

ON MORALITY AND RIGHTS: ETHICAL YELUGNTA DESCRIBED.

INTRODUCTION.

Implementing politics that does not have ethical constraints does much harm. Without ethical constraints unethical cowards can be catapulted to high positions in society, so that virtue is replaced by vice and cheating is rewarded. Unfortunately, the politics in Ethiopia beginning with the early 1970's was devoid of ethical characteristics. Consequently, Ethiopians are ripping the morass that ensues from immoral and unethical governance by individuals who are disposed to extremes, characterized by either excess (having too much of something, too little fear, too much confidence) or deficiency (having too little of something, too much fear, too little confidence). They do not attempt to strike at the proper balance between the two extremes. They are cowards given to vice, and do not have the courage or strength of character that is virtuous or exudes virtue.

Some of the greatest contributions to comprehension of morality and human rights were the result of reflections by philosophers and social scientists who lived in periods of turmoil of their countries. For example, Thomas Hobbes fled to France and provided translations into English of his earlier works in Latin, and wrote new books at the time of the civil war in England. His contributions to the state of

nature, ethical egoism, and social contribute resulted from his reflections of the political turmoil in his country. At about the same time Philosopher Zera Yacob lived a century after the jihad in Ethiopia and exactly when emperors of Orthodox phase were replaced by those of Catholic faith and back again to the Orthodox. He was tormented in the reign of Susneyos the Catholic emperor, and was self exiled to a remote part of Ethiopia, Infrac. His argued that will is the ultimate source of morality and he infered that God is revealed to reason and debunked organized religion as the way to comprehend God.

Since 1974 Ethiopia has been in turmoil. Between 1974 and 1991 a military junta ruled over Ethiopia. It alienated the educated class from the society, and ruled under a despotic and murderous regime it called socialism

Since coming to power in 1991, the TPLF party has behaved in ways that cannot be expected from a rational Party with a discernible plan for the future other than destroying Ethiopia. The leader of the TPLF party is called Meles Zenawi. Many parties have been created by him and by the opposition, and the acronyms of such organization are listed at the end of the book.

Zenawi's despotic regime knows no bounds for its destruction of Ethiopia. The Ethiopian Civil Rights leader Professor Mesfin Woldemariam in his book, “Yekiulkulet Khedet”, examined issues when the social contract is broken and likened the condition as a trip to the abyss. He argued that "khetet" (denial of a social contract) is not only a mistake; and though “khetet” is linked to ignorance and stupidity, it is not only the sum of the two; “khetet” is

going outside of the light of one's heart and being governed by external power or interest; it is lowering the value of the human spirit and changing it to an inanimate object (Mesfin Woldemariam, 1996 Ethiopian calendar, p.15).

That, in the minds of the people, there is social contract among Ethiopians, though it is continuously assaulted with impunity by the TPLF/EPRDF, becomes very clear in the cry of Ms. Almezurai Teshome on Voice of America. In November 2005, TPLF security forces came to the home of Ato Teshome, a member of the CUDP and who was elected as council member of Addis Ababa, and dragged him out of his home. His wife Mrs. Etenesh Yimam, a mother of six, pleaded to the security police not to mistreat her husband, at which point she was shot dead by one of the security guards. Her daughter, Ms. Alemzuria Teshome had witnessed the wanton murder committed by the security forces. When interviewed on VOA about her condition, she sobbed uncontrollably as she shared the horrific story and concluded by pleading: "Let Ethiopians judge me." Clearly, she had understood that there is a social contract among Ethiopians and she was asking that they pass judgment on her case. The incident was one of more than 193 killings committed after the May 15, 2005 elections, and after Mr. Zenawi, the leader of the TPLF and Prime Minister of Ethiopia, declared that he had taken charge of the security forces of Ethiopia.

The harm brought by Zenawi to Ethiopia and Ethiopians is incalculable. The question is: how come Ethiopians cannot tame, contain, or otherwise remove the wild Zenawi Kingdom that has divided the country into coastal (Eritrea) and landlocked (FDRE) regions, thereby bestowing

“geography of poverty” to both regions? The “geography of poverty” that he helped engineer and enforces allows him to make Ethiopia a destitute, impoverished, famished and diseased country. His doctrine of Revolutionary Democracy (see Book 3) provides goals, objectives, strategies and tactics by which he will use his TPLF/EPRDF party to enrich himself, his extended family, relatives and others of his choosing. Ethiopians seem to have forgotten how their forebears protected their country. They gave their limbs and lives and handed the current generation a blessed country free and blameless. In everything that relates to Ethiopia, Ethiopians have no one but themselves to blame for they should assert their rights. Yet, Zenawi has become a formidable tyrant for the current crop of Ethiopians to handle partly because he gets favors from what appears to me to be wrong-headed foreign-policy objectives of the West, and principally from the recent administrations of the United States and Great Britain, Mr. Bush and Mr. Blair, respectively. The situation for Ethiopia worsened when the current president of the USA embarked on his preemptive attacks. True to America's promise people's representatives both from the Republican and Democratic parties have passed a bill in committee in support of the rights of the people of Ethiopia and are working to get it through the full congress.

This book has two chapters. Chapter 1 deals with a brief description of ethics and morality. Though not described in detail, contributions by philosophers of ethics both of classical ethics and ethical egoism are assembled here. For ease of retrieval, references available on websites are given at the end of the chapter. The reader is encouraged to refer to the materials by those authors, as the ones given here are

simple abstractions of the work of others. However, the work of Philosopher Zera Yacob, and a description of ethical Yelugnta are unique to this book. Also examples are included to aid comprehension of some ethical issues.

Chapter 2 deals with rights ('mebet') of individuals. Here too, for ease of retrieval, references emphasize on those available on the web. The chapter also provides brief summaries of parts of the contributions of philosophers to the understanding of the rights of individuals and the social contract that societies might engage in.

Eleven appendices describe the conditions of Ethiopia to offer a context for focusing on morality and rights in this book. Acronyms of the different organization created by Ethiopians since 1974 and used in book are provided in the last pages of the book.

Chapter 1. Morality and Ethics.

This chapter introduces stepwise the philosophical concepts of virtue ethics, ayena helina, utilitarianism, deontology, egoism and yelugnta.

