
TEACHING ALMARIAM HOW TO WRITE

SUPERVISING PROFESSORS

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I am a lover of good sentences. I have more weakness for ‘sparkling’ prose than sex or alcohol. This Almariam guy has been on my nerves. He is perhaps, the worst political writer among those who think they can write in English language concerning Ethiopian case. Though he is not an exception, he can easily win the prize for worst type of political commentary, both for the style and content. I used to ignore him for the interest of time. But when the rights of sentences are abused by the human rights advocate on a broad day light, one reacts. I want Almariam to succeed. So, I picked a random article from his website and volunteered to give him a hand so he improves his craft. Ufff...Supervising professors is not an easy job, especially when you are not one. The font in black is almariam speaking, the red is my comment on his sentences, the blue is my suggestion for alternative construction.

~~Ethiopia: Cry! Cry Freedom the Beloved Country!~~

[Prof., this can't possibly be the title for your article. Perhaps you are referring to Alan Paton or south African apartheid or the movie by Attenborough. But most of your readers don't know those things. You are wasting your energy. Perhaps something like “Remembering the fallen”, or Ireecha victims in my mind” or something else is a better title for your article.]

By [almariam](#) On October 9, 2016

~~I cry for the hundreds of victims of the October 2, 2016 Ireecha Festival Massacres in Ethiopia.~~

~~I also cry out for freedom, democracy and human rights in Ethiopia.~~ [These two sentences are unnecessary at the beginning of your article. For one, it is not strong statements that can capture the imagination of your readers, for another an African man is not supposed to cry.]

On October 2, 2016, troops loyal to the Tigrean Peoples' Liberation Front (T-TPLF) [This T and hyphen before TPLF is not attracting attention, I suggest you drop it] opened fire indiscriminately [you need evidence for this, especially the word 'indiscriminately is misleading] on crowds attending one of the most important cultural and spiritual events in Ethiopia, the Irreecha (Thanksgiving) Festival in the town of Bishoftu, some 45 miles southeast of the capital Addis Ababa. [One sentence for a paragraph? - my Goodness, this is unacceptable prof. A decent sentence is supposed to be about 8 or 9 words- may be little more, but this... no, no]

An estimated 500 plus people were killed by gunfire and in a pandemonium that followed the gunfire. Twice that number were severely injured and maimed. [Now, what to do about this? I am confused. Are you sure 500 people were killed? Also, how was the 500-people killed? By gunfire or pandemonium or both? Or still 1 person died of gunfire and 499 by pandemonium or vice versa? You say, "twice that number" now you are not being serious. Say something like "twice that number were 'reportedly' or 'feared' ...injured and so on.

For over ten years, I have been the unremitting voice of massacre victims in Ethiopia. [that is too much. Don't brag about yourself. Especially the adjective 'unremitting'. Show some humility to your readers. Don't tell us how great you are. Readers appreciate humility. So, say instead: [For over ten years, I have been one of those who voiced their concern about massacre victims in Ethiopia]

For over ten years, I have appealed to the conscience of T-TPLF leaders, ~~but having none~~, they have ignored my appeals. [Again, you are boasting about yourself. And the sentence? Improve it. You are not telling us what you appealed the TPLF guys. How can you say, "they have ignored your appeals"? Who are you? And are you the only one who appealed? Are you sure? May be you can improve the sentence like this. I am trying to help you here so that you shine. [For over ten years, I have been one of those who appealed to the leaders of TPLF to change their ways. And yet our appeal received no attention]

The Most people of Ethiopia ~~petitioned, solicited and~~ implored T-TPLF leaders ~~and their cronies~~ and supporters to change their ways; to become more human and humane; to show a little compassion and understanding; to be a little less greedy and to feel the pain and suffering of their. [Suffering of their ... what?. The sentence not full] They have turned a deaf ear to the voice of

justice **and** blinded their eyes to the suffering of the people. They have answered [say, responded] the peoples' pleas with repeated insults, injuries **and** massacres. [Prof. I am really getting angry at you. How many 'and's do you have in one paragraph. Nine? Look at you.]

