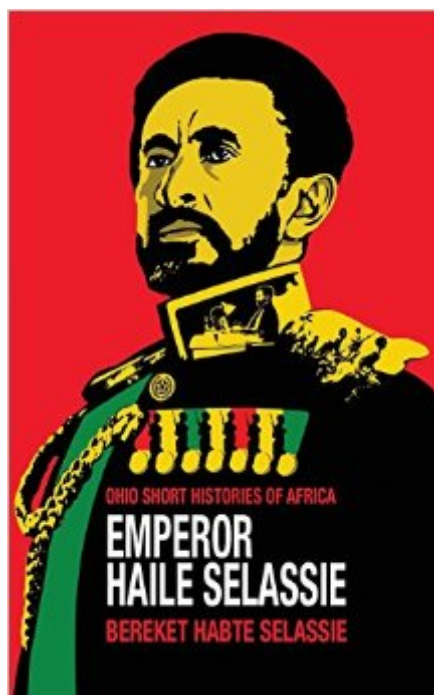


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Emperor Haile Selassie (Ohio Short Histories Of Africa)



Synopsis

Anyone searching for a quick introduction to Ethiopia's fascinating history could happily turn to Emperor Haile Selassie as a starting point. Focus on the Horn Emperor Haile Selassie was an iconic figure of the twentieth century, a progressive monarch who ruled Ethiopia from 1916 to 1974. This book, written by a former state official who served in a number of important positions in Selassie's government, tells both the story of the emperor's life and the story of modern Ethiopia. After a struggle for the throne in 1916, the young Selassie emerged first as regent and then as supreme leader of Ethiopia. Over the course of his nearly six-decade rule, the emperor abolished slavery, introduced constitutional reform, and expanded educational opportunity. The Italian invasion of Ethiopia in the 1930s led to a five-year exile in England, from which he returned in time to lead his country through World War II. Selassie was also instrumental in the founding of the Organization of African Unity in 1963, but he fell short of the ultimate goal of a promised democracy in Ethiopia. The corruption that grew under his absolute rule, as well as his seeming indifference to the famine that gripped Ethiopia in the 1970s, led finally to his overthrow by the armed forces that he had created. Haile Selassie was an enlightened monarch in many ways, but also a man with flaws like any other. This short biography is a sensitive portrayal of Selassie as both emperor and man, by one who knew him well.

Book Information

Series: Ohio Short Histories of Africa

Paperback: 156 pages

Publisher: Ohio University Press (October 20, 2014)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0821421271

ISBN-13: 978-0821421277

Product Dimensions: 4.2 x 0.5 x 7 inches

Shipping Weight: 3.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.8 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (4 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #186,680 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #11 in [Books > History > Africa > Ethiopia](#) #64 in [Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Regional U.S. > Midwest](#) #144 in [Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Historical > Africa](#)

Customer Reviews

This slim volume is meant to briefly skim over the life of Emperor Haile Selassie about whom so

many books and articles have been written in many languages. The author on the back of the slim volume is actually supposed to have had very close access to the Emperor, having lived in Ethiopia for most of his life and been one of the people who were early collaborators with the military junta, called the Derg, who overthrew the Emperor. With this vintage one expects to get a glimpse of what the author himself witnessed during that tumultuous period to be at least one original contribution to the story of the emperor. But Professor Bereket disappoints miserably and has written a book that a motivated high school student or a college freshman might write as a term paper, perhaps with better clarity. His book adds no more information than many Google articles, and has much less detail than the wikipedia article on Emperor Haile Selassie. It is not clear why Prof. Bereket wrote this book and he does not adequately explain why he wrote this inadequate book, when so many books are available out there. Perhaps he is trying to expel some nagging guilt about his role as the chief prosecutor of the Derg as a member of the kangaroo court euphemistically known then as "The Inquiry Commission" of the emperor's top officials with his grand inquisitors zeal to verbally assault and prepare minimize individuals who in one way or another had contributed to the history of their country and prepare them for execution. Indeed as expected many of them were slaughtered before even the commissions inquiry was completed. One would have also hoped that Bereket would have explained his undercover role for the liberation of Eritrea prior to the breakup of Ethiopia.

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