

# Life as Dark or Black: the Case of Eritreans and Ethiopians

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## Dark side of life of my generation

Two weeks ago, I was admitted to a hospital emergency room for a mini stroke and I have shared with a lot Ethiopians and Eritreans both on the Internet as well as in person. All of the respondents admired my guts of sharing my private and personal life. I did not know that this kind of sharing about death threat required guts. For those of you who want to read about the article titled "Death by ignorance or death through ageing" has been posted in [www.Ethiomedia.com](http://www.Ethiomedia.com) and [www.assenna.com](http://www.assenna.com) ". Note though that Ethiomedia posted it under the title 'lessons for Ethiopians and Eritreans whereas Assenna posted it with a picture of women sharing coffee. I am sure those who feel or real Eritrea or Ethiopia will have their choice to see it in their respective cave of alliances.

Most if not all of the comments I received were positive. There is one comment which required my attention and that is about ABJ meaning about Author Zewdie Retta, Businessman Abessalom Yihdego and Journalist Mulugheta Lule. According to my readings, history and personal knowledge of these three individuals, I have the following perspectives on their careers and professionalism.

### Zewdie Retta

Many people admire his writing style and documentation. I have no problem with that but to say that he was a historian of a great nation Aethiopia (Eritrea & Ethiopia), is untenable. As far as history of Eritrea, At Zewdie was asked by MOTHER why he has to wait too long to write about Eritrea. MOTHER argued that all the wars and battles fought between brothers and sisters could have been avoided had the contestants were provided with such valuable data and information. Ato Zewdie had no answer. The damage has already been done.

As to his biographical history of Haile Sellase and his government, I personally asked him how as his Majesty biographer has rated as "a loved or a feared leader of Ethiopia." Although there was no statistics, he could have told us about Haile Sellasie' model of political philosophy such as Machiavellians or others. He could not dare to tell.

On such account my reading about Zewdie Retta's contribution is tantamount to death warrant. It is as if adding insult to injury. The healing between Eritreans and Ethiopians will take more time than necessary after wars and battles.

### Abassalom Yidego

Abessalom never liked education but he liked people and so his career was geared towards people and in people he curved his niche. By the time he finished his elementary school, he was high in meeting Eritrean University students and by the time he opened a bakery and a coffee shop, he was well in advance of commercialization of business. In lieu of expanding in bakery and coffee shops, he found a

niche in sports arena. The business of commercialization sport became his pet noire. Any Sports in Ethiopia or Eritrea were carried out on voluntary basis but not for Mr. Yihdego.

The thing that I do not understand about those Ethiopians who told me that Abassalom is an Eritrean Par Excellence of being a real Ethiopian instead of real Eritrean. That is baloney. Being a businessman does not make you a true nationalist. If it was so Alamudi would be a true Ethiopian instead a true Saudi citizen. Some people's argument is foolish maybe because of their upbringings or hoodwinked by the policies and practices of EPLF and TPLF. In old Ethiopia, lineage of heredity is through male not through female but the current governments in Ethiopia or Eritrea have changed the game plan without the consent of people. They may have an advantage to rule Ethiopia and Eritrea simultaneously. That is a ridiculous idea and I believe that is one reason if not the main reason why the leadership of both countries are not welcomed and accepted. It is detrimental to their survival as well as to the democratization of both countries. It is a boomerang of the first order.

Abassalom is neither an Eritrean nor an Ethiopian. He was a business man operating in sports arena. We should not compare him with those who aspire choice of freedom of being an Eritrean, an Ethiopian or both. We can talk of his good deeds while he was alive but not about who he was when he is dead. Our culture of glorifying people after death should be abandoned especially about their professional or career history.

