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THE ETHIOPIAN TRANSITION FROM MILITARY AUTOCRACY TO POPULAR DEMOCRACY?: SOME MAJOR ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION IN CROSSING THE CROSSROADS

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Introduction

After years of military repression, the fall of Africa's most brutal dictator, Mengistu Haile Mariam, in May 1991 has created once again a new opportunity—at least a new hope for peace, democratic governance, and positive development in Ethiopia. For the last two and half years, in what claims to be positive initiative in that direction, the force that has now replaced Mengistu's regime has taken a number of measures of far-reaching consequence: demolition of institutions and structures of the military regime—banning the constitution, the National *Shengo* (Parliament), the party and its supportive mass organizations; dismantling the country's military establishment, etc., on the one hand and, in what appears to be a creation of a new order in its own image, proclamation of a Charter; establishment of a Transitional Government; restructuring of the country's regional and local administration based on ethnic/linguistic affiliations; holding of regional and local elections; initiating a new economic policy; proclamation of a new press law and judicial system; formation of a Constitution Drafting Commission, etc.

Despite such drastic measures, in fact primarily because of them, Ethiopia is nowhere near the promised goal—durable peace, democratic governance, and positive development. Still it is the drums for war, not the peaceful reconstruction of the country, that invoke the emotions of people in the corridors of power as well as some opposition groups.

These are the main the issues that have made imperative an empirical study of the Ethiopian transition from military autocracy to pluralistic democracy by raising the basic issues of the on-going transition as sponsored by the Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF).

Background of the Study: Contradictory Perspectives on the Democratization Problematic in Africa

Democratic rights as fundamental human rights, and democracy as a system of government, entered the center-stage of African politics during the hey-days of the anti-colonial nationalist struggles as a mobilizing ideology in the battles for independent statehood. In fact, mobilizing factors from the American Bill of Rights to the moving spirit

of the French revolution—equality, liberty, and fraternity; from Rousseau's "Social Contract" to the ideals of the Bolshevik Revolution were used to arouse the masses of people for the popular struggles for national liberation across the continent. Sadly, what emerged was a new class that Frantz Fanon correctly described as "black skins, white masks."[1] Ironically, the African leaders began to reject democracy both in theory and practice as "un-African" and/or as "colonial legacy," at worst and a luxury that Africa cannot afford, at best.[2] This in turn was rationalized in the name of national unity in order to tackle the main tasks of socio-economic development. To this end, African dictators of both right and left leanings, by skillfully exploiting the international politics of the cold-war era, have effectively neutralized both the masses and the popular forces from the decision-making process, thus clearing the way for a state of terror and repression. More specifically, the received Westminister model of liberal democracy was deformed, giving way to a one-party state while "barrack socialism" served the same function in the case of those who rejected liberal democracy in favor of the so-called socialist alternative.

In the first decades of the post-independence period, the intellectual discourse also took the same lineup as leading theoreticians of the Western establishment; for instance, people like Samuel Huntington rose to defend pro-Western authoritarian regimes as the ideal type for the process of modernization in Africa,[3] while their Eastern counter-parts reacted in the same way by blessing the anti-democratic currents in Africa in the name of "revolutionary democracy."[4] Far worse, Africa's officer caste from Master Sergeant to Field Marshals joined the field by reasoning, if Asian generals, e. g., Korea, Taiwan, etc. could sponsor positive development, there is no reason why they cannot repeat the same miracle in Africa. However, by the mid-1980s the results of the performances of all regime types in Africa were pointing in the same direction: successful failure. Furthermore, the resultant effects of this miserable failure have manifested themselves in multi-dimensional crisis whose list include: political, economic, social, moral, security, environment, and, above all, a socio-economic crisis. It is such a predicament which led one African intellectual to mourn:

> If the world has become one global village since the end of the Second World War, then Africa has increasingly been threatened to become one global slum, one global cemetery of people dead from malnutrition and a host of other crumble maladies. Yet the World keeps marching on as many of Africa's Blackies' bodes lie a' moulding in their graves.

Why is the world so callous or is it Africa which does not know
how to find for itself in this cruel man-eat-man world? The
World may be full of man-eat-man nations; in Africa, however,
the human species is fast being endangered by a man-eat-nothing
environment! Where, then, is the enemy? Is it to to be found
among the manipulators of the international system in which
Africa is embedded as an unwilling partner, as a helpless
dependent child? or should we say, as a British literary critic
once said of Shakespeare's Othello, that in Africa the essential
enemy is within the gates?[5]

While Africans ponder the question of whether the essential enemy is
within the gates or outside of the gates of Africa, the "wretched-of-the
earth"[6] condition of the masses of people in Africa is growing from bad
to worse with each passing year.

As an intellectual response to such a disturbing African reality, a
group of African scholars under the auspices of the United Nations
University (UNU) came up with two important works in 1987: *Africa:
Perspectives on Peace and Development*[7] and *Popular
Struggles for Democracy in Africa*.[8] The editor of the former,
emphasizing a holistic approach to the peace problematic in Africa,
argues:

The peace question has to be seen in two aspects: peace should
be conceptualized and perceived not only in the negative sense of
minimizing or resolving conflict but also in the positive sense of
creating material conditions, which provide for the mass of the
people a certain minimum condition of security, economic
welfare, political efficacy, and psychic well-being.[9]

In the latter work, committed to the analysis of the nature and character
of the state as well as democracy in Africa, the contributors have gone
further to draw the essential links between peace, democratic
governance, and genuine development in the continent. They have
persuasively argued that the root causes of the African crisis is the "lack
of democratic practices in African politics"[10] and that the "questions of
development and problems of economic crisis cannot . . . be
meaningfully discussed without discussing problems regarding the
nature of state power, the form of popular participation in the process of
government and the question . . . democracy."[11] They have also
substantiated their assumptions by taking up both concrete and diverse
experiences of Ghana under a "revolutionary" soldier who turned and
IMF boy;[12] the case of "barrack socialism" in Congo (Brazaville);[13]
Field Marshal Mobutu's lootocracy in Zaire;[14] Liberia's betrayed

revolution by a Master Sergeant;[15] the condition of labor in Kenya hitherto Africa's show-case at the free enterprise experiment;[16] Morocco's Allah-blessed autocracy,[17] etc. According to the conclusion reached by each of them, the way out of the present African predicament is realization of "participatory democracy"[18] which in turn can only be possible under a "popular national state."[19]

More recently, Issa G. Shivji, in his article "The Democracy Debate in Africa: Tanzania" raised yet another paradox of African politics—the peculiar and fast transformation of liberators to oppressors in the continent:

> Once upon a time African radical intellectuals thought "True Independence" was that which came through the barrel of a gun. The other type was fake, or "flag" independence. In an otherwise brilliant analysis, Fanon (*The Wretched of the Earth*) undoubtedly placed prime value on violence as a political therapy to rejuvenate a colonial people. Well, since then we have had half a dozen examples of "national liberation" through the barrel of a gun.

