

PAY ATTENTION ETHIOPIANS: NEW NATIONAL MATRIX

Defying Ethiopian Toxic Ethnic Politics

Tecola W. Hagos (11 December 2018)

I. Prolegomena - Pointing Fingers

I have never supported federalism based on ethnicism or on language for Ethiopia. I believe in a “unitary” system with guided limited local autonomous provincial administration, with few incorporated urban structures as needed. I justify my position of a unitary administrative structure based on two solid grounds: 1) the primitive state of life in Ethiopia cannot allow or sustain a modernist structure such as federalism of any kind, least of all one based on ethnic identity; 2) lack of skilled and enlightened managerial manpower and the low count of efficient second tier assistants and committed field operators to advance governmental policies and government backed projects.

The fact remains that a handful of Ethiopians created the disastrous socio-political experimental ethnic state structure in the Transition Government of 1991-95, but its gestation goes back decades to the era of the Ethiopian students movement of the 1960s that lead directly to the rustic blood soaked Military regime of the 1970s and 1980s. I, along with very many Ethiopians, wrongly had blamed Samuel P. Huntington of Harvard for the type of “Federalism” as practiced in Ethiopia since 1995 to date. However, published material vindicates Huntington, for he had warned Meles Zenawi and his Government the risk of basing a political structure on ethnicism. Meles Zenawi is the one and only *mover and shaker* responsible in the creation of the current Kilil system, supported by Sebat Nega, Endreas Eshete, and Fasil Nahum, and fully backed by the Members of the Central Committee of the TPLF *in toto*. They were all responsible for the Federal structure adopted in the Constitution of 1995. To some extent, Members of EPDM, OPDO and SEPDM (later as an amalgamated group) helped the establishment of the current federal structure that is now tearing Ethiopia apart in the hands of the current mediocre Leadership.

What is ironic under the Government of PM Abiy Ahmed is the fact that the two most fiercely antagonistic Kilil Leaders, Gedu and Debretsion, who are fighting for political dominance, are the staunch supporters of the Federal Kilil structure. The legacy of the Kilil divisive system is having now a new and coercive lease on life. When I listen to the polemic of the two leaders and read statements coming out of both the Amhara Kilil and Tigray Kilil, I concluded that they are playing a dangerous political game that could easily go out of control and plunge Ethiopia in to deep and long-lasting civil unrest. The problem is compounded by the many media outlets/websites, such as *Z-Habesha*, *ACEDF*, *Borkena*, et cetera that demonize Tigrians as a group and censor dissenters like me on behalf of Abiy Ahmed (whom they consider as the second coming of a Messiah). They are promoting genocide and would be answerable to the International Criminal Court and any national courts. (The exceptions to some degree are Eskinder Nega of *Ethiopsis* and, and Abebe Gelaw of *ESAT* who practice the journalist’s art with restraint and self-discipline).

What I find alarming and truly dangerous is the fact that Ethiopian media outlets in the Diaspora are fueling ethnic genocide against Tigrians, as the Rwandan Government radio station RTLM did broadcasting on July 8th to the Hutu to begin killing the Tutsi minority group identified as “tall trees” and “cockroaches” prior to the genocide committed against the Tutsi minority groups in Rwanda in 1994 (the genocide took place over a period of 100 days, from April 6th, 1994 to July 16th, 1994). Abiy Ahmed and hatemonger Diaspora Journalists and media outlets use the term “የቀን ጅቦች” and “ሌቦች” to identify TPLF Officials but is understood in its expansive meaning to include all Tigrians even those that are mixed with Amhara or Oromo parents. All such targeting of a group is in violation of the Genocide

Convention and other international norms and practices. It is quite understandable the fact that a couple of Websites *Tigraionline* and *Aiga* tried to counter such coordinated assault, with their far more open forum allowing diversity of opinions. I am not being partisan here, for my interest is the whole of Ethiopia that even includes both Eritrea and Djibouti. I am for all Ethiopians and against hatemongers and chauvinistic individual leaders in every Kilil who use ethnic hatred to promote their own individual political ambitions and private lives. All forms of attack and displacements based on ethnic identity must be stopped dead in all parts of Ethiopia.