I became a human rights advocate outraged by the Meles Massacres which resulted in the deaths and injuries of over one thousand unarmed protesters following the 2005 election. [now you have one sentence paragraph. And ... the sentence is sloppy. Is 'massacres' supposed to be in capital? Check it. I don't know. May be. I am not a professor remember? Again, why do you have to make advertisement for yourself. Also, has this sentence got relevance to the upcoming paragraph?]

As a utopian Ethiopian, I believed that "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice." [umm, what is utopian Ethiopian?. You readers may not know utopia. Besides, why do you appeal to the quotation of MLK at this point. Just say, as an idealistic Ethiopian] For over a decade, every Monday, without missing a single week, I have raised my pen to register my bootless cries to the conscience of humanity and the mercy of divinity. [bootless cries to the conscience of humanity and the mercy of divinity? [are you giving a speech or writing an article? Ufff, prof. you are mixing politics and religion. And this basically is empty rhetoric. Thank you for the hard work but perhaps the reason your appeals are not make a difference is because you are not writing well-with panache.]

I believe freedom is like a train that is always delayed, but also always arrives. [I am aware you know the metaphor- 'train delay' but you are not making any predictive claim- I would avoid this sentences]

On October 15, 2007 (almost to the week this month), I announced to Ethiopians, "Hold on! Hold fast! Hold tight! Your Freedom Train is coming!" (See my [commentary](#), "One Small Step for the U.S. Congress, One Giant Leap for Ethiopian Human Rights".) [I like the reference but ummm—the reference is yourself. You are thinking too much of yourself. Please avoid this attitude]

I believe the Ethiopia's Freedom Train has finally arrived, though very, very late. [This appears as if you learn the metaphor – linking freedom to train- yesterday. You already used three times. Not acceptable]

All aboard!!!! [remove this and the exclamation- this is for babies]

Oromos, Amharas, Tigreans, Gurages, Sidamans, Welayita, Hadiya, Afar, Gamo, Ogadeni, Anuak... Christians, Muslims... [this is not full sentence]

All aboard!!!! [again?, you said it up there- uff, professor!]

I have made my preliminary case for a crimes against humanity investigation and prosecution in the Irreecha Festival Massacres last week. (See my [commentary](#), T-TPLF's Killing Fields in Ethiopia: Massacre by Stampede at the Irreecha Festival!) [again, self-referencing? No one has said anything better than you could say? Or everyone is silent? At least mention the other professors- u know who they are- or someone else]

In September 2016, the BBC [reported](#) that "A[n] [Ethiopian] government statement says 21 died of **suffocation after a stampede** [at Qilinto prison] while two others were killed as they tried to escape." Qilinto prison has a population of 3,000 persons who are held for three years or more as they await trial. Oromos constitute the largest percentage of the Qilinto prison population. Now over 500 persons died in a "stampede". Is "stampede" the newest T-TPLF massacre strategy in Oromiya elsewhere? Click [here to read more...](#) [you could write this paragraph quite briefly. You are wasting too much words. Don't waste my time to paraphrase it for you. I am pretty busy]

Let Barack Obama Speak!

For the first time, in over a decade, I must hold my peace this week. [this is ok, from syntactic perspective]

~~This is the time for me to cry and cry again for the innocent young men, women and children who were slaughtered by the T-TPLF at the Irreecha Festival in Bishoftu on October 2, 2016.~~ [you talked about this earlier. Remove]

I raised my pen to write, but my pen refused to shed its tears of ink. So I must cry and cry again. [is this poetical language? What is this article about? Are you making an argument, or appealing to some reason or what...]

