperor Ḥaylā Śəllase received the least attention⁶⁴, presumably for reasons of the prevailing political circumstances. This assumption is justifiable when one considers the number of works about him published abroad. In Ethiopia his image is still suspended between the revivalism of the sentimentalists and the hatred of the revolutionaries. The monograph by GETAČČĀW MĀKWĀNNĒN,⁶⁵ written as a centenary memorial, is a daring attempt, however superficial it may be in its approach. Various monographs and articles by Ethiopian scholars have already appeared in print, particularly in Europe and the United States.⁶⁶ The published memoirs of some of his officials (see below) also reflect a great deal of his character and personality. Our knowledge will certainly be enriched when the works of H.H. Ras ƏMƏRU, Fitäwrari TĀKLĀ ḤĀWARYAT, Kāntiba DĀSTA and others become accessible. One of the latest biographies of the leading personalities is that of the present head of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tāwahdo Church. The patriarchate produced “volume I” of his biography⁶⁷ in a very traditional manner, not dissimilar to the hagiographies, but still a very revealing work. No author or editor is mentioned by name.

Apart from rulers and great warriors, two educators have captured the attention of writers: Māmḥər Yəsəḥaq – son of the learned Protestant Tāwaldämädḥən and brother to Blattengeta Efrem – is widely acknowledged in Eritrea as the founder of modern education. The life story of this educator who became legendary in his lifetime for his veracity, frankness, diligence and humour has been narrated in a

⁶⁴ A novel characterizing the socio-political panorama under the monarchy and in which the Emperor plays a role was written during the Marxist era by ISAYYAS DĀMƏSSE, *Šəkuččaw* [= “The Intrigues”] (Addis Abāba, Bole Printing Enterprise, 1982 YG = 1989–90) 255 pages.

⁶⁵ *Nəguśā nəgāsttu. Yäqadamawi Ḥaylā Śəllase Nəguśa Nəgāst Zä ityopəyan yämätōñña* ‘*Amat Bā’ al Məkənyat Bāmadrəg Yätäzägağgä* [= “The King of Kings: Prepared for the Occasion of the Centenary of Emperor Ḥaylā Śəllase I”] (Addis Abāba, Ḥamle 1984 YG = July–August 1992) 208 pages.

⁶⁶ See, for example, the two articles by BAHRU ZEWEDE: “Hayla-Sellase: from Progressive to Reactionary” in: *Preproceedings of the Sixth Michigan State University Conference on Northeast Africa* (Holiday Inn, East Lansing, April 23–25, 1992) pp. 29–43; and, “Hayla-Sellase: From Progressive to Reactionary” in: *APEth* pp. 30–44.

⁶⁷ *Zena Mäwā’ə Zäbeşu’ə Wäqeddus Abunä Pawlos Qadamawi*. Book I (Addis Abāba, Patriarchal Office / Bərhanəna Sälam Printing Press, Ḥamle 1989 YG = July–August 1996) 528 pages.

small book⁶⁸ by YƏSƏHAQ YOSEF, apparently a man who knew him personally. Another man of merit in the field of education was Gäbrä Əgziʿbher Gobbaw Dästa, conventionally known as Kántiba Gäbru, who worked as an instructor, translator, interpreter, administrator, writer and senator, and yet one of the Ethiopian intellectuals who had to play the underdog. His biography has been written in Amharic by his son, DAWIT, a retired police colonel.⁶⁹ To these should be added RITA PANKHURST's⁷⁰ biographical study of Kántiba Gäbru's daughter, Sənəddu, a leading educator, writer and politician. There is also a biography of the poet, Näggadras Täsämma Əsäte, which will be mentioned later in connection with the valuable poems and expressions it contains.

2.5. Autobiographies / Memoirs

The writing of one's own life history is a twentieth century innovation in Ethiopia and Eritrea, unless of course one interprets the royal chronicles as autobiographies. The field did not even have a proper name until Mäsfən °Alämayyāhu coined the phraseological appellation – gəllä tarik – in 1996. Until then, it went under any name including təzzəta = reminiscence. Its use was in any case not wide spread since its introduction under *Yəhəywät Tarik* (generally understood to be the field of biography) by HƏRUY WÄLDÄ ŠƏLLASE in 1929.

