

**THE ETHIOPIAN MIDDLECLASS**  
**&**  
**EPRDF'S FUTURE IN THE EYES OF THE DIASPORA**

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It is becoming increasingly clear that the last of the vocal Diaspora political opposition is losing altitude. As the political radar screen shows, it seems fated to take a nosedive and crash in the very metropolitan jungle where it was born and raised. Indeed telling signs of its accelerated descent to ground zero are plenty. Witness if you will that, barring the usual attention-seekers, hardly anyone of any weight attend anti-Woyane outdoor rallies any more. Even less congregate at conference halls to listen to the same wailing and breast-beating over Ethiopia's presumed disintegration. Rare are also the once frequent opposition fundraising activities, which only filled the pockets of flag-waving imposters whose shamelessness is only exceeded by their empty threats to shoot their way to power. The daring among them who have not been heard from since are, in fact, remembered only for renegeing on their boastful promises and repeated pledges to deliver Meles' head on a silver platter.

Thanks, among other things, to ETV's global reach, the so-called overseas silent majority is no longer swayed by tear-jerking Diaspora rhetoric, bemoaning Ethiopia's imagined plunge into the abyss. As talk about such cataclysmic national misfortune flies in the face of the facts which otherwise suggest a radically different scenario, disinformation is becoming a liability to the aging Diaspora spin-doctors. Worse still, harping on the 'sufferings' of the Ethiopian people under a 'vicious' regime can hardly fool the gullible. Much less those who always had doubt about the opposition's self-fulfilling prophecies of Ethiopia's downward spiral. At any rate, given the increasing flow of real-time information that lay bear the country's robust renewal, the opposition in exile might not henceforth profit from its trade-in-stock — lies, fabrications and more lies. Alas, if it is to stay afloat, it needs to seriously revisit its narrow-minded Tigray bashing which its clueless spokesmen mistake for an alternative political program. May be then the émigré opposition might begin to sense how utterly detached it had been from the actual situation. Particularly from the palpable reality where the entire Ethiopian society is bracing for an irreversible transformative leap determined to make poverty history. And hopefully too, the opposition might then shift to new thinking that somewhat resonates with the fact that Ethiopia is now within a striking distance to end its age-old dependency on foreign handout.

At least Enanu Agonafer, the latest to join the Internet onslaught against the EPRDF seems to realize the urgent need for a fresh approach. By way of responding to Messay

Kebed's recent proposal, Enanu calls on the opposition to abandon its old line of thinking and come to terms with the issues that matter most. In a refreshing departure from the hollow opposition clamor for an immediate regime change, she says: *Ethiopia needs new thinkers and Dr. Messay and Abiye are not two of them.* ... *the future of Ethiopia is the new emerging middle class, the economic elites. Any analysis that shuns this force from consideration is wrong. And that's why most attempts to introduce change in the form of democracy or other continues to fail.* It might not be right to lump in this category Abiye Teklemariam, the cleverer of the new breed of the gutless Woyane-bashers whose lone exception is the loose tongue, Eskender Nega. A nuisance, more than anything else, who endlessly craves to become Ethiopia's most famous prisoner of conscious. Much to his frustration, however, the authorities seem to have decided to ignore him, possibly due to his congenital mental instability, which could possibly worsen and become a threat to himself and his family more than the Federal Democratic Republic State. Messay on the other hand is no erratic or lightweight political adversary. By far, he is an inveterate hardliner, though until recently he was equivocal about the opposition's agenda of reviving the old dead and buried unitary state. A state, let it be emphasized, which among other ghastliness, huddled frightened citizens at Revolution Square to force them pledge allegiance by chanting the bloodthirsty slogan, *'Motherland Or Death!*

Throughout his carrier in Ethiopia, Messay was passionate at what he did. He diligently served as a vigilant ideological watchdog of EWP's Marxist-Leninist political creed at the philosophy department of AA University. One must hasten to add that Messay was no armchair campus thought-police. He was never content with sidelining canonical philosophical texts deemed inconsistent with Stalin's interpretation of Marxism-Leninism. An ideological system, which everyone, from the cowardly butcher Mengistu, down to the lowest state official, pretended to follow. Messay no doubt displayed an uncanny versatility of delivering philosophical lectures on how society should be ordered on the one hand. And, on the other, the guts to monitor its implementation at *Kebele* level, the once nightmarish institutional expression of the Red Terror regime. At any rate, after Woyane dispatched the Derg, Messay was stripped of his dual command over parallel state institutions. These were not mere service-delivery state organs. But what Foucault might have described as fused apparatuses of knowledge and power that perpetuate a stifling political order with no room for slight deviation.

