

## BOOK REVIEWS

ኦርቶዶክሳዊ ቅዱሳን ሥዕላት። ታሪክ፣ መንፈሳዊ ትርጉም፣ የሊቃውንት አስተምህሮ እና ሌሎችም (*Ortoksawi qəddusat sə'əlat: tarik, mänfäsawi tərgum, yäliqawənt astämhəro ənna leločəm*, 'Orthodox Sainly Paintings: History, Spiritual Meaning, Teachings of Religious Intellectuals and Others'). By Hailemariam Shemelis. Addis Ababa: Mahibere Qidusan, 2007 A.M. (=2014 A.C.). Pp. viii + 237; 24 images. 50.00 ETB.

The author of this book is a multifaceted figure: a clinical pharmacist working in the Black Lion Specialized Hospital, Hailemariam Shimelis is also a web page designer and painter and he has a passion for religious art history. Hailemariam has published different articles in the internet on the topic of Ethiopian icons and he is currently working on two new books about "The Icon of the Virgin Mary in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church" and the "Icon of Saint Arsema" (Hailemariam Shemelis, 2016).

*Ortoksawi qəddusat sə'əlat* is called to become an obliged reading for those interested in Ethiopian Christian art, including its unique aesthetics and traditions as well as its artists, who still today are keeping the art alive in the newly constructed churches or in those being in process of renovation. The significance of the work is enhanced by being written in Amharic, which may allow the wider Ethiopian public to learn on the art history of their country.

The book is structured in five chapters and each chapter includes dozens of sections and subsections dealing on different issues. Chapter 1 begins with the historical origin of painting and its biblical connections. Based on the biblical narrative, Hailemariam traces back the beginning of sacred art to the creation of Adam by God. Then he continues by describing the times of early Christianity, when different schisms resulted in the separation of western and eastern Christianities. These differences had a profound impact on the style and use of sacred paintings in Eastern orthodox churches, Latin Christian churches and oriental churches. Then the book moves further in time to the period of the European Reformation of the sixteenth century. Here Hailemariam focuses on the iconoclastic positions of such figures as John Calvin and the anti-Marian stand of the Reformists or the Protestants.

Further the book addresses the challenges that sacred paintings face today in the ancient monasteries and churches of the country. To solve these problems the author suggests some solutions as well as directions that could help to alleviate such challenges by the concerned bodies and stakeholders. Finally the book shifts its focus towards the miracles that saintly paintings and hagiographies have allegedly produced.

The strength of this book is that it has the appearance of a scholarly work. Thus, even if the author is not a professional art historian his work is well

edited and written. Hailemariam uses a number of historical sources and produces a logical connection and interpretation of historical events. Thus, for instance, his analysis of the differences among Christian churches on their specific use of art and religious icons is remarkable. Such insights might be of help for scholars interested in studying art history and also for those painters who are seeking to paint and restore tarnished wall paintings of Ethiopian churches.

Yet, the work has also its own shortcomings. Thus, the main argument of the book seems to be purely of a theological nature as Hailemariam's chief interest appears to be that of defending the doctrine and dogmas of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. Therefore, the approach of the analysis is clearly biased and it often takes a condemnatory tone when he presents the views and dogmas of those standing outside his church, something that shall not be acceptable in an academic study. Thus, for instance Hailemariam accuses the Swiss reformist John Calvin of having condemned the cult to Virgin Mary. Yet, truth to the fact is that John Calvin did not undermine the Virgin Mary; he rather believed that knowing about the Virgin Mary is an integral part of knowing about Jesus Christ (Ross Mackenzie, 1982, p. 69). Moreover, the use of sources can only be described as weak. Indeed, for a book that delves on the doctrines and dogmas of the Ethiopian Orthodox church concerning sacred art using only secondary literature is surprising. What about the dozens of—mostly Ge'ez-language—manuscripts, hagiographies, royal chronicles and treatises that at some point or another deal with sacred art? Many of these manuscripts are today available in critical editions or even online and it is these that should be studied first when trying to describe the traditions and dogmas of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. Similarly, the author did not think it necessary to conduct interviews with the religious artists that in contemporary Ethiopia maintain alive the millenarian tradition of Ethiopia's sacred art. The text also lacks a final bibliography. The book might not be even free of the suspicion of plagiarism as Hailemariam often uses certain interpretations by other authors without providing the due reference or citing the sources (e.g. in pp. 117-118). Last but not the least, some technical aspects could have been handled better. Thus, the group of images that are organized in a sort of appendix at the end of the book (pp. 229-237) could have been more profitably used if embedded in the main text.

