

CALL ME BY MY NAME: A debate with Debteraw, XVI  
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Debteraw website is a Marketplace for solution seekers  
Ethiopia is a country of many Writers  
Eritrea is a country of many Fighters  
The world is full of problem Creators

### **After the celebration of 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium and Border Demarcation what?**

- The *history* of Ethiopia and the *geography* of Eritrea are perhaps the culprits for all our real and perceived problems. What about geography and what about history? Of course, there are different areas of geography and hundreds of history classification. The geography I am referring to is the Red Sea, which is irrelevant for transportation these days. The history I am alluding to is not peoples' history. It is rather about water, the source of Blue Nile. So we see, it is neither about the locational geography of Eritrea nor about the social history of Ethiopia. Or is it about color – a Red and a Blue- a red referring to sea and a blue referring to river. In actual fact the Red Sea is not red and the Blue Nile is not blue. A further confusion to our perception of natural primary color has been added to. We are just like the adage “a blind man in a dark room looking for a black cat which is not there.” I hope the morning after the MC&BD (millennium celebration and border demarcation) that will take place on or after September 13, 2007, we would not be in such a blind alley for life. Will the TPLF share a *piece* of the cake they desperately want and will the PFDJ get the *peace* they desperately need? Call me by my name. What is my name?

## **MARKETPLACE**

First of all, all intellectuals should be happy for the availability of Marketplace for their ideas, thanks to Debteraw's website. Everything that is posted on Debteraw's website is about ideas not products or services (PIS) or is that peace or piece? How do the current writers spell the spell? Every one of us is a salesman. What do we sell? The question is do we have products of our own? Do we have services to provide? The answer to the first question is that we have none but as to the second question, we have plenty of services to provide although we give our services without due consideration for cost prices. We all have ideas that nobody has in today's marketplace. Our ideas may not be current but nevertheless, they are marketable. The question is how to market them. We were not in the business of selling goods and services let alone ideas. Ethiopians were in the business of preservation of humans, animals and plants. Thanks for the regime of TPLF/EPRDF, every animal, human and plant is now for sale.

It is true that before the Eway Revolution, Ethiopian politics was limited to the Monarchy and to the Nobility occasionally blended with religion. For the majority of people,

politics was alien. Ethiopians were living by socio-economic and cultural values detached of politics. However, Ethiopia has marketplaces open for seven days a week for almost an entire year. It is a wonderful place to be in any Ethiopian marketplace. I have missed those places of openness and of abundance. How come we could not emulate our open market tradition in politics and economics? That is the puzzle I could not figure out! How come our intellectuals speak and write about politics and economics if they do not know about our traditional Marketplace for goods and services and above all of ideas?

There is no question that Ethiopia under the current regime is a marketplace for products. Products from everywhere except from its own domestic product have flooded the market. An economist who used to work for the regime said once that the WTO (world trade organization) has put a double edge sword on the leaders' neck, as if the DERG was not dreaming that all Ethiopians has one big neck so as to deal with by its so-called revolutionary sword. As a result they allow everybody to sell in Ethiopia. Inasmuch as TPLF allow to be organizing in ethnic lines, it has also encouraged every Ethiopian to sell virtually in websites including our daughters and sisters whom they call it free-free market for whom? We should demand for answers. All websites are full of ads and marketing gimmicks.

#### ETHIOPIAN WRITERS

As I have suggested in my previous article XV, the titles that we inherited such as Grazmatches and Kegnazmatches were perhaps suitable for our current situations, as we have not come up with new alternative literature for titles to address one another. There is so much disrespect for one another within our communities.

All Kentibas, Negadras and Balambarass have come back to sell something to boost up confusion. TPLF/EPRDF also known as Grazmatches, CUD alias Kegnazmatches, UEDF alias Fitawrari, and PFDJ alias Rases OLF alias Dejazmatches have laid down their programs or practicing or non-practicing what they preach! Individual posing as Kentibas (mayors) or Negadrases (businessmen) have come in the open market place. But there is no communication tools to send the message. The bridge of trust is broken.

The battle and the battlefield have changed though our writers with PhDs do not seem to accept it. These days a lot of them have been writing on the knowledge they have acquired from their academic worlds. The artifact of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries has crumbled. So what is that professors did not get it right? While arguing relentlessly about Ethiopia and Eritrea, we have witnessed in front of our naked eyes, the UN is composed of over 200 nations from less than hundred countries during a short period of time. In the word of Kenichi Ohmae, in his book the End of the Nation State wrote the followings: -

**For many observers, this erosion of the long-familiar building blocks of the political world has been a source of discomfort at least and, far more likely, of genuine distress. They used to be confident that they could tell with certainty where the boundary lines ran. These are our people; those are not. These are our interests; those are not. These are our industries; those are not. It did not matter that little economic activity remained truly domestic in any sense that an Adam Smith or a David Ricardo would understand. Nor did it matter that the people served or the interests protected represented a small and diminishing fraction of the complex social universe within each set of established political borders."**