> The gun itself has not performed the task of a purgative. Liberators have turned tyrants and continue to tyrannize through the barrel of the gun.[20]

The implication of his message is clear. It is to bring home the bitter truth of the African reality that unless yesterday's liberation fighters change the rule of the game from the barrel of the gun to the ballot box what could emerge is the law of the jungle to terrorize the broad masses in whose name the Wars of Liberation were fought. In other words, if the on-going struggles for democracy, christened by some as the "Second Wave of Liberation in Africa"[21] is to produce positive results better the first wave, a "commitment to the concept, the value and the goal of democracy at the individual as well as the group level"[22] should be met as a pre-condition to both genuine liberation and positive development.

Sadly, the mockery of democracy by Mobutu of Zaire; Savimbi's gamble in Angola; Moi's double faces of democracy in Kenya; the confrontation between the Islamist and the secular forces in Algeria, Tunisia and Egypt; the highly charged election experiments in Cameroon, Niger, and Côte d'Ivoire; Ghana's soldiers' "undemocratic transition;"[23] the meaningless comedy of Nigeria's soldiers; the tragic end of Burundi's short-lived democracy, and, above all, the depressing stories of the civil wars in Somalia, Liberia, and the Sudan, etc. are all indicators of our concrete reality that the birth pang of democratic

governance in Africa is going to be long, fundamentally because of the skin-deep commitment of the continent's political elites to the legitimacy of the ballot box.

Taking these pervasive contradictory perspectives and tendencies of democracy in Africa as a point of departure, this study analyzes the basic issues in the Ethiopian transition in light of the inter-linkages between peace, democratic governance, and positive development, and to suggest the way forward from the present quagmire—a vicious circle of crisis manifested in famine, war, and destruction.

The Emerging Condition in Ethiopia After the Fall of Mengistu's Regime

> . . . While Sudan deserves a government as good as its people, it is the nation's elite who got the governments they worked for and deserved.
>
> Mansour Khalid, Ex-Foreign Minister of Sudan

One Ethiopian journal celebrated the fall of Mengistu by raising the following pertinent questions of the day with all its implications for the future fate of the country:

> Does the entirely welcome defeat of tyranny mean that a dark era is drawing to a close? Will the Ethiopian people now be spared dictatorship and strife? Will the quest for the country's collective identity be pursued amicably? These questions lie behind the profound anxiety which has seized the public. The removal of these doubts is the challenge facing all citizens and political groups. The task is urgent, coming as it does at a moment in our history when the aspiration for viable democracy, durable peace, and robust collective identity has become a felt need for ordinary people, not just a platform in a political program or a provision in a constitution.[24]

As the political cloud in the country is getting clearer, the doubts whose removal this journal has posed as a pre-condition for "viably democracy, durable peace, and robust collective identity" have already become a disturbing reality. Despite a genuine euphoria among some Ethiopians at the beginning, and superficial observations of the country's foreign well-wishers, what has been happening in the last two and a half years is fundamentally to recreate the Ethiopian state and

society according to the image of EPRDF and its now foreign comrade-in-arms—the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF).

From the very beginning the EPRDF's takeover has never been celebrated by a greater majority of the Ethiopian population as a popular national action. In fact, in many parts of the country, the EPRDF's People's Liberation Army has remained an unwelcome guest by the very people it claims to have liberated. More specifically, the occasional armed conflicts between the EPRDF and the various opposition groups in much of the Southwest and East; the potentially explosive no-war-no-peace situation in the rest of the country; the massive dismissals of government employees of various institutions for political reasons which include the intellectuals of the historic mother University; the reckless over-politicization of the country's ethnic differences by members of the Transitional Government; the EPRDF's farcical election drama exercised over a terrorized populace; the betrayal of a vital national interest of the country in the case of Eritrea; the on-going systematic terror against opposition groups; the shrinking political support base of the Transitional Government as a result of forced departure of important political groups, and, above all, the arrogant refusal of the EPRDF to heed the call for national reconciliation—which is a fundamental precondition for durable peace, democratic governance, and sustainable development—are all pointing to one thing: the crisis of the Ethiopian transition. Ironically, like the Marxian transition to the rosy communist future, when we look at the discrepancy between the promises made and the actual reality, we are moving both farther and faster away from the ultimate goal. As the causes for and the resultant effects of such a crisis can be better understood when viewed in relation to the core issues of the transition let us have an in-depth look at them.

The EPRDF and the Core Issues in the Ethiopian Transition

For more than two and a half years, the EPRDF has been busy in restructuring the Ethiopian state and society according to its own plan. In doing so, as we shall see further below, it has led the country to a political quagmire where its people are both at war against themselves as well as against the government that claims to represent them. With this brief remark let us move to consider the major issues that fundamentally shape the direction and course of the EPRDF sponsored transition from military autocracy to the hoped for popular democracy.

A Bad Political Legacy and an Equally Bad Continued Practice

What we have inherited from the country's dark days under
Mengistu are seventeen years of military mismanagement, war, and
destruction. There is no need to repeat here what Mengistu and the
kangaroos around him did after they betrayed and led astray Ethiopia's
popular revolution of 1974, as it has been well documented and
discussed by others before. What should be repeated and emphasized
here, in light of our discussion, is the legacy that outlived their police
state of terror: open deceit and crude political manipulation. As it is
becoming increasingly clear, since the July conference of 1991, the
modus operandi of the EPRDF-led Transitional Government has been a
photocopy of the old games in all its essentials. For instance, let us take
the drama that surrounded the July Conference: to fulfill the fashion of
the day, the criterion of broad-based government, the conference hall
was filled with delegates representing several national liberation
movements which, except in the case of a few, were never known even
to the people they were supposed to liberate let alone the Ethiopian
people at large. Surprisingly, some members of the delegates left their
friends in coffee houses to lead a given "liberation movement" existing
only in the minds of the EPRDF leaders to that date. To make sure the
drama was peacefully performed, the country's multi-national political
forces were systematically prevented from attending the conference.
Then, with little or no resistance, in some cases even applauses from the
delegates sponsored by itself, the EPRDF went on organizing the
Transitional Government, taking the lion's share of the 87-seat Council
whose number is itself randomly determined. An important point to
note here is that such a make-believe act of handpicking people's
representatives on behalf of the people is reminiscent of Mengistu's
creation of his talking-shop in 1987, in many respects very visible even
to the foreign onlookers.[25]

