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Neil Macknish, Elizabeth Berg. *Welcome to Ethiopia.* Welcome to My Country Series. Milwaukee: Gareth Stevens, 2001. 48 pp. Ages 9-14. $23.93 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8368-2524-4.

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Welcome to Ethiopia

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Welcome to Ethiopia by Neil Macknish and Elizabeth Berg is part of the *Welcome to My Country* series. It can serve as a supplementary social studies textbook for elementary school students. The photo of a nuclear family on the cover and of children herding cattle on the title page attract readers of the same age. The contents consist of the standard fare: land, history, government, language arts, leisure, and foods. All the sections are brief given the page limitation. The section on history describes the founding of the Solomonid Dynasty, the Italian invasion, and the socialist state. The current government is a federation of elected officials from each state. One political fact not mentioned is that the capital, Addis Ababa, is also the headquarters for the Organization of African Unity–an organization for mediating political differences among African nations. The authors try to dispel U.S. stereotypes of Ethiopia concerning famine and civil wars. In the discussion of families, the authors write that families are typically large; however the repeated illustration shows the same family with two and later three children. Children would be particularly interested in the section on language. Since many Ethiopian languages utilize non-Roman script, the illustration of the script is interesting. Concerning food, many U.S. children from large cities may have the opportunity to taste Ethiopian cuisine. This section describes appropriate etiquette for dining.

A strength of this book is the authors' juxtaposition of photographs. Each page spread contains photos providing opposite perspectives. This strategy reinforces the idea of variety within the country. For instance, to illustrate education, one photo portrays English instruction at an elementary school while the other portrays adult education. Unfortunately, several photos are repeated through the book such as the cover family and an obelisk. Surely, the authors could have utilized alternative photos to provide additional examples. Some photos appear out of context since they have no reference to the text. For example, a picture of a stone house on the same spread as the maps and reference points is confusing. That picture might be more appropriate in the section on architecture as a replacement for the photo of obelisks.

The book contains other important features. To the authors' credit, they provide a country map with an accompanying set of reference points. However, the boundary between the states of Harar and Somali is not clear. It would have been helpful for the authors to indicate a capital town or city in each state and the ethnic and religious character of the state. There is a summary of critical facts that includes a sample of the country's currency. A glossary provides definitions but lacks a pronunciation guide. The age-appropriate bibliography lists book, video, and web sources for further study. The text ends with an index.

In sum, the book provides the basic information elementary school students need for research. This reviewer recommends it for a school collection.

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