

Greater Ethiopianist Narrative on Eritrea: A 75-Year Ruse Exposed-Part 1 & 2

Thoughts and rants of an Eritrean-American.

April 5, 2017

This article is the first in a series on the “Greater Ethiopianist Narrative on Eritrea.” The series is a response to the frantic campaign over the past year by a special group of Eritrea-Ethiopia experts to reframe understandings of emerging unfavorable news on the countries to fit a false narrative on Eritrea designed to justify Ethiopia’s militaristic territorial expansion in the name of regional stability, economic growth and global strategic interests. The series will contextualize the extraordinary claims of these perennially wrong “Greater Ethiopianist” experts (e.g. “no famine,” “economic miracle,” etc.) and their deceptive narrative that has misled the world, bringing endless conflict and profound human misery to the Horn of Africa. Part 1 gives a broad introduction of the narrative, its origins and impetus, its main peddler’s and its evolution towards today’s understanding.

“Those who tell the stories rule the world.” – Hopi Proverb

A narrative is simply a story. These stories are built by news reports—sometimes accurate, sometimes

inaccurate—framed by expert analysis. Due to lack of coverage, the conventional narratives on African nations have been [notoriously inaccurate](#). However, narratives can be challenged and changed for the better. As such, a recent barrage of news reports on political developments transpiring in the Horn of Africa have poked new holes in the checkered conventional narratives on two notable, disputing states within the region—namely, Ethiopia and Eritrea.

For the better part of the last year, Ethiopia, which has been trumpeted in the media as an economic powerhouse of “stability” and a Western ally, has undergone a dramatic sociopolitical and economic unravelling that now challenges the very survival of the Ethiopian nation-state. Some of Ethiopia’s many growing problems include looming famine, mass protests, political repression, mass incarceration, ethnic warfare and genocide. These developments challenge the notion of an economically successful and stable Ethiopia.

In contrast, Eritrea, which has long been portrayed by the media as an isolated, failing state and an unruly force of regional instability that is unfriendly to Western interests, has very visibly strengthened her relationship with Western nations and entrenched herself as a critical piece in promoting regional stability. Some of Eritrea’s recent actions towards these positive ends include entering into Red Sea security agreements, strengthening diplomatic and financial ties to the EU and becoming a leader in

achieving all health-related Millennium Development Goals. These actions challenge the notion of an isolated and unfriendly Eritrea.

This recent turn of events inside the Horn have led to growing criticisms about the dominant narratives on both Ethiopia and Eritrea. For instance, respected French journalist René Lefort, who has reported on Sub-Saharan Africa for *Le Monde* and other publications since the 1970s, [rang the alarm bells](#) in an article from February this year concerning the growing unrest in Ethiopia's Oromia region triggered by the government's failed "Master Plan" that Lefort called "the straw that broke the camel's back." Listing a host of issues, including drought affecting 20 million citizens, and reminding his readers that the overthrow of the last two Ethiopian regimes came after the "famines that preceded them", Lefort went on to predict that the "worst is yet to come", that the Ethiopian state was "a crumbling pyramid" and that "faced with these challenges...maintaining the status quo, has become untenable."

Such negative critiques are growing and fly in the face of much more sanguine reporting this past year that has heralded Ethiopia as an "economic miracle", "East Africa's big success" and "Africa's next hegemon." Contradictions have sparked new questions: How can there be an "economic miracle" when more than 20% of Ethiopia's population survives on foreign food assistance? Likewise, developments this past year have also poked holes in the story on Eritrea. American diplomat Herman Cohen wrote in February that

Eritrea, which the Western media has called a regional “spoiler” and a candidate for the US’s “State Sponsors of Terrorism” list, had joined a regional anti-terrorist coalition where “the list of countries in that coalition are all good friends of the United States”. How can one address this contradiction? Is the narrative on Eritrea correct?

It has been impossible to ignore the gaping plot holes that have emerged this past year, which have invited radical academic critiques that attempt to reframe the national narratives to fit—rather than contradict—ground realities in Ethiopia and Eritrea. Over this same interval, a special coterie of Western academics on the conflict-riddled Horn, who wield unparalleled status as authoritative experts, have taken up a new, insidious campaign to reframe the national narratives in creative ways that address outstanding contradictions and rehash storylines to fit the same “Greater Ethiopianist” narration that has shaped US policy in the region for almost three-quarters of a century.

One is at loss to explain how the very same people who initially created, shaped and promoted the checkered narratives on Eritrea and Ethiopia, which has turned the Horn into the most conflict-riddled region on Earth, are now the ones who provide the world—via leading foreign policy mediums—with their same “expert” analyses on the two countries that appear to only reiterate rehashes of the same Greater Ethiopianist narrative.

What's more surprising—and the primary impetus for this article series—is the disconcerting fact that de Waal and the aforementioned experts are publishing these very types of articles in major publications regularly and are the most authoritative voices in the Eritrea-Ethiopia discourse, framing the official narrative on the two countries. This narrative adopts the “Great Ethiopianist” version, which leads us to the following important question: What, exactly, is the Greater Ethiopianist narrative?

75 Years of Greater Ethiopianism

According to a May 2000 [article](#) by Eritrean historian Alemseged Tesfai:

“Apart from strategic interests in the Horn, which obviously gives priority to huge Ethiopia over its smaller neighbors, our problem with the West has also been their blind and total acceptance and fascination with the Ethiopian myth. An array of their own scholars – the Pankhursts, Clapham, Gilkes, Erlich, Marcus, Rubenson and a former American spy named Paul Henze, to name a few – have seen to it that the Ethiopian ruling class version of history is firmly implanted in the minds of Western thinking. These are career Ethiopianists whose every prediction about Eritrea has been disproved by its present existence and status. They can't wait to see it go, even reconquered by Ethiopia, if it were possible.

This “myth” was given a popular name three decades prior. In his 1974 book *Greater Ethiopia: The Evolution*

of a Multiethnic Society, Donald N. Levine introduced the name and concept of “Greater Ethiopia,” which he candidly admitted was an arbitrarily contrived “image” based on a “popular” historical “assumption”. In the name of creating one common, indigenous “Ethiopian” identity for “autonomous and distinct ‘African’ tribes” native to the Horn that was not defined by subjugation to an “alien Semetic minority...of the first millennium B.C.”, he proposed creating an older pre-Semetic “Greater Ethiopia” as an “image of an arbitrary empire composed of numerous isolated and vastly diverse subject peoples with the image of a vast ecological area and historical arena in which kindred peoples have shared many traditions and interacted with one another for millennia.”

After arbitrarily proposing the “image” of Greater Ethiopia, he further proposes to arbitrarily impose “unity” upon the peoples in its realm, in spite of their divergent histories, on the grounds that they share the following: “(1) a continuous process of interaction of the differentiated Ethiopian peoples with one another; (2) the existence of number of pan-Ethiopian culture traits; and (3) a characteristic mode of response to the periodic intrusion of alien peoples and cultures.”

Thus, Levine defined, for Western academia, a mythical polity superimposed over the Horn region that would give the modern Ethