

## Analysis on the Current Ethiopian Politics by the Name of “Medemer”

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### Abstract

The current conflicts happening in most parts of Ethiopia followed from the dissatisfaction of the leading government system. In this regard, we motivated to write this paper just to explain, analyze and criticize the current reformed politics of Ethiopia by the name of “medemer”. In this paper we attempt to critically analyze the etymological meaning and general connotation of the term with regard to politics and its appropriateness in Ethiopian context. In the end we would say the concept of “medemer” should replace by the term “tolerance”.

**Keywords:** Medemer; Tolerance; Social contract

### Introduction

After the fall of Derg regime in 1991 the Ethiopian politics scored many prudential progresses with regard to economy, social, and political ever before. The spark light of democracy and the essence of equality, justice, human right and private property has been shown. People have better standard of living ever before, live in peace and stability, and have better access to infrastructure, educational institutions (college/universities) and hospitals.

However, since 2013/14 people were dissatisfied with the government (EPRDF) and raise questions with regard to: democracy, good governance, corruption, human right, freedom, unemployment, and other related issues. Government officials are highly infected and involved in corruption. Voice of political oppositions has been heard from all directions of the country.

*The analysis considers the current political scenario of Ethiopia. Particularly we attempt to reflect our personal outlook on the contemporary political issues of the country.*

Indeed the system of EPRDF is totally distorted and gradually changed to aggressive and anarchy. It is a government which is led by those who strive for their own honor, wealthy, other than the benefit of the poor people. The power is once given to the government just by the people, but it does not mean the government is sovereign. According to our mind people must be sovereign.

But here what we are seeing is like Hobbes’s state of nature, “war of all against all”. Unlike Lock, According to Hobbes, when the power is already given to the government by social contract the people have no right to ask questions, revolt and oppose too.

O’Toole argues that:

*Hobbes regards the sovereign as all powerful and immune from revolution; Locke does permit the people to revolt in circumstances of long, sustained abuse. This permission is allowed because of Locke’s notion of the social contract as based upon consent. While Hobbes agrees about the initial consent regarding the beginning of the social contract, he also believes that the sovereign must remain independent and autonomous in order for him to be able to enforce the laws of the land [1].*

From this quotation, Hobbes argues that the people have no right to oppose the government and revolt against the system but in the reverse Lock is pro revolutionist philosopher. The same is true which is happening in Ethiopia. Many are arrested, died (killed) because of their critical opposition (revolution) against the current Ethiopian political system or government. May be their way of opposition may

let them die and harmed. Even though, the way of their opposition is destructive, we strongly support the revolution for the matter that government has no credit to listen and see the pain and problem of the people in the peaceful revolution.

When we see the history of democracy of Europe and America from 1970-1995 is developed by crisis and revolution. In this regard some political thinkers such as: Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson argue that:

*Our approach to democratization, in fact, stresses not only the role of crises but also the importance of social unrest, the threat of revolution, and generally the de-facto power of those without de jure political power in inducing a transition to democracy. In this section, we return to the historical discussion of the emergence of democracy in nineteenth-century Europe and twentieth-century America to discuss this issue [2].*

Thus according to this quotation the democracy of most of European states and America is the result of revolution. For instance, in France, although democracy had flourished briefly after the revolution, it was quickly ended by the rise of the Jacobins and then Napoleon. After the fall of Napoleon, the absolutist monarchy was restored. Absolutism began to weaken after the 1830 revolution, which led to a highly restricted democratic regime in which property restrictions limited the electorate to about 0.75 percent of the population.

The modern democracy of Germany starts with the 1848 revolution, when nearly all German states significantly increased popular participation in government, again in the face of revolutionary pressures. The same is true happened in other European states like Sweden.

Accordingly we recommend revolution is important and necessary for the cultivation of democracy, but it must be in a democratic and rational way. However what is happening in Ethiopia is not such kind. The Ethiopian revolution widely was started in Oromo and irritated to Amhara particularly Gojjam (Bahirdar) and Gondar. The recent Ethiopian political revolution was born in Oromo and Amhara and it was calculated. Even though the revolution was/is run by high

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government officials of both regions just for the hegemony of both regions (Oromo and Amhara), their way of opposition is like inhuman and slaughtered. For instance many innocent Tigreans were killed in 2016 in Gondar, Bahirdar and 2018 in Bati and in Oromo region too, in 2017 many Wolaitians were killed in Oromo particularly Zeway, Jimma, Shashemene and others and currently in sidama. This kind of opposition or revolution is genocide; it is not a revolution towards government but the people against the people. We don't think this kind of youth's opposition is political oriented but mob.