Apart from four individuals – the first Prime Minister Ras Bitwäddäd Mäkwännən Əndalkaččäw, Emperor Həylä Šəllase I, the court official Däggazmač Käbbädä Täsämma and the lawyer Həywät Hədaru – none apparently attempted to publish his/her life story before this decade. Autobiography was generally regarded as immodest in the Ethiopian–Eritrean societies. Yet, it is no secret that many have written their life histories and reminiscences and used the manuscripts as a memory aid in their old age. For some reason, the 1990s saw a relative boom in this area.

⁶⁸ *Haşir Zanta-Həywät Məmhər Yəsəhaq Təwäldämädhən. Qalsi Məfə'ə Dənwərənna* [= "A short Biography of Yəsəhaq Təwäldämädhən. War on Illiteracy [sic]"] (Addis Abäba, Commercial Printing Press, 1986 YG = 1993–94) 72 pages.

⁶⁹ *Kántiba Gäbru Dästa – Yä'ityopəya Qərs* [= "... – An Ethiopian Heritage"] (Addis Abäba, Bole Printing Enterprise, Mäskäräm 1985 YG = September–October 1992) 384 pages. A genealogical table of his family is given at the end of the book.

⁷⁰ "Senedu Gabru: A role Model for Ethiopian Woman?" in: *Proceedings of the First University Seminar on Gender Issues in Ethiopia* (Addis Abäba, December 24–26, 1989) (Addis Abäba, Institute of Ethiopian Studies, 1991) pp. 71–87.

The former cabinet minister and diplomat, Ato HADDIS °ALÄMAYYÄHU,⁷¹ opened the decade with the publication of a part of his fascinating life history, namely, from the eve of the Fascist invasion of Ethiopia to his release from prison in Italy in 1943. His honesty and sense of humour coupled with his great talent of style and presentation have made the book at least as readable and enjoyable as his famous trilogy. Equally gratifying is the autobiography of his schoolmate and colleague, Ato AMANU°EL ABRÄHAM,⁷² whose English translation has been published abroad. The original in Amharic is said to be in preparation for publication by the University Press of Addis Abäba. An interesting reminiscence is also the alleged memoirs of the second Imperial Prime Minister, Şäḥafe tə°əzaz AKLILU HABTÄ WÄLD, one of the 60 officials executed in November 1974. It is said to have been written in prison and appeared a dozen years later in instalments in the Amharic magazine *Tobiya* Nos. 6–10 (1986 YG = 1993–94).

A vice minister in Aklilu's cabinet⁷³ and a prisonmate of his colleagues under the revolution, Ato ABÄRRA ĞÄMBÄRE,⁷⁴ has vividly described his prison experience in the Grand Palace during the years 1974–82. This work also contains a long list of the officials and academics imprisoned there by the Därg. The former high court president of the governorate of Harar, Fitäwrari KÄBBÄDÄ HABTÄ MARYAM,⁷⁵ in a first volume relates his escape from arrest at the outbreak of the revolution and the beginning of his exile in France. There is, however, no hint so far as to whether the second volume has appeared in print. An Eritrean lawyer and fighter,

⁷¹ *Təzzəta* [= "Reminiscences"] (Addis Abäba, Kurraz Printing Press, 1985 YG = 1992–93) 252 pages.

⁷² EMMANUEL ABRAHAM, *Reminiscences of my Life* (Oslo 1995) 343 pages.

⁷³ Among these cabinet members who have published their memoirs should also be included GAITACHEW BEKELE [Getaččaw Bäqqälä] who lives abroad and who has authored the book: *The Emperor's Clothes: A Personal Viewpoint on Politics and Administration in the Imperial Ethiopian Government, 1941–1974* (East Lansing, Michigan State University Press, 1993) 206 + 6 pages.

⁷⁴ *Yä°əsər Betu Abäsa. Bätalaqu Betä Mängəšt (1966–1974)* [= "The Prison Torture: In the Grand Palace (1974–1982)"] (Addis Abäba, Bərhanənnä Sälam Printing Press, 1985 YG = 1992–93) 200 pages.