Loss of control over these institutions and brief incarceration was one thing. It was quite another, from Messay's perspective, to have to live under a radically altered state. One, that is, where each nationality enjoys a legally protected option to pledge or renounce allegiance to Ethiopia. Ironically, though Messay's productive period begins from hereon, he could no longer feel at ease in an environment where the old involuntary national unity is condemned and ethnic diversity is celebrated. The lesser evil for him was to swallow his ideological pride and seek relief in America. Albeit not like others who had reason to speedily sneak out of the country no sooner than the Derg collapsed, Messy gradually followed suit. At any rate, even he must have been struck by the curious paradox in his choice of destination. Since, as he knows very well, back in the days of the Derg, even an accidental contact with any American citizen carried perilous consequences. At any rate, in 'the land of the free and home of the brave', Messay was granted asylum. He is today officially listed as a potential victim of an apartheid-like one-party regime ---- which, as the story goes, his kind of broad-minded thinkers are not tolerated.

Exile for Messay, nonetheless, has not been a mere occasion for a quite academic pursuit. Though he never deigned to join any of the noisy opposition parties, Messay is arguably the most prolific political writer with countless articles and full-fledged books to his name. His writings, it has to be said, are not purely intended for academic purpose. Rather, the purpose is to providing theoretical underpinnings for the campaign aimed at scuttling the ethnic-based federation by any means not least through violent insurrection. Lately, however, Messay seems to be disillusioned by this core agenda which the unitary opposition continues to pin its hope on to this day. In other words, judging by his recent article, it appears that he no longer believes that the opposition is capable of making a meaningful headway. Not at any rate by the same old strategy of funding clandestine subversive entities, lobbying US Congress and conspiring with president Issayas. A man who apparently needs no promoting since destabilizing Ethiopia has long been Eritrea's topmost national agenda. Nor does Messay seem to be any longer impressed by the fanfare that often accompanies opposition rallies where empty declarations are issued to a credulous cheering crowd. The latest being Ginbot 7's forum where its all-knowing leader was interrupted by applause before he barely finished telling the crowd that EPRDF's days are numbered. Though Messay now cares less for this kind of wishful-thinking nonsense, he still thinks there is a flicker of hope for the presently weakened anti-Woyane parties. As his latest article shows, he reckons that the opposition could, with some luck and cunning, sneak itself through a backdoor. And subsequently appear at the summit of the political hierarchy as a co-decision-maker on par, no less, with prime minister Meles Zenawi and his cabinet. He indeed boldly argues that a power-sharing arrangement must be forged to avert an impending national disaster, which apparently only he and he alone seems to envision. Yet, as if there is only one anti-EPRDF grouping with a single platform, Messay intentionally avoids specifying which of the mutually exclusive anti-government forces are more likely to take his advice. But his silence on this matter betrays that his sympathy lies with the centrist opposition as opposed to the separatist wing. Even then, anticipating severe Diaspora backlash and being labeled as a spineless renegade, he says in his defense: *'no grudge is worth nursing if stands in the way of a much higher cause.'*

Enanu, nevertheless, feels that Messay has not advanced his *'higher cause'* by fresh set of arguments. For her any search for any kind of power-sharing scheme has to be first anchored in a sober appreciation of the new reality in Ethiopia where a solid middleclass is emerging. It is on this class, she reckons, that the future of democracy in Ethiopia must depend. The contrast in approach here is interesting. Given his ideological background, one would think that Messay, and not Enanu, would be keen on anchoring political proposal in class and class interest. Much to Enanu's disappointment, Messay failed to do that. The reason is simple. As his present article which appeared under a longwinded title, *Ethiopia: Meles's Political Dilemma and the Developmental State: Dead-Ends and Exit* shows, his concern lies elsewhere. For him, ethnicity and not class is the weightier issue that needs to be tackled. After years of vacillation on the question of where ethnic politics fits in a democracy, he now sees as one big factor which underscores the impossibility of a development democratic state in Ethiopia. Even further, the subtext of his latest article lends credence to those who for years tried hard to ban ethnicity from the country's political arena. Though the better of the intellectual advocates of the opposition, Messay, however, is silent on what happened to Somalia right after Siad Barre banned clan and clan identity from Somalia. As if this myopic and crude decree has

not been disastrous, with Messay's tacit approval, the Diaspora opposition wants Ethiopia to emulate Siad Barre and proscribe ethnicity.

