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Book Review

Franklin F. Russell

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DELICT AND TORTS: An Introduction to the Sources of the Law of Civil Wrongs in Contemporary Ethiopia (Arts. 2027-2161 of the Ethiopian Civil Code of 1960). By Yohannes Berhane. Il Poligrafico Printing Press, Asmara, Ethiopia. 1969. Pp. xxiv, 392. \$15. Eth.

Reviewed by Franklin F. Russell of New York.

This book is the result of two years of research at Yale and the University of Brussels by an Ethiopian judge (who had previously obtained a degree of Master of Comparative Law at George Washington University, D.C.), while studying for an LL.M. and the equivalent of an American SJD. He had had judicial trial and appellate experience, which included the application of Italian Penal and Civil Codes, and the customary law of various Eritrean villages, and writing opinions in Italian, English and Tigrinya, his native dialect, spoken chiefly by Eritrean Christians. To write this book, he had to learn Amharic, the official language of Ethiopia, and French, the language in which the Civil Code was originally drafted by the distinguished Professor David of Paris.

We have here a superb example of the application of the comparative method to the varied sources of the law of torts in the Ethiopian Civil Code. Official Amharic and English translations of the original French version have been published, with the usual linguistic and legal complications. In contrast to the French Code, which covers Torts in five short articles, and also the Italian 1942 Code, which gives only 19 articles, the Ethiopian Code has 151 Articles. In addition to the equivalent of the French and Italian provisions, the Ethiopian Code sets forth the essential elements of several specific Common-Law torts, e.g., Assault, Defamation, Trespass, Strict Liability, etc.

The author has separate chapters on Continental (chiefly French and Italian), Common Law (both English and American) and Ethiopian (chiefly Eritrean) Customary-Law sources. The book was written primarily for Ethiopian students, lawyers and judges, but it still be welcomed by many persons interested in African, Customary or Comparative Law.