Thus, with the absence of the country's main multinational
opposition forces the delegates assembled at the Africa Hall spoke to the
walls, heard their echoes, and unanimously accepted the EPRDF-
prepared charter,[26] some of the contents of which are quite detrimental
for the future fate of the country and its people. In other words, the
seeds for the future conflict was laid down in this charter that is only as
democratic as its authors assume themselves to be. To be sure, it was
such a danger that was signaled on the eve of the conference by a
committee for Peace, Democracy, and Rehabilitation at Addis Ababa
University, in a paper entitled "The July Conference and After: A
Promise for Peace and Reconciliation or Continued Warfare and
Retribution?" [27] to which the EPRDF gave a donkey-ear. Needless to
add, such a political deceit and make-believe drama have become

pervasive over time. For instance, the other case in point is the so-called regional and local elections of 1992. In those elections, the EPRDF has even belittled what a social critic once said about hypocrisy of elections elsewhere:

> The general public are viewed as no more than ignorant and meddle-some outsiders, a bewildered herd. And it's the responsible men who have to make decisions and to protect society from the trampling and rage of the bewildered herd. Now since it's democracy they—the herd, that is—are permitted occasionally to lend their weight to one or another member of the responsible class, that's called an election.[28]

Ironically, what the EPRDF did was excluding even the "responsible men" from participating in the elections while terrorizing the "bewildered herd" to vote for its own candidates or that of its surrogates. In other words, it set the rules of the elections, it contested in the elections against itself, supervised the elections for itself, and declared itself the winner of those elections. In fact, the decisive factor was the barrel of the gun rather than the ballot box. Once again, this reminds us of the ugly history of the Ethiopian elections in the past.

As the story goes, in one of the elections during the Emperor's time, a donkey with a placard "elect me" on its back was led to the Emperor's parliament building by the passersby as an act of symbolizing the quality of the members of the Emperor's parliament. Years later, Mengistu Haile Mariam, as the imperatives of "official socialism" demanded, declared winners his cronies with symbols of the elephant regardless of how terrorized citizens voted. The EPRDF in its turn has introduced the barrel of the gun to influence the outcome of the ballot box. Tragically, the improvement in our election history has been from bad to worse, as the symbols indicate. Needless to add, bad politics always leads to bad dialectics.

The EPRDF's is yet another measure that resembles Mengistu's make-believe drama in the restructuring of the Ethiopian state and government. For a sharp contrast let us recall what Mengistu did following his proclamation of the "People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (PDRE)" in 1987. In his novelty of creating a new state structure, he ended in creating the most elaborate and amorphous bureaucracy anywhere in the continent: four Vice-Presidents, a Prime-Minister with five deputy prime-ministers; twenty-five cabinet ministers with additional fifteen ministers without portfolios, etc. He also doubled the country's regional administrative units, giving some of them a fake name of autonomous regions—all led by the closest among his cronies. This was in addition to the party structure which was

already in place: a 17-man political bureau, a 120-member Central Committee with regional and sub-regional committees to the lowest level, and the Secretary General's 400 personal staff at the headquarters of the party.[29] Besides, there were peasants, workers, women, and youth associations with their corresponding structures from the central committees of their own to the local levels. It was truly a huge parasitic machine that not only suffocated economic development and sucked the economic cream of the nation but also transformed the whole country into a large prison house.

As though history is repeating itself, look what has been merging under the sponsorship of the EPRDF. Although, to be fair, the situation is still short of Mengistu's days, the direction is all the same: the emergence of another huge parasitic machine. As a matter of fact, tens of national liberation movements, most of them EPRDF-sponsored have mushroomed across the country to head this or that regional administration. Even if the structure appears to be federal, like Mengistu's regional autonomy, it is a multiplication of the same hydra. More specifically, it is the EPRDF itself which controls the center as well as rules the regions through what are cynically called "condom" organizations, except in the case of the Afar region and, to a certain degree, the Somali-speaking area, for obvious reasons. Even the case of Somali-speaking area, there were some attempts by the EPRDF—an incident which, as reported elsewhere, the Somalis humorously called government-bought representatives from a "black market."

No less surprisingly, in certain cases the role and activities of the EPRDF-sponsored organizations in the regions resemble that of the leaders of the South African Bantustans which are biting the ANC as the loyal dogs of the whites. In our case, the Oromo People's Democratic Organization (OPDO) is fighting the OLF, the Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement (EPDM) the All Amhara People's Organization (AAPO), while a host of EPRDF-sponsored southern Ethiopian organizations are harassing their local counter-parts. To be sure, what we see around us is a mixture of democracy and state of terror in all its essentials. What all of these remind us is that like Mengistu's period, the new leaders devote their time and energy in the promotion of deceptive democracy through manipulation at best and the use of state terror at worst. In other words, they use the same crude and rude methods in the transformation of the Ethiopian state and society as well as in the running of its day-to-day affairs.

To sum up: Mengistu became overnight a "socialist revolutionary" soldier to outsmart his revolutionary opponents while the present leaders have become multi-party democrats overnight for the same trick. Mengistu co-opted opportunists and mediocres while destroying the real revolutionaries. The present leaders are doing

exactly the same—co-opting opportunists and mediocres while keeping at bay those who can better contribute to the task of reconstructing the country. Mengistu was crying loud for "revolutionary unity" while he was disintegrating the country. His successors are also crying for the same goal while destroying the common bonds that have tied us together. Mengistu used to accuse his opponents of counter-revolution, while the present leaders accuse their political opponents as anti-peace and anti-democratic enemies of the Ethiopian people. In short, Mengistu's bad political legacy is still with us influencing both the behavior and actions of those who are destined to rule the country after him.

Eritrea as a "Problem Child" of Ethiopian Politics

Without exaggeration, no single political issue has influenced contemporary Ethiopia politics as the Eritrean question has done for more than a quarter of a century. It has tested the wisdom of successive Ethiopian governments—from that of the Imperial Majesty's to the EPRDF-led transitional government. It has tested the wisdom of the Ethiopian Student Movement which had fought for the principle of self-determination of nations. It has also tested the wisdom of Ethiopia's political parties of various colors and faces. No less paradoxically, despite Eritrea's declared geographical separation from Ethiopia, there will be no end to such a predicament. Hence, our characterization of Eritrea as the "problem child" of Ethiopian politics is to bring home the bitter truth of the county's past, present, and future political reality.