~~I shall bite my tongue, just this once.~~

~~I yield my pages to Barack Obama to speak directly to the Irreecha Festival Massacre victims, their families, friends and communities in Ethiopia.~~

~~Let Barack Obama, the stalwart defender of the T-TPLF speak to them about democracy, the rule of law and human rights.~~

~~The blood of the Irreecha Massacre Victims are on Obama's hands. There is no detergent on earth that can wash the blood of those victims from his hands. NONE!~~

~~Let Obama wag his silver forked tongue and ooze out his venomous lies.~~

~~I have nothing to say to him now.~~

~~But paraphrasing Shakespeare, I ask my readers only one question: "Were there a more malignant serpent seen, with forked tongue, / That slyly glided towards the majesty of Ethiopia?" [I know you love quoting Shakespeare but at this point he is totally uncalled for. Pls avoid. Remove! mentioning the bard will not make you look any more intelligent]~~

[Here you can simply say despite Obama's foreign policy rhetoric, he is not helping freedom seekers in Ethiopia. Don't give the whole paragraph of what he actually said. That is boring. Just summarize for your readers- and show you can actually summarize.]

Thus, spoke Barack Obama:

I don't bite my tongue too much when it comes to these issues. We are opposed to any group that is promoting the violent overthrow of a government, including **the government of Ethiopia, that has been democratically elected.** We are very mindful of Ethiopia's history – the hardships that this country has gone through. It has been relatively recently in which the constitution **that was formed and the elections put forward a democratically elected government.** U.S. President Barack Obama, Press conference in Addis Ababa 27 July 2015 (Emphasis added.)

Let history record: Ethiopians make no distinction between the killers who committed ~~heinous~~ [this word called 'heinous' is over used and not making sense anymore- delete] crimes against humanity at the Irreecha Festival on October 2, 2016 and those who defend, ~~bankroll, finance,~~

~~subsidize, publicize, authorize, humanize, glamorize, militarize, idolize, lionize an apologize for them.~~ [this is simply looking for synonymous words. Use one or two. Delete the rest]

It is often said, “Those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it.” [this is overused. Delete.]

~~The history of apartheid South Africa is repeating itself in Ethiopia every day.~~

~~On March 21, 1960, the white minority apartheid regime massacred 69 unarmed Black men and women and wounded 180 others protesting “pass laws” in Sharpeville, South Africa.~~

~~On October 2, 2016, the T TPLF apartheid regime in Ethiopia massacred over 500 men, women and children and injured hundreds more.~~ [you are repeating yourself for the fourth time. You told us this already or else say it in different words. I am aware you want to link SA to Ethiopia. So say it well. Begin like this: Those who remember what happened at Sharpeville, South Africa, in 1960’s will not be challenged to find parallel to what is happening in Ethiopia today. Here you may talk about memory, then little bit of history and so on. Then mention briefly and link to Irreecha incident]

~~The Sharpeville Massacre is permanently recorded in the annals of man’s inhumanity to man in the Twentieth Century.~~ [‘man’s inhumanity to man’. Not very original. This is very flowery language. Avoid]

~~I do not doubt that the T TPLF Irreecha Festival Massacre of October 2016 will be remembered as the second Sharpeville Massacre on the African continent in the in the Twenty first century.~~ [this is not true- it is rhetoric. Indeed something bad happened but the context is completely different. Now, I am sure you don’t want to close your sentence in such poor note. Bring your imagination. Include something your readers can’t forget.]

~~**BEHOLD THE HARVEST OF APARTHEID IN WHITE AND BLACK!**~~ (totally unnecessary, Delete)

In summary, Prof. you are not focusing. Your ideas are not flowing. You are not making a logical narrative. You are jumping from here to there. As your supervisor, you need to listen to me. You need to rewrite the whole article. Don’t give up. I know it is not easy to write good sentences. It is

not the end of the world. You can learn from others. Consider the style of your old friend Prof. Mesfin. His style is brief, beautiful, penetrating, if not always optimistic. You may also consult the luminaries of political commentary in English language. There are plenty of old, white, dead men you will feast on. Since you are a hardworking man, even though your diligence is not exactly informed by the love of your neighbor, I want to help you. Together we can come up with prose style matching Orwell and hopefully with instant power to obliterate T-TPLF overnight.