A) VIRTUE ETHICS:

The questions of (a) "how ought I to act", and (b) "what kind of a person ought I to be", are the domain of ethics. The later question defines the character of a person, whether the person is virtuous or full of vice, a hopeless coward or a hopeful brave one.

Like a well functioning democracy places its trust in (a) laws and in (b) judges and juries that adjudicate the laws, ethics places its trust in (a) theories, which provide rules for conduct, and in (b) virtue, which provides the wisdom necessary for applying rules in particular instances.

As Aristotle further taught us, virtue is a habit that can be learned by practicing it. We have it in our power to control our desires and sensibilities. Will is strengthened through practice. Weakness of will occurs when individuals do not control their desires. Virtue requires striking a proper balance between extremes of too much fear (deficiency) on one hand and too much confidence (excess) on the other. For example, individuals who are too confident (excess) show the following attributes. a) In attitude toward self they display arrogance, conceit, egoism, narcissism and vanity, while the virtuous response is self-respect. b) In

attitude toward offences of others they display revenge, grudge, and resentment, while the virtuous response is anger, understanding and/or forgiveness. Individuals who are too fearful (deficiency) show the following attributes.

c) In attitude toward good deeds of others they display suspicion, envy, or ignoring them, while the virtuous response is gratitude and/or admiration]. d) In attitude toward their offenses they display indifference, remorselessness, or downplaying the offence, while the virtuous response is remorse and/or making amends.

Virtue requires confronting issues or things, though they might frighten one, and deriving confidence by the mitigating actions. Nichomachean has reportedly described how a coward fears both what he ought not and, as he ought not. He further argued that a coward runs away from what is troublesome and may die on flight, though it is not noble to run away from evil. Nobility, he argues, is the domain of the brave who has confidence and a hopeful disposition because he feels and acts according to the merits of the case and without submitting to faults of the coward (who fears what one should not, who fears as one should not, and who fears when one should not). Engrossed in fear the coward does not have a hopeful disposition

The above is abstracted from a presentation on ethics by Professor Lawrence M. Hinman, (URL1) and is shared in the spirit of infusing comprehension of the essentials of ethics and morality.

B) Ayene Helina, the light of our will.

Ayena helina is an Ethiopic (Ge'ez) word that means "the light of our will." Some translate it also as the light of our hearts (ayene lebona). Before the birth of Christ the Greeks had elucidated virtue ethics. After the birth of Christ and that of Prophet Mohammed religion gained prominence and ethics and morality were derived from the religious codes of conduct. However, not all codes of conduct, and corresponding ethics and morality, of the different religions were similar. Thus, that some morality and ethics derived from religious codes has no universality.

Through a stepwise discourse, called "hateta", the Ethiopian philosopher, Zera Yacob (1599-1692), satisfied himself that God is revealed to reason, and debunked organized religion as the way to understand God. He argued that we could understand God and morality by the light of our will. His renowned phrase is:

"As my faith appears true to me, so does another find his own faith true; but truth is one." (Zera Yacob as translated in Sumner, 1985, p. 236).

Since truth is one, the different "truths" reported by separate religions cannot be true, neither can the corresponding dissimilar moral codes. He examined the different codes of conduct and accepted only those that have universal applicability. His piercing analysis demonstrated that truth and morality are universal and cannot be obtained through the dictates of organized religion or, as we may now infer, ethnic-based politics.

Rather, Zera Yacob declared that truth is to be revealed through reason, or by the light of our will.

He exposed the falsity of religious tenets on fasting, celibacy, so-called disallowing of copulation during a woman's monthly period, marrying more than one wife; he criticized slavery as well as any form of violence against humans. Moreover, in his book of 1667, Zera Yacob proclaimed that a man and woman are one in marriage and have equal property rights. Accordingly, Zera Yacob is also the first person to write on women's rights, and human rights in general.

Zera Yacob wrote: “God the master of morality created man to choose to be good or bad. Man can choose to be bad or a liar until he receives his punishment. Moreover, since man is of the flesh he pursues happiness. Good or bad man pursues all avenues to please him (his flesh) (Zera Yacob as translated in Daniel Worku Kassa, 1995 Ethiopian calendar, p.15). Later, the pursuit of happiness and pleasure, have been independently explored more fully by John Locke (1632-1704), Jeremy Bentham (1748- 1832), John Stuart Mill (1806- 1873) and others, who have been credited for exploring ethical Utilitarianism. Pursuit of happiness and pleasure viewed from the perspective of the self is known as ethical egoism. Egoism has been explored more fully by Thomas Hobbes (in his book, the Leviathan, 1665), Fredrich Nietzsche (1844-1900), Ayn Rand (in her book on the virtue of selfishness, 1964), and is described under ethical egoism. Whereas utilitarianism and egoism are goal-oriented, the first to make the world a better place for all, and the latter to make the self the beneficiary, another form of morality called deontology, or duty- based

ethics, measures morality by the action taken and not by the outcome it might produce. Similar to Zera Yacob, but working independently about a half a century later, Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) has explained that the will is the means for evaluating morality, and that actions have to be evaluated irrespective of outcomes. Kantian categorical imperative is not to use humans merely as a means, but as an end, and ties in nicely with Yacobian strictures against violence to humans.

Philosopher Zera Yacob may be regarded as the founder of universalizable ethics and morality, which subsequently have been explored by others under utilitarian ethics, duty-based ethics, ethical egoism, and ethical yelugnta.

C) UTILITARIANISM: UTILITY ETHICS

The Utilitarian moral theory holds that the consequences of our efforts must promote the greatest good (benefit) to the greatest number of individuals so as to make the world a better place. This makes Utilitarianism a goal-oriented ethics. In particular, it defines that the purpose of morality is to make the world a better place.

Because it focuses on consequences, Utilitarianism allows examining a number of different actions that may lead to the same consequences. Since it is possible to quantify and determine which actions can provide the greatest benefit for the greatest number of individuals, Utilitarianism permits the merger of mathematics and ethics. The calculations result not only in showing which consequences have positive or negative qualities but also the degrees to which they are positive or negative.

Questions regarding Utilitarianism arise on a number of fronts. Some of the questions are as follows.

1) What (intrinsic value) constitutes the greatest good (benefit)?

Different parameters that constitute the greatest benefit have been suggested, and four people are often quoted for the suggestions.