*Ortoksawi qaddusat sə'əlat* can be an important reading for art historians and the general public as a source of information on the history of art of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church in particular and the history of art in Ethiopia in general. However, the readers should need to be cautious that Hailemariam's approach is deeply biased, theologically.

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የጳውሎስ ሾኽኾ የህይወት ታሪክ (1926-1984 [A.M.]) (*Pawlos Ñoñño yāhəywāt tarik*, 'The Biography of Pawlos Ñoñño [1933-1992]'). By Dereje Ti'izazu. Addis Ababa: Artistic Publishing Enterprise, 2006 A.M. Pp. 308, ca. 55 illustrations. ISBN: 978-99944-974-4-7. Price ETB 84.00.

Writing the biography of public figures is not an easy task. A passionate writer and journalist, Dereje Ti'izazu has faced this big challenge. His *Pawlos Ñoñño yāhəywāt tarik* ('The Biography of Pawlos Ñoñño') is a step forward towards documenting the deeds of one of the pioneers in the history of the Ethiopian press, the journalist, novelist, historian and musician Pawlos Ñoñño, probably one of the most influential Ethiopian intellectuals of the twentieth century. Conventionally the writing of a biography is aimed at statesmen, ambassadors, and military figures, whereas the life of other professionals such as teachers and journalists, who are often considered as people without stories, is rarely told (Tsehay Jenberu, 2008 A.M., p. vi). Indeed, scholarly works on media and journalism are not fairly represented in Ethiopia's literary production (Afework, 2013, pp. 12-13; Birhanu, 2006, p. 144). In this sense, the current book breaks new ground by focusing on such a neglected profession as journalism in Ethiopia.

Dereje's book is divided into nine chapters that cover the main episodes of the intense life of Pawlos Ñoñño. It begins by reconstructing his upbringing, the only son of a Greek merchant and a Shewan woman who met in Dirre Dawa but soon divorced after Pawlos's birth. Then it follows the footsteps of Pawlos's extraordinary life, from his early break up with school education to his meteoric ascension as Ethiopia's leading journalist. The book provides interesting insights into Pawlos's prolific literary production, which includes twenty one titles, counting his published and unpublished works (see the list of his books on p. 139). Dereje's text makes a fun read while improving our knowledge of Pawlos's figure. There are several anecdotes on the life of Pawlos and insights into his charismatic figure. Of note, for instance, is the scene wherein Pawlos was about to play a game of 'carambola' with the murderous Derg official in Gondar Melaku Tefera and before starting the game he asked the latter not to murder him in case he was victorious (p. 124). Noticeable are also the passages where Dereje recounts some of Pawlos's prominent historical insights (e.g. p. 200-02). Moreover, the biography also provides valuable information on the status of

the Ethiopian mass media and communication. The biography is endowed with several photos that show the life of the biographee and his rise to prominence in the Ethiopian press and media (pp. 277-99) as well as many archival documents (pp. 300-04).

But what is the image that Dereje offers of Pawlos? Dereje characterizes Pawlos as a “journalist and history writer” (pp. 138-151, p. 197) and he champions him as an exceptional and blameless figure (p. 160, 189 and 195). He even heralds Pawlos’s failure to meet professional ethical standards in relation to the coup makers of 1960 and the Ethiopian public (pp. 213-216). Indeed, the approach to the biographee appears often as uncritical (e.g. p. 87, 121, 197, 224-257) and it is not buttressed in other important sources from that particular period (Bahru, 2002; Birhanu, 2005; Gebru, 2016; Markakis, 1977; Mennasemay, 2006; Tibebe Eshete 2010).