Enanu, on the other hand, believes that ethnicity is being neutralized by the growth of a middleclass on whose shoulders rests Ethiopia's hope and the future of democracy. No doubt, in part she is on a firm ground here. Since, historically speaking, the middleclass, which she confuses with the business elite, was the chief social agent of Liberalism. This is, of course, only one part of the story. There is a less told side that does not cast her favorite class in so bright a light. Again as history repeatedly showed, the middleclass has not been a great champion of democracy after the foundational moments of the 18<sup>th</sup> century American and French Revolutions. Myth aside, business elites across the world have been invariably jaundiced towards broader democratic inclusion. An early illustrative case in point is the property qualification that placed arbitrary barrier on the right to vote. This indefensible anti-democratic restriction was only revoked in 1815 by grassroots mobilizations of ordinary American citizens against the objection of the big propertied men of power and influence. In England too, where the industrial class, despite its deference to and mimicry of the feudal aristocracy, first seized power, democracy was a contested agenda. For instance, it took the Chartist movement before the 1857 Reform Act passed, and the working-class gained the right to vote. Even more telling is that, for all the high-sounding rhetoric extolling the virtues of equality, patriarchal thinking of gender subordination was most pronounced among the social and economic elites of these liberal countries. Women had to struggle hard and long to break the legacy of gender political exclusion. It was only in the 1920s that full female suffrage was written into law in the US and the UK. A more recent reminder of the gulf between liberal rhetoric and democratic practice is racial segregation in America where big-business continues to wield disproportionate political influence. Here too, without African American civil rights activists, the Equal Right Act of 1965 would not have passed. Disappointing though it was to the white power elite, the Act, nonetheless, ushered in political desegregation and laid the path for, among other things, an African-American to enter the Whitehouse. To end a long story short, from the dawn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to the present, democratic reform and popular empowerment has never been a great elite agenda. Where such agenda has succeeded, it has always been a function of protracted campaigns backed by a multitude of formerly marginalized popular constituencies. Recall too that the global democratic awakening of the late 1980s that, among other positive developments, tossed aside several Western-backed dictatorships, had nothing to do with business elites. Again, it was the Gdansk shipyard workers of Poland who, with characteristic proletarian determination defied the nomenclatura and sparked the mass wave of pro-democracy movement that finally broke the "iron cage of conformity" in totalitarian Eastern Europe.

The same holds true when we turn our gaze to Sub-Saharan Africa. Apartheid, for instance, was dismantled and replaced by a democratic system of one-man- one-vote not by the white mining tycoons and their Western elite business partners. But, by the hunted ANC activists who to this day rely on the poor for their legitimate exercise of power in democratic South Africa. Close to home, at least in Rwanda, Uganda or in Ethiopia, it was not middleclass pressure, but peasant-baked rebel movements that terminated one-man rule and introduced election as the only legitimate route to power. In sum, in the actual existing world, contrary to Liberal and Marxist dogma, democracy is not an ontologically class-bounded phenomenon that entirely hinges on the economic interest or ideological predilections of the middleclass or the bourgeoisie, to use a more expressive

leftist term. To the contrary, particularly in this day in age where ideas travel fast, ordinary folks are increasingly taking ownership of the democratic principle of government by consent which was once associated with the rising middleclass. More so, during its struggle against feudalism, a system that gave pride of place to lineage than individual merit. Today, even the most isolated agrarian population of Ethiopia is learning to brandish its voting card to keep local authorities on their toes and punish contending political parties that fail to reflect its interest. Surely, one only has to glance at the current largely peaceful mass rage that is rocking the Arab world to realize that demand for democracy and democratic reform is not the exclusive preserve of the middleclass much less the business elite.

Obviously, it is not the business elites which is making the clamorous roar for rule of law and democratic governance which to this day continues to reverberate across the Maghreb and beyond. Rather it is the million-strong low-income citizens, youth, housewives, factory workers, the unemployed etc, who are shaking the foundation of dictatorships from Tunisia to Syria. Whereas, so far at least, the Arab business elite, particularly of Egypt is nowhere to be seen. As an exclusive co-beneficiary of the *status quo*, it seems to prefer to wait and see from safe distance. Lest, that is, its unearned economic status is jeopardized by siding one or the other of the contending forces before the outcome is known. The point of rehearsing these highlights from distant, recent and current events is obvious. It is to help Enanu take a good stoke of the role or, the lack thereof, of the business elite in the genesis, expansion and consolidation of global democracy. If she were to examine the record, she would certainly realize one thing. Notably that democracy is the power of the many and not the prerogatives of the few to grant or deny the majority.