A host of problems have already developed regarding the government's Eritrean policy. So far the EPRDF is busy trying to assure the Ethiopian citizens that if only they accept Eritrea's independence, then peace and prosperity would follow soon. The problem is, in the eyes of many Ethiopians, even if the advice could be genuine, that the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF)-led government is the least qualified to give such advice—for three basic reasons. First and foremost, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front's victory was made possible by the EPRDF, which was able to break the backbone of the nation's army in the central areas of the country, which has clearly demonstrated the interwoven interests of both groups. Secondly, the TPLF-led government is telling the Ethiopian people that Eritrea has been an Ethiopian colony, a historical claim that could not convince even the non-chauvinist Ethiopians. Finally, it is ironic that for most Ethiopians the same force that is facilitating the breaking away of Eritrea—inhabited mostly by its kith and kin—is aspiring to rule the rest of the country.

Although future history will show who would benefit and who would lose from separation, with the May 1993 referendum, Eritrea's

de facto independence was transformed in *de jure* with the blessings of the OAU and the UN. What surprised many Ethiopians, however, is not the referendum drama but the way the EPLF fighters celebrated Eritrean independence—with a strike for bread—and the speed with which the EPLF leaders changed their tones by beginning to emphasize the "historic unity" of the two peoples. Especially, our surprise at the latter point forces us to raise an all important question: what is the source of the new-found love of the EPLF leaders for mother Ethiopia at a time when they are euphorically celebrating their hard won freedom with so much fanfare? What we can read from the shuttles of officials between Addis Ababa and Asmara, as well as from the declarations and agreements that followed these shuttles is that a new political project is in the making, which, of necessity, carries within itself the most serious threat to any democratic transition in Ethiopia. Without claiming any special knowledge of political prophecy, we have enough reasons to believe that Ethio-Eritrea relations cannot be otherwise. As they speak for themselves, let us look at the following facts.

First and foremost are the resultant effects of the bloody civil war that has devastated Eritrea for years. For the leaders of the EPLF who have fulfilled their age-old dream of Eritrea's independence, this is a permanent reminder that a friendly government in Ethiopia is a matter of life insurance. Secondly, all the major political forces in Ethiopia, which may possibly win any free and fair election (except the OLF) continue to question the legitimacy of the Eritrean referendum, and for them Ethiopia's claim over Eritrea is still as valid as ever. Thirdly, in the leadership of the major pan-Ethiopian political groupings we find a good number of Tigrean leaders, including from Eritrea, who still think that Eritrea is an integral part of Ethiopia with all its implications. Fourthly, if the allegations of the opposition forces are true, there has been a continuous flow of resources to Eritrea from the rest of Ethiopia, and its continuity can only be ensured under a friendly government. Finally, the privileges of Eritrean citizens in Ethiopia, including government employment (at a time when thens of thousands of Ethiopians are losing their jobs and thousands of fresh graduates of universities and colleges are roaming the country's streets) as well as the personal safety and security of the property of Eritrean citizens in Ethiopia could only be guaranteed again under a friendly government.

What all of these show us is that Eritrea's survival as an independent state under the EPLF leadership depends on the existence of a friendly government in Ethiopia. The point we want to make here is not that all Ethiopian governments should be unfriendly to the EPLF but to show that what is good for EPLF may not be good for Ethiopia. Herein lies the source of the EPLF's continued challenge to peace, stability, and democratic governance in Ethiopia.

The government's Eritrean policy is also connected to other basic issues that have tested the sincerity of the EPRDF in the charter it itself has authored. The cases in point are the Oromo and the Afar questions. The EPRDF charter recognizes the right to form separate states for all nations/nationalities without exception (although it was clear in the minds of the authors that this right can be practically given only to the Eritrean brothers). However, the problem soon arose when the OLF began to work for the same right. Understandably, the challenge of the OLF is too serious both to the EPRDF-led government and the country as a whole to be left for self-determination. The reason for this is that if the Oromos, who constitute more than 40 per cent of the country's population and inhabit a geographical landmass with much of the country's resources, somehow suceed in their bid for separation, the move could reduce what is left of Ethiopia to a state that would be, as one commentator puts it, "as absurd geographically as the South African Bantustans."[30] At any rate, the EPRDF has already demonstrated that it cannot be as democratic toward the OLF demand as on the Eritrean issue. The same double standard is also applied to the Afar people whose fate is arbitrarily determined between the EPLF and the EPRDF leaders.

The EPRDF's New Modality of Political Organization as a Bottleneck to Ethiopia's Passage to Democracy

To overcome the challenge posed by the pan-Ethiopian forces, and to appear democratic to the leadership of the so-called "New World Order" which blessed its takeover, the EPRDF has been busy organizing one national liberation movement after another. At the end of the process, even the Amharas were given TPLF's first child—the EPDM—to adopt as their liberator to fit into the new model, only to render more senseless the question of who is liberating what from whom as well as the *raison d'être* of having too many liberation movements just in one poor country.

The EPRDF's strategy is understandably to kill two birds with one stone; i. e., to destroy the social bases of its strong adversaries—the main multinational opposition forces—by applying a new model of political organization which is an anti-thesis to that of the latter, while at the same time attempting to appear more democratic to the outside world by using the suddenly mushrooming liberation movements as a show-case of multi-party democracy that is supposedly flourishing in the country. The problem arises, however, when the stone misses its targets. This is what has been happening to the Transitional Government's novelty of political organization for the last two and a half years. The evidence is all around us: the inter- and intra-ethnic

conflicts across the country. In fact, the EPRDF's calculated move to speak through the mouths of the various liberation movements it brought not only failed to create a democratic atmosphere by healing old wounds but has ended up, to the contrary, creating more disorder by opening up new wounds while enlarging the old ones. The latest incidents—the cold blooded slaughters in the Gumuz area of Wollega and the senseless drama at the Pawi market place of Gojjam—are once again ample proof of what we are busy doing: turning the country into a mad-house.[31]

The paradox of the EPRDF/TPLF's ethnic politics is that it is the political organization whose ethnic support base is far narrower than those which can be supported by the country's two major nationalities which are playing the ethnic card. The EPRDF/TPLF political calculation is that by speaking through the mouths of various liberation movements they have created, they can tilt the political balance in their favor. What they did to the OLF by using the OPDO and the cold-war type propaganda against AAPO and other pan-Ethiopian forces can be seen in this light. However, if the ossification of ethnic differences continues to grow at the cost of class or political programs, except for short-term gains for the EPRDF/TPLF leadership, there will be no long-term benefits to them—as, sooner or later, the comparative advantage of number can shift to those who can represent better the profound aspirations of the Oromo and Amhara peoples. Therefore, it goes without saying that their exercise would be a self-defeating one unless Nikita Krushchev's dictum "politics is not mathematics" is going to be a permanent fact of the reality of power. At any rate, such political gimmicks cannot be defended by any logic including that of the TPLF.