Several other shortcomings should also be mentioned. Thus, for instance, Dereje makes use of long quotations and justifies the praxis by saying “I put things as they are for the sake of objectivity” (introductory paragraph to the second page, n.p.). The absence of any type of citation system is also a negative aspect of the book (pp. 13-20). Indeed, the text has neither footnotes, endnotes nor in-text citation (see for example pp. 40-51). The reference entry consists of sources and none of which are cited anywhere in the text (e.g. pp. 242-50). Last but not the least, in his introductory part (second paragraph, n.p.) Dereje claims that the book is the continuation of his senior University essay complemented by extended library and field research. But the truth is that it fails to fulfil the criterion for an academic dissertation. He claims, for instance, having used sources from the Institute of Ethiopian Studies and other institutions, but we are not told exactly what documents were used from these institutions.

In addition to that, the text is punctuated by plenty of instances of omission of terms and spelling errors. The instances are too numerous to be quoted here and a few examples may suffice: እርሱቡም is wrongly written for እርሱም (p. 230 and 233); instead of እየሰራችሁ ነው he wrote እየሰራችው (p. 44); instead of የተቀጠረኩት it appears የተቀጠሩት (p. 46); ተረጋቶ appears in place of ተረጋግቶ (p. 49), and in place of ይባል እንጂ there is ይባልጂ (p. 57). Punctuation problems are also frequent (e.g. p. 108, third paragraph). Errors of a historical and methodological kind ought to be mentioned too. Dereje erroneously gives two names for one of Emperor Hayle Sillase’s sons, Prince Mekonnen: Hayle Sillase (p. 28) and, the right name, Mekonnen (p. 32).

Last but not the least, the numerous graphic material displayed is impressive but it is organized in such a form – without proper captions and without following a chronological order – that its power to illustrate the text is largely diminished.

Until the date, authors have rarely adventured to research on the history of Ethiopian media and communication services. For this very fact, Dereje’s attempt to produce a biography on Ethiopia’s most renowned journalist deserves praise. True to the fact, the book has several problems that make it a weak reference work on the great journalist least on the history of

Ethiopia's mass media after the liberation. This notwithstanding, as the first ever biography on that famous literate, Dereje's *Yepawlos Noñño hey-wet tarik* will be an interesting read for those interested in the history of Ethiopia's medias and shall pave the way for further studies on this important part of the political and social life of Ethiopia's contemporary society.

## References

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እኛ እና አብዬቱ (*ፆክና ልማት* 'We and the Revolution'). By Fiqreselassie Wogderes. Addis Ababa: Tsehay Publishers, 2006 A.M. Pp. xx + 450. ISBN: 978-1-59907-078-0. Price: 200.00 ETB.

Ethiopia is exceptional in Africa for not having been colonized. Yet it shares with most of the African countries that doubtful honour of having endured a military dictatorship. The military dictatorship that befell on Ethiopia was the Derg (1974-1991) and Fikreselassie Wogderess, the author of the book under review, was one of its most important figures. Born in 1945, Fikreselassie served as prime minister of the Derg regime from September 1987 to November 1989 serving mainly in the field of foreign relations. In 1991, he was jailed and was charged in absentia by the government of Ethiopia on issues of genocide, murdering individuals and crimes against humanity.

In 2008, he was sentenced to death but, on October 4, 2011, after twenty years of incarceration, he was freed together with sixteen former colleagues. It was during his prison time that Fikreselassie wrote *፤ክላላንና ለሃይማኖት*, which was released once he was free. Currently the author lives in Addis Ababa.

*፤ክላላንና ለሃይማኖት* has several interesting aspects that render it an important source for the study of the Derg period. One of them is the extensive analysis of top Derg officials who, after all were Fikreselassie's former colleagues. The author interprets the phases of the Derg's emergency, comparing it, in very typical Marxist fashion, to the Paris Commune of France. Of interest is his insight that the Derg Committee was largely formed by returnee soldiers from the campaign in Congo (pp. 54-50 and 66). Whilst the exact number and identity of the Derg Committee remains still a controversial issue, the book provides some ideas on why it has been so (p. 68). Fikreselassie also sheds new light on the Derg's main ideological logo, the famous *Ethiopia Tikdem* (i.e. 'Ethiopia First', p.7 8) as well as on the form the creeping autocracy was conducted (p. 91).