⁷⁵ *Yäsəddät Zämäne* [= "The Years of my Exile"] (Addis Abäba, Bərhanənnä Sälam Printing Press, 1985 YG = 1992–93) 496 pages.

°ALÄMSÄGGÄD TÄSFAY,⁷⁶ has also recorded his reminiscences of the war of independence in a mixture of prose and poetry.

Finally, mention should be made of the incomplete, but still very illuminating autobiography of the outstanding poet, playwright, novelist and academic, Ato MÄNGĒSTU LÄMMA, who died in 1988. The work, which covers his life from childhood to his university studies in London, has been published with an introduction by the editor, MÄSFĒN °ALÄMAYYÄHU⁷⁷.

2.6. Church History

The history of the three major churches in Ethiopia and Eritrea – The Ethiopian Orthodox Tāwəḥdo Church, the Catholic Church and the Evangelical Church – have been considered by insiders in recent years. Most of the publications are in Amharic, but there are also a few in English and Təgrāñña.

The Orthodox Church, which has always been a major focus of study, has still a great deal to offer by way of historical material and interpretation. The new works represent perspectives on its history, doctrine, sacred books, laws, and relations with other churches. An assessment of the role of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church in the campaign of °Adwa has already been mentioned in section 2.1. above.

Another book by KÄFYALÄW MÄRAHI⁷⁸ assesses the history and the holy books of the church as well as its contributions to education and the literacy campaign. The book was published by an agency of the Ministry of Education known as The Production and Distribution of Books, and hence, it appears that it was intended for educational purposes.

The patriarchate produced a revised edition of the short but clear handbook of the church in Amharic and English bound together and entitled *The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church – Faith, Order of Worship and Ecumenical Relations*.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ *Kalattä Qenä ab Dəfa°at. Zəkrətat, Täwasə°otat, Ḥəşärti Zantatat* [“Two Weeks in the Trenches. Reminiscences, Plays and Anecdotes”] (Asmära, Ḥədri Publishers / Adulis Printing Press, 1997) 203 pages.

⁷⁷ *Mängəstu Lämman – Dämamu Bə°əräñña (Gällä Tarik)* [= “... – The Accomplished Writer – (Autobiography)”] (Addis Abäba, Mega Publishing Enterprise, 1988 YG = 1995–96) 267 pages.

⁷⁸ *Yäbetä Krəstiyan Astəwasə°o Lä°ityopəya Səlatane* [= “The Contributions of the Church to Ethiopian Civilization”] (Addis Abäba, Educational Materials Printing and Distribution Agency, Yäkkatit 1986 YG = February–March 1994) 120 + 8 pages.

⁷⁹ (Addis Abäba, the Patriarchal Head-Office, 1995) 109 pages.

Another author closely connected with the patriarchate, KĒNFÄ GÄBRĒʾEL ALTÄYYÄ,⁸⁰ wrote a book which outlines the procedures, customs and traditions of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tāwəḥdo Church as a congregational organization. The author was head of the department of church education and training at the time the book was published.

LULE MÄLʾAKU,⁸¹ who had earlier produced a booklet on the baptismal teachings of the church, sums up the history of the early church fathers and the major church councils of the fourth and fifth centuries from which time the separation of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tāwəḥdo Church originates.

Finally, a very meticulously descriptive and comparative study of the history and structure of the 81 canonical books of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tāwəḥdo Church has been published by DIBÄKKULLU ZÄWDE⁸². Another significant contribution⁸³ of the same author is a detailed commentary and history as well as value assessment of the Fəṯḥa Nägäšt, a work which has as much to do with the traditions of the church as with the laws of the state.

The history of the Catholic Vicariate in Ethiopia and Eritrea is presented in three meticulously researched books⁸⁴ entitled “*The Ebullient Phoenix*”: *A History of the Vicariate of Abyssinia* by an Irish missionary priest, KEVIN O’MAHONEY, who worked in the region for a long time. The last volume covers the period up to 1916, and one can only hope that the period thereafter will also be worked on in the foreseeable future. Similarly, the early history of the Protestant church, established by the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Mission, is told in a booklet by a veteran

⁸⁰ *Šərʾatä Betä Krəstyan* [= “The Rules of the Church”] (Addis Abäba, Tənsäʾe Printing Enterprise, 1984 YG = 1991–92) 144 pages.