- a) Increasing or augmenting pleasure does it according to Jeremy Bentham (1748- 1832).
- b) Happiness does it according to John Stuart Mill (1806- 1873).

c) Maximizing ideal values such as freedom, justice, knowledge, and beauty does it according to G. E. Moore (1873-1958).

d) Preference satisfaction, i.e., allowing people to choose what they value does it according Kenneth Arrow.

2) What happens when the different benefits, such as love and beauty, are not quantifiable and hence not determinable by numbers? Do we fall in to the danger: "if it can't be counted, it doesn't count." [URL 2]

3) Do we calculate utility each time the act is performed (Act Utilitarianism), or do we calculate the overall utility of accepting or rejecting the rule each time everyone follows a particular rule (Rule Utilitarianism)? Rule utilitarianism might violate human rights and other important moral values, whereas Act Utilitarianism might not, under certain circumstances.

4) Who does the calculating? For example, "In Vietnam, Americans could never understand how much independence counted for the Vietnamese." [URL2]

5) Who is included or considered in the calculations? [In an ethnic-based party only members of the ethnic group are included. Clearly, ethnic-based governance over a multiethnic country is immoral an unethical.]

Conclusion

Questions are raised to better understand ethical theory and to expose weaknesses and strengths of the theory.

Utilitarian ethical theory defines the role of morality to be making the world a better place. Our society must be one in

which more people have their preferences of pleasure, happiness, and/or imperative ideal values of freedom, justice, knowledge and beauty satisfied. In conditions where unethical individuals are catapulted to high offices of society it is unlikely that a greater number of the citizenry will have its preferences for good outcomes satisfied. So, education in ethics fostered through ethical parents and/or through formal education is important to having a wholesome society.

D) DUTY-BASED ETHICS: DEONTOLOGY.

Deontology is derived from the Greek work "deon" which means obligation or duty. Deontology refers to duty-based moral law.

Two types one called Act Deontology and another Rule Deontology are briefly described below.

Part A. Act Deontology of a German philosopher, Immanuel Kant (1724-1804)

A1. Universality Test or Formula

A2. Respect Test or Formula

Part B. Rule Deontology of a Scottish philosopher, Sir William David Ross (1877-1971).

Part A. Kant's moral law is founded on and enacted by **reason**. He argued that **all good**, and therefore **moral duty or law** is derived from **goodwill**. He went on to assert that the **will** alone acts in conformity to moral law, respects moral law, and is not partial to experiences or consequences. He inferred that "moral duty or law" is the **maxim**, or motive of the will, and that it is necessary and universally applicable. [URL9] For Kant an action has intentionality and does not merely involve bodily movement. He also observed that an action ought to be evaluated both by its efficiency and by whether or not it is intrinsically right. [URL7]

A1. Universality Test or Formula.

The universalisability of moral duty led Kant to his formula for moral law:

"Always act in such a way that the maxims of your actions can be willed as a universal law of humanity."

A2. Respect Test or Formula

Declaring that neither necessity and universality nor the moral law originate from experience or follow from analysis of conception, but that they originate in pure reason, Kant argued that determining the **law of reason** has the nature of a command or **imperative**. The command is "not a **hypothetical imperative**, which enjoins actions only as means to an end and implies a merely conditional necessity, but a **categorical imperative**, which enjoins actions for their own sake and hence involve absolute necessity." [URL9]

Kant conceived will as a faculty that determines itself according to certain laws. The self-determination of the will results in it being an end in itself. Accordingly, man as a rational being, "is an end in himself, a person, and must in all actions, whether in regard to self or in others be respected." [URL9] The respect for human beings led Kant to enunciate the categorical imperative as follows:

"Always treat humanity, whether in yourself or in other people, as an end in itself, and never as a mere means."

A3. Publicity Test proposed by L. Hinman (URL4).

Hinman suggested the following useful observation as a duty-based ethics.

"Always act in such a way that you would not be embarrassed to have your actions described on the front page of the New York Times."

Below we use stories to explore Kantian philosophy and Rossian prima facie duty, which help select the best morally right duty among alternatives.

Story 1. After members of a British expedition traveled for days from Addis Ababa to Nairobi and the Ethiopian guide, Dejazmatch Haile, continued to encourage the expedition that Nairobi is just across the hills, the captain of the expedition asked Haile whether it would take less time to return to Addis or to go forward towards Nairobi. Haile replied: **it depends on what you want to do.** Between Addis and Nairobi, Dej. Haile and his helpers had cumulatively traveled many times. Though Haile was asked if he could serve as a guide by his emperor, he accepted the task voluntarily and was not doing the task as an order. Haile took the job without any commitment to the time the expedition would take or if the expedition would be successful. Was Haile's action morally right?

Story 2. John had amassed wealth by cutting corners and through what others called strange ways. Mike needed to buy a car and borrowed money from John promising to repay him within a year though he was determined not to repay it at all because he believed that John was a crook. Was Mike's action morally right?

Both examples will be used to examine Deontology or duty-based ethics.

The universality formula may be determined as follows. Firstly, " think that **maxims** are subjective rules that actually motivate a person." [URL7] Then:

- a. Take an action

b. You or another person can determine if the action is universalizable by pursuing the following algorithm.

1. Determine your maxim based on some kind of experience by you or others.
2. Generalize the maxim by dropping references to particular person including yourself.
3. Check if the generalized maxim is consistent with the affairs of a wholesome society.
- 4a. If the answer to 3 is correct, the maxim is universalizable, and the action was a categorical imperative, and the action is morally right.
- 4b. If the answer to 3 is incorrect, the maxim is not universalizable, and the action is morally wrong.

Let us apply the algorithms to the examples given above. Consider the action of Haile, Story 1 above.

1. Haile's maxim ("subjective" rule) was 'I will serve as a guide because I know the route.'
2. The corresponding generalization (objective rule) is 'Everyone will serve as guide if they know the route.'
3. Haile "has to determine if this generalized maxim can become a moral rule in a society. That is, he must consider what would happen when everyone acted on the same maxim. " Is everyone morally justified to served as a guide to places they knew.
- 4a. Can we rationally will (want) that everyone follow the same rule?" The answer is yes. It is universalizable. So Haile's action is morally right.

As another example, consider Mike's action in Story 2 above.