For instance, Debteraw website has published a long article by Ato Obang Ujilu on the dialogues between two professors who are behind the current political issues of Ethiopia and Ethiopians. Their names are Al GebreMariam and Ephraim Isaac. Both names sounded Judeo-Christian. Both names of Al and Isaac do carry negative connotations. Call me by my name. What is my name? Anyway, both professors may have an interest in Ethiopia's welfare although not necessarily in Ethiopians well being. Both are viewing Ethiopia and its people from their academic fields. Specifically, Mr. Al's attempt is basically to change the justice system of Ethiopia but he is forgetting that the people in power are secretive and shrewd grown up in a feudal society. They have not liberated their minds so far. For Mr. AL changing justice system may be sound simple like changing names in a matter of seconds. Mr. AL sees from the angle of his **name** while Mr. Isaac sees it from the culture of **symbols** (I see him dressed in Habesha's qemises) But Mr. Ujilu speaks from the behaviors or values. Dozens if not hundreds both from the old and new schools of thought have begun to write about Ethiopia and Eritrea but not enough about Ethiopians and Eritreans. Debteraw would love it provided they are also reading at the same pace they are writing. Debteraw's mantra is READ, READ and READ (revolution-education-arts-democracy)

The article by Ato Obang Ujilu (I hope it is a real and an Ethiopian name) "of lies, promised joy, "shimagles", pardons and bananas" is a case in point. I am not biased in names but the meaning of names matters for me. In names, there is meaning, without meaning there is no life. NIBAB YIQETL WETRGUAME YEHAYI an Ethiopian name comes from three sources.

- Religion
- Family and
- Fashion (popularity)

The main reason why most of us do not know the meaning behind our names is that we have not attempted to decipher our desired name or live by our name. Who baptized parents or those responsible who took care of us during childhood? It was all secret and mysterious. Call me by my name. What is my name?

Another instance that I would like to point out is in relation of Dr. Fikre Tolossa of Ethiopia and Dr. Tesfatsion Medhane of Eritrea. Both academicians have achieved the academic excellence they deserve and that is why they are lecturing at Universities. We applaud for their achievement. However, both professors have not yet joined what we call the TSINHATE MUHURAN intellectual groups. What this means is that – a unitary comprehension of concept-theory-application (CTA) is lacking in their analysis of Ethiopia and Eritrea respectively. Both are theoreticians devoid of the Ethiopian and Eritrean concept of struggle and application. I wish these individuals academic knowledge could have been incorporated into the long and complex Eway Revolution. I want to point out to them that two out of three is better than one out of three.

Let me say something of somebody whose name is Ato Mandefro who was working in the Central Personnel Agency of Ethiopia. When educated people return from abroad, the first question he used to ask them was "have you written a paper on Ethiopia?" If the

answer was no, he provides them blank papers and asked them to write something about their country Ethiopia. Most of them were stuck. They defend themselves that they could not have access to information and documents. Ato Mandefro was put in prison for asking “silly” questions.

Professor Tolossa’s article “Alienation: a result and impact of western education on Ethiopian intellectuals dated on 8/18/07 and posted on Ethiomedia.com was mainly of complaints and concerns not solutions. If there is no recorded documentation for his analysis, why shouldn’t he interview illiterate people or educated individuals who are not of his type? Or why can’t he approach his own colleagues who were in elementary, high school and colleges? I am sure they know beyond his expectation. Ethiopia’s case was not between modernization and civilization. It was a lack of MES (mathematics, engineering and science) to cope up with the modern world. But for intellectuals who studied social studies there was a missing link known as Freedom- the freedom of SEA (Speech, Expression and Assembly). It so happened that the masses of Ethiopia and Eritrea were and is still fighting for the actual SEA (Red). Isn’t this confusion on your part? Decipher your name? What is your name? Call me by my name.

As to my best friend’s book of Confederation: Professor Medhanie’s complaints and concerns seem to be over, he was alienated from the masses of Eritrean people although mostly of his own making. He has proposed a confederation among many nations. How is it feasible when everyone has returned at least psychologically into his mothers’ womb? Ethnicity by Woyane and languages by Shabia can be stumbling blocks. How the regime change is possible? Is this the American way or the Eway revolution? Shouldn’t we build on what we have as knowledge and assets are cumulative?

Debteraw’s two main questions of why and how to every proposal and project should be considered before you write. Tsegaye Debteraw has inculcated these two questions into the minds and hearts of our generation. We should be better prepared to answer these two questions.

#### ERITREAN FIGHTERS

The Blue Nile River and the Red Sea are not useful for the majority of Ethiopians and Eritreans per se. currently these Blue and Red are only useful for foreign nations. For who and why will be a discussion in future articles. For now, suffice to let to rest the issue of geography and history aside and concentrate on the people’s issues of politics, military, social, economy and culture.

