



Aethiopia 18 (2015)

International Journal of Ethiopian and
Eritrean Studies

MAGDALENA KRZYŻANOWSKA, Universität Hamburg

Review

MUSSIE TEFAGIORGIS G., *Eritrea* and PAULOS MILKIAS, *Ethiopia*

Aethiopia 18 (2015), 309–310

ISSN: 2194–4024

Edited in the Asien-Afrika-Institut
Hiob Ludolf Zentrum für Äthiopistik
der Universität Hamburg
Abteilung für Afrikanistik und Äthiopistik

by Alessandro Bausi

in cooperation with

Bairu Tafla, Ulrich Braukämper, Ludwig Gerhardt,
Hilke Meyer-Bahlburg and Siegbert Uhlig

Bibliographical abbreviations used in this volume

- AE* *Annales d'Éthiopie*, Paris 1955ff.
- ÄthFor* Äthiopistische Forschungen, 1–35, ed. by E. HAMMERSCHMIDT, 36–40, ed. by S. UHLIG (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner (1–34), 1977–1992; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz (35–40), 1994–1995).
- AethFor* Aethiopistische Forschungen, 41–73, ed. by S. UHLIG (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1998–2011); 74–75, ed. by A. BAUSI and S. UHLIG (*ibid.*, 2011f.); 76ff. ed. by A. BAUSI (*ibid.*, 2012ff.).
- AION* *Annali dell'Università degli studi di Napoli 'L'Orientale'*, Napoli: Università di Napoli 'L'Orientale' (former Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli), 1929ff.
- BSOAS* *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (London, 1917ff.).
- CSCO* Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, 1903ff.
- EAE* S. UHLIG, ed., *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, I: A–C; II: D–Ha; III: He–N; in cooperation with A. BAUSI, eds, IV: O–X (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010); A. BAUSI in cooperation with S. UHLIG, eds, V: Y–Z, *Supplementa, Addenda et Corrigenda, Maps, Index* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2010, 2014).
- EMML* Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library, Addis Ababa.
- JAH* *The Journal of African History*, Cambridge 1960ff.
- JES* *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, Addis Ababa 1963ff.
- OrChr* *Oriens Christianus*, Leipzig–Roma–Wiesbaden 1901ff.
- PdP* *La Parola del Passato. Rivista di studi classici*, Napoli 1946ff.
- PICES 8* TADDESE BEYENE, ed., *Proceedings of the Eighth International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, University of Addis Ababa (26–30 November) 1984*, I–II (Addis Ababa: Institute of Ethiopian Studies–Frankfurt am Main: Frobenius Institut, Johann Wolfgang Goethe Universität, 1988–1989).
- PICES 10* C. LEPAGE and É. DELAGE, eds, *Études éthiopiennes: Actes de la X^e Conférence internationale des études éthiopiennes, Paris, 24–28 août 1988* (Paris: Société française pour les études éthiopiennes, 1994).
- PO* *Patrologia Orientalis*, 1903ff.
- RIÉ* É. BERNAND, A.J. DREWES, and R. SCHNEIDER, *Recueil des inscriptions de l'Éthiopie des périodes pré-axoumite et axoumite*, I: *Les documents*, II: *Les planches* (Paris: (Académie des inscriptions et belle-lettres) Diffusion de Boccard, 1991).
- RRALm* *Rendiconti della Reale Accademia dei Lincei, Classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche*, Roma, 1892ff.
- RSE* *Rassegna di Studi Etiopici*, Roma, 1941–1981, Roma–Napoli, 1983ff.
- SAe* *Scriptores Aethiopici*.

Reviews

tion indicates the letter ‘forgotten’ in the Oromo entry, e.g. ‘bilblamuu [bilbila'mu:] vi läuten’ instead of the correct bilbilamuu.