One of the main problems in Ethiopian political culture is the loose or even the absent sense of responsibility by its political leaders. Fikreselassie's book scores better than others even in the minor issues and issues such as the political responsibility for mishaps and wrong policies as they are presented in more detail (p. 153). Indeed, the book includes valuable details on political, economical, social, cultural, religious, and artistic policies. Fikreselassie has also the value of showing self-criticism for his own participation in the bloody regime, a fact he blames also on his former colleagues. Yet, the author is rather tenuous in this regard. Thus, he denies any responsibility in setting the country's national agenda (he emphasizes that he just attended "the meetings", chapter 18) and he tends to attribute much of the bloodshed occurred during the Derg on the EPRP and its 'White Terror' (p. 223), remaining silent of the more murderous 'Red Terror'.

Yet, the book has also some limitations that ought to be pointed out. For a book bearing the bombastic title "We and the Revolution" the chronological scope appears as rather short, for it covers not more than three years, 1974-1977. The events before the revolution of 1974 are explained without sources and with rather poor arguments. Fikreselassie, for instance, diminishes the importance of the Gojjam (1968) and Bale (1966-67) peasant rebellions (pp. 15-18) and even assesses them under a negative light by saying that they undermined the consciousness of the people and they were inspired by the *awraja* (province) governors. The writer himself enumerated fuelled causes for opposition like land measurement and the burden of tax, both of which became paradox generalizations.

Some of the ideas pushed forth in *፤ክላላንና ለሃይማኖት* are also not clear. For example, the social origin of the soldiers recruited in the humongous army set up by the Derg: Did they come from among the ranks of the nobility or the peasantry? The author states that 95% of the military force recruited

were from poor farmers (pp. 20 and 50) while the Imperial government recruited their forces from the nobility (Amberbir, 1976 A.M).

The book also incurs in unjustified synopses, as when it ignores key episodes during the Derg's early phase, such as the murdering of General Teferi Banti, Atinafu Abate and the persecution of sixty Imperial officials. Accordingly, it presents the almost 'automatic' emergence of Mengistu as the sole dictator of the country, the decease of Hayle Sillase I and the Red Terror. But there might be some clue as to why Fikreselassie has avoided mentioning such important episodes. Thus, according to the recent book by Eshetu Wondimu thirteen members of the Derg, including Teferi Banti and Fikreselassie himself organized a secret plot to kill Mengistu. Once the plotters had put their signature on paper, Fikreselassie would have betrayed them and informed of the situation to Mengistu, who then killed all participants (Eshetu Wondimu, 2006 A.M, p. 24).

*Enñaanna Abyotu* is the work of a political actor rather than of a professional, academic historian. The book thus is absconding from the discernible crimes, and undermines the people's level of understanding. Yet, the book also provides valuable insights into chapters of the Derg dictatorship that had not been known to date or that had been poorly understood. The contents are also supported with shreds of sources, especially the first two chapters. For these reasons the book is a recommended reading for scholars and the public interested in the Derg regime and, in general, on the era of African dictatorships.

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*The Massacre of Debre Libanos: Ethiopia 1937. The Story of one of Fascism's most Shocking Atrocities.* By Ian Campbell. Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa University Press, 2014. Pp. xlviii + 307; 81 images and 7 maps. ISBN: 978-99944-52-51-4. Price: 120.00 ETB.

The book under review is part of a trilogy dedicated by the author to the massacres perpetrated by Italy during their short-lived occupation of Ethiopia. The first book of the trilogy was published in 2010 and it was an encyclopaedic-like study on the plot to kill General Graziani in 1937 (Campbell,

2010). The trilogy shall be concluded with a third title, soon to appear, dedicated to the Italian massacre of Addis Ababa, which in Ethiopia is known as 'Yekatit 12' (=February 19, [1937]).

*The Massacre of Debre Libanos* is the outcome of decades of study by Ian Campbell, who is not a trained historian. Indeed Campbell started his involvement with Debre Libanos monastery back in the 1990s as a consultant for a hydro-electric project in northern Shewa (p. xxviii). His visit to the area of Debre Libanos led him to dedicate part of his time working as a development consultant in Ethiopia to the study of this famous monastery, one of the historical centres of Ethiopia's monasticism. Soon his focus of attention shifted to the massacre committed by the Italians on May 21, 1937 against Debre Libanos's monastic community, which had been launched in retaliation to the plot to kill Graziani on February 19 of the same year (see Campbell & Gabre-Tsadik, 1997).