1. Mike's maxim is " I will borrow money from John by promising to pay it back, although I know that I will not fulfill the promise."
2. The corresponding generalization is 'Everyone will borrow money with a promise to pay back, although all know that the promises will not be fulfilled.'
3. Is everyone morally justified if they will not fulfill their promise to pay their debt?

4b. Can we rationally will (want) that everyone follow Mike's maxim? The answer is no. As suggested by Kant, a society will not function properly with such a maxim. It is not universalizable. Thus, Mike's action is not morally right.

Criticisms of ethics of Kantian duty include the following

- 1) It does not require heartfelt feelings (morality minimalism). [URL4]
- 2) It is alienated from feelings (moral alienation). [URL4]
- 3) Since the end does not justify the means, and actions either pass or fail the test of duty ethics, with no chance of a middle ground or "gray area", "polite lie" is not permitted as Kant considers that lying is always wrong. [URL8]

Part B. Ross' Prima facie duties, Also called Rule Deontology. [URL6]

'Prima facie duty' or 'conditional duty' is a brief way of referring to the characteristic of an act, such that "whether an act is a duty proper or an actual duty depends on all morally significant kinds it is an instance of" (Ross: The Right and the Good, pp. 19-20 as quoted in URL7).

The following are seven kinds of prima facie (or conditional) duties of:

1. fidelity
2. reparation
3. gratitude
4. justice
5. self-improvement
6. non-malfeasance
7. benevolence

"An action, A, is morally right if and only if (iff) no alternative to this action is a more stringent prima facie duty." [URL7] The imperatives of Ross' deontology are conditional, i. e., they involve doing X to get Y, until and actual imperative, which is the weightier among the alternatives, is selected.

Conclusion.

According to Kant, actions derived from the dictates of reason should be evaluated to pursue duty-based morality, without regard to outcomes. Ross' prima facie duties are a means of assigning priority of duties and result in a resolution of conflicting duties.

E) ETHICAL EGOISM AND ETHICAL YELUGNTA

E1. Ethical Egoism

Ethics focuses on identifying moral behaviors suitable for coexistence and successful living of humans. The perspectives that good behaviors are examined from vary. Egoism focuses on the perspective of the self, the individual. A description of egoism lies in the field of psychology. How individuals ought to act as examined from the perspective of their own self-interest, ethical egoism, is a subject of philosophy. Philosophers have identified, personal, individual, and universal aspects to ethical egoism.

Whereas all ethical egoism doctrines deal with the perspective of an individual acting from self-interest they have the following differences.

In personal ethical egoism nothing is stated about the motives of others.

In individuals ethical egoism all others are said to act to serve the self-interest of one individual (the egotist).

In universal ethical egoism all persons should serve their self-interest exclusively. [URL10, URL11]

Three arguments are proposed in support of ethical egoism. The first was championed by Nietzsche and considered that altruism demeans the folks to whom help is considered or rendered. [URL10] [This concept ill-defines help for no one in a social setting can claim that he/she survived without help from others.]

The second considers that selfishness creates a better world. [If true, this is an argument for utilitarian ethics and not for egoism. [URL10]]

The third argument indicates that, "ethical egoism does not create such a different world after all." It is argued that we should remove our hypocrisy for even those who claim altruistic rational do things selfishly. [However, if such concept is applied, "children and people at risk or in need, they would be put in further jeopardy." [URL10]]

Among the major criticism of ethical egoism is that it cannot be universalize. That is to say, we cannot have society in which all act altruistically to satisfy the selfish needs of one among them. However, in sports, teams win according to this maxim. [URL10] Another criticism is that ethical egoism is inconsistent with moral sensitivity for the suffering of others may not sway the egotists.

Egoism is a natural tendency of humans, requiring a social contract entered under an authority figure, which Thomas Hobbes described in the Leviathan. Otherwise he felt that the life of man would be 'nasty, short and brutish'. John Locke had showed that an authority figure was not necessary for people to have a social contract, but did not negate the egotistic right of the individual to rights and liberty and the pursuit of happiness. However, the ways by which the adherence to self-interest is expressed does not have to be naturally derived. In some cultures, for example, where the male had to castrate other males and wear human organs as trophy in order to entice a female has no naturalness to it. However, it is done in pursuit of

self-interest, which, as we can clearly see, is defined by the society rather than by nature. Ayn Rand's virtue of selfishness indicates that the selfish interests of one do not have to rely on the destruction of another.

For some people ethical egoism is internally contradictory (URL12), and most adherents of religious philosophies find it objectionable, e.g., (URL13). Yet, the self is natural and many practice ethical egoism. Infusing the values of ethical egoism might benefit societies and groups who are gripped by a different form of selfishness called "yelugnta," which is described next.

E2. Ethical Yelugnta

Yelugnta focuses on the perspective of the self, the individual. How an individual ought to act on the basis of his/her perception that others will benefit from or appreciate the action is a subject of ethical yelugnta.

Ethical yelugnta (a form of selfishness) in the act mode is: To be morally right, act according to what you perceive that others might say or feel about the act.

Though some might think that such action should be discussed under duty-based ethics, ethical "yelugnta" is better comprehended when contrasted to ethical egoism. The goal of ethical egoism is to assign the good to the self under all conditions. In contrast, the goal of ethical "yelugnta" is to assign the good to the self by acting in ways based on the perception that others may like the act or feeling good about it. Unlike ethical egoism, which is better suited for a society of strangers, ethical "yelugnta" is suited for a society of the preferred.

Note that ethical yelugnta, unlike utilitarianism, does not set aside the self for the greater good of the society. Yelugnta is a selfish act but one that is conducted on the perception that the act is good as seen by others.

Criticism of ethical yelugnta.

a) Ethical yelugnta focuses on perceived interests of others as its goal. While pretending to be mindful of the interest of others, it demeans them because it does not leave for others the right to define and work for their own interests. It also demeans the self for it relegates its functions to be dependent on perceptions about what others may like.

b) Authoritarian rulers, dictators or cult leaders, who promote their self-interests, will have an easy time ruling over a society that promotes ethical yelugnta.

c) A society governed by ethical yelugnta might stifle creativity and progress, which is based on productivity, which in turn heavily depends on psychological egoism and the derived ethical egoism.

d) Ethical yelugnta results in segregating people into different groups that pursue separate customs, cultures, and functions. Groups of people that wear uniforms, similar bodily decorations, ordered and codified vestments, or any type of group identifying epithets practice ethical yelugnta. Gang members killing one among them for perceived misdeeds, soldiers court-martalling one of their own, customs of "honor Killing" that lead a person to kill one of his/her family on the perception that the pertinent family member has brought dishonor to the family by her/his actions result from ethical yelugnta.

