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Review of

ALULA PANKHURST – FRANÇOIS PIGUET (eds.), *Moving People in
Ethiopia. Development, Displacement and the State*

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Reviews

However, the book is a re-interpretation of Ethiopia's recent past that has direct resonance with the present political landscape: Meles Zenawi himself was a member of the radical Ethiopian student movement that initially supported the military, Marxist dictatorship of Mengistu Haile Mariam – “remnants of the Ethiopian student movement of the 1960s and early 1970s”, as labeled by the author (p. vi). This motive comes out quite clearly on the cover of the book which pictures a lonely Ethiopian man, lying down beside a tree, resting on the shores of Lake Awasa, against a rather desolate background. The man seems to be reflecting on past events, alluding to the anguished course of the idealistic young intellectuals of his generation. This has also been recently put filmed by the Ethiopian director Haile Gerima in his latest film “Teza”.

Thus, the key value of this book for scholars and advanced students, who will be its main market, is that it expands on existing studies of the dynamics of change leading to the downfall of the imperial regime, providing valuable additional insights into the political evolution of the country that still echoes in the present.

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ALULA PANKHURST – FRANÇOIS PIGUET (eds.), *Moving People in Ethiopia. Development, Displacement and the State* = Eastern Africa Series. Woodbridge, Suffolk: James Currey, 2009. XLII + 301 pp. Price: £ 45,-. ISBN: 978-1-84701-613-3.

There is hardly any part of Africa where population dynamics since the 19th century have been as intensive as in Ethiopia. Processes of “moving people” can either occur voluntarily or forcibly, yet in most cases the state is involved. Editors Alula Pankhurst and François Piguet have collected a broad spectrum of contributions on this topic which focuses on different types of development, drought-induced displacement as well as conflict and its socio-economic results. The articles presented in this volume stem from papers discussed at a conference held in January 2003 that was organized by the *Ethiopian Society of Sociologists, Social Workers and Anthropologists* in cooperation with the *United Nations Emergency Unit for Ethiopia*. A considerable amount of new findings and materials have been updated by most of the authors since then.

This book is composed of contributions from 16 authors and as such is divided into six major parts including the introduction and the conclusion. Part II deals with *Theoretical and International Perspectives*, Part III with *Devel-*

opment-Induced Displacement, Part IV with *The Experience of State-Organized Resettlement*, and Part V with *The Dilemmas of Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Groups*. It is worth mentioning that the editors succeeded in employing one of the world's leading authorities in questions of resettlement, Michael M. Cernea, to write a preface of substantial value which is subtitled "An Original Contribution to Country-wide Displacement Analysis". Social scientists could not agree more with his view that an "anthropology of displacement and resettlement" (p. xxv) should be reinforced as a relevant sub-discipline. The fact that eleven authors are citizens of Ethiopia should not be unnoticed; indeed, their contributions demonstrate the country's academic potential in the fields of scholarly work dealt with here. Their articles, largely based on material from their Ph.D. studies, indicate that they are products of a particularly intensive phase of their research activities. Apart from the theoretical and general analyses 13 case studies are presented from different parts of Ethiopia. Geographically speaking, the book focuses on Təgray, Gumuz, Addis Abāba, western Oromia, the middle Awaš and the southern Rift Valley, whereas the utmost eastern and western regions of the country, such as Ogaden and Gambela are not represented. Because the reviewer is confronted with a large spectrum of heterogeneous themes, he is to some extent inevitably biased by his own professional interests and specialization of knowledge. It should nevertheless be a matter of scholarly fairness that all contributions in this volume be given due attention. Here is now a brief summary of some focal points of each of the anthology's articles.

The editors Pankhurst and Piguet present a general outline of the book in their *Foreword* and then specify relevant points of research in their 22 page *Introduction*. They make note of the historical background as well as the environmental and ecological root causes of migratory dynamics in Ethiopia and frame the different facets of the state's involvement in spatial mobility. Most of these aspects are later discussed in detail by the authors of the various case studies.

Part II begins with an article by David Turton, an anthropologist who in his former field studies recorded data on the effects of drought among the agro-pastoralist Mursi in the lower Omo valley. He raises some general points of theoretical interest and addresses the demand of establishing a common framework for the study of forced migration. He argues that forced resettlers should be awarded the same legal position as refugees by a nation-state system. Chris de Wet raises the question as to why things often go wrong in resettlement projects. According to his view, people are threatened at five different levels, namely the individual, the community, the institutional, the national/regional and the international level. He points to the ethical conundrums as always being a particular problem of resettlement projects.

Part III deals with development-induced displacement which is caused by the construction of dams and irrigation schemes, the establishment of national parks for wildlife conservation and urban relocation. In this field of research the authors benefitted from a solid base of experiences and writings which go back to the pioneer studies of Elizabeth Colson and Thayer Scudder regarding the Kariba resettlement scheme in Zambia during the 1960s. Kassahun Kebede observes the effects caused by the Gəlgäl Gibe dam located at the upper Omo River, a project intending to improve Ethiopia's demand for electric energy. The relocation of ca. 10,000 people began in 1985 and was resumed by the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) government in 1996. The dam-induced displacees during the *Därg* regime who had been exposed to terrible socio-economic sufferings were rehabilitated to some extent after 1999. Since the 1960s large-scale agricultural projects managed by foreign agrobusiness in joint ventures with the Ethiopian state have steadily been advancing in the region surrounding the middle Awaš River. This resulted in a decreased access to grazing and water resources which threatened the very existence of the area's indigenous nomads and agro-pastoralists, namely the Karrayu-Oromo, the ʿAfar and the ʿIssa-Somali. Ayele Gebre and Getatchew Kassa analyse the effects of this process which is continuously resulting in violent clashes of local people with government authorities as well as with rivalling pastoralist groups and sedentary neighbours. A further extension of the plantations of sugar cane, etc. has not materialized due to the fierce resistance by the autochthonous inhabitants. The rights of agro-pastoralists were also neglected in the case of the Šamakko in the Wäyto River valley. State authorities often resumed pastoralist land use and resource management as being 'irrational' and instead they advocated for the promotion of large-scale commercial farming in order to convert extensively used pastures into more productive agricultural land. In such a case the ecological carrying capacity as well as the indigenous environmental knowledge of the local inhabitants are blatantly ignored. A situation of a related type is debated by Tadesse Berisso. He demonstrates how the rights and interests of the autochthonous people are often ignored, in this case those of the Guğgi-Oromo with regard to the Năčč Šar National Park south of Lake Abbaya. 3,500 agro-pastoralists who have been living there for generations in relatively harmonious co-operation with nature are now threatened by forcible expulsion from the area. They complain to be misinformed by the government and not adequately integrated in the planning processes. Feleke Tadele analyses the consequences of urban development for a peasant community in the outskirts of Addis Abäba by employing the model which Colson and Scudder had proposed for this type of studies. He outlines the numerous deficits concerning food supply, the search of sustainable livelihoods, sheltering,

social disarticulation and marginalization, all areas of everyday life that have been steadily affected. Nonetheless traditional institutions of crucial importance such as *Iddir* and *Iqub* have remained stable.

In Part IV three authors criticise state-organized resettlement which has played an essential role in Ethiopian socioeconomic policy since the mid-1980s. Gebre Yntiso searches for explanations as to why the Tana-Beles Project of Pawe/Mätäkkäl in Beni Šangul-Gumuz became a failure despite enormous national and international investments. He draws attention to the logistical mismanagement and disregard of environmental factors and ethical standards and concludes with a set of recommendations in order to avoid similar mistakes in the future. Wolde-Selassie Abbute also carried out field research in Pawe and focuses on the social impact of resettlement in this scheme, which sheltered ca. 82,000 people at its climax in the late 1980s. He describes the ways how these people strove to reconstruct their livelihoods by establishing or strengthening social institutions for livelihood adaptation in environmental conditions which proved to be extremely harsh and difficult for them. The resolution of conflicts with the local Gumuz proved to be a basic prerequisite for the resettlers who originated from different provinces of northern and southern Ethiopia. Alula Pankhurst draws on long-term experience concerning resettlement in Ethiopia and thus utilizes his position as co-editor of this book to contribute a text which considerably exceeds the length of the other articles. Upon commencing research on this topic during the *Därg* regime he had obviously remained too uncritical with regard to the organizational, logistic and human deficits of the programme. Given that resettlement was resumed in 2003 by the EPRDF government, he now embarks on revisiting it in the light of his experience from the 1980s. Pankhurst provides a high density of information concerning research on the macro-level of Ethiopia, on current statistical data, on costs of the projects and their ethical implications. His conclusion that resettlement is ultimately a human rather than a technical process is vehemently to be supported.

Part V of the book deals with different types of dilemmas refugees, returnees and displaced groups are facing. Lewis Aptekar and Behailu Abebe depict the problems of Ethiopian and Eritrean families which were separated as a consequence of the hostility between the two countries and the war of 1998–2000. These people mainly surviving in the capital Addis Abäba are not only exposed to poverty, but also to traumatic experiences and mental illnesses, which they try to overcome, for example, by traditional techniques of exorcism and possession cults. The researchers therefore make a plea for extended financial support in the sector of mental health. Kassahun Berhanu's article considers the fate of returnees who were displaced along the border of the two countries by military actions during the Ethio–Eritrean war. He investi-

gated the conditions of their rehabilitation in two resettlement schemes in Humära, a place in western Təgray near the Sudanese and the Eritrean border. The prospects offered to them seem to be as constructive as is possible considering their highly miserable situation. Behailu Abebe's article on war, displacement and coping with the effects of violence is based on case studies in the Ethio–Eritrean border area of Zalanbesa in eastern Təgray. During the clashes civilians took refuge on both sides of the frontier and thus were often forced to establish a kind of dual identity as a means of survival. When civil war ended in Ethiopia after the fall of the *Därg* regime in 1991, the necessity arose out of financial and economic reasons to demobilize a part of Africa's largest army of more than half a million military personnel. Yisak Tafere observes in his article the process of how young soldiers change to adult civilians and he places his research focus on cooperatives established for ex-soldiers in Addis Abäba. As he points out, female soldiers were discriminated against not only during their army service, but also in their civilian life in that they are not given equal chances for socioeconomic emancipation and adaptation upon demobilization.

The *Conclusion* composed by the two editors Alula Pankhurst and François Piguet in Part VI aims at bringing together overall insights from the case studies and presenting suggestions based on past experience and current trends in order to provide advice for future debates on research and practical policy. For this purpose the major fields of investigation and potential sources of conflict, namely internally displaced people by development-induced projects, refugees, returnees, demobilized soldiers, are briefly revisited. The editors finally appeal to Ethiopian as well as to foreign scholars and to international institutions to intensify their studies on these subjects of central importance for the present world.

The book includes a list of acronyms, a glossary, a map, notes on the contributors, an index and a bibliography of 26 pages comprising 663 titles. The selection of literature referring to the various themes of the anthology is thus highly voluminous and comprehensive.

“Moving people in Ethiopia” is an outstanding example of modern anthropological research on the most burning problems in the Horn of Africa. The broad range of topics analysed in this field demonstrates a remarkable advancement of the social sciences in Ethiopian scholarship. Anthropologists will also welcome the fact that not only the “mainstream” of the state's population is taken into consideration, but also a particular emphasis is given to marginalized ethnic groups such as the Şamakko with less than 10,000 people or nomadic pastoralists such as the Karrayyuu, whose economic strategy and cultural survival are highly endangered. With their writings – and presumably also by practical actions – scholars become advocates

of people who are neglected and/or mistreated by the state authorities. Many projects, for example villagization and resettlement during the *Därg* regime, went so tremendously wrong that a high amount of sensitivity and care is demanded to avoid disastrous mistakes of this kind in the future. It can be stated that the book does not exclusively serve academic purposes, but it can also be recommended as a basic reader for applied social sciences.

The case studies are primarily descriptive, but most of them try to fit into a theoretical framework offered by scientific authorities in this field such as Michael Cernea. Most of the authors have successfully combined quantitative research and the use of statistical sources of information with qualitative research methods such as structured and biographical interviews. Given the broad range of introductory remarks and case studies, redundancies and repetitions of data cannot be avoided. References to literary sources could sometimes have been more precise by adding the numbers of pages.

To sum up, the topic of this book is so important for present-day Ethiopia that its publication can be said to be overdue. It is desirable that the editors and the authors of the case studies continue their efforts to study the causes, effects and consequences of spatial mobility in the Horn of Africa.

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HERMANN AMBORN, *Flexibel aus Tradition: Burji in Äthiopien und Kenia. Unter Verwendung der Aufzeichnungen von Helmut Straube. With Explanation of Some Cultural Items in English* = Aethiopistische Forschungen 71. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2009. xvii + 327 pp. Index, 4 maps, 18 photographs, glossary. € 64,-. ISBN: 978-3-447-06083-7.

With this book the Munich anthropologist Hermann Amborn has presented the impressive result of long-term field research on the Burji people, an ethno-linguistic group of ca. 80,000 people who live in Southern Ethiopia and in northern Kenya (mainly Marsabit), and in fact are currently spread out over a large area. They call themselves D'aashi, and linguistically they are part of the 'East Cushitic' Burji-Konso cluster. They formed a, what Amborn calls, polycephalous society, without a centralized structure and with a pervasive dualism in their social and territorial organization. Their neighbours in Southern Ethiopia are the Gedeo, Konso, Dullay, D'iraasha, Koore, Borana-Oromo and Guji-Oromo.

In part, the work is a more or less conventional ethnography, with sections on the economy, settlement structure, customary land law, social organization, personhood, and worldview. Two more analytical chapters (7