In this destructive opposition rent seeker government officials are involved just for their political gain. Following this high political opposition towards government, Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn resigned his power on his willing and Dr. Abiy Ahmed becomes Prime Minister of Ethiopia. After he becomes to power many things are changed; favorable and unfavorable strange events have been occurred.

For instance he allow political protestors to come back their homeland, most of the former government officials resign and replaced by new and young but the Majority are from Oromia region. For instance *Prime minister, president, ministry of defense, ministry of foreign affair, ministry of communication, ministry of security, ministry of education, ministry of health*, and other high federal powers are replaced by Oromo and dominated by them. If so where is fair distribution of power and there will no change at all and fair distribution of power is a major indicator of democracy and democratic government.

Hence the current Ethiopian political system is dominated by Oromo. This is one feature of the irrationality of the current government of Ethiopia.

The other part of the irrationality of the current government is its stand on the relation with Eritrea. In this regard, the government's intension from the relation is to own and use Assab port for the development of some selected regions. To make this real the government shouldn't have make peace with Eritrea. It is wrong to make peace with Eritrea by confirming the Algiers agreement to give Tigray land the so called Bademe and some parts of Erob to Eritrea. From the beginning the cause of the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea was not the quest of boarder. Rather it is the will and hope of political and economic domination of the government of Eritrea (Sha'ebia) over Ethiopia. This is the reason for Sha'ebia to launch war over Ethiopia. However, he incorrectly understood the point. But it doesn't mean the government is not aware about the cause of the war rather it is the way he used it and targeted to weaken Tigray and TPLF and use the Assab port by the name of *medemer*.

With this regard the government should invite the people of Tigray and Afar living in the boarder of both countries for discussion, unless otherwise the mission will never be achieved.

The people which are living in the boarder of both countries should be willing to accept the agreement and well informed or aware about it. They are attempting to be heard their voice by the government in different social medias. In this regard the government should give a credit for the esteemed people and deal on their questions for the sake of sustainable peace with their brothers (Eritreans).

The other point is selling the government huge investments to foreign and local investors. Unfortunately the government is liberalizing Ethiopia. The current Ethiopian youths are derived by emotion with no reason. Prime Minister Abiy's concept that he used to make Ethiopians unified is "medemer". The word is vague can be translated in multiple direction. The literal meaning of the word is "to be added", but in what

way, what are the conditions, with whom? It is better to answer these questions before supporting and applying the notion of "medemer".

Following this it is easy to guess the intension of the Prime Minister and his political stand. In the current period the relation between Amhara and Tigray is not very well and Amhara sided with Oromo. The reason of Amhara region to close with Oromo is to be beloved and to hide the past inhuman and evil doing of feudalists system over Oromo particularly over Arsi people. Moreover, their objective is to revive and return the past strategy of feudal system (domination of Amhara), the so called Amharization. The political officials and elites of Amhara denied the diversity and hegemony of nation, nationality and people of Ethiopia.

Hence, they came together both regions just to deteriorate TPLF. Because they know that TPLF and Tigray people are the prominent advocators of federalism and stand with the side of constitution to be respected. For this matter many Tigreans have been killed everywhere and this inhuman killing of Tigreans particularly in Amhara and Oromia regions is the result of irresponsiveness of the political leaders of the two regions; this is either they are ignorant or they are using it for political gain.

Even they forget suffer of TPLF and Tigray people which is paid in 1975 war against fascist derg to the liberty of all Ethiopians. In this war many golden Tigrayans were died for the wellbeing and liberty of all Ethiopians and in 1991 fascist derg defeated. But now Tegararu are killed and robbed mainly in these two regions. The target of elites of both regions was not strategic but tactical simply by being one and embedded just to weaken and demoralize TPLF and to control political hegemony of the country. In this regard the goal of elites of Amhara is to replace the current political system by the old outdated feudalism and to make it true they prefer to be close with Oromo and to damage the Tigray people and TPLF and finally to expand their territory. However, it is the day dream to do that. They misses the point, Tigreans never give up for these creepy political forces. Tigreans are strong, "one" and cosmological intellectuals could not be defeated by these simple handed forces.