To be fair, one last point to be emphasized in this connection is that ethnic conflict in Ethiopia is by no means the result of the evil designs of the EPRDF. It has been the ugly part of the country's long recorded history, and as it is to be recalled, it was the notoriety of national oppression, especially in relation to the alienation of land, that contributed much to the outbreak of Ethiopia's popular revolution of 1974. To us, what is evil in the EPRDF actions is what Bahru Zewde has correctly identified in the following words:

> To deny the principle of national self-determination is both unprincipled and impolitic. But to elevate that principle—which is only a working principle—to the level of creed and not to relate it to the country's pressing economic needs and the international context in which it finds itself can only bring trouble. A policy of conscious and organized induction of ethno-nationalist sentiments, as being done in Ethiopia today, can only conjure foreboding of yet another disaster. To

emphasize the divergent and acrimonious chapters in the history of the peoples of Ethiopia while de-emphasizing systematically or even denying outright the cultural, economic, geographical and historical links that have bound them through the centuries is expressive of an overriding interest in destruction rather than reconstruction.[32]

Needless to say, one should not forget the adage that "one who sows wind reaps a whirl-wind."

Ethiopia's Transition Through Selective Democracy

At the July Conference and after, the EPRDF has adamantly refused to allow in vocal political organizations. More surprisingly, it even forced out some of the political organizations which participated at the formation of the Transitional Government when they became vocal in their opposition to the EPRDF policies. It has become clear over time that the EPRDF hopes to give democratic rights selectively to those whom it favors, and through them, consequently, to the Ethiopian people, while keeping at bay the opposition forces that can threaten its existing hegemonic position in Ethiopian politics.

Such a political strategy cannot take the EPRDF anywhere near its planned goal. In the first place, central to the rules of the game of multi-party democracy, which these days is accepted as a recipe for good governance, including by the EPRDF itself at least theoretically, is a demand for "free and fair elections." The choice is, therefore, to abide by the rules of the game or abandon them altogether with all that the latter implies. Furthermore, democratic governance is not a wedding party to which one invites selectively without bearing responsibility for the consequences of one's actions. However bitter the rules of multi-party democracy may be, they are the pills that the EPRDF must swallow to save both itself and the country from an uncalled for political disaster.

An important question at this point of our discussion is: why has the EPRDF opted for multi-party democracy against its own nature and background in the first place? To be sure, the EPRDF, which was marching to Addis Ababa by successfully using as a mobilizing factor a mix of Marxist-nationalist ideology, suddenly found itself in the midst of a fast changing international politics for which it was totally unprepared. Now the license to the gate of heaven can only be issued by one power, and the pre-condition to get the license is to accept the rules of the game of multi-party democracy. Thus, the EPRDF wisely accepted the pre-condition and got the blessings of the leader of the "New World Order" at the London Conference.

The contradictory tendencies we have been watching since then are, therefore, due to the manoeuvres and political gimmicks of an organization whose acceptance of pluralistic democracy is only skin-deep. In other words, what has been happening is an attempt by the EPRDF-led government to be democratic as far as the opposition is not a threat to its hegemony. But once it began to see threat, real or imaginary, its democratic coloring faded quickly, revealing its despotic essence, as was demonstrated in its paranoic reaction to the peaceful demonstration by the Addis Ababa University students, which, incidentally, served to herald the birth of a new Ethiopian student movement after long years of inaction. Besides, as a result of its inability to repress with sophistication a confrontation by a hostile population, the EPRDF has engaged itself in politics of a sort—mobilizing and organizing for the government by whatever means and simultaneously demobilizing and disorganizing the opposition by using, again, whatever means, including the use of terror from media war to the actual use of force as in the case of OLF, AAPO, etc.

To be sure, the end result of such a contradictory tendency can only end in the kind of reality remarked upon by Noam Chomsky:

> One who pays some attention to history will not be surprised if those who cry most loudly that we must smash and destroy are later found among the administrators of some new system of repression.[33]

True to the spirit of Chomsky's observation, the choice we are facing is either to get organized on the regime's terms or face its propaganda machine that has been perfected by Mengistu's state of terror, at best, or face a more severe attack by the more repressive arms of the state. The exclusion of the major pan-Ethiopian forces from the Transitional Government, the forcing out of the OLF from same, the political pretext used to terrorize the AAPO into submission, and the marginalization of the relatively independent southern Ethiopian political groupings, however innocent their political projects are, all point to a coming danger. Alas, many Ethiopians are already smelling the odor of Dergue II!

Ethiopia's Democratic Transition and the Problem of Organizing a National Army

As the transitional period is ending according to plan, the talk of how to organize a national army is already in the air. At this stage of the transition, it does not require any political sophistication to predict that the EPRDF is going to transform itself into the next national government of Ethiopia. Certainly, the present EPRDF army would follow the same

dialectics. Here, what should concern us more is not the dialectical transformation of the army as such but the issues beyond it: the composition and the future role of such an army.

In any venture of organizing a national army under the present Ethiopian condition, what comes to mind is its composition. To change the present composition of the EPRDF army to reflect the country's ethnic balance is suicidal for the EPRDF, while the maintenance of its present composition is equally dangerous for Ethiopia's democratic transition. The point we want to make here is that if the present composition is going to be changed to reflect the numerical strength of the country's ethnic demography, then the change would be in favor of the Oromo- and Amhara-based political organizations. And, it would be anybody's guess how far such an army can be permanently loyal to the present settlement, including the Eritrean issue. One can also imagine what it would mean if the pan-Ethiopian forces win the election with their agenda of bringing back to life Ethiopia's ex-national army with its memories of defeat and humiliation in the hands of the EPRDF army. Of necessity, therefore, the EPRDF should maintain its present private army as long as it is in power. Of course, the implication of this is both clear and simple: despite the fuss daily made about democracy, Ethiopia's "free and fair" election is more of a distant dream than an immediate reality, as, after all, it is the barrel of the gun that safeguards and maintains the legitimacy of the ballot box itself.

