

The Ethiopians and their recent history. By Yilma Bekele

We all repeat by rote that our country is three thousand years old. It has always been like that ever since I remember. Not a single year more or one day less. I doubt anyone knows the details but we all seem to be happy repeating that mantra. I am not going to argue nor go on a fishing expedition to prove it right or wrong. To tell you the truth I am very comfortable with that aspect of our history. We are poor, when it comes to technology we are very backward, we still experience real famine and we are at the bottom of every index that measures human development but my dear friends that three thousand years figure is the only thing that keeps our head up and our spirit soaring and that is perfectly fine with me.

It is only when it comes to recent history our problem rears its head. When I say recent I am really talking about yesterday regarding things that happened when most of us are around to witness. Calling it history is a little presumptuous but due to lack of a good term let us call it immediate history. It is unfortunately true that times have not been good to us or we haven't been good at making a history that our children would be proud of. For some reason we stopped being in charge of deciding our fate and making history as it has been done by those that came before us. Our bragging rights for the three thousand years is resting on shaky ground when it comes to this generation.

We are all free to pick a date and year to signify our trip down but after a lengthy debate with myself I have decided December 1960 to be the exact month and year we abdicated responsibility and took a leave of absence from making history. It has never been the same since then. We have showed signs of life only twice after that but overall we have been on hibernation. This is not the first time such things have happened in our three thousand year old history. You can actually pinpoint the few brilliant moments when we have woken up and stirred to make a difference but I would say the vast majority of the time we choose to be not involved and always let whoever was in charge do what they want.

December 1960 was the first time in our recent past the brothers Mengistu and Geremew attempted to make history. We refer to it as the Tahesas Gereger. I guess Gereger is what would be called chaos in the English language. It is a perfect description to what happened at the time. Absolute chaos reigned and change did not take place. After the dust settled things went back to what it was before and we all went back to sleep. Absolutely nothing happened. The Emperor went back to his old ways, the landlords continued their abuse of the ninety nine percent and the sun dimmed a little to help us sleep better.

The next time we stirred from our slumber was around 1974 when we woke up with convulsion. You notice we just don't wake up in a slow controlled manner but rather we flex our legs and hands in a violent manner and jump out indicating we are rising up from a nightmare. Do you think going to bed with an empty stomach does that to us? That definitely is not a good way to regain conscience from a deep sleep. That is always why we end up being

hazardous to ourselves and all those around us. No one is safe from an Ethiopian that opens his eye from a deep sleep.

Our recent attempt to wake up from our short nap took place in November of 2005. It was a little different from times before. For some reason we stirred in a careful and deliberate manner. I have no explanation why but it was definitely not as violent and destructive as before. It was controlled and Zen like accompanied with soft music and bright smiles. Hey we thought we are entering a new phase and it felt different. There was no Gereger, no wild drunken moves with signs of hangover anywhere to witness. Observers of our violent past were actually beginning to write about a new chapter in the life of the Abyssinian. It was not to be. We only licked half the problem. You know us, we love leaving things undone and unfinished.

Dear reader, please notice there is always another force that is always waiting around the corner when we are trying to wake up. The force is always sinister and negative by nature. In 1960 the Emperor with his landowners were the dark force. In 1974 the Derg with Sargent Mengistu were the dark knights. In 2005 the TPLF with evil Meles and his TPLF Politburo were waiting with bayonets at the ready. All three attempts to bring change ended up with acts of untold cruelty and real damage to our people and country. Please also notice that it was never an outside power that stands against our sincere attempt to build a just and harmonious society. Most other country's history is full of their struggle against outsiders that try to control and subjugate them. Our Ethiopian history is a little different, we are our worst enemy. Our history is full of atrocity committed by no other than one of our won against the rest of us.

This weekend is the ninth anniversary of November 2nd and 3rd 2005 massacre by Meles Zenawi's private troops of peaceful protesters in the aftermath of the 2005 election. According the report by the wonderful and brave commission led by Judge Woldemichael Meshesha one hundred ninety three Ethiopians were brutally murdered by Meles Zenawi and his TPLF party solders. We have the names of all those that lost their lives so a few could stay in power.



It happened just yesterday. The parents, sisters and brothers that were murdered by the ruthless regime are still with us. We have their names, pictures, their date of birth and their address. They are not imaginary people but real Ethiopians that were murdered in broad daylight to keep a few Woyane's in power. None were armed. Do you know any Ethiopian

that even holds a few minutes of silent remembrance for these brave souls that went out to protest the theft of their vote? Do you for a second stop what you doing to think of them and why they died?

No we do not. We have no planed special anniversary to honor those who stood for our liberty. We do not fly our flag half-mast to remember our heroes. We do not write poetry to think of

these extraordinary heroes. We do not have literature to teach our children what happened nine years ago and instill in their head the importance of the actions of those that dared to challenge dictatorship.

I guess we don't find it significant. Even those of us that claim to be aware are too busy talking our mouth off about Woyane atrocity today without bothering to honor those that fought yesterday against the same abuser. The Jews remind us of the Holocaust, the Palestinians don't forget Al Nafka or the catastrophe, the Americans keep a flame burning for 9/11 and the Ethiopians get upset when reminded of November. Why do you bring negativity, isn't it better to forget some say. Those that did the crime want us to be a people without a memory and those that suffered accommodate without question. If we don't think of it, it did not happen is the conclusion.

You know what I think? I believe we like being victims. We go the extra mile to recite all the atrocity Woyane is doing to our people so that we can hate some more. Is it because we are looking for sympathy? Is it to show our helplessness and elicit some pity? No one goes to great length like an Ethiopian to dig all the crimes done against them. We are like a bottom less pit fishing for story to tell about the cruel nature of Woyane. In fact we step over each other to see who would come up with the most horrific story to show what a monster Woyanes are. We are so frightened of the TPLF party that we end up frightening all those around us.

Thus you open our wonderful Websites that chronicle history as it happens and you want to close it fast. They are all full of horror stories in a never ending manner. If a being arrives from outer space and visit our pages I have no doubt the amount of self-flagellation would make their stomach churn with pain. It is a never ending report of what they are doing to us in graphic detail. The question to ask is how could we do this to ourselves? What exactly are we trying to accomplish by reciting the bravery, cruelty, cunningness of the enemy? If the purpose is to make us hate Woyane isn't there a limit to how much hate one can accommodate without it turning to fear? How many ways can I hate thee is a good question?

The same being from outer space would ask isn't there something this people are capable of doing? Glancing from our news and literature that information is hard to come by. It is buried deep and a few scattered here and there. How could people survive three thousand years with such disposition about life is the next question to ask. Well truth be told despite the many that get overtaken by a few weak and feeble there seems to be plenty brave souls among us that manage to keep the ship sail in stormy weathers.

That is the reason we still talk of three thousand years of history. The flickers of the bright light that shine intermittently is what keeps the story intact. Oh yes we have seen many flickers throughout history. The Holy Bible is full of allusions to our existence before Christ, the Holy Koran gives testimonial to our bravery, piety and generosity. Those three instances I mentioned earlier are recent flickers of our never ending quest to add on the glorious past. We are at it again stirring from a tiny little nap since 2005. You might not notice it due to the naysayers'

noise but it is there gathering momentum and all you got to do is listen with your ears open and cancel the shouts of defeatism.

Listen to the braves of Semayawi Party gathering the young and restless, pay attention to Andenet Party re-inventing itself from turmoil, observe OLF refusing to die, watch the forces of



Ginbot7, Patriotic Front and Amhara Forces realigning in perfect harmony and my friend you can't help but see the flicker of light getting brighter. Of course if you don't want to see it, you would rather insistently talk about abuse and concoct story of a dying spent negative force like the TPLF no one can stop you. I am tired and bored of your

recital of abuse. I would rather discuss my own positive growth and nurture the emerging, young and vibrant that is working to add to my glorious history. Go ahead talk about TPLF, shout about Eritrea numb your brain with horror stories of abuse and see if anything is going to come out of that.

Yes Eskinder is in jail, Andualem is in isolation, Reyot is denied medical treatment, Wubeshet is moved around, Andargachew is in solitary confinement, Temesgen was just taken hostage and hundreds unnamed ones are living in turmoil, well my friend isn't that what the struggle is all about. Guess what they are inside because they were lighting the torch of freedom not sitting around talking about liberation but actually doing something to make it happen. I doubt they want us to sit around and mop about it. Did I tell you talk too much?

Thus this weekend I dare you to take one minute and think about Shibre Desaligne and the others whose life was cut short by Meles Zenawi and his Politburo friends that are still with us.



When you go to church, when you visit the Mosque this weekend I want you to pray for my people that gave the most precious asset they have on behalf of you and I. Be Ethiopian enough and think of our heroes that are sitting as hostages of Woyane as you read this, think of the

independent party members and leaders that are operating despite the tremendous pressure by the rogue regime and be proud of the liberation forces that are getting ready to engage the enemy and you will help make the flicker of a light burn a little brighter.

God bless them the Ethiopian Diaspora are the most precious asset our beautiful country have produced in a long time. We have left our beautiful land with nothing in our pocket and managed to build one of the most successful immigrants to ever step outside of their home. Where ever we have settled we always remember what we left behind. We have added value to that unique quality of being an Ethiopian and to claim all our mothers are proud of us is putting mildly.

It is up to the young Ethiopians in the old country to wake up and make history. It is up to our young people to follow on the footsteps of their elders that rose up to demand 'Land to The Tiller', it is up to our young Ethiopians to build on the shoulders of those EPRP heroes that

defied the mighty Derg army and dared to dream of change and sacrificed in the streets, valleys and mountains of our beautiful land. Our Universities and high schools were training grounds where we thought of those less fortunate than us and rose to bring change. That is what is needed today from our young Ethiopians. We on the outside are doing our share, we expect the same sacrifice and dedication from our young people. No one is coming over to bring you freedom. It does not work like that. It is not about Woyane, USA, Britain China or any other but you my young friend, it is all about you. Dare to make history.

You know what, Woyane forces are going to complain and make fun of us, belittle our efforts and a few of you are going to go on the bandwagon and split hairs, find a sentence here, quote out of context there and pat yourself on your back for your feeble attempt at self-hatred. But some of us are not paying attention to you because we got work to do. I am only going to discuss what our gallant fighters are doing to Woyane why would I talk about what they are doing to me? Why would I give them precious space on my website to broadcast their atrocity when I can use the same space to galvanize my people to rise up?

We do not shed tears for Eskinder, Andualem, Andargachew and thousands others but we follow their footsteps and build a better Ethiopia that would make them proud. With or without you the freedom train is leaving the station. No one can stop that. It is inevitable.