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“Ethiopiawinet: A Reflective Quest to Promote Love, Tolerance, Reconciliation and Respect to all the People in Ethiopia and Humanity in the rest of the world”

It is an honor to be invited to give the keynote address at this prestigious 2018 Bikila Award Ceremony. I congratulate you all for keeping on this important award ceremony and wish you great success in keeping on keeping this great mission. I would also like to congratulate Professor Getatchew Haile for receiving the 2018 Lifetime Achievement Award. How I wish I was able to come and get the opportunity to join Prof. Getatchew, his beloved family and all of you indeed, on this highly deserved recognition ceremony of this patriotic son of Ethiopia and all the other successful Ethiopians.

Dear brother Ato Tessema Mulugeta asked me to write my reflections on Ethiopiawinet (Being Ethiopian) quest for love, peace, forgiveness, reconciliation and tolerance among Ethiopians.

I am not sure how much we know about Ethiopia. To be honest, Ethiopia has a global recognition for the provision of spiritual strength to humanity than any other country in the world. Ethiopia goes beyond a nation and country. Ethiopia combines civilization, history, humanity and philosophy combined. Ethiopia has given spirituality with Africa for Africans, Africans for humanity and humanity for God. Ethiopia has a unique place in the universe for empowering those that were disempowered, for humanizing those that were dehumanized, spiritualizing those that were denied their right to worship God and inspiring and strengthening those oppressed to resist oppression. Africans and people of African origin all over the world say “it is Ethiopia that made us human, made us worship God and have access to Christ and provided us the spiritual, mental and physical strength to resist the enslavement and colonial onslaught on our lives.” Ethiopia has remained a great inspiration just by her sheer sense of its very being becoming recognized as the provider of liberation resources to all humanity. Ethiopianism remains very relevant for continuing to provide spiritual strength, confidence, independence, self-worth and freedom, to all those who were denied their humanity and their right to worship God.

Ethiopia’s name has been used to declare two Manifestos. The first was the 1829 Manifesto written by Robert Alexander Young in the US. And the 2nd one was the 1896 Ethiopia Manifesto that was declared in the Southern African region “calling all Africans across the globe to form an African nation with/using Ethiopianism.” The Great African Adwa victory, when Ethiopia became the first African country to defeat colonial Italy and remain un-colonized, has been recognized as a global heritage by others but not by Ethiopians, sadly! This victory of 1896 at Adwa is the root of Ethiopianism and then pan-Africanism. Due to this victory, as Ogbu Kalu in his chapter “Ethiopianism in African Christianity” puts it “Ethiopia became a symbol of African redemption, political and religious ideology that continued to inspire through generations.” The Ethiopianism includes eight main principles. These are spiritual liberty, self-confidence, self-worth, self-sufficiency, resisting external oppression, mediating the spiritual freedom with the earthly or worldly freedom, cooperating and standing with the oppressed and humanity, caring for one another. These principles guided the Ethiopianism, Pan-Africanism and then the African renaissance movement.

Encyclopedia Britannica describes Ethiopianism as such:

Ethiopianism, religious movement among sub-Saharan Africans that embodied the earliest stirrings toward religious and political freedom in the modern colonial period. The mystique of the term Ethiopianism derived from its occurrence in the Bible. Use of the term was enhanced when the kingdom of Ethiopia defeated the Italians at the Battle of Adwa in 1896. The word therefore represented Africa's dignity and place in the divine dispensation and provided a charter for free African churches and nations of the future.

The victory at the Battle of Adwa was recognized as world-history because without the Adwa victory the de-colonization process in the world would have taken a different path. The Adwa Victory has made a difference, not just to Ethiopia and Africa, but also to the entire world. This message is promoted not by Ethiopians and Africans, but also by Westerners.

Ethiopia has successfully united the people to resist external colonial powers. There were some who betrayed Ethiopia and sided with the enemies of Ethiopia. Now over the last 27 years Ethiopia has been subjected to ethnic division. What the colonial enemies failed to do, our own Ethiopians from the TPLF/EPRDF government did it and implemented the divide and rule ethnic federalism. When the then colonizers of the Fascist Italian regime came to re-occupy Ethiopia, they had promoted the ethnic division that is now known as killel. If you all read Barron Roman Prochaska's book *Abyssinia the powder Barrel*, you will see that he vehemently denounced Ethiopia and called all the colonial powers to eradicate Ethiopia through ethnic division and rule by strongly denouncing especially to quote him the "Amhara and the Orthodox Church."

Identity politics, as it is becoming a threat in the developed world, it is also becoming threat in Ethiopia and to Ethiopianism. Can you believe that recently in capital Addis Ababa, Ethiopians were attacked because they belonged to a certain ethnic group and were even told to leave the capital because they were labeled as "settlers" in their own land? Ethnicism is an evil disease. It should be removed from Ethiopia.

Today, in Ethiopia, there is a beacon of positive political transition with the coming to power of a new team of government administrators, who espouse the Ethiopianism vision. The current Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed is promoting Love, Reconciliation, Forgiveness and Tolerance. I also recommend that we all should join and do the following:

- The Ethiopianism philosophy should now include the love, reconciliation, tolerance and forgiveness message that is spreading within and across.
- We should go for the 3rd version or the "2018 Ethiopia Manifesto"
- Promote Unity of all Ethiopians by doing away with the "killel" or the regionalizing identity designations, categorizations and classifications

- Change the constitution
- Bring back Ethiopia's historic flag
- Revitalize Pan-Africanism and the African renaissance

The period from 1829 to 1929 was known as the classical period of Ethiopianism. Now, let us resuscitate and make the period from 2018 to 2118 the time for the revival of the Ethiopianism philosophy to save humanity and this planet from all the divisive and identity politics. After 2118, we can go for the 4th Ethiopia Manifesto and it can go on!

In the 3rd Ethiopia Manifesto, let us inscribe that no politics is worthy enough to kill another human being. Fetrari or God created humans in his own image, to hurt them is to hurt God! That is why you find this phrase in the bible "Ethiopia stretches her hands unto God" not to weapons!

Currently, I am working with the Pan-African Federation Movement to adopt the Ethiopian flag and the Ethiopian Ge'ez alphabet as the flag and language of the new federated and united Africa.

I want the Abebe Bikilia Award Team to join us in these endeavors.

Let us reaply the successes of our beloved brother, the late Marathoner, Abebe Bikila to make Ethiopianism Philosophy achieve in uniting Ethiopians free from all the ethnic diseases!

Congratulations once again and wishing you a great success deep from my heart:

Professor Mammo Muchie, DST/NRF Rated SARChI Research Chair, Faculty of Management Sciences, Tshwane University of Technology, South Africa.

Prof. Mammo was born in Gonder and completed his elementary school in one of the oldest schools in Gonder, Tsadiku Yohannes Elementary School. He is now raising funds with his daughter using the Go Fund Me website to rebuild the school. (<https://www.gofundme.com/tsadiku-yohannes-bright-futures>)