Conclusion

Though ethical egoism and yelugnta are to be derived by the will of a person, and both are derived from selfish motives, the former focuses on self-interest as its goal, while the latter focuses on perceived interests of others as its goal. As L. Hinman (URL10) put it: "Ideally, we seek a society in which self-interest and regard for others converge."

Chapter 2. Rights (mebet!) of individuals, and the social contract.

This chapter briefly outlines the behavior of organism with the view of showing the state of nature and natural laws that govern their lives. It also provides brief notes of the contributions of pertinent philosophers and political thinkers, (Abba Estafanos, Zera Yacob, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jean Jacques Rousseau, Authors of American Constitution and Woodrow Wilson) who help us understand human rights (“mbet”). The conclusion argues that preemption is not a right and that Zenawi does not pay any attention to principles that work for the rights of the Ethiopian as a person or Ethiopia as a country.

ON THE STATE OF NATURE.

Birds fly freely. They eat grass seeds and/or animals. They mate as they wish, perhaps in pursuit of happiness, but certainly to reproduce and maintain their species. They gather twigs and grass to make nests. They lay their eggs in their nests. They guard their nests against external danger. They feed their hatchlings until they mature, fly away and fend for themselves. This is a state of nature. Birds have natural rights to do what they do. Likewise humans have natural rights.

Note that birds do not make trees or grass. God creates them; accordingly they are His properties. Birds use twigs and grass to make their nests. The nests result as a product of the labor of birds, so that the nests are the properties of birds. This is a state of nature, and birds have natural rights to own their property. Likewise, humans have natural rights to own properties that derive from their labor, particularly labor necessary for subsistence, i.e., eat, drink, have a habitation, clothes, etc.

Organisms, including humans, live in groups. Birds of the same feather flock together. Plants of one type bloom in a region while other plant types do not. In the oceans minute plant-like organisms bloom in discrete bunches. Other organisms that graze on the plant-like organisms occur as bunches. Smaller fish feed on the grazers or the plants and swim in schools. Fishes swim in schools in the ocean and birds of the same feather flock together in the sky, and they do so by maintaining formations. Within each formation individuals move to the left, the right, up, or down in tandem with others as they migrate from one place to another, giving an appearance that the formation is one

giant organism. Each organism has the right to behave independently, yet it behaves dependently and occupies a different role when it is in a formation. The individual benefits by participating in the formation when in flight or swimming. Among other considerations the individual is assured to have a mate when they settle after their flight in formation. This is a state of nature and the individual benefits by moving together in a group. Likewise, human beings benefit by cooperating with others when migrating in groups.

Observing the activities of even more organisms may enrich our knowledge of the state of nature, particularly their behavior as groups. Bees give signals to other bees and inform them exactly where and how far to fly in order to collect nectar. Bees make honey that a collection of most competent chemists would be unable to achieve. If they feel threatened a swarm of bees sting the offender. A pack of hyenas can threaten a lion and take away the kill that the lion had made. A pride of lions protect their territory by scenting it as a warning to intrusion by other lions. Intruder lions dare enter that territory at their peril. A strong lion claims the lioness and sires off springs until he is defeated by another stronger lion. Similarly, monkeys are social and territorial and a strong monkey has several in his harem until he is defeated by another. Male monkeys may defend their group from predators by biting on the predator to their death and also that of the predator. Such social and groups of organisms of the same species may shed light on state of nature if man obeyed only natural laws.

ON NATURAL LAW.

To the state of nature described above there are corresponding natural laws. In the case of working individually, the natural law is predicated on total and complete liberty of the individual organism to do as is necessary for its survival and its reproduction. In the case of living in a group, the individual surrenders its liberty to do it alone in exchange for other benefits such as security and to get a mate that the strong male may not claim.

Likewise, humans enjoy natural laws. However, in addition to submitting to the strongest, in the case of humans, they may also have to submit to the wisest and/or the wealthiest. Hence, in groups or societal settings there are serious differences between humans and other organisms, which require making social contracts that are briefly outlined below.

ON SOCIAL CONTRACT.

Unlike other organisms, humans have the capacity to raise in their imagination structures before they implement them and build dams, churches, roads, castles, etc. The property that humans create by their labor, which is above and beyond that which they require for subsistence is called productive labor. The labor-process for subsistence living and the property derived from it are qualities performed by a single individual independent of others. In contrast, property that results from productive labor has a different quality because productive labor usually involves more than one individual. Also, the means of production (1- land and raw materials, 2- the body of the laborer, and 3- the tools for mechanical advantage that the laborers make) might involve or belong to more than one individual. Some of the products of a labor-process may be repeatable at costs much less than the cost of labor and of commodity paid for in the initial cycle of production. Such works generate surplus value, which pay huge dividends to the owners of the product. A society might allow individuals to patent as individual property some kinds of ideas that yield surplus value. However, an individual, an agency, or a group that claims a project as its property, commonly pays wages to the productive laborer. The wages that individuals receive for their productive labors are quite different within the same society and among societies. The relations of labor and who claims the properties derived from the labors are the crux of social contracts between individuals and their government. A more perfect human society allows for natural right respecting liberty and the pursuit of happiness for each individual. The members of such a society by their consent agree to have a government that is accountable to them. On their behalf the government would administer

laws for maintaining internal peace and works to safeguard the society against external danger. Such a desirable social contract is derived from experiences that are gained from the history of societal contracts.

ON HISTORY OF SOCIAL CONTRACTS.

Energy matters. Energy is stored in plants and animals in the form of glucose that is sought for life and living. Productive labor is a form of another kind of energy that fuels societal growth and the effort of society “to make history” as Karl Marx put it. Trees, fresh water, plants, and fossil fuels are stored in different amounts at separate places, and such fuels are necessary for the economic well being of societies.