The slogan of the current Prime Minister is "medemer", according to him by the name of *medemer* the majority people of the country is driven by emotion to follow the slogan. The young part of the society is running forward to accept the concept without digesting and analyzing the entire meaning of concept of the word medemer.

According to Aristotle human beings are political animal i.e. all human beings are naturally political animal. According to him no one can refrain himself from politics; directly/indirectly can involve in politics and it should base on reason and in logical manner. But the current Ethiopia youths miss this thing. Recently in Ethiopia everyone is trying to be politician but no one can be deserved as politician, because they lack reason, logic and rationality rather the only thing that they have is emotion and biased. It is mob that youths are running and striving to kill innocent individuals and robe their resources, not a political opposition headed for government.

As Aristotle argues, human by its nature is political animal, we also argue man by its nature is emotional but also nature gives us a potential (it is reason) to control our emotion. Therefore, people should be rational and act in accordance with reason.

Accordingly, the Prime Minister should calm and think critically in making decision and logical persuading the mass. Everyone is talking about "medemer", but they do not know the meaning of the word and its vagueness. The word is indeed vague, which has more

than two meanings. This is the meaning of the word that most people could agree is: "oneness". But we falsified its necessity and justified its impossibility. We mentioned below the metaphysical justification for the inappropriateness of medemer for unification.

For instance, the result of  $-1+1=0$ , this is brief and précised inapplicability of medemer, because, the result may be bad (negative) or zero. So we concluded this is the imperfectness and irrationalities of the notion. It is the same with the Equality of Unequality, because the result is Inequality. So how do we apply this slogan in unification?

Hence Medemer is impossible in the case of diversity, for instance lemon and milk. Rather what is possible and better is tolerating with the diversity.

The current Ethiopian constitution is the constitution which is recognized by and (it recognizes) all Ethiopian nation, nationality and people of Ethiopia, but it is destructed in some parts of Ethiopia, particularly most parts of Amhara ever before. Unrepresentative flags (not recognized by the constitution) or the flag of feudalists are widely shown in Amhara, Oromo and other regions, by some peoples of Amhara live in Somalia and SNNP, and lawlessness is irritating. In this regard the Prime minister must not keep silent on the destruction of the constitution. He has also refrain from doing the similar thing.

He intervenes in the regional sovereignty of south nation nationality and peoples (SNNP). He informally resigned the head of SNNP by force, but in the federalism system the head of region is elected by the people and resigned by the people too. The prime minister has no power to elect and resign the head of regional government, but it is happening now in Ethiopia.

Accordingly this is a kind of destruction of constitution by the prime minister himself, because prime minister has no mandate to resign any regional political official. However, he is intervening in the political sovereignty of regions like what is happened in SNNP and Ethiopian Somalia.

Thus for me the target of the team of the current political officials including the head government of Amhara is by making Somalia, Afar, SNNP, Benshangul and Gambela instable and insecure to weaken the influential party in Tigray (TPLF). If TPLF is demoralized and weakened it is easy for elites of Amhara to make true their entire objective, just to expand their territory.

Accordingly we argue that all people should unite together for the wellbeing of their country. Nation, nationality and peoples shouldn't have to be "medemer" but tolerate each other. The notion of medemer is unfit for Ethiopia and Ethiopians, and it should be replaced by the concept Tolerance.

Ethiopia is the multi diversified sate; there are plural and diversified ethnic group, religion, language, culture, value and norm. It is too difficult and impossible to unite all these difference in one. The only option for Ethiopia's peace and stability is tolerance. Sustainable development can merely be ensured by tolerating and accommodating the differences between the people.

All people should be conscious of this undemocratic and uncivilized strategy. Conflict activists and campaigners are emerged officially in most parts of Ethiopia and aggravate social war. To grip this Satanist action, people should be conscious and tolerate each other. Now is the time to unite not by medemer but tolerance.