I. The Best Proposal

The point of this article is the proposal by two Ethiopian Engineers on restructuring and replacing the Kilil States system. The administrative state structure proposed by Engineers Engidashet Bunare (Water Engineer) and Shiferaw Lulu (Hydrogeologist) goes a long way both as concrete solution to the ongoing ethnic conflicts and an inspirational futuristic proposal. Engidashet Bunare and Shiferaw Lulu have laid out a truly constructive science-based and statistics backed proposal to replace completely the divisive Kilil system of state structure in a white paper titled ***“New Ethiopian Government Administrative Boundary System for Unified Nation Building.”*** [hereafter “Proposal”]

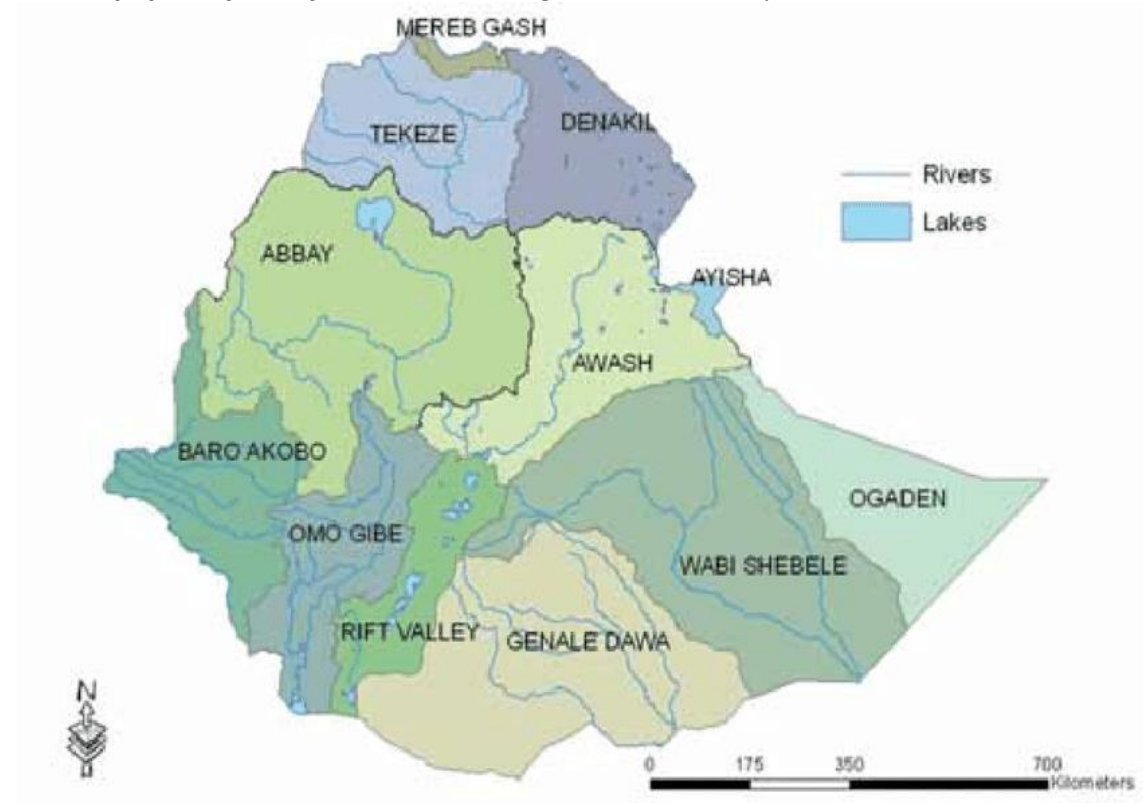


Figure 1. Major River Basins [Mekonen Ayana]

https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Ethiopian-river-basins-map_fig1_42765483

What impressed me the most in the proposal is the fact that the boundaries of the eight States are based on river-basins that are not limited to any particular ethnic groups but do enclose several ethnic groups within each basin state. [Figure 1] Having witnessed in the last eight months millions of Ethiopians suffering wherein thousands killed, tens of thousands brutally kicked out of their homes, and millions displaced, thus, faced with such grim situation, the two engineers wrote in the introduction of

their proposal, *“One of the ways out would be basing the administration on non-ethnic based criteria. The main aim of this paper is to present one way out for discussion and debate among Ethiopian people for their better future.”* [Proposal, page 8] Most of my friends and I worried sick from the get-go that ethnic based Kilils would turn out to be in the future the killing-fields of East Africa, a morbid and frightening prediction. It did not take long for that prediction to be our nightmarish reality currently in Ethiopia where tens of thousands were either killed, dehumanized, driven out of their homes, and live in make-shift temporary shelters numbering in millions. It is that form of catastrophe the two Engineers wanted to tackle and create a system of equitable life to all Ethiopians.

