

On Zeru Hagos's Comment "To TPLF" and Documenting History

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Let me start by underlining that I, for one, fully subscribe to the concern you raised in your short commentary on the history of WOYANE, posted on AIGAFORUM (July 2009). I appreciate you for raising it and AIGA for posting it. No wonder, the history of WOYANE is a history of the people of Tigray, the TPLF, and beyond – the history of the Ethiopian people. As you clearly indicated, written or not, loved or hated, the history of WOYANE is bold and remains in the hearts and minds of millions. Volumes of books are not enough to tell it for every household, and every one in the household, has a story to tell about it. These stories like other heroic stories will be told for generations to come for, behind them, there is a reason to do so. A reason that those few, in blind hatred politics, often fail to understand. Almost every household has paid a price- a price dear enough to bridge generations. We are talking about a history where the total is exactly equal to its parts. There are children left without fathers and mothers, parents left without children, wives left without husbands, mothers left without daughters and sons, grand children without grand fathers and grand mothers, villages left without the youth, churches left without priests and deacons, mosques left without Imams, and so on. This is a history of the people by the people, inked with blood and human body, dead or alive, of those with unbelievable humility, courage and commitment. This is a history of heroism, responsibility, desire for change, creativity, sharing and comradeship blended with utmost sacrifice, which will never fade away easily. However, I am not saying these stories in the hearts and minds of the people are immune, especially as time goes by, to winds of lies and biases by those who dream to twist history to their individual benefit. Obviously, wicked quitters and losers (of this history)

will never leave any stone unturned to take advantage of the weakness of those who should write it.

The question is who should write it? Well, clear enough, the TPLF as an organization falls at the center of this history. Individuals in it come next. And the TPLF maybe expected to do this job. Indeed, there were some efforts in the past towards this end. The book series '*teraroch'n yanketekete tiwild*' is an example. However, history is often left for historians to document and not necessarily to those who make it. Writing and documenting history is up to the generation that follows. In short, it is upon us those who think history be told straight and recorded fair that this responsibility falls. It's not to mean that the TPLF should not do any thing about it, but that ordinary citizens should also do their fare share. I say this not just because this is what happened elsewhere in the world, but because it is the responsibility of 'this generation' to do so. In this regard, although the TPLF is not completely free of blames (esp. given the fact on the ground), the lion's share of the blame goes to somewhere else. That is what needs to be discussed first before pointing fingers to the TPLF. Here is where I differ from Zeru's comment.

In fact, it's ironic that while our brothers and sisters wrote history with their bloods and bones, we are here discussing about writing it with ink. It's ironic that while many fail to make history, we fail to document the history that we are bold enough to make it. A living and most recent evidence of this is that only little of the Ethio-Italian wars and the politics preceding them is documented and as a result known to us now. The rest is dark and dead with those heroes and heroines of the time. The reason is obvious.

I am afraid we seem to repeat the history of not documenting our own history. Let me be clear here. I am not blaming any one, nor am I complaining at, or representing any body but simply sharing my own feelings out of humble concerns. By “we”, I am referring to those of us concerned (including myself), be it in the west, east, inside or outside the country, who are well suited, better educated, well equipped and have the luxury to do the job. We cannot expect this to be done by those in otherwise. We cannot afford not to do it, and not to do it now. Thus, I humbly call upon every one concerned to think and think twice about this before it is too late to do so: before the winds of lies and biases paint their mud on the golden history of our heroes and heroines.

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