

The Modern History of Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa: A Select and Annotated Bibliography. By Harold G. Marcus. Hoover Institution Bibliographical Series, Volume 56, Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press 1972. Pp. 641; \$32.50.

Professor Marcus states his goal, in the introduction to this weighty and expensive tome, as being the opening up of source material which has hitherto been virtually untapped by historians. Since 1963, when he first noticed this neglect, the situation has improved considerably. Mordechai Abir, Donald Crumme, and Richard Pankhurst, among others, have all used the sort of periodicals included here, and Marcus' own eagerly awaited Menilek biography, from which this work is a spin off, will surely make any such charge of neglect impossible from now on. Nonetheless, a systematic compilation of precisely what exists is a valuable tool, which will save researchers much time, and will, by sharpening their awareness of potential sources, improve the quality of their work.

How well, then, has Marcus done? We may judge by examining the breadth and adequacy of the defined area of investigation; the completeness of coverage and clarity of organization within the defined area; and the quality of the abstracts themselves (and their indexing).

Although the title does not say so explicitly, this is in fact a bibliography of geographical journals between c. 1800 and c. 1915-20. A rationale for the cutoff point, which differs from periodical to periodical, and an explicit definition of "geographical journal", together with a discussion of the grounds for deciding what to exclude, would have been helpful. Much primary historical material exists in periodicals not found in this bibliography, some of which has been used by Abir, Crumme, and Marcus himself. One might mention mission journals such as *Annales de la propagation de la foi* and *Missions catholiques*; journals of opinion such as *Athenaeum*, *Nineteenth Century*, *Nuova Antologia*, and *Revue des deux mondes*; and special interest periodicals like *Mitteilungen der Afrikanischen Gesellschaft in Deutschland*, *Anti-Slavery Reporter*, and *Bulletin de la Societe des Etudes Coloniales et Maritimes*. Leaving out such titles can lead to distortions; one would think from the entries listed under "anti-slavery measures" that only the Italians had any interest in them. In view of the omissions, this is not, despite its size, a complete compilation.

As a bibliography of geographical journals, however, it is very rich indeed, and will make all of us aware of items previously unknown. Yet it still has deficiencies. Based entirely on what was available at the Library of Congress, it reflects the inevitable gaps in holdings. It is too bad that the effort was not made to fill these gaps through other libraries (see, for example, the important Paulitschke article mentioned in abstract #1816), although fortunately Marcus indicates in an appendix exactly what was missed. A check of this sort might also have supplied additional titles such as *Geographisches Blatter* of the Geographic Society of Bremen, referred to in item #1725 but not listed in the index. Other titles were omitted because not being in one of the major European languages they were presumed to be of no importance. But while it is true that nearly all the Northeast Africa material in a journal such as *Boletin de la Sociedad Geografica de Madrid* is derivative, V. 15 contains the 93-page report of J. V. Abarques de Sosten, first Spaniard who traveled widely between Gondar, Wollo, and Massawa in 1881 and had an audience with Yohannes. Since Spanish is a language which few Africanists can read, an abstract would have been most welcome here. One wonders, considering the extensive activities in Ethiopia since the 1860s of missionaries from Sweden, what the periodicals of that country might yield.

The index of journals abstracted has a number of errors. On pp. 471-3 no information other than title is given for ten journals in French. Yet three of these were definitely used (items #434-5, 683, 686, 688-9, 964). *Bulletin de La Societe de Geographie* for 1882 was missed, we are told; in fact the single relevant item is abstracted. An article by Antoine d'Abbadie in V. 8 (1889) of *Bollettino della Societa Africana d'Italia* (all supposedly checked) is nowhere to be found. This is far more serious, since reference works acquire a tyranny of their own and items omitted run the risk of being totally ignored; one hopes that there are no other mistakes of this sort.

The chronological organization allows one to see quickly what was being published at any given time; an alphabetical index is also provided. I fail to see, however, why items were grouped by native tongue of author. Why not a purely chronological order? And if separation was necessary, why not simply by language of publication?

As for the quality of the abstracts, I make no claim to have checked them against the originals. They seem, from acquaintance with certain articles through my own work, as well as from their general feel, to strike a nice balance between summary and evaluation; they are particularly good in telling whether material is derivative. It is not altogether clear from the introduction exactly how work was allocated between Professor Marcus and his research assistants; but whatever the division, someone should have caught errors like locating Brava on the Juba River (#1682) and putting Kafa under the control of Takla Haymanot in 1883 (#1747), not to mention the grammatical howler in #1727.

The thoroughness of the indexing, or the lack thereof, will only become fully apparent as scholars make use of it over the years. I have checked two abstracts discussing trade (#716 and 721), and two originals which mention important geographical and political figures in Berbera and Zeila (#763 and 786), and could not find entries in the subjects geographical or proper noun index. A scholar working on a thesis or a publication will probably find it worthwhile reading through the abstracts for the time period he is interested in, as well as going through the indices.

In sum, what we have here is not the absolute last word in Northeast African bibliography, nor is the work without its flaws. Aside from those mentioned, one might also note the absence of a good map; and although there was no need to abstract the book reviews, they at least could have been listed to aid the scholar interested in the context of a work, its reception at the time, and the career of its author. But this book has closed an important and yawning gap. If the lack of interest in this kind of project shown up to now by foundations is changed, and work on other areas of Africa---or on a supplement to this volume---is initiated, it will be due in no small measure to Dr. Marcus' success in fashioning the valued research tool he initially set out to provide.

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