The Government's Economic Policy of Transition

After the demise of Mengistu's regime, an Ethiopian economist summed up the sad and depressing story of the condition of the Ethiopian economy in the following terms:

> The economic record of seventeen years of military rule was to prove an unmitigated disaster. . . . By almost every major index of economic growth, the country retreated rather than advancing forward. Wrong-headed policies, war, environmental degradation, a rapidly growing population, adverse external developments and a number of other factors combined to drive the economy to the edge of the precipice.[34]

What is at the "edge of the precipice" after seventeen years of devastating civil war, recurrent famine, military mismanagement, and disorder is, of course, Ethiopia's "prestigious" position—the rank of the third poorest nation in the world.[35] What we have inherited is, therefore, an economy so much in shambles.

In what appears to be a response to such a predicament the Transitional Government proclaimed a new economic policy in November 1991.[36] As a follow-up action, it negotiated an economic package deal with IMF/World Bank consortium, signed loan agreements with a number of loan-giving countries and agencies, and carried out restructuring at home to meet the pre-conditions of the external benefactors. Especially, the acceptance of the IMF/World Bank conditionality of devaluing the national currency, more out of desperation than as a result of a well-studied consideration, has led to a major controversy as to the wisdom of the government's hasty implementation of policies so far proved, by and large, to be a failure across the board in the entire Third World. In our case,too, although the government has postponed the chaos that might have resulted from the price rise by increasing the salary of government employees, which for the time being has created the illusion of more money in the minds of the unconscious workers, many Ethiopians are beginning to feel the brunt of the adjustment. The evidence is all around us: beside the belt-tightening pressure imposed upon millions of Ethiopians, the specter of unemployment is haunting several hundreds of thousands more across the country. Moreover, judged by the fate of more than 9,000 workers of the Construction Ministry, thousands of workers are expected to join the unemployed army of hundreds of thousands of youth roaming the country's streets as the market forces bring the logic of more profit at the cost of social welfare for the majority of the country's population. Needless to say, the hopelessness and despair that have invaded the university campuses and other higher institutions, whose graduates were hitherto accorded the privilege of automatic employment, would have serious repercussions on the country's educational system far beyond the immediate fate of the country and for generations to come.

To be fair, however, such a gloomy picture is only one side of the story. For its part, the government is giving the Ethiopian people a comforting picture that the country's economy has begun to turn around, and it even registered a growth of 7.6 per cent, while the inflation rate is reported to have decreased from 21 per cent to 10 per cent.[37] In this connection, to save ourselves from a sterile debate, it is enough to recall Eshetu Chole's sober observation:

> What can be stated with certainty is that the transition process will be an extremely difficult one and that there is no room for wishful thinking. Those who have taken it upon themselves to steer this tortured country through these difficult times should be wary of underestimating the magnitude of the economic challenge and of making facile promises of the impending millennium. Ethiopians have in the past been treated to to more

than their share of promises that have turned out to be hollow. Not surprisingly, therefore, they have all become doubting Thomasses.[38]

The Last Major Issue of the Ethiopian Transition is the Drafting of the National Constitution

As was stipulated in the Charter, and as we observe from the current cold-war type media barrages, the final act in the EPRDF drama of transforming the Ethiopian state and society according to its own image is the writing of the national constitution.

Paradoxically, the underlying considerations of constitution-writing in Ethiopia in all cases so far exhibited striking similarities, whether the mandate of heaven was invoked, as in the case of the Emperor, or assignment by history, as in the case of the Dergue, in terms of the authorship of the constitution and the central objective of the authors. In other words, the constitutions were written by the victorious powers to consolidate their hard won victory as well as to impress the foreign onlookers than to serve the Ethiopian people in whose name and or whom, supposedly, the constitutions were written. Let us see in concrete terms what surrounded the writing of the 1931, 1955, and 1987 constitutions.

The 1931 constitution was authored by an Emperor who had emerged as a black Machiavellian by finishing off his enemies left and right from 1916 to 1930. And true to his Machiavellian character, the main concern of the Emperor was to consolidate feudal absolutism both for himself and his successors at home while the foreign spectators were to be impressed by the country's entry to the family of civilized nations. Again, in the case of the Revised Constitution of 1955, one could note the same underlying factors: the victories the Emperor scored over the patriots who resisted his restoration to power from 1941-1955, the incorporation of Eritrea into the Ethiopian Empire, etc.[39]

Mengistu's PDRE constitution of 1987 was a repetition of the same drama in all its essentials, except that the actors were different. Mengistu, having decimated one dynamic generation in the blood-bath that followed the Ethiopian revolution of 1974, proclaimed a constitution that was hoped to consolidate his victories at home and to impress the socialist popes in the ex-Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

From the evidence we have so far, it is not difficult to draw in advance the same historical parallels in what is being drawn up as our next constitution. Like Mengistu, the entire exercise of the new governing elite is to transform the legitimacy of the barrel of the gun to that of the ballot box. Surprisingly, we eve see some dramatic

improvements both in terms of the use of technology and the demand of the "New World Order" such as the debate over satellites and the comings and goings of American, British, French, German, Indian, etc. legal experts to give their input in the drafting of the constitution. In this regard, without going to unnecessary details, we advise the sponsors of the Constitution Drafting Commission, at least for the record of history, that in the final analysis, it is not the beautiful opinions of the experts that matters but what the Ethiopian people see, experience, and feel in their daily lives.

Towards Charting a Viable Political Alternative: Some Points for Consideration in Navigating the Crossroads

Before we venture to suggest any sort of democratic alternative, it is necessary to understand the stage and depth of the process of the country's on-going democratic transition. Despite the loud claim of the Transitional Government and its over-enthusiastic supporters, the existing political atmosphere in Ethiopia is at the stage of *political liberalization*, a stage far behind *genuine democratization*. That means, unlike popular misconceptions, political liberalization is by no means genuine democratization which involves, among other things, the empowerment of the people to choose their leaders freely and the process of institutionalization of democracy as a system of government. In fact, political liberalization emerges under two unique conditions: when a given regime has lost its repressive capacity and thus begins to give in either to buy time or to get a new lease on life, or when a given regime has just assumed power and is at its populist stage, undertaking populist measures both to destroy the political power base of the old regime and to consolidate its own power base. In our situation, the best examples of the former are Haile Selassie's government from February 1974 to its demise in September of the same year and the last days of the Dergue regime, roughly after the 1989 coup attempt to its collapse two years later in 1991. The best examples of the latter, again in our case, are the first years of the Dergue regime from September 1974 to roughly the beginning of 1977 and the present condition under the EPRDF-led Transitional Government. Ironically, again, unlike the popular belief, the odds about political liberalization is that since the measures are half-hearted at best, and strategic, at worst, usually it leads either to repression or the ultimate demise of the regime in power. The evolution of the Dergue to a counter-revolutionary force exemplifies the former case while its own demise in 1991 and its predecessor's fall in 1974 are the best examples of the latter.

