The Ethiopianists and their Contribution to Greater Ethiopia

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I read two articles discussing the responsibility and the role of the Ethiopian intellectuals. The first article is written by Prof. Alemayehu G Mariam, “Ethiopia: The Irresponsibility of the Privileged.” The second article is written by Prof. Messay Kebede, “Beyond Ideology: The Betrayed Task of Ethiopian Intellectuals”. These two articles made me to reflect on the works of foreign scholars who devoted their life and time in studying Ethiopian history, culture, philosophy, language, art, archeology, etc. during the modern period, particularly since the 1950s. The list of the name is too long to mention and these group of scholars came originally from different parts of the world including western and eastern Europe, Scandinavian countries, USA, Soviet Union and Japan. Some of them established Ethiopian studies center in their respective countries and provided network and institutional supports to educational centers and universities in Ethiopia. They dedicated all their resources and time in researching the various aspects of Ethiopia and trained researchers in their respective countries. They dedicated to build the research capacity of the universities and colleges in Ethiopia, particularly the Addis Ababa University and Institute of Ethiopian Studies through research projects, program support, funding documentation system, graduate student support, postdoctoral support, support for visiting researchers, etc. It is impossible for me to write the whole picture of their support and knowledge contribution to Ethiopia, and all was done without any advertisement. As an example to their dedication in generating genuinely new knowledge relevant to the country, I compiled the following bibliography on modern Ethiopian history. The list is in alphabetical order and it is not exhaustive and includes works extending mainly to the early 1990s. Read the bibliography to see the scope and depth of their efforts. Professor Claude Sumner, who wrote volumes of books on Ethiopian philosophy, said that he is "a Canadian by birth and an Ethiopian by choice". What can be said more than this revealing statement by an Ethiopianist.

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