As for me, I have geography of Ethiopia and Eritrea in my pocket, the language and the culture right in my sight. Blue Nile Basin encompasses about one third of Ethiopia’s size. This land mass covers from Eritrea down to Kefa and Illubabor of 318,000 squares miles. And who will benefit from this Water Basin? EGGIKSWWT (Eritrea, Godjam, Gondar, Illuabor, Keffa, Shewa, Wellega, Wollo and Tigrai) Regions are affected by the use and abuse of this water Basin.

And who are the beneficiaries from the use of the port of Assab in the Red Sea? The Wolloyes, the Tigrrians, the Godjames, the Gondares and partially the Shewans, are the potential savers of transportation cost from the smooth operation of the port of Assab. The GoGoTW (Godjam, Gondar, Tigray and Wollo) regions are the real power brokers for the morning after. Do the other Kifle Hagers of Ethiopia need the Red Sea? No, they do not need the Red Sea for reducing transportation costs. The ports of Sudan, Massawa, Djibouti, Mogadisho and Mombassa are lined up for competition to provide services to SEEDS. But it is an established fact that competition is the lifeblood of any nation, be it in politics, social, and economics.

Eritrea has produced hundred thousands of fighters in the last forty years and still doing it. What is the purpose of these trends? It is good that people are trained for any skill- a skill that is useful. Nowadays all skills have changed be it in military, social, economics and even in politics. It is time to realize that there are four Cs that are operative in our world. These are Capital, Corporation, Communication and Consumerism. Eritrea can only be a consumer society just like any other country unless otherwise, the government has the other Cs in place. I am of the opinion that the fighters should be transformed to entrepreneurs. I would have liked the fighters to be peace keepers in the whole world. It is a noble and a payable job. The most unwise thing is to keep the youth in the trenches for indefinite period. In the name of demarcation, time, effort and energy are wasted. And above all, the demarcation is a bogus. As I have said before, the demarcation is already done in the minds and hearts of the Eritrean people right after the unprecedented mass deportation of Eritreans from Ethiopia. Technical demarcation is not the answer. Peace will not come because of the UN, AEA or AU interference. It lies within our own people who fought side by side to bring justice and democracia for all Ethiopians and Eritreans.

I find it amazing that the TPLF and the PFDJ have returned to the symbol of flag of Red, Yellow and Green. What about the Paquame, the Meskel, Timket and the Tsome rituals? You answer it. What about heroes? As far as PFDJ is concerned, there are no official heroes only the sandal and the camel. In Ethiopia, though, there are heroes here and there. In Ethiopia, there is no value so far except the love for money that is not the same thing for the value of money. In Eritrea, there is value for being debt and corruption free. But there is no value for choices.

The best thing that I have heard so far is that PIA of Eritrea and Sebat Nega both said that they stand or love the other people more than their own. This is a good thing. But what is the problem? Is it greed for money or power? One of them is doing right and the other is doing evil. Which one is that, please stand up!

INTERNATIONAL (global)

AEA (Americans-Europeans-Asians) have essentially begun to believe that the Red Sea Corridor and the Blue Nile Basin are intertwined. The people who live around them will have to plant seeds (Sudan-Eritrea-Ethiopia-Djibouti-Somalia) for generations to come all the way to the Third Millennium. The Physical unity of these countries of SEEDS is the real interest of AEA. Are we entitled to know what our Ethiopian Thinkers and our

Eritrean Fighters plan to do after the so-called 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium and Border Demarcation? The human brain uses only a third of its potential but in the case of Ethiopians and Eritreans, we only use an insignificant fraction of our brains. Why? Socially speaking, it is because of fear of embarrassment, wurdet in Amharic keiybluni in Tigrigna. Scientifically, speaking for fear of imperfect work and religiously speaking, for fear of interfering in God's work. Politically speaking though, I believe it is emanated from fear of persecution and imprisonment. What has happened to the struggle of liberation? What a tragedy or travesty for Eritrea and Ethiopia? Has the Revolution failed us? Yes, the Revolution by the DERG was a misnomer. The Eway Revolution of Debteraw's EPRP was real and it is still going strong.

### ***CONCLUSION***

It is worthwhile to know that the age of symbol, ritual and hero is over. The age of value has arrived and it is going to be fought within Ethiopia and among Ethiopians. Reading is not enough it should be accompanied by writing for reading and writing are complementary inasmuch as talking and listening are intertwined. We should be reminded of the wisdom of our scholars such as Debteraw who used to tell that NIBAB YIQETL WETRGUAME YEHA YI meaning that reading by itself kills while translation saves. Ethiopiannes/nist/winet can only validated through practice by faith by name and by face. Join the Tsinhate muhuran (CTA) associates.

Ethiopians and Eritreans who were born between 1941-1974 have brought political ideas into the limelight though cautiously and clandestinely. This generation for lack of name, I call it **JJJC** (33). Call me by my name. What is my name? No doubt, this generation has created the following characters.

1. Doubters represented by TPLF and CUD
2. Atheists represented by PFDJ
3. Believers represented by UEDF
4. Seekers represented by OLF
5. Everybody and Everyone represented by EPRP

And in the next Millennium, what do we expect to get? Piece-Peace-PIS or pins?

For comments and critics  
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