What this tells us in concrete terms is that under the condition of political liberalization, the road to genuine democracy is very narrow

indeed. Regrettably, this is the situation we are in in Ethiopia today: at a critical crossroads to go either way. The most serious intellectual as well as political challenge to Ethiopians of all political persuasions, ethnic as well as religious affiliations, is, therefore, to know as well as to show how cross the critical crossroads to peace and prosperity. It is the belief of the author of this article that the key lies in understanding the essential links between peace, democratic governance and positive development, and the struggle for their realization. The starting point of such a lofty ideal is the understanding of the lessons of our contemporary political history. Here, without any shadow of doubt, for those who have both the capacity and the political will to learn, nothing is more instructive than the basic lessons of our current history. In light of what we have discussed so far, let us recollect some of the lessons from our recent past.

The first basic lesson of our current history is that if our recent past has anything to teach us, beautiful blueprints by themselves can help us very little. For that matter, some of the policies of Mengistu's government were not bad policies per se. They failed because they were conceived of to mask bad politics, implemented in a bad political environment, and managed by a misfit bureaucracy. These were what finally led to the successful failure of not only the policies of Mengistu but his police state of terror itself. The implication of this past lesson is clear: policies could be successful if they are formulated to promote good politics and implemented by a capable administration in a good political environment. Our first suggestion is, therefore, that the present and future governments of Ethiopia not lose sight of this elementary but basic lesson of our current history to save both themselves and the people they claim to lead away from disaster.

The second basic lesson of our current history is associated with problems that arise from bad political culture and an equally bad leadership quality. Very often, Ethiopian leaders exhibit political arrogance, a conduct very pervasive among our leaders at all levels of the power structure. As it has also been made clear by our recent past, political arrogance easily leads to political intoxication which, at the end, is too costly for all—the country and its people as well as the actors themselves. It must not be underestimated, in a country like ours, that it is only the politics of national reconciliation and accommodation, which in turn depends on good leadership, that can lead to durable peace—an essential pre-condition to channel all our energy and meager resources into meaningful national development.

The third basic lesson of our current history is the understanding of the fruitlessness of militarizing the Ethiopian state and society just to fulfill one's unmitigated lust for power and glory. Here, for those who have the mind to learn, there is no better lesson of history than looking

at just what happened to the "heroic" deeds of Mengistu and the kangaroos around him.

The fourth basic lesson from our current history is the danger of being carried away by the political drama without understanding the meaning of the play as well as the motives of the actors. What we have in mind here is that many Ethiopians during the hey-days of the revolution joined the socialist groupings of various colors more as a fashion of the day than from an understanding of the progressive aspirations of the Ethiopian people. What happened then was, in the midst of the play, the force which had the advantage of a military muscle used socialism as a passport to power and decimated one dynamic generation in the name of the revolution. Today, what we see around us is exactly the same, the loss of soul on the part of many people in the dance for the liberation of this or that ethnic group, as the fashion of the day demands, while the forces which have the advantage of military might are using ethnic politics as a passport to power and domination. Without further detail, for us the best way to understand the meaning of the on-going drama is, therefore, by stopping to behave like a lost child at the crossroads, not exactly sure where it did come from and not at all sure where it is going either.

As a footnote to this last point, what must be clearly understood is the dangerous road followed by some as a panacea for evils—separate states, while the country's population composition, geographical location, and resource distribution, etc. all suggest the opposite solution. In separate states, definitely some can be better than others, but as Ethiopia's problems are basically that of underdevelopment, there is little empirical evidence that shows Ethiopia's future mini-states could better tackle the immense tasks of solving the problems of underdevelopment. It is not also clear that if those who happen to be leaders of the country as a whole continue to be oppressors, how leaders of separate states (products of the same political history) would be angels sent by God for the liberation of the various peoples comprising the Ethiopian state. In terms of the international political economy, too, if rich countries of Europe are coming together by the pressures of the global economy, for any sober and informed mind, it is hard to imagine how Ethiopia's mini-states would do better in such an environment. At any rate, if Ethiopians lived together for so long, largely in oppression, there is no convincing reason why they cannot live together in a democratic state where freedom, equality, prosperity, and social justice are ensured. Hence, fighting for these lofty ideals and fundamental freedoms of all Ethiopians are far more urgent than to be in so much a hurry to pack for separation as if to be the first to enter paradise. To be sure, as a traditional saying puts it, "a fool's haste is no speed." To sum up: these are the real issues about which the clarity of thought and understanding are necessary if we are to move beyond the

"dialogue of the deaf" and contribute to the on-going popular struggles for people-empowering democratic transformation in Ethiopia. Finally, it is with this in mind that we should cry for *National Reconciliation* as an essential precondition for durable peace, democratic governance, and positive development in Ethiopia.

Concluding Remarks

Mansour Khaled, a Sudanese scholar, wrote the following words about the similar conditions of the Sudan:

> Many Sudanese thought that the rebirth of democracy, after Nimeiri's fall on 5 April 1985 ushered in a new dawn where the lessons of the past were learned and its mistakes would never be repeated: the May experience should have been a textbook case for all future politicians. However, only three years later the April uprising was slenderized like the uprising of 21 October 1964, into an historical event to be commemorated annually without having served any political end.[40]

This, of course, is what is happening in Ethiopia almost to the letter as well as spirit: failure to learn from past mistakes. Sadly, despite the opportunities thereof for positive and constructive changes, blurred by myopic and sectarian politics, our new leaders are on the verge of aborting the hoped for democratic alternative after years of military brutality and repression. As we have argued all along the balance sheet of the performance of the EPRDF-led transitional government and the outcomes of its policies are not in the direction of creating a popular national state. In fact, their policies and actions are the anti-thesis of such a state. Ridiculously enough, Ethiopia's bewildered ex-guerillas are proving what a Kenyan intellectual aptly remarked about Africa's tragi-comedy: "As the regime becomes more and more bankrupt in terms of ideas, so does it grow richer in revolutionary slogans, billboards and attire."[41]

The evidences are all around us, again. Just look at the fashionable slogans about peace, democracy, development, justice, equality, etc. that daily fill our TV screens and the pages of newspapers which are written more to blur the vision of the Ethiopian people than to reflect the country's reality. Ironically, the main source of the country's crisis is ethno-nationalism, and what the EPRDF is trying to do is to solve it by promoting ethno-nationalism, which is tantamount to curing malarial disease by breeding more mosquitoes. Here, what must be stressed is that our intention is not so much to incriminate the EPRDF-

led government as to state the hard facts that can help us arrive at a logical conclusion and, of course, to go far beyond helping us to suggest a viable alternative.