Giving primary attention to this tragic event was more than justified. Not only there were many gaps in the study of this sombre chapter of Italian colonialism, but historians had trusted too much the 'official' account of the massacre, which was based on the letters that General Graziani had sent to Mussolini. In these letters, as Campbell plausibly suggests in the book, Graziani tried to conceal before his superiors in Italy the magnitude of the tragedy and under-reported the number of murdered Ethiopians to 'only' 450, among monks and laymen (p. xxxi). Now, with Campbell's study it can be confidently stated that the tragedy was far larger than believed, that it befell on vast sectors of the local population and that it occurred not in one but in at least nine different locations, between February 22 and late June 1937.

*The Massacre of Debre Libanos* is structured in six chapters. Chapter 1 ("Prelude") introduces the history of the famous monastery as well as its singular geographical setting, above a cliff overlooking the Siga Wedem Gorge. Chapter 2, "Occupation and resistance", focuses on the resistance to Italian occupation and, specifically, on the escalation of repression under the governorato of General Graziani. Patriotic resistance had one of its main centres of activity in the region of Selale, wherein Debre Libanos is situated and, for some time, resistance was led by the sons of ras Kassa Haylu, the *gabaz* or secular custodian of Debre Libanos monastery (pp. 33 et passim). The tragic fate of three of Kassa's sons, Wendwessen, Aberra and Asfawassen, who in December 1936 were treacherously murdered by orders of Italian generals Biroli and Tracchia (p. 40 et passim) somehow precluded what was to occur five months later. Chapter 3 ("The best-laid plans") shifts the focus towards two accidental witnesses of the soon-to-come massacre, the monks Gebre Giyorgis and *abba* Buruk. Here we encounter one of the assets of the book, which is the skill with which Campbell integrates within the main historical narrative the numerous personal accounts of survivors or witnesses of the massacre that he gathered through innumerable interviews. Then, with the use of contemporary Italian dispatch letters, Campbell depicts the political context that induced the foreign occupiers to launch the 'final solution' for the Debre Libanos monastic centre. Chapter 4 ("The massacre of Debre Libanos") meticulously



reconstructs the days of May 1937 (Ginbot 1929 in the Ethiopian calendar) when the main massacres were perpetrated –between May 21 and 26. Campbell’s study shows crystal clear the discipline and secrecy under which the master plan of Italian repression in Ethiopia (the “liquidazione convento di Debra Libanos” as Italian official reports referred to it, p. 70) was carried out. Indeed, the Italian military executed the plan with resolution and discipline, the aim being that nobody could see and nobody could escape (p. 96). So, in order to trap the largest number of Orthodox faithful, the Italians chose Ginbot 12 (May 20) the day to carry out their plan, coinciding with the yearly celebration of the monastery, when thousands of pilgrims flocked there from all corners of the empire (the officer in charge of the operation, General Maletti, however, missed the calendar and initiated the operation two days too early; eventually the main massacre was to be carried out one day after the annual celebration; p. 99). Campbell follows the footsteps of the dozens of Italian officers and *bande militari* that took part in it as well as of the hundreds of victims. Although Campbell does not use the term, after reading this well-crafted chapter we are tempted to call the tragic fate of Debre Libanos a true ‘ecclesiocide’, the purpose of the Italians being to destroy the very core of Ethiopia’s Christianity, accused of being behind all patriotic resistance against the colonial power. The chapter does not leave any episode unturned and it also reports the looting of the treasures of the monastery (pp. 121, 140–41), which are assumed by the author—though no serious research has been carried out so far—to have ended up in the possession of Generals Maletti and Graziani in their Italian villas. Campbell’s account also proves conclusively that the massacre was carried out at eight different spots (table on p. 171), which should be nine if we include the fate of those 1,100 Debre Libanos inhabitants who were deported to the Danane concentration camp near Mogadishu, most of whom died of disease and malnutrition (Chapter 5, “The persecution of the house of Tekle Haymanot”). Chapter 6 opens by focusing on the impact the massacre had on the Italian colonial state itself, for an ironical ‘victim’ of the tragedy was General Graziani himself, who in early 1938 was replaced by the more compromising and soft-handed Duke of Aosta as the head of the colony. Then it presents how after the liberation the monastery, slowly and painfully but also surely, recovered its past strength.