Granted, a solid middleclass is crucial if democracy is to take deeper roots in countries like Ethiopia. For a polity of impoverished citizenry is vulnerable to rightist or even leftwing extremist politics that, as so often in the past, deteriorates into tyranny. In the broader sense than Enanu's observation would allow, there is, more than at any time ever, an emerging middleclass in Ethiopia which in time be a bastion of democratic moderation and deterrent against extremists. One need not sift through piles of intricate economic data to sense this upward bound social trajectory. A quick glance at the massive construction of private homes, manufacturing plants, agro-processing, commercial farming, and modern horticulture suffices to concede that a middleclass is indeed expanding at an impressive pace to boot. The ascendancy of the private sector i.e., the growing number of shareholding and real-estate companies, service-providing establishments, including banks, insurances, hotels, hospitals, schools etc, bears out Enanu's point about a growing middle-income population. Though it slipped her notice, the biggest upward social mobility is, in fact, taking place in rural Ethiopia. Witness the thousands of small-plot farmers who annually receive awards for graduating into middle-income bracket with liquid and fixed assets that hoovers around millions of Birr.

In actuality, there are clear signs that a growing segment of the rural population is extricating itself from the drudgery of subsistence farming. Many today are producing for the expanding food market and generating income that they never thought was ever possible. With soaring international demand for agriculture commodity, a significant portion of the farming population is likely to shift to high-value products. The prospect, therefore, is undeniably high for the bulk of the Ethiopian peasantry to finally lift itself out of the poverty trap by at least the end of the five-year Growth and Transformation

Plan. Speaking about poverty, Enanu would do well to pay closer attention to the no less promising result achieved through the Small Scale Enterprise scheme. As the project reaches the cluster phase, even more among the formerly unemployed urban youth is bound to climb the economic ladder and register as middle-income tax payer. Hence, the likelier possibility is that the expanding middleclass, particularly the infinitely more numerous rural variant would stay the present political course much longer than Enanu's timetable would permit.

As much as Enanu celebrates the emergence of the middleclass, she says nothing about the driving force behind its expansion. Writing from an oppositional vantage point, she knows that digging a little deeper would compel her to credit the very government she otherwise prefers to discredit. Without doubt the single most decisive factor behind the growing middleclass, on the one hand, and the even more impressive rate of rural and urban poverty reduction, on the other, is the country's policy environment. No middleclass formation would have been possible without the government's development oriented private-sector incentive package i.e., credit service, subsidies, tax holidays, including foreign market outlets. This is not to mention the opportunities opened up for the private business community to, among other things participate in government bids as largely sub-contracting agents in the public-funded wide-ranging infrastructural works, low-cost public housing, construction of universities, schools as well as in the irrigation-based agro-industries, power plants, including the massive foreign-owned industrial parks etc. In short, in the absence of such state intervention, Enanu's hero — the middleclass — would never have seen the light of day.

If truth be told, almost to a man, this social stratum is, in a manner of speaking, a creation of the government. Yet Enanu believes that it is this very class, which would eventually end EPRDF's grip on power. Yet again Enanu forgets that this claim has to be backed by logical argument as to why the opposite cannot be true. For instance, she does offer any sound argument why one has to rule out the possibility where the middleclass cannot turn into a stable ruling party constituency. For there is no logic that says a thriving middleclass has to be anti-establishment or has to reject the *status quo*. In the Ethiopian context at least, if the 2010 election results is any indicator, the reverse of Enanu's thesis seems to be the case. Though, the likes of Messay and his associates might find it hard to swallow, the entire voting population, the middleclass included, threw its lot with the incumbent. And, mind you, this is by preference and not for any lack of options as there were several parties for the rich to back and challenge EPRDF's supremacy.