### Mulugheta Lule

Lule as veteran journalist should be commended as I might have guessed he was not educated at higher educational institutes. Given that background, he has done his best to write articulately and literally and sometimes poetically. That he was a voracious reader was an asset in his balance sheet of life. But the question about journalism, especially about modern one was far away from Mulugheta's modes of operandi. In the realms of journalism, Lule was in the DARK side of history. As reported by many so-called journalist, he was clandestinely writing in different names and pen names. That was ridiculous and unethical at best. We know writers use pen name for whatever reason. If it was for fear of arrest, one can write clandestinely until caught. That is the challenge of a true journalist and his name will remain forever for the next generation but to change names after names during three regimes was in my view unethical and cowardly.

The most challenging for Lule was the attempt to follow the steps of the two Tsegaye G. Medhins by imitating their names as Tsegaye G. Medhin Araya. Was he really ARAYA – a role model? I doubt it.

Anyhow, Eritreans and Ethiopians so far did not have any role model be it by Historians, by Business men's or by Journalists. All these three professions of trade are unknown to the majority of Ethio-Eritrean Community. Let us hope the young generation will pick up these respected trades. I have no doubt that the new generation will pick up fast these professions provided they learn from their predecessors. Some comments came as a surprise by saying that the old should die soon and advise me not to warn them about stroke, cancer or diabetes. That is not right, the young need our experiences if not other, at least for learning purposes.

The old generation of Ethiopia has lived in a dark environment meaning they have lived in the HAPPY VALLEY of Abyssinia. What is Happy Valley? It is equivalent to the Garden of Eden in Abyssinia. The History of RASSELAS, the prince of ABYSSINIA is presented below for the benefit of DIASPORA COMMUNITY.

## Black side of life for the next generation

Samuel Johnson, an English essayist and biographer produced a book titled “The History of RASSELAS, the Prince of ABYSSINIA. It is a philosophical romance of pilgrimaging a prince of Abyssinia to the outside world only to return to his homeland Eathioipia. Rasselas first pondered about a number of issues before he went out of the Happy Valley in the land of Abyssinia. Rasselas imagined how to escape, to find romance love, the discoveries of science and the real life discovery of Happiness.

In other words, according to the biographer, Samuel Johnson, Rasselas was determined to discovery the “Choice of Life”. This reminds me the contemporary Eritrean Youth and the adult population of Ethiopia becoming RASSELAS, the prince of Ethiopia of the eighteenth century. What a return of fate?

At this juncture, it is better to quote Samuel Johnson’s main theme of “The Choice of Life” as it for replicates the story of young Eritreans and Ethiopians.

What is the best way to live? Restless young prince Rasselas, his sister Nekayah, and his companion Pekuah venture out into the world to seek the secret of happiness. But none of the people they meet, blissful as they may seem at first, is really happy. The carefree young hedonists they meet turn out to be terrified of solitude and silence. A hermit who has renounced the world wants nothing more than to return to it. The old want to be young, the single want to be married, and the married want to be single. Everybody wants something different; they all think happiness lies over the fence, or over the next hill, or perhaps somewhere where they used to be, “For the hope of happiness. . . is so strongly impressed, that the longest experience is not able to efface it. Of the present state whatever it be we feel, and are forced to confess, the misery, yet, when the same state is again at a distance, imagination paints it as desirable.” All is vanity, and the princess at last decides that “the choice of life is become less important; I hope hereafter to think only of the choice of eternity.” She and her companion all have made vague plans for the future, “but well knew that none could be obtained.” They see that there is nothing to do but “to return to Abissinia.”

Although the history of Rasselas, the prince of Abyssinia, has open ended conclusion, there are some young Eritreans in the face book claiming that they are not Abyssinians but Eritreans. I don’t understand what they want or who they want to become. They have the choice to live their lives but not dictate to others. They should leave open their choice of life as in the Prince of Abyssinia after all is that not why they condemn the Eritrean President.

Live and let live, that is my motto in life. Don’t live in Black and Dark!!!

For any comments and criticisms, mailto: <mailto:oboaradashawl@gmail.com?subject=Lif in Dark and Black; the case of Ethiopian and Eritrean in Diaspora>