The book includes a final, well-documented chapter (not numbered) focusing on the stolen heritage of the monastery (pp. 217 et passim; see also Table in p. 228) and on the fate of some of the butchers and the few survivors of the massacre (p. 240 et passim). Finally, at the end of the book ten appendices provide ample documentary data, chiefly a chronology of the massacre (Appendix I), a selection of contemporary Italian archival documents (Appendices III to IX) and a list of the monastery staff who died in the massacre (Appendix X).

While carefully written, the book suffers from a poor editing, which surely is not simply the responsibility of the author but can be blamed on the prestigious house under which the book has been published. Some typos for instance ought to be noted: “da” for “di” (p. 61 note 63), the word “crescendo” separated by a paragraph (p. 81), and “of, certain” for “of certain” (p. 102). In addition, the same picture is used twice (Figures 3 and 41). But

more problematic is the low quality of reproduction of the graphic material, which had it been printed properly would have been one of the main assets of the book. Last but not the least, a generally poor layout make the book appear as a second rank monograph while the text would have deserved a much better presentation.

*The Massacre of Debre Libanos* is a well-documented and well written monograph on one of the most sombre episodes of European colonialism in Africa. Ian Campbell has done a superb work of research and analysis, re-assessing the truthfulness of well-known archival material, such as Italian military dispatches, and adding to the picture dozens of invaluable oral testimonies of survivors and witnesses of the massacre. The magnitude of the tragedy makes the book a difficult read, as one turns its pages and, little by little, gets to know of the fate of thousands of religious leaders, nuns, children, elders and pilgrims who were murdered by the foolishness of the colonial 'reason'. Yet, this should not prevent us in this journal to vividly recommend the work to historians of European colonialism in Africa and to those interested in the history of contemporary Ethiopia.

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*Nurturing Language and Learning: Development of Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Infants and Toddlers*. By Patricia Elizabeth Spencer and Lynne Sanford Koester. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016. Pp. 404 + XVII; 12 images. ISBN: 978-0-19-993132-3. Price: 38.50 USD.

This book is called to become a reference source for the studies on deafness and the professional treatment of this impairment. The authors have a long career in the field. Patricia Elizabeth Spencer has been a teacher, assessment specialist, and educational advocate for deaf and hard-of-hearing students, with a long career at the Gallaudet Research Institute and with broad experience internationally as research and educational consultant. She has also written extensively on issues related to development and education of deaf and hard-of-hearing children. Lynne Sanford Koester recently retired after twenty five years of teaching developmental psychology at the University of Montana and at the University of North Carolina-Greensboro.

She has also worked in Ethiopia, Austria, and Germany, and is the former Director of Intercultural Youth and Family Development.

The present book is the result of decades of collective research on education and human development, developmental psychology, language studies on families and infants-toddlers with typical hearing and language development of deaf and hard-of-hearing children. The rationale for the book is condensed in a row of questions raised by the authors at the beginning of their work: "We reasoned that the story of development has been told often enough regarding babies and toddlers who have typical hearing. Why not produce such story for those whose parents find out, often within weeks of giving birth, that their babies will have added challenges due to limited hearing abilities? How will these babies be similar to those with typical hearing, and how might they differ? What kinds of parenting attitudes and activities will be especially supportive? What kinds and levels of development can be expected when these babies reach 3 years of age and their early intervention services (if available at all) have ended?" (pp. xi).

The book is composed of twelve chapters which are organized according to the age of the infants, starting from near birth to the three years old and subsequently. Every chapter is structured according to the following sections: questions to consider, cases, summary, notes and charts. The book includes an appendix with a list of organizations and websites working with deaf and hard-of-hearing infants and toddlers with which the authors have been well acquainted.

The first chapter (pp. 1-30) highlights the fact that every child is a gift and a challenge regardless of his/her disability. Here the authors emphasize that any intervention to a disability, be it medical, language-based or educational, will be the more effective the earlier it is carried out. Generally speaking, it is the conviction of the Authors that "hearing does not necessarily result in limited accomplishment/use of one's potential, if language (signed, spoken, or both) is learned early and if it is supported by experiences (e.g. supporting the child with visual attention, promoting thinking and problem solving skills)." (pp. 27-28).