⁸¹ *Yäbetä Krəstyan Tarik* [= “History of the Church”] (Addis Abäba, Tənsäʾe Zägubaʾe Printing Press, 1986 YG = 1993–94) 326 pages.

⁸² *81 Qəddusat Məšəḥəftənnä Mənčoč Qännonat* [= “The Holy Scriptures and the Sources of the Canons”] (Addis Abäba, Commercial Printing Enterprise, 1987 YG = 1994–95) 296 pages.

⁸³ *Fəṯḥa Nägäšt Bəḥerä Həg Wəqännona. Siyamew, Şənşä Həssabu, Mənčočcu. Məšəḥəft Amlakawuyat, Qännonat Betäkrəstyanawuyat, Qännonatä Nägäšt ʿAlämawuyat* [= “The Fəṯḥa Nägäšt – The Ground of Laws and Canons: its Appellation, its Concepts, its Sources, the Divine Books, the Ecclesiastical Canons, and the Secular Laws”] (Addis Abäba, Bərhanənnä Sälām Printing Press, 1986 YG = 1993–94) 395 pages.

⁸⁴ Each book has a different subtitle: Book I: 1839–1860 (Asmära, Ethiopian Studies Centre, 1982) 250 pages. Book II: 1860–1881 (Asmära, Ethiopian Studies Centre, 1987) 306 pages and a map. Book III: 1882–1916 (Addis Abäba, United Printers, 1992) 228 pages and a map.

member, Ato AMANU²EL ABRĀHAM,⁸⁵ an eminent octogenarian who stood by the Mäkanäyäsus Church throughout his career as a teacher, diplomat and cabinet minister.⁸⁶

2.7. Ethno-History

The writing of ethnic and/or regional history was by no means favoured under the monarchy even if no deterrent decree seems to have been issued. Although the Marxist regime professed the promoting of ethno-cultural and linguistic identity, it appears that hardly anything was produced by way of historical or ethnological examination; such an undertaking would nonetheless have enriched the national history. Apart from the works of AŞMÄ GIYORGIS on the Oromo, TÄYYÄ GÄBRÄ MARYAM on the peoples of Ethiopia and GÄBRÄ IYYÄSUS °ABBAY on the peoples of Märäb Məllaş, there seems to have been no significant publication in this area, at least in the earlier decades.⁸⁷ The few works that appeared in print in the 1990s seem, therefore, indicative of a great change.

MICHAEL GHABER's monograph on *The Blin of Bogos*⁸⁸ was posthumously published in the early years of this decade. It surveys the history of the Bogos or the Blin in the nineteenth century. The main text of the work was originally submitted as a senior paper at the Department of History of the then Haile Selassie I University, Addis Abäba. The research was updated and extended with an epilogue shortly before the author's death in 1992. This work is supplemented by a Təgrəñña translation of ALBERTO POLLERA's work on the peoples of Eritrea by Abba YƏSƏḤAQ GÄBRÄ

⁸⁵ *Yäwängelawit Betä Krəstiyan Mäkanä Iyyäsus Aggamamar* [= "The Genesis of the Mäkanä Iyyäsus Church"] (Addis Abäba, Commercial Printing Press, 1987 YG = [May] 1995) 93 pages.

⁸⁶ For his biography, see JOHANNES LAUNHARDT, *Ato Emmanuel Abraham. Christuszeuge in Äthiopien* (Erlangen, Verlag der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Mission, 1980) 30 + 2 pages.

⁸⁷ Two rather short monographs appeared in print: one on the Gurage and the other marginally on the Oromo. SÄYFU DÄBBÄBÄ, *Azmač. Yägurage Həzb Aččər Tarik* [= "A Short History of the Gurage"] (Addis Abäba, Täsfa Gäbrä Şəllase Printing Press, Ḥamle 1966 YG = July–August 1974) 68 pages; YƏLMA DERESSA, *Yä ityopəya Tarik Bä'asra Səddestañña Käflä Zämän* [= "History of Ethiopia of the Sixteenth Century"] (Addis Abäba, Bərhanəna Sälam Printing Press, Hədar 1959 YG = November–December 1966) 248 + 8 pages. The last 30 or so pages are devoted to the migration of the Oromo to the Northeast African highlands.