What we suggest as a viable option in this conclusion of our study is that there is an essential link between durable peace, democratic governance, and positive development; and the only way to navigate the crossroads to such lofty ideas is by ensuring participatory democracy where both the rulers and the ruled set in common the terms of the "social contract" and both abide by them. Furthermore, in a country like ours, where the absence of a strong civil society that can guarantee the development of political pluralism is self-evident, a political consensus on the terms of the "social contract" among the country's competing political elites is an essential complementary factor for any meaningful venture of democratizing the country. Since, for now, the ball is in the court of the EPRDF, the political will on the part of this force is central to reaching any such constructive solution. To be sure, failure to do so on the part of the EPRDF leaders is not only an act of hindering the prospects for peace, democratic governance, and positive development in the country, but it is also continuing along the perilous road of destruction, which eventually must include those at the corridors of power as the recent history of our country amply has demonstrated.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

[1]The phrase is an allusion to one of Frantz Fanon's most famous works in which he condemns Africa's emerging political elites. For details, see his *Black Skins, White Masks* (New York: Grove Press, 1967).

[2]For a detailed discussion on this issue, see Harry Goulbourne, "The State, Development, and the Need for Participatory Democracy in Africa," in Peter Anyang Nyong'O (ed.), *Popular Struggles for Democracy in Africa* (London and New Jersey: Zed Books, Ltd., 1987), pp. 247 and E. Wamba-dia-Wamba, "The Experience of Struggle in the People's Republic of Congo," in *Ibid.*, pp. 96-112.

[3]Samuel P. Huntington, in his book *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968) has argued that social movements like the student movements are destabilizing forces and hence even military dictators are preferred to stabilize the forces of modernization.

[4]Good examples are Soviet supports to Ethiopia under Mengistu, Somalia in the first years of Siad Barre's regime, and People's Republic of the Congo under various regimes.

[5]Peter Anyang Nyong'O, "Elephants and the Grass: Africa in International Affairs," in *Eastern African Social Sciences Research Review*, Vol. II, No. 2 (Addis Ababa: OSSREA, 1986), p. 1.

[6]The phrase is an allusion to Frantz Fanon's work *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1963), used here to describe the deteriorating African condition.

[7]Emmanuel Hansen (ed.), Africa: Perspectives on Peace and Development (London and New Jersey: Zed Books, Ltd., 1987).

[8]Peter Anyang Nyong'O (ed.), *Op. Cit.*

[9]Hansen (ed.), *Op. Cit.*, p. 4.

[10]P. Nyong'O (ed.), *Op. Cit.*, p. 19.

[11]*Ibid.*, pp. 19-20.

[12]Emmanuel Hansen, "The State and Popular Struggles in Ghana, 1982-86," in *Ibid.*

[13]E. Wamba-dia-Wamba, in *Ibid.*, pp. 96-112.

[14]Nzongola-Ntalaja, "The Second Independence Movement in Congo-Kinshasa," in *Ibid.*, pp. 113-141.

[15]Peter Anyang Nyong'O, "Popular Alliances and the State in Liberia, 1980-85, " in *Ibid.*, pp. 209-247.

[16]Michael Chege, "The State and Labour in Kenya," in *Ibid.*, pp. 248-264.

[17]Abdelai Doumou, "The State and Popular Alliances: Theoretical Preliminaries in the Light of the Moroccan Case," in *Ibid.*, pp. 48-77.

[18]This is a concept used by Harry Goulbourne in the title of his article in *Ibid.*, pp. 26-47.

[19]This is a suggestion made by Samir Amin. See his article "Preface: The State and the Question of Development," in *Ibid.*, pp. 1-13.

[20]Issa G. Shivji, "The Democracy Debate in Africa: Tanzania," in *Review of African Political Economy*, No. 50 (ROAPE Publications, Ltd., 1991), p. 79.

[21]This was a general characterization given by Workshops participants at the "Democratization Process in Africa." For details, see Sahr John Kpundeh (ed.), *Democratization in Africa: African Views, African Voices: Summary of Three Workshops* (Washington, D. C.: National Academy Press, 1992).

[22]This is the consensus reached among African scholars and political activists at Workshops on "Democratization Process in Africa". See *Ibid.*, p. 75.

[23]For a detailed discussion on the on-going Ghana's transition, see Kwame A. Ninsin, "Some Problems in Ghana's Transition to Democratic Governance," in Zenebework Tadesse (ed.), *Africa Development*, Vol. XVIII, No. 2, 1993.

[24]*Imbylta: An Ethiopian Quarterly of Political Opinion* (Special Issue, June 1991), p. 1.

[25]See, for instance, "Ethiopia: Majorities and Minorities," in *Africa Confidential*, Vol. 32, No. 14 (July 12, 1991), p. 1.

[26]Ethiopian Transitional Government, "Charter for the Transitional Period" (Addis Ababa, 22nd July 1991).

[27]See the paper made public by the Committee for Peace, Democracy, and Rehabilitation (Addis Ababa University, June 28, 1991).

[28]Noam Chomsky as quoted by Staff Reporter, *The Guardian*, Monday, November 23, 1992.

[29]For further details, see Dawit Wolde Giorgis, *Red Tears: War, Famine, and Revolution in Ethiopia* (Trenton, New Jersey: Red Sea Press, 1989).

[30]Alan Rake, "Ethiopia: Danger of Division," in *New African*, July 1991, No. 286, p. 16.

[31]For a full report of the incidents, see the Amharic Weeklies, *Tomar*, October 15, 1993 and *Zena Admas*, October 17, 1993.

[32]Bahru Zewde, "Hayla-Selasse: From Progressive to Reactionary." Paper presented to the Sixth MSU Conference on North East Africa, April 23-25, 1992, pp. 42-43.

[33]Chomsky, *Op. Cit.*

[34]Eshetu Chole, "Ethiopia at the Crossroads: Reflections on the Economics of the Transition Period." Paper presented to the Sixth MSU Conference on North East Africa, April 23-25, 1992, p. 82.

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[37]Reported in *The Ethiopian Herald*, September 14, 1993.

[38]Eshetu Chole, *Op. Cit.*, p. 97.

[39]For a critique of Haile Selassie's Constitution, see, among others, Bahru Zewde, *A History of Modern Ethiopia, 1855-1974* (London, Athens, and Addis Ababa, 1991).

[40]Mansour Khaled, *The Government They Deserve: The Role of the Elite in Sudan's Political Evolution* (London and New York: Kegan Paul International, 1990), p. 134.

[41]Peter Anyang Nyong'O (ed.), *Op. Cit.*, p. 22.