Accordingly unless the constitution is respected civil war might be

occurred in the state, the state might be distorted to Hobbes's state of nature, war of all against all.

## The Result of Violations of Law

Primarily current Ethiopian government should keep the constitutional sovereignty and promote peace and stability of its citizen unless killing of innocent people will never be stopped. If the government failed to take serious action over the criminals, the state might be Hobbes's state of nature that is state of war. Therefore, all society must know the find end of this emotional and illogical social conflict among the social communal group. Unless otherwise have no a guarantee for Hobbes's state of nature will not occurred. As Rachels wrote, Hobbes discusses in his Leviathan, in state of nature there would be:

No place for industry, because the fruit thereof is uncertain: and consequently no culture of the earth; no navigation, nor use of the commodities that may be imported by sea; no commodious building; no instruments of moving, and removing, such things as require much force; no knowledge of the face of the earth; no account of time; no arts; no letters; no society; and which is worst of all, continual fear, and danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short [3,4].

Thus this state of nature is the cruelest state and we have to take care of this. Everyone have a responsibility to respect the constitution of the country and even if it needs modification it has to be modified in a legal way (constitutionally), not by force.

## Conclusion and Recommendation

In most of diversified sates; there are plurality of ethnic group, religion, language, culture, value and norm and following this there would be conflict of interest. Ethiopia is one of the diversified countries in the world with different nations, norms, values and interests too. Since 2011 different political groups revolts against the EPRDF (government of Ethiopia) because of absence of freedom of press, fair distribution of power, corruption, unemployment, identity questions, and other socio-political questions. In 2017/2018 the revolution seriously irritating country wide and it was dangerous peoples were died everywhere; law have been destructed. Thus the government decides to reform the system through the country by the name of "medemer", but it is inappropriate to apply the concept in the politics of Ethiopia. But still the problems are aggravating in different parts of the country.

There are various causes responsible for the destructive conflict and revolution in Ethiopia. We don't think this is because people are too much evil, but corruption, racism, economic deficiency, unemployment, inflation, lack of good governance and other economic, political and social problems.

## Then, how the government could solve the problem?

Political institutions should not be sensitive to conflicts over power between different groups. If the goal is peace, political institutions may, for example, have to develop explicit power-sharing arrangements between ethnic or religious groups [5,6].

To solve this ethnic based conflict permanently, we recommend the government to do the following points. The Ethiopian government should frequently apply Hobbes's four basic facts about the conditions of human life to make the reformation real and promote sustainable stability and development [7].

- First, there is the fact of equality of need. Each of us needs the same basic things in order to survive: food, clothing, and shelter. Although we may differ in some of our needs (diabetics need insulin, others don't), we are all essentially alike [8].
- Second, there is the fact of scarcity. We do not live in the Garden of Eden, where milk flows in streams and every tree hangs heavy with fruit. The world is a hard, inhospitable place, where the things we need to survive do not exist in plentiful supply. We have to work hard to produce them, and even then there often is not enough to go around [9].
- If there are not enough essential goods to go around, who will get them? Since each of us wants to live, and to live as well as possible, each of us will want as much as we can get. But will we be able to prevail over the others, who also want the scarce goods? Hobbes thinks not, because of the third fact about our condition, the fact of the essential equality of human power. No one is so superior to everyone else, in strength and cunning that he or she can prevail over them indefinitely. Of course, some people are smarter and stronger than others; but even the strongest can be brought down by others acting together [10].
- If we cannot prevail by our own strength, what hope do we have? Can we, for example, rely on the charity or good will of other people to help us? We cannot. The fourth and final fact is the fact of limited altruism. Even if people are not wholly selfish, they nevertheless care very much about themselves; and we cannot simply assume that whenever our vital interests conflict with theirs, they will step aside [11].

The government should frequently apply the above points just promote the peace and stability and wellbeing of the people. The conflict may be over material possessions such as territory, or a stock of food, or other goods [12].

People should have access of food, shelter and clothing, the government should work in reducing unemployment and prepare good work environment and make awareness on the equality of all society, on the absence of class society and in the end the people must care of others. Accordingly, the ethnic and the conflict of interest will highly decline. That is why tolerance is appropriate for the wellbeing of people than medemer.

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