⁸⁸ (Baghdad, Type set by Margaret Sarafian, 1993) 70 + 8 pages (paperback, small size).

IYYÄSUS⁸⁹ who was mentioned earlier in this article. This edition is provided with a short introduction pertaining to the significance of the work and the author. An incomplete list of Pollera's publications related to Ethiopia and Eritrea is appended.

Another people who, unusually, received the attention of an Ethiopian writer were the Betä ʿĪsraʾel or Fälaša, as they were commonly known. In a booklet ASRÄS YAYYÄH⁹⁰ reviewed the history and culture of the Ethiopian Jews. A map showing their geographical location is also included. Similarly, NOCHO WODEEBUSHO⁹¹[sic] outlined the history of the kingdom of Kafa. The emphasis is on the nineteenth century, and the work tends to be an ethnographic survey rather than a historical analysis. An interesting work on the Oromo is the one by Balambaras GABBESSA ʾĪĠĠETA,⁹² who suffered imprisonment under the Därg. The book considers the social, religious and customary life of the largest ethnic group in the country. Another work⁹³ on the social and political history of the Oromo was recently published in an Amharic translation, the original having apparently been written in English in the 1980s by a member, or members, of one of the Oromo liberation fronts.

Some research papers on various peoples of southern Ethiopia – including the Guġi by ELFNEH UDESSA and TADDESE BARISSO, the Hadiyya by MOGES MOLLA, the Gämo and Konso by TADDESE WOLDE, the Wola'itta by TSEHAI BERHANE-SELASSIE and the Gurage by WORKU NIDA – were presented at the Eleventh International Conference of Ethiopian Studies at the beginning of this decade.⁹⁴

Perhaps the most popular ethnic group among Ethiopian writers as well as foreign scholars is the Gurage. At least four books have been published in Amharic on that

⁸⁹ *Däqqäbbat Həzbətat Erətra* [= “Native Peoples of Eritrea”] (Asmara, Hədiri Publishers, 1996) 323 pages.

⁹⁰ *Betä ʿĪsraʾel Bāityopəya. Tarikaččäw, Bahlaččäwənnə Anwanwaraččäw* [= “The Betä ʿĪsraʾel in Ethiopia. Their History, their Culture and their Life”] (Addis Abāba, Bole Printing Enterprise, and Toronto, Canada, 1989 YG = 1996–97) 120 pages.

⁹¹ *Yäkafaččo Həzb Tarikawi Mənç. Ase Gakki Šäräččo (1857–1919)* [= “Historical Origin of the People of Kafa. Emperor Gakki Saracco”] (Awasa / Addis Abāba, Artistic Printing Press, 1986 YG = 1993–94) 73 pages.

⁹² *Yäʾoromo Bəher Bahlənnə Aččər Tarik* [= “The Culture and Short History of the Oromo Nation”] Book I (Addis Abāba, Artistic Printing Press, nd) 271 pages.

⁹³ HARRO BIYANSA (Trans.), *Yägāda Melba – Oromiya. Yäʾoromo Həzb Tarik* (Addis Abāba, Bərhanənnə Sälam Printing Press, 1985 YG = 1992–93) 224 pages.

⁹⁴ Cf. BAHRU ZEWEDE, RICHARD PANKHURST and TADDESE BEYENE (Eds.), *Proceedings of the Eleventh International Conference of Ethiopian Studies*, Addis Abāba, April 1–6 1991. I–II (Addis Abāba, Institute of Ethiopian Studies, 1994).

ethnic cluster of peoples in the 1990s. TÄSFA GÄBRÄYES⁹⁵ wrote *A Short History of the Soddo Gurage* with their centre at Aymäläl which is reputed to be the first settlement of the Gurage in the mid-fifteenth century, while WÄRQU NĒDA⁹⁶ outlined the history of the Gurage at the end of the nineteenth century. Muhammäd Anġamo features well throughout the book. A more analytical work is that of °ALÄMAYYÄHU NARI WĒRGASO⁹⁷ which deals with the history and culture of the Gurage people. The author is obviously familiar with the research works related to his people and does not hesitate to cudgel previous writers wherever they erred. The author planned to publish three other related volumes, but it has not been possible, in the course of writing these notes, to find out if any of them has appeared in print. As far as cultural history of a particular ethnic group is concerned, the book of GÄBRÄ°TYYÄSUS HJAYLÄMARYAM⁹⁸ is more original. It describes the social tradition of the Gurage with particular reference to slaves and slave-owning practices. The book was originally published in one of the Gurage languages before it was translated into Amharic. The author has written about a dozen books in all.