What seems to confuse Enanu is the experience of the Asian Tiger nations. By all accounts in these countries economic development and the attendant rise of an assertive middleclass preceded democratic governance. Again, Enanu and Messay notwithstanding, the opposite is the case in Ethiopia. A constitutional federal order with full protection of basic democratic rights, including an election law was laid long before the emergence of the present middleclass. An indirect confirmation that such is the sequence of the appearance of democracy and middleclass formation in Ethiopia can be adduced from the writings of the opposition itself. Recall the amount of ink opposition figures poured on the controversial aspect of the 2005 election. No one also would have dared to go around claiming to be Ethiopia's first elected mayor if democracy in this country were non-existent. Besides if, as Enanu would have us believe, democracy in Ethiopia is only a future agenda waiting for the business elite—its natural bearer — to become a reality, none among her newly formed urban middleclass would have registered

to vote in any of the multiparty elections held in this country. Neither would Messay have gone the length he did to situate the 2005 election as a watershed in the history of political competition in Ethiopia.

In any event, unlike its Asian counterpart, whatever set of political issues Enanu's middleclass might raise in the future, it cannot include constitutional governance. Or, for that matter, freedom of assembly, of expression, of due process let alone the right to vote and stand in elections. For to varying degree, these basic rights are presently exercised by all citizens, irrespective of class, ethnicity or political preference. As far as Messay is concerned, none of these additions to the public sphere represent an improvement over the previous regime that came to power in 1930, 1974, and 1991 respectively. He dismisses electioneering in Ethiopia as nothing but a facade designed to placate the West. Further on he tells us that the state is used, as in previous regimes, "*to sideline the opposition.*" (*sick*) Messay's self-serving quip aside, the intention of at least the Derg regime was never to sideline but to physically decimate the opposition and eliminate anyone who dared to dissent. Messay's exculpatory tactic here is obvious. It is to blur all distinctions between the three successive governments founded in 1930, 1974, and 1991 respectively. And thereby undermine EPRDF's resolve to live up to its commitment to democracy, an effort much appreciated, particularly by those who suffered under the Derg. A regime, as we all recall, Messay had no moral qualms to serve and legitimize in his capacity as an official card-carrying party philosopher.

Just like Messay, Enanu is also unwilling to give credit where it is due. She says '*They have* (the EPRDF leaders) *have time and again said that democracy is not an urgent affair; development and democracy are.*' This is not only sad but pitiful that goes to show the extent to which EPRDF's detractors could go just to score an otherwise indefensible point. The folly of it is that Enanu cannot cite a single authoritative source where such a statement was ever uttered or written. What the EPRDF has said time and again is that without democracy and the right to self-determination, neither the country's unity is feasible nor development is possible. Again, she says, *the TPLF/EPRDF has not talked for a while and will not talk to the opposition both from within and without the country.* This too is inaccurate. Had she not been too eager to pass as an EPRDF expert, Enanu would have been spared the embarrassment of being caught out. For instance, as recently as a few weeks ago, a party-financing consultation session was held between all legally registered parties. In fact, the resultant decision to disburse government finance to all parties, with or without parliamentary seats, was crucial. For otherwise some opposition parties would have been forced to close office for lack of funding. Similarly, it has been EPRDF's longstanding position to enter into dialogue with any foreign-based opposition so long as the concerned party is ready to renounce violence and abide by the laws of the land. Enanu also reads an inordinate amount of politics into the discussions that the prime minister periodically holds with the business community.

It may be newsflash to the Diaspora, but it is not only with the business community the prime minister Meles hold town meetings. Almost annually, he exchanges ideas with say, labor unions, youth forums, women associations, even occasionally with Diaspora visitors. Contrary to Enanu's reading, however, the ongoing interface between policy-makers and the business community has nothing to do with politics. The agenda, for instance, of the recent session was exclusively focused on new regulations aimed at combating rent-seeking, promoting legitimate business practices, and expanding the government's tax base. All the same, Enanu declares with certainty, *The economic elites*

*have now turned to the government and started demanding wider economic space (in the form of free economy and market) which they are getting day after day . The entire bureaucracy is serving theme and the police are protecting them and their property. Soon they will demand further political liberalization in the jargon we hear every day, good governance, transparency, accountability .....*

Well, at first one is puzzled as to how to respond to this skewed interpretation since most of it is derived from fantasy than reality. She is right in that the business community has given up on the opposition and turned to the government for a better privet/ public sector partnership. In fact, the initiative aimed at forging a closer understanding between the two sectors was first taken by the government, notably by the Inland Revenue and Customs Authority. To partially repeat what has already been said, much of the recent talks between the two sides have been around the country's tax regime, license registration, cache-register machine, price cap and what have you. These deliberations were intended to forge a commonality of understanding principally around the harmful practices of tax evasion and rent seeking. It is, therefore, not clear what Enanu means when she says, *"the economic elites ...demanding for free economy and market space."* If Enanu is talking about the Ethiopian business community, she could not have been more mistaken. For, to begin with the private investment sector is so vast that the local business community can barely begin to cover much less demand for additional outlet. Why else would foreign businessmen be attracted to Ethiopia, as they are increasingly, if the investment scope is narrow or unfavorable?

