

A Marriage of Equals and the Role Eritreans Played

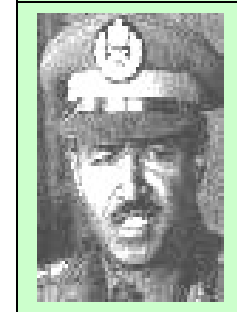
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Ethiopian History depends on **who** wrote it; and **when** it was written. I am not a Historian; however I have read enough of Ethiopian history, as they say, to *attempt* some damage! I have read for starters, that Queen Saba gave birth to her son Menelik I, the son of the biblical King Solomon of Israel, in Asmara specifically on the banks of Mai Bela River. Without venturing into the slippery slopes of Ethiopian History *again*, I can point *cautiously*, to archeological findings within present day Eritrea which predate Axum; or at least match it. One theory which *may* support the flight of Ethiopian Monarchy from **Medri Bahri** (present day Eritrea) to Axum was the *alleged* constant threat of incursions into Ethiopia from across the **Erythrean Sea / Bahre Ertra / Red Sea**. The *preferred* Ethiopian sea port back then was **Adulis/Zula**.

If some **Ferenj** stranger half way around the world, asks you whether you are an Ethiopian, trust me, you *are* an Ethiopian; regardless of which part of Ethiopia (Eritrea included) you originate from! How many a time have we in the Diaspora, gazed at a *stranger in a foreign land*, and said among ourselves: “yegnan ager sew ymeslal or tmeslalech”? Often times the stranger(s) would acknowledge by smiling and nodding in the affirmative, as if we read each other’s mind. What a feeling!

By far more battles in the *defense* of the Ethiopian Empire were launched from *within* Eritrea than any other region. Be it against Egypt at **Gundet** and **Guræ** or against Italia at **Dogali**, most of Ethiopia’s enemies met their *fate inside Eritrea*. Guess who fought in those battles in most predominant numbers? Eritreans of course: By virtue of their proximity, the *local people* knew the terrain of the battleground better than any other group. Moreover, *intelligence* information about the invaders, made Eritrean contribution towards *victorious outcomes* inevitable. The dictator Mengistu Haile Mariam had erected a landmark depicting Ras Alula’s victory at Dogali; which was ironically, later *demolished* by Isaias Afwerki.

Marriage among the different Ethnic groups had various *objectives*. One such objective was for long distance *traveling convenience*. The idea was to provide accommodation for family members during extended trips away from home; be it for business or for pleasure. Significant population movements from one region to another were common. It is recorded in Ethiopian History, for example, that the **Gurage Nationality** has its origins in **Guræ**, in Akeleguzay (Eritrea). The **Bilien** people in Keren originated from **Gojam**. The **Adere Nationality** in Harar originated from **Seraye** (Eritrea). The ancestors of the people living in many areas of Asmara are from Tigrai; who accompanied Ras Alula when he was Emperor Yohanes’ representative in Eritrea. One such area in Asmara is a place called **Tselot**. The significance of Tselot is that it is common knowledge among Eritreans, for being the ancestral home of Isaias Afwerki. Yes, Isaias Afwerki is Tigrawai! Technically Isaias can be court-martialed for being a traitor (a joke)! Last but not least, **Somalis** are said to have migrated from **Hamasiën**. There is sufficient evidence of that, which is reflected in the names of cities like **Kebri Dehar** within **Somali State**.

It is only befitting for the “**Eritrean Nation**” to rejoin the **rest of Ethiopia’s “Nations and Nationalities”**. Eritrea gave us **Zer’ay Deres**; the man who went to battle on behalf of Ethiopia single handedly; with only a *sword as a weapon* against the Fascist army in **Roma**! Imagine that! Then there were **Abraha Deboch** and **Moges Asgedom**; young men who challenged Italia’s **Rodolfo Graziani** and made a daring attempt to kill him in Addis Ababa in 1937. Their gallant attempt rekindled the support of the League of Nations for Ethiopia, which eventually led to the defeat of Italia. I am happy to hear that plans are underway to build a monument in Addis Ababa in honor of the two Ethiopian super-heroes.

In the field of diplomacy, few can rival Dr. Lorenzo Taezaz. Simply stated he was a genius in all walks of life. He was Ethiopia’s Permanent Representative to the League of Nations in Geneva during World War II. The following is a quote from **Dr. Daniel Kindie’s** paper titled “**Dr. Lorenzo Taezaz And The Italo-Ethiopian War (1935-1941)**”:
“Lorenzo, who lacked neither ideals nor insight, successfully played several roles as a pressman, diplomat, intelligence officer, agitator, and counselor, and discharged his responsibilities with great distinction. In the process, he displayed great fortitude and endurance. For no one can dispute the key role he played in Ethiopia’s liberation. But more than most, Lorenzo’s commitment to duty must have strengthened Haile Selassie’s faith in education.” To read the complete report please go to [<http://www.zikkir.com/ethiopianreview/?p=138>].

A special mention is warranted for the great **General Aman Michael Andom**, the darling of the Ethiopian Army; also known as the **Desert Lion**. General Aman Andom led Ethiopian forces to the Korean war. He was the recipient of the highest honor, from the UN for his accomplishments; and thereby *brought honor to Ethiopia* in the process. General Aman is perhaps best remembered for his heroics in **Ogadien** in the early sixties; much like the gallant **Dejazmach Afewerk Wolde Semayat** who led the Ethiopian resistance army in the Ogadien during the Italian invasion in 1935. General Aman was elected by the Derg regime as its Chairman in 1974, primarily because of his immense popularity within the then Third Army Division stationed in Harar. He was well known for his fair mindedness; which was why he was opposed to the proposed wholesale executions of the detained ex-Ministers and other dignitaries, belonging to Emperor Haile Selassie’s regime; fifty-nine in all. The unwarranted executions took place immediately after General Aman was killed.

General Aman was also opposed to escalating the conflict against the guerilla forces in Eritrea; opting for a *diplomatic solution* to the problem. He was very popular among the Eritrean people to the extent that he was perceived as a threat to ELF and EPLF on a *personal level*. My Eritrean sources tell me that the people were beginning to turn against the ELF and EPLF after General Aman’s elevation to Chairman of the Derg. He was a uniting force among all Ethiopians *including* Eritreans. For the record, if the cowardly Mengistu Haile Mariam had not murdered General Aman Andom on November 23, 1974, after the latter’s brave last stand against Mengistu’s tanks, Eritrea’s “war of liberation” would have been early on, *nipped in the bud by Eritreans themselves!*

In the context of Ethiopian Nations and Nationalities, Eritrean role has been significant since the beginning of time. One without the other is unrealistic. The nationalities on either side of the **fictitious border** must demand rectification of *this* egregious error in our history. The idea that a border line drawn at Badme, Tserona, Zala’nbesa, Bure, along Irob Land, or any other spot along the common border will separate *Ethiopians* on either side permanently is a farce! **It will never work!** The time is now, to resolve this **nonsense**, once and for all peacefully. **The Eritrean people will do very well under the Ethiopian Constitution.**