2.8. Documentary Works

A few works which contain material of historical interest have also been published in recent years. The well known *Nägarit Gazeṭa*, the legal organ of the Ethiopian government since 1941, which contains proclamations, decrees, official appointments and legal notices is still being published. Since 1991, the Eritrean government has been publishing the laws and related legal matters in a similar organ known as the *Gazeṭa Awaġat Erṗtra* [= “Gazette of Eritrean Proclamations”], a successor at least in name to the Eritrean Gazette of the 1940s and 50s. The practice of the 1940s of publishing regional customary laws in Eritrea seems to have been revived by the Capucin Brothers in Asmära, one of whom produced an edition of *The Laws of*

⁹⁵ *Aymäläl. Yägurage wäym Yäsoddo Gordana Aččər Yätarik Mastawäša* [= “Aymäläl: A Short Historical Outline of the Gurage or the Soddo Gordana”] (Addis Abäba, Commercial Printing Press, Gənbət 1987 YG = May–June 1995) 228 pages.

⁹⁶ *Ġäbdu. Yägurage Bablənna Tarik* [= “Heroism: Culture and History of the Gurage People”] (Addis Abäba, Bole Printing Enterprise, 1983 YG = 1990–91) 165 pages.

⁹⁷ *Ensät. Yägurage Babäl əmma Yäityopəya Mäsarätawi Tarik* [= “Ensät: the Gurage Culture and the Fundamental History of Ethiopia”] Book I (Addis Abäba, Bole Printing Enterprise, Gənbət 1985 YG = May–June 1993) 252 pages.

⁹⁸ *Adäraw* [= “The Trust”] (Addis Abäba, Bole Printing Enterprise, Hämle 1987 YG = July–August 1995) 254 + 2 pages.

*Enganə'a and the Procedures of ʿAşmi Ḥarmaz.*⁹⁹ It consists of the traditions, laws and procedures of a district in Akkäläguzay. ʿAşmi Ḥarmaz is the place where the inhabitants occasionally assembled to initiate or change laws. Such works are more than mere legal documents and can be valuable sources of history.¹⁰⁰ A compilation of extracts of traditional court litigation procedures and legal expressions from various books and newspapers has been published by ŠIBĀŠI LĀMMA.¹⁰¹

From time to time both governments also issue booklets expressing one or the other aspect of their policies. Such a one is, for instance, *Ethiopia's Economic Policy During the Transitional Period*¹⁰² by the Transitional Government of Ethiopia. The Department of External Affairs of the Government of Eritrea also issued *Eritrea. Birth of a Nation*¹⁰³, a report on the national economic projects and achievements. A series of annual booklets entitled *Qalä Mätäyəq*¹⁰⁴ has also been published annually in Asmära. They contain a collection of a variety of questions from the public addressed to President Isayəyas as well as his answers.

An interesting compilation of select newspaper articles, speeches and poems of the famous Eritrean teacher, journalist, poet and politician, Ato WĀLDÄ'AB WĀLDĀMARYAM (1905–1995) has been published by TĒKWABO ARĀS'Ē,¹⁰⁵ himself

⁹⁹ SĀLOMON GĀBRĀKRĒSTOS (Ed.), *Ḥəggi Engänə'a Šər'at Aşmi Ḥarmaz* (Akkäläguzay – Erətra). (Asmära, The Capucin Brothers / Franciscan Printing Press, Mäggabit 1985 YG = March–April 1993) 124 pages.