To sum up, it should be said that Melkamu Duresso’s Oromo–Deutsch/Deutsch–Oromo Dictionary is the first to provide Oromo lexemes with German equivalents. In the Oromo–German/German–Oromo vocabulary in the *Lehrbuch des Oromo*¹⁸, the German language was used in the same way, but to a much smaller extent. The aim of that Textbook was to help German students to learn Oromo and therefore it naturally included only a limited amount of words within a limited number of semantic fields while Melkamu Duresso’s Dictionary covers practically all the semantic fields of basic German and Oromo vocabularies and includes a lot of technical terms in different fields of human activity: administration, politics, education, nature, medicine, etc. It is a well arranged, comprehensive and good looking publication. I have no doubts that the Dictionary will become a suitable means of support for many Oromo speakers living in German speaking countries as well as for those Germans who intend to learn Oromo or need a knowledge of this language for their work in Oromiyya.

Catherine Griefenow-Mewis, Berlin

MUSSIE TEFAGIORGIS G., *Eritrea*, Africa in Focus Series (Santa Barbara, CA–Denver, CO–Oxford: ABC-CLIO, 2011). 424 pp. Price: US-\$ 94.00. ISBN: 978-1-59884-231-9.

PAULOS MILKIAS, *Ethiopia*, Africa in Focus Series (Santa Barbara, CA–Denver, CO–Oxford: ABC-CLIO, 2011). 544 pp. Price: US-\$ 94.00. ISBN: 978-1-59884-257-9.

Mussie Tesfagiorgis’s and Paulos Milkias’s bulky (and expensive) volumes *Eritrea* and *Ethiopia*, respectively, inaugurate a new series of books *Africa in Focus*. Both are aimed at a broad readership and intend to give a solid and reliable background for grasping the political, social and cultural situation of the two countries.

The arrangement and content of the books follow what has probably been set as a standard for the *Africa in Focus* series. Thus, they contain seven main chapters dealing with *Geography*, *History*, *Government and Politics*, *Economy*, *Society*, *Culture* and *Contemporary Issues*. The chapter on *Society* is divided into smaller sections such as *Social Classes and Ethnicity*, *Women and*

¹⁸ C. Griefenow-Mewis and Tamene Bitima, *Lehrbuch des Oromo*, Afrikawissenschaftliche Lehrbücher, 6 (Köln: Rüdiger Köppe Verlag, 1994).

Marriage, and *Education*. Similarly, the chapter on *Culture* embraces sections on *Languages*, *Etiquette*, *Literature*, *Art*, *Music*, *Food*, *Sports* and *Leisure*. Additionally, in *Eritrea* there is one subsection concerning *Traditional (Herbal) Medicine* while in *Ethiopia* we encounter a part on *Popular Culture*. The final chapter, on *Contemporary Issues*, comprises sections discussing ongoing topics that often hit the newspaper headlines outside these countries. For Eritrea these include, among others, freedom of the press, freedom of movement and freedom of belief, national service, the plight of refugees and food insecurity. In *Ethiopia*, in turn, we may read about such issues as ethnicity and ethnic federalism, religious conflicts, human rights, population explosion and family planning, capital punishment and adoption. At the end of both volumes, we find a glossary of local terms, basic facts about the country, a list of holidays and important organizations based in Eritrea and Ethiopia, respectively, annotated bibliography and indices.

The content of the two books is interestingly presented and generously illustrated with black-and-white photographs. Paulos's book, however, warrants a serious criticism. In his zeal 'to shatter the deep-seated stereotype of Ethiopia' (p. xviii) as a famine-stricken arid country, the author, especially in the part dealing with history, offers ideology rather than a decent academic account. Furthermore, there are so many factual errors in the text that the book can hardly be recommended as a reliable source of information.

An editor's critical eye has clearly never seen either *Eritrea* or *Ethiopia*, as can easily be inferred from their defective system of references, inconsistent spellings and a plethora of typos. It must be stressed that Mussie's book is far better self-edited than Paulos's.

The credibility of Paulos's book calls forth strong reservations; therefore, I can only suggest to the interested reader that s/he use the book with great caution. Mussie's book, on the other hand, I can heartily recommend to anyone who wants to gain a solid and broad knowledge about Eritrea and/or travel in this country, even if only in their imagination—where there are no travel restrictions!

Magdalena Krzyżanowska, Universität Hamburg