Plants and plant-like organisms convert sunlight and store it as chemical energy, glucose, within their body. They burn the glucose and convert the stored chemical energy to mechanical energy that would allow them circulate materials within their bodies and move or sway to sustain their lives. What they have not used-up is stored and eaten by grazers. So, glucose is what organisms are after as they fed on each other in the eternal pursuit of life. We seek organisms not only for food but to use them as a source of different kinds of energy such as horses for transportation, oxen for farming, and others to power our utilities. We burn wood, charcoal, coal, oil, or gas to generate heat and/or electricity. We use water for all kinds of activities including for irrigation farming and also to generate electricity. Ethiopian civilization sprang at the headwaters of the Nile, while Egyptian civilization began at the mouth of the Nile an endured because of irrigation farming. A vibrant society needs energy for its economic wellbeing. Productive labor and the quality of that labor are of paramount importance to the economic progress of a society and the liberty of its people. Education increases the quality of productive labor. Knowledge of such attributes is derived from historical precedents.

As society evolved from the hunter-gatherer stage to the agrarian, enslavement of humans by organized leaders became the norm. Calling on all forms of objects as gods for one or the other occasion hid the curiosity of humans and a search for their creator. Calling themselves gods helped some powerful leaders. Individuals who pondered the unacceptability of slavery sought of different ways to break away from this bondage. Prophets Moses, BCE 13th to 16th century and Mohammed, AD 570-632, appeared at different times, one to take the Jews out of slavery from Egypt, and the other to establish Islam. Both performed miracles as ways of demonstrating that they are prophets of God. Prophet Moses claimed that he talked to God, and brought the Ark of the Covenant that bore God's script, while Mohammed was inspired by his dream in which he claimed that he talked with Saint Gabriel. Both preached against worshiping of idols and focused the attention of their adherents to worship only in one God, which is quite a liberating effort.

The traditions established after Moses were limited as they were designed to help only the Chosen People, the Jews. Yet, the Babylonians in the BCE 6th century destroyed the temple that was built by Solomon and in which the Ark of the Covenant was placed to safeguard the well being of the Chosen People, until the Persians permitted the rebuilding of the Temple. At a subsequent time, the Romans, some of whose leaders proclaimed themselves as gods, conquered other countries including that of the Chosen People. Jesus Christ appeared in Israel

and proclaimed himself God of both Jews and others, and the Christian tradition began. Martyrs (members of “Hizbawi Imbita”) carried Christianity far and wide. More than 300 years after the birth of Christ, when Emperor Constantine used the Cross-in his war efforts and the Ethiopian Emperor Ezana accepted it as the religion of his court, Christ ruled even through governors. It was in the AD 570 that Prophet Muhammad was borne and his teachings started later.

CHURCH REFORMATION AND HIZABAWI IMBITA.

Abba Estifanos (1380? - 1450)

After the spread of Christianity some Christian churches and church leaders enriched themselves at the expense of the laity. Even some monks, who had proclaimed to follow Jesus by giving up the pursuit of owning property, became slave owners. Other priests and monks were enraged by what they saw. One notable monk was Abba Estifanos of Gunda Gunde, who taught his disciples to read and adhere to the New Testament, and worship God and only God. His teachings were strict, and he and his followers would not bow to any other thing (the Cross, the icon of St. Mary, etc.) or person (the emperor) as they considered bowing to be a form of worshiping. His teaching became popular, which caused other monks to oppose him. They took him to imperial courts by accusing him that he is not teaching the correct Church doctrine. In the court of Emperor Yeshaq (1414-1427- by the way it was Yeshaq's soldiers who gave the name Somalia to the coastal region of Ethiopia of that time) the monk was exonerated. However, in the court of a subsequent emperor, Zera Ya'qob (1433-1468) he and his followers were either stoned, beaten by sticks, and/or put in jail to die. Emperor Zera Ya'qob was a highly church schooled and educated person, who authored many articles and books. There was a serious disagreement on the interpretation of the scriptures between a church-educated emperor and a New Testament evangelist. As a ruler, he probably felt that he is exonerated to demand respect because the scriptures support given unto Caesar his due. However, Abba Estifanos and his supporters saw bowing to a king not as a form of respect but as worship. Those

disagreements were fatal to what otherwise would have resulted in the reformation of the Ethiopian Church about a hundred years before the German monk, Martin Luther (1486-1546) had the idea of a reformation when he visited Rome in 1511. At any rate, Abba Estifanos and his followers did not flinch from their beliefs because of torture. They did not oppose the emperors on their other roles but they steadfastly stood by their ideas, and as such they were the founders of Hizbawi Imbita (Civil Disobedience). Indeed they were martyrs of what would have likely become an Ethiopia Protestant Church, though none took hold. The following is an excerpt from a book written about Abba Estifanos (Getatchew Haile, 2004, p.55).

"They rose in anger against me by saying you teach material that is not of our country. What is the teaching of this country? How is this teaching? Beyond Christ and all that is in one Church I know nothing else." Abba Estifanos,

There is no question that Abba Estifanos and his followers (Deqiqa Estifanos) have charted the reality that rights ("mebt") are to be gained by the efforts of individuals and the groups who wish to have their "rights" respected no matter the cost. They correctly did not seek rights ("mebt") as a gift to be given to them by anyone including the ruling emperor. They said no to the emperor who tried several ways of causing them to change their ideas. They said no as individuals and as groups. The "Hizbawi Imbita" (Civil Disobedience) that the Deqiqa Estifanos charted is very different from the mass suicide that Jews committed as they jumped to their deaths down the cliffs of Mosada when the conquering Romans laid siege to the mountain and climbed

it. The Jews elected to die instead of surrender to the Romans. Deqiqa Estifanos did not question the authority of the emperor on all matters except as it relates to their interpretation of the scriptures. They wanted their rights (“mebt”) to their beliefs respected. Their “Hizbawi Imbita”, however, did not involve a large enough number of the population and hence did not force the emperor to mend the error of his ways. Regardless, they founded “Hizabawi Imbita” in the history of Ethiopia.

INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS.

a. Philosopher Zera Yacob (1599-1692).

Ethiopia was in turmoil after a jihad against the Christian Kingdom of 15th century. Kings came to power by violent means and the kings had Orthodox then Catholic and back again Orthodox faiths when Philosopher Zera Yacob of Aksum area went to monasteries, completed his education and lastly settled in self-exile at Infraz, northeast of Lake Tana. He wrote his book of 1667 at the urging of one of his students, while he was in self-exile at Infraz. He wrote his work in Ge'ez which was translated in different languages (Sumner 1973, 1982, 1985, 1986, Daniel Work, 1995). If Abba Estifanos was a fire brand New Testament evangelist, Philosopher Zera Yacob was a rational critic of organized religion, and he perceived that natural religion is “revealed” to reason. He pursued an Ethiopian type of discourse called “Hateta” based on which he satisfied himself about the existence of God. Zera Yacob argued that God is good and does not curse His own creation, so that he would not have incinerated any of His creations had they met Him with Prophet Moses. He continued his rational criticism of religion as shown below.

“In his kind wisdom the creator has ordered for blood to flow from a woman's womb every month. However, Moses and Christians have made this wisdom of God a cursed act. Additionally, Moses curses the man who mates with such a woman. This Law of Moses has brought hardships to her marriage and her life in general. It violates the law of reproduction. It hinders fostering children and destroys love. Thus this Law of Moses cannot be from the creator of women (Daniel Worku Kassa, 1995 Ethiopian calendar, p.20).

He exposed the falsity (or violation of natural laws) of religious tenets on fasting, celibacy, and criticize slavery as well as any form of violence. He believed in the equality of man and woman. He proclaimed that a man and woman are one in marriage and have equal property rights.

Regarding the pursuit of happiness Zera Yacob wrote: "God the master of morality created man to choose to be good or bad. Man can choose to be bad or a liar until he receives his punishment. However, since man is of the flesh he pursues happiness. Good or bad man pursues all avenues to please him (his flesh) (Daniel Worku Kassa, 1995 Ethiopian calendar, p.15).

As a rational criticism that organized religion may not be the way to reveal God, Zera Yacob wrote:

"As my faith appears true to me, so does another find his own faith true; but truth is one." (Sumner, 1985, p.236).

Since emperors and some other dictators base their power on divine rights as asserted by organized religions, when Zera Yacob debunked the role of organized religion for revealing God he provided the foundation for individual rights and the pursuit of happiness, and was the first in Ethiopian history to argue for the rights of women.

b. Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679).

Everybody wants to do whatever he or she wants, but they do not because they do not want to get hurt. So they enter into agreement that promises their survival. The people of that society listen to or are made to listen to a leader to whom they have given the authority to enforce laws and to ensure internal peace and a common defense.

The above is basically the political philosophy expounded by Thomas Hobbes in his 1651 book, the Leviathan. A contemporary of Zera Yacob, the English philosopher Thomas Hobbes graduated from Oxford and worked in France during the 1664 Civil war in Britain. He worried about individual and social rights and published books in Latin and in English. In early 1651, he published a translation of his Latin book *De Cive*, which included criticisms of religious doctrines, under the title *Philosophical Rudiments Concerning Government and Society*. And in the middle of 1651 he published his famous book *Leviathan, or the Matter, Form and Power of a Commonwealth, Ecclesiastical and Civil*. The cover of the Leviathan book depicted a crowned giant holding a sword and Crozier in its two hands, and exposing tiny humans below its waist of which it is composed. [URL14)

For Hobbes the society is an object of study. He was a theorist of natural state and social contract. He depicted an individual as a “self-centered-corporation,” and the state as a Leviathan or a monstrous humanoid as depicted in the engraving of the cover of his book. He perceived that individuals who compose the Leviathan lead a life that is

bound by the pressure of human needs, but have the capacity to destroy the Leviathan by human passion. He saw individuals with the right or the license to do anything they desired. Yet, in a world of scarce things, a constant rights-based human struggle would result in a "war of all against all. As he further put it: "In such a natural world, the life of man would be "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short." However, he reasoned, man is afraid of violent death, and self-defense against violent death is the highest human necessity out of which other rights are borne. These rights guide man against war and for peace, and are the foundation of a social contract between the individual and the government. Thus, Hobbes saw the need for a balance between individual rights and the social contract between individuals and a government that has absolute authority. [URL14]

c. John Locke (1632-1704)

Locke received the bachelor's degree in 1656, the master's degree in 1658, and the bachelor of medicine in 1674 from Oxford. While at Oxford he worked with such scientists as Robert Boyle. He was a Fellow of the Royal Society, and rubbed shoulders with Sir Isaac Newton. Locke was a practicing medical doctor, and a person of letters. Locke, among other achievements, provided amendments to Hobbes views particularly regarding the license of individuals to do every thing, and individuals bestowing power to an authority figure. He was also a theorist on the state of nature, natural laws, and social contract. Though in practice he might have lived differently his writing is powerfully liberal. He published some of his works, namely two treatise of government, anonymously for they dealt with political issues. He had influenced subsequent thinkers and the founders of the American constitution. His anonymously published second treatise on government that is currently available on the web is used in what follows. [URL15]

In his second treatise of government, John Locke (1690) explains the State of nature, in which man as a creation of God is free to do everything he pleases though he does not have the license to harm others. Then he explains the law of nature, in which he observes that man as a property of his creator does not have the right to destroy himself much less others. Humans are created by the labor of the Creator and as such are his property, and only he can dispose of his property, Locke argues. He continues, "by right of self-preservation, as every man has a power to punish the crime,

to prevent its being committed again,...: and thus it is, that every man, in the state of nature, has a power to kill a murderer, both to deter others from doing the like injury, .. and also to secure men from the attempts of a criminal.”

This logically resulted in his conclusion, “every man hath a right to punish the offender, and be executioner of the law of nature. Ultimately he argued that men have the right to revolt against an oppressor regime. In regard to invading humans in other countries, Locke enquired, “by what right any prince or state can put to death, or punish an alien, for any crime he commits in their country.” [URL15]

Therefore, he logically exposed that there is no foundation for preemptive attack of one nation by another.

d. Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778): on Social Contract.