Accordingly, the new state administrative structure proposed by the two Engineers will constitute of the following administrative states: 1. Abay basin state; 2. Awash, Ayisha and Denakil basins states; 3. Baro-Akobo basin state; 4. Genele-Dawa basin state; 5. Tekeze and Merib basins states; 6. Wabi-shebele and the Ogaden basins states; 7. Omo-Ghibe basin state; and 8. Rift valley Lakes basin state. [Proposal, page 11] Moreover, I suggest that the two Engineers change all references in their Proposal to a “Basin State” or “Basin States” to “Administrative Region or Regions”. It is important also that we avoid any reference of a separate sovereign entity within the State of Ethiopia.



Figure 2. Proposed Basin States [Proposal, page 11]

“In practice, giving hydrologically bounded administrative states on national agenda; creates greater cohesion among different ethnic groups, decision-makers responsible for economic policy; creating more

effective channels for communication and shared decision-making between government agencies, organizations, interest groups and communities; and encouraging people to think 'outside the box' of traditional sectoral definitions....Ethiopia has historical, social, economic, political, cultural, religious, moral/ethical, and legal values that are key agent for unifying the Ethiopian Empire. Thus initially, we have to recognize the common national historical, social, economic, political, cultural, religious, moral/ethical, and legal values in order to pave the way for nation building and for future sustainable and safe development by giving emphasis for diversity and unity. In addition, we have to carry out national reconciliation events/program to conclude once and for all past mistake agenda.” [Proposal, page 91]

It is not an exaggeration when I state that there is much more animosity and hate in the lives of Ethiopians in the time of Abiy Ahmed's reign of *speechology*, especially in the political lives of Ethiopians back home and/or in the Diaspora, than ever before. The proposal by the two Engineers is like a breath of fresh and clean air wafting down the stale and stinking writings of bloggers and chat-room intellectuals and those who write *ad nauseam* with a single theme of “I hate Tigrains or Woyanes,” in hundreds of variations. Writing in the best interest of the public without biases or prejudices is a mark of a wise person, but it requires also moral courage and excellent academic training and native intelligence. The two Engineers are truly gifted patriotic Ethiopians for whom I have unbound admiration, respect, and gratitude.

Conclusion

My call for a 3rd Woyane or for a Military takeover was meant to counter any civil war and future genocide based on ethnicity, and especially so by hindsight considering the recent agitation by the rustic ignoramus little big-man Gedu and his shadow dancers. Consider Gedu's belligerent speeches, which he delivers with hate edged on by the disfranchised and maladjusted immature Diaspora groupies in Washington DC, as if he is innocent of ethnic cleansing and murders of innocent Ethiopians. Gedu used our B-787 Jetliner as his private Jet, wasting our money that could have been used to help victims of ethnic cleansing of the direct results of Abiy Ahmed's inept leadership. Such activity sets precedent that every Kilil President is also entitled to such privileges. Please, somebody tell these peasants that a Boeing 787 is not a toy to be used on flimsy excuses to fly to foreign lands. Such activity is also corruption and an abuse of power.

It is absolutely impossible for me to promote divisive views in order to create a dominant exclusive tribal group. I do not want any Ethiopian getting hurt anywhere within Ethiopia or outside of Ethiopia. My fellow ethical Ethiopians, I address you all directly not to follow the current Leadership goading you to attack minority groups, for people are armed and will fight back and the result will be civil war where everyone will suffer. How could I and why should I promote one ethnic group over another or others, for I am a person who proudly identify my birthrights in every major ethnic group and who proclaimed rather pompously and repeatedly that the whole of “Ethiopia is mine”. To this day, the breaking off of Eritrea is an open wound for me and it is aggravated further with the recent Peace Agreement that solidified the 1993 secession in concrete. I may never be healed even after the cause of all the turmoil is gone.

A number of people have asked me by mail and in writing on the question whether Tigrai State should declare its independence due to the current relentless campaign against Tigrains by Abiy Ahmed and the Leaders of Amhara Kilil. For the nth time, I am stating here that I do not support such an idea and never had, for to do so would be to fulfill the destructive anti-Ethiopia wishes of Egypt and some Arab nations.

I am for building an Empire that would reconstitute the old glory of Ethiopia as a world power that encompasses the whole of the Horn of Africa under the name of Ethiopia. All human beings need a national long history in order to maintain social order. No sane person dares undermine the unifying power of our historic Ethiopia. If any one is to be booted out, it has to be the new incompetent Leaders.

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