Be that as it may, contra Enanu, what the business community is demanding is not economic space and market expansion, but efficient and uniform service delivery, credit facility, universal TIN number registration, adequate supply of hard currency etc. While such is the fact on the ground, Enanu tells us that the economic elite is demanding for more market *'which they are getting day after day'*. Further she asserts *'The entire bureaucracy is serving theme (the business elite) and the police are protecting them and their property.'* On this reading one would think that a 'state capture' had already occurred in Ethiopia where the government slavishly caters to the business elite at the expense of the rest of society. No doubt the state has constitutional obligation to protect private property. But this applies across the board regardless of the economic and social status of the proprietor. Finally, as if she had firmly established the hold that the new business elite has over the state, Enanu concludes, *"Soon they will demand further political liberalization in the jargon we hear every day, good governance, transparency, accountability.* Here again Enanu forgets that it was years back that the government sounded the need for good governance, transparency, and accountability. Chances are less, therefore, for her business elite to outflank the government by appropriating these slogans. Besides, if, as Enanu would have us believe , the business elite has the entire bureaucracy in its pocket, why would it demand for transparency? If the past is any guide, it is often those deprived of impartial government services that call for greater accountability and transparency.

At this point, it has to be said that Enanu's response to Messay's latest posting, though fraught with fallacies, was more engaging than others. She at least has gone beyond the old fixation with ethnicity and has tried to bring a class dimension to the discussion. Without doubt, the emergence of a middleclass has a far-reaching implication on the political alignment of state and society in Ethiopia. If, as envisioned in the government's long-term plan, industry is to take the lead from agriculture within the present capitalist

configuration, the strategic alliance between the EPRDF and peasantry cannot continue. Nor can the party's ideology of revolutionary democracy that underpinned most of its policies. As constituted in its present form, therefore, the EPRDF has, if we can be bold enough to say so, three broad options. A) Based on its record of delivering the desirable public goods, to frame a new program that reflects the interest and aspirations of a new emerging, possibly an urban, social class. If indeed Ethiopia is to undergo transformation and the EPRDF is able to reposition itself, its longevity as a leading force in society could match social-democratic parties. Needles to say these parties, despite occasional setbacks, continue to be formidable political actors. Or B) to resist making the necessary adjustments that corresponds with the new socio-economic changes that itself brought about. And, in consequence run, like the communist parties of Eastern Europe, the risk of being sidelined by a politically mobilized ascendant social force wrought by the new socio-economic dynamics. Or C) to retire content in the edifying knowledge of the debt owed to it by society for inheriting a tyrannized dirt-poor country and leaving it as a democratic republic that no longer depends on food aid. Obviously this is just a conjuncture, and by no means an iron-necessity. No one can tell what the future holds with crystal-ball precision. But if we have to guess, the founding members of the EPRDF are most likely to take the third option. As the retirement of several high-ranking EPRDF leaders shows, a phased leadership replacement plan is already underway. Though the Diaspora may not believe it, the party's plan is even more sweeping. It is in fact startling, since by 2015 no one from the years of the armed straggle, Meles included, will hold a government post.

Whereas the younger and upcoming party leadership, we reckon, is already poised to take the first option. An opportunity available to the party to rally the bulk of the population behind its program and score even greater victories. What might be in its favor is the fact that the condition for a dominant party has already been created where the EPRDF is better placed to ride. Hence, assuming that they the new leaders have inherited their mentors' uncanny instinct to adopt and alter any new situation to the party's advantage, the EPRDF is bound to be around indefinitely as a redoubtable political force than the opposition would like to believe. Enanu for one thinks that EPRDF's fate is already sealed, and implies that it would go the way the parties cited under the second option did. This is not surprising because, despite her disavowal of the old thinking, she is still in the habit of polarizing the EPRDF and democracy. In this Enanu barely differs from Messay. It is apt now to examine Messay's power-sharing theory a little closer.