Rousseau was music writer and political philosopher born in Geneva. Among his several works, Rousseau wrote in 1762 a book in French, which in English translates to Social Contract, Principles of Political Right. He argued that individuals in a society ought to make a social contract among each other, and not with a government or a leader. A society would have two organizations, the first one being the society as a sovereign and the second being a government that would discharge administrative responsibilities. Rousseau influenced the French revolution, and western political structure. [URL15]

e. The American Constitution (ratified in September 17, 1787)

The authors of the American Constitution were strongly influenced by John Locke. The American constitution is a document that enshrines the inalienable rights of individuals to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. It embodies a promise for a more perfect union that its citizens may work toward. Yet the constitution vests the power of defense and foreign policy issues on the president and depending on the outlook of the president and the political situation that he perceives lots of stuff may happen before the people catch up with what is going on.

f. President Woodrow Wilson (1856-1924) and the right to self-determination.

As a way of tearing down the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the First World War, Woodrow Wilson brought his Fourteen Points, including the rights of nation to self-determination. This self-determination principle is enshrined in the documents of the United Nations, which Wilson worked very hard to establish. The United Nations Charter does not and cannot condone preemption as a principle by which sister nations can coexist, for preemption will be internally inconsistent with the other well-founded principles of the Charter.

CONCLUSION.

There is no foundation in the state of nature, the law of nature, and the social contracts among individuals and/or between individuals and their governments, or the contracts entered among sister nations that could or would permit preemption as the right of any nation. The case of invading another country for the preemption of perceived offenses was and remains unthinkable to clear thinkers. John Locke has shown that no basis exists for a nation to punish individual of another nation in their country. The UN Charter, which enshrined President Wilson's self-determination principle, clearly opposes preemptive attacks of one country by another. Preemption is not a natural right or a right entered into by the concerned governments. It is a false right, claimed by a bully who terrorizes less strong members of the community of nations.

What is astonishing is how poor Ethiopia was used to invade Somalia, when Somalia was at its hour of weakness. Mr. Zenawi argued in favor of self-determination to support his rebel friend of old, Mr. Isaias Afewerki, as the reason for giving away coastal and maritime territories and properties of Ethiopia to Mr. Afewerki. Zenawi used all the power of the Ethiopian leader to work against the interests of Ethiopia in support of self-determination because he thought that he would personally benefit by that arrangement, and not because he had a belief in the value of self-determination. Likewise, Mr. Zenawi has used "the right of nations and nationalities to self-determination" as an instrument to let him divide the landlocked part of Ethiopia not because he understands or misreads the

meaning of self-determination, but because a divided country will allow him to pillage Ethiopia and enrich himself and his extended family. Clearly self-determination as a principle means nothing to Mr. Zenawi for he would not respect the right of self-determination of the Somali to form a Somalia. He invaded Somalia to vest a few Somalis in power and to oust others that most Somalis had preferred, because doing so will enable him to take a portion of the funds that western governments likely paid to get Ethiopians invade Somalia. His invasion was not limited to killing citizens of Somalia for he has bragged that he has killed citizens of other nations. What happened to Ethiopians who were refugees in Somalia? How many of them were killed? How many have been placed in prisons?

It must be emphasized that Zenawi sent soldiers into Somalia who arrived in Baidoa on July 20 before Sheik Aweys declared a Jihad against Ethiopia on July 21. Zenawi was the intruder that caused Aweys and other patriotic Somalis to raise their ire against Ethiopia. On the other hand, Aweys is not justified to declare a Jihad against Ethiopia for reasons that I repeat here. Firstly, his declaration is against the teachings of Prophet Mohammed. Secondly, there are more than twice as many Moslem Ethiopians than there are Moslem Somalis.

Zenawi went to Algiers to agree with Mr. Isaias Afewerki on how to place an international boundary within Ethiopia de Novo. The two cousins led a senseless war in which over 70,000 Ethiopians were killed. Zenawi goes through the motion of holding elections in Ethiopia. After losing the May 15, 2005 elections to the Kinijit Party, he placed the leaders of the Kinijit Party in jail where they

languishing from November 2005 to July 2007. He personally took over the command of the security apparatus of Ethiopia in which over 193 unarmed and peaceful Ethiopians were killed by a disproportionate use of force as attested by an inquiry commission that whose members he hand-picked and which his rubber stamp parliament appointed. As the outcry against his murderous rule built momentum, Zenawi invaded Somalia with an estimated 16,000 Ethiopian troops. He has shown “shock and awe” to himself and perhaps to admiring officials of Western governments who might give him a bonus for a job well done. However, what Zenawi has done, above all else, is soil the blameless name and history of Ethiopia, by dragging it down the gutter of invading a neighboring country. Somalia was invaded by Ethiopia for no discernible offense committed by Somalia against Ethiopia. On June 28, 2007, Zenawi asserted it was wrong miscalculation on his part to have invaded Somalia, as did the USA foreign office on July 1, 2007. Such mistakes resulted in the murder of thousands of innocent people, displacement of hundreds of thousands of others. Despite the assertions for miscalculations, either Ethiopia or the US government for the damages done on Somalia offered no compensation to the Somalis.

Nonetheless God loves the inhabitants of both Ethiopia and Somalia, and new opportunities for forging a union or working as independent nations have opened up for the people of the region. Regardless, since the end does not justify the means, all sane Ethiopians, Christians and Moslems, young and old, women and men, should condemn the contemptible invasion of Somalia by Zenawi, the irrational tyrant of Ethiopia. Responsible people should

do everything necessary to expose the fact that Zenawi's senseless invasion of Somali is not done with the best interests of Ethiopia, and does not represent the wishes of the people of Ethiopia, as neither does his rubber stamp parliament.

After Zenawi ascended to power in Ethiopia he made Ethiopia voiceless as he used the power of the "leadership of Ethiopia" to campaign and implement policies against the interests of Ethiopia and to place an international boundary within Ethiopia. The West was eager to comply with the wishes of Zenawi and implement international agreements that countered the interests of Ethiopia. Now Somali is made voiceless as the recent leadership of Somalia that people preferred was replaced by cohorts, which Zenawi was used to place in office. The current "leadership of Somalia", which is imposed on Somalia through Zenawi, does not speak against the murder of Somalis by foreign troops, preferring instead that more should be killed. Freedom loving people of both Ethiopia and Somalia have to work harder to regain the liberties of their people, who are made even harder because the West is behind leaders who work against the interests of the people that they purport to represent. It is as though time has reverted to the days of colonialism, where the coastal region of the Horn of Africa is forcibly fragmented into geographies of poverty and only the leadership sanctioned by colonial powers and partially paid for by the largess of the Western colonial powers are allowed to subsist.

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