The second chapter addresses the question "What can my baby hear?" (pp. 31-63). The authors explain here how to assess the hearing level of young babies as well as of older babies and toddlers. They emphasize that "based on behaviour alone, it is difficult to know whether a young baby hears a sound; identifying deaf and hard-of-hearing newborns and babies up to about 3 months of age depends to a great degree on the use of modern assessment innovations and technologies." (pp. 32-49). Thus, along with personal efforts to help their young babies and infant toddlers who are deaf and hard-of hearing parents are strongly recommended to cooperate with professionals in the assessment/screening process and the service provision.

The third chapter, "Welcome to the world", discusses the developmental aspects of the children. Before birth, during the so-called prenatal period, babies receive some information from the outside world through their

senses. Accordingly, the senses of taste, smell and touch, the orientation (or position) and movement of the body and even hearing and limited vision operate during the last three months of a full-term pregnancy. After birth, the senses continue to develop and become refined through interactions with others and through stimulating experiences within the infant environment. This occurs particularly during the first three months, when the brain is most active in areas involved in processing sights, sounds, and touch.

The fourth chapter, "Early parenting goals", highlights important differences between hearing and deaf parents. Thus, hearing parents need more support and guidance on how to help their child. However, deaf parents have better potentials of tactile and visual stimuli by which they can easily help the deaf and hard-of hearing infant receive appropriate multi modal communications. Hence, for parents effective early intervention programs are necessary to reduce their stress of having a new baby who is deaf/hard-of hearing, and serves the baby or toddler as his/her development proceeds.

The fifth chapter addresses the question "Why is early learning so important?" The authors conclude that "studies that have been conducted in many places around the world suggest that early sensory experiences or lack of them have a long lasting effect on development" (pp.128). This experiential phase is particularly important during the first six months of life. Then, experiences can have both short and long term effect on the children's achievements.

In the sixth chapter, "Learning, feeling and communicating", the authors provide precious insights on how growth unfolds during the first six months after birth. Message centres and systems are developing rapidly in the brain. Motor and physical behaviours become more intentional and more controlled, the baby's memory is developing, cause-effect relations are learned, and emotions are differentiated and expressed. Next, in the chapter "On the move", the book unveils the important fact that babies who are developing at typical rate, regardless of their hearing abilities achieve important milestones (e.g. motor development, visual input, coordinate visual attention between objects or events, representation ability, observation and play experiences) during the age of six to about twelve months.

The eighth chapter, "Little communicators", focuses on the phase when infants reach the first year of age; then most babies (regardless of hearing levels) are effective communicators (e.g. give visual attention, to pupil and communications, explore, master objects and situations use gestures and facial expressions and vocalization to express needs and interests and the like). Next, in "The symbol users", the focus is on the period between the twelfth and eighteenth months, when babies develop the ability to represent objects, events, people and even themselves. On the same age, babies learn by being accompanied through experiences mainly when they are engaged in activities and backed up by language expressions in activities and interactions. The authors provide the necessary recommendations on what to do

for the concerned parents, care givers, special needs educators, early intervention specialty and professionals.

In the tenth chapter, “Almost two and what is new!”, the age-frame eighteen to twenty four months is discussed. This second half of the second year of life is typically one of a rapid development of motor skills, ability of representation (objects, events and feelings using symbols), complex and sequenced language and play and interaction skills. Following that, “Little Psychologists and budding linguists”, focus moves to the age of two to three, when overall development occurs at a typical rate and, if they are provided with opportunities of meaningful and accessible communicative interactions, children will have astounding language development. They will be able to show language expressions and more or less alike with majority of adults and children in their respective communities.

The twelfth and concluding chapter, “Where we are ...and where we are going”, raises the important issue that there is no “one best way” to raise deaf and hard-of hearing children. Here the authors revisit the previous eleven chapters and discuss the progress and challenges of children with hearing impairment and their parents. They conclude with their confidence of a brighter future and call up for a concerted effort by all the concerned to make people who are deaf and hard-of-hearing lead productive and satisfying lives. Their call is also shared by the reviewer: “continuing research, clinical and educational practice and empowerment, and increased confidence in families, all justify the ever greater expectations we share for all our children.” (pp. 367).

*Professional Perspectives on Deafness: Evidence and Applications* is a valuable contribution to the study and treatment of deafness and hearing issues among children. The book will surely become a standard reference for parents, care givers, special needs educators, early intervention specialty and professionals who live with, care and educate deaf and hard-of-hearing children.

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