¹⁰⁰ On the nature and significance of the published and unpublished customary codes of Eritrea, see F. KEMINK, *Die Təgreñña-Frauen in Eritrea. Eine Untersuchung der Kodizes des Gewohnheitsrechts 1890–1941* = Studien zur Kulturkunde 101 (Stuttgart 1991). A member of the legal department of the Eritrean government, YOḤANNĒS HABTĀ ŠĒLLASE ADḤANOM, assessed the democratic elements of the traditional laws on which one could base land reform and other changes in a booklet entitled: *Dämokrasiyawi Ba'ətatat Ḥəggi Endabba. Şəkwə'u Dəbri nay Mi'ətti ʿAmät Ba'ədawi Mägza'əti* [= “Democratic Components of the Customary Laws: Their Impact After a Hundred Years of Alien Rule”] (Asmära, np, 1992) 83 + 12 pages.

¹⁰¹ *Tätəyyäq* [= “Be Questioned”] (Addis Abäba, Kurraz Publishers / Bərhanəna Sälam Printing Press, 1985 YG = 1992–93) 166 pages.

¹⁰² (Addis Abäba 1991) 48 pages. Unlike the text of the Federal Constitution of 1994, this booklet bears the remark, “An Official Translation”.

¹⁰³ (Asmära 1993) 44 + 4 pages.

¹⁰⁴ The first was: *Qälä-Mätäyəq Wanna Şəhafi G.M.E.* [= “Interview with the Secretary-General of the Provisional Government of Eritrea”] (Asmära, 6 Nəhäsä = August 1991) 48 pages.

¹⁰⁵ *Məruşat Anqəşat Ato Wäldä'ab*, 1941–1991 [= “Select Articles of ...”] (Asmära, Ḥədri Publishers, 1995) 337 pages.

a writer. A short introduction and a table of contents are provided. The documents are arranged chronologically. A collection of folklore, poems and anecdotes related to the biography of a hero of the nineteenth century, Nəguṣä Əlfu, has been published under the title of a popular folk song in Eritrea by Abba YƏSƏḤAQ GÄBRÄ IYYÄSUS,¹⁰⁶ mentioned earlier in this article. A teacher and writer, ASRÄS TÄSÄMMA, has produced perhaps the most systematic and valuable booklet¹⁰⁷ consisting of a brief history of the Təgrēñña language and a collection of poems, witticisms, aphorisms, and anecdotes within the context of historical events as well as vivid descriptions of traditional games, ceremonies and customs. A part of it was presented at an academic symposium organized by the University of Asmāra in 1983.

The lifelong leader of the Ethiopian Football Federation and cabinet minister of culture and sports in his old age, Ato YƏDNAQAČČÄW TÄSÄMMA,¹⁰⁸ produced a monograph comprising witticisms, sayings, poems and anecdotes of his quick-witted father who became legendary for his remarkable, sarcastic and poetic comments. A unique work is that of YƏSƏḤAQ YOSEF,¹⁰⁹ a writer mentioned earlier, on the *History of the City of Asmāra*. It is based on oral traditions and reminiscences of the elders. As such, it is a collection of source material rather than a study, though the author attempted at some points to interpret the meaning of some area names. A collection of letters by a former official of the Därg, DAWIT WÄLDÄ GIYORGIS, addressed to President Mängəstu Ḥaylä Maryam and the newspaper *Addis Zämān* after the writer went on exile has also been published.¹¹⁰ No editor is given for this booklet, but the staff of the aforesaid newspaper seem to have been involved.

Finally, it must be mentioned that there have been some editions of ecclesiastical works pertaining to at least the Ethiopian Orthodox Tāwəḥdo Church which can be useful sources for the religious history of the region, though I had access to only

¹⁰⁶ *Nəguṣä, Nəguṣä wäyza ‘Aläm Bəlaš!* [= “Negusa! Negusa! Alas – This World is Vain!”] (Asmāra, Ḥədri Publishers, [1994–95]) 20 pages.

¹⁰⁷ *Dəḥay Bahli Qāddamay Kəffal: Gälä kab Mäqqaləḥ Gəṭmi Təgrəñña; Kalə’ay Kəffal: Gälä kab Babləwi Šəwatatna* [“The Voice of Culture: Part I: A Little from the Echoes of Təgrəñña Poems; Part II: A Little from Our Wits”] (Addis Abäba, Commercial Printing Press, 1992) 75 pages.

¹⁰⁸ *Sämənna Wärqu – Täsämma Ešete* [= “Wax and Gold: ...”] (Addis Abäba, Bole Printing Enterprise, 1985 YG = 1992–93) 226 + 6 pages.

¹⁰⁹ *Zanta Kätäma Asmāra* (Addis Abäba, Commercial Printing Press, 1993) 72 pages.

¹¹⁰ *Yədräs “Ləgwad Liqämänbär” Mängəstu Ḥaylä Maryam* [= “May it Reach Comrade Chairman Mängəstu Ḥaylä Maryam”] (Addis Abäba, Bole Printing Enterprise, [1991]) 67 + 4 pages.

very few of them. The outstanding book-producer and zealous church adherent, Ato TÄSFA GÄBRÄ ŚĪLLASE, published perhaps the most extensive compilation of the miracles of St. Mary in two parts:¹¹¹ the first contains 270 miracles and the second 123 miracles, both in Gəʿəz, together with an Amharic translation. The MAḤBÄRÄ ḤAWARYAT [= “Society of the Apostles”], which published numerous works earlier, has also issued an edition of the so-called Nägäšt, consisting of Enoch, Job, First Samuel and Second Samuel¹¹² in recent years.

3. Summary / Conclusions

As the random samples in the preceding notes show, publications of various kinds and qualities have been continuously produced (albeit obvious financial, political and technical difficulties) in Ethiopia and Eritrea in Amharic, English, Gəʿəz, and Təgrəñña throughout the decades of this century, and particularly in the present one. In the field of history, which has been taken as a point of focus in this article, conspicuous progress seems to have been made in the last half a dozen or so years as a result of the enhancement of historical consciousness promoted partly through education and partly through the prevailing political circumstances which awakened many, at least in the case of Ethiopia, to the uncertainties that have been looming up on the horizon. In the case of Eritrea, the primary drive seems to have been the search for identity and self-assertion following the attainment of sovereignty. Another factor is the rise of a relatively vast and rapacious readership in both countries evolving from the educational efforts of the last half of a century and the general literacy campaign which accompanied formal schooling. Furthermore, there has been a marked expansion of printing facilities, bookshops and libraries, as well as some pioneering publishing houses – all of which might have provided an impetus in their own way. The production of some works critical of the contemporary government may also reflect the existence of a relative relaxation in censorship, at

¹¹¹ *Täʿammärä Maryam. Balä Hulät Mäto Säba Məʿəraf. Gəʿəzənnä Amarəñña. Yätənt Liqawənt Endäşafutənnä Endätärəgomut* [= “Miracles of St. Mary Consisting of 270 Chapters: Gəʿəz and Amharic as Written and Translated/Interpreted by Ancient Scholars”] (Addis Abäba, Täsfa Gäbrä Śällase Zäbəherä Bulga, Nəḥase 1983 YG = August-September 1991); II: *Mäto Haya Sostu Täʿammärä Maryam. Bäḡəʿəzənnä Bäamarəñña* [= “The 123 Miracles of St. Mary in Gəʿəz and Amharic”] (Addis Abäba, Täsfa Gäbrä Śällase Printing Press, 1984 YG = 1991–92) 444 pages.

¹¹² *Mäşhafä Nägäšt: Henok, Iyyob, Samuʿel Qädamawi, Samuʿel Kalʿə* (Asmära, Kokäbä Şəbah Printing Press, Gənbət 1983 YG = May–June 1991) 232 + 4 pages.

least in the early years of the decade, a unique situation which was unthinkable under the monarchy and the Marxist regime.

Two significant aspects of the recent production of historical works in Ethiopia and Eritrea have been the marked improvement in quality as well as the increase in thematic variety. Episodic, epochal, biographical and autobiographical studies are prevailing over the traditional tendency of commencing history with Adam and Eve. Likewise, the narrative and/or collective method of history is gradually giving way to the interpretive, but not at the expense of source materials which are also being sought, collected and published.

Most of the works have a touch of originality, as they incorporate, consciously or otherwise, materials derived from oral traditions and personal observations of the authors. It is, therefore, time for scholars, reviewers, bibliographers and librarians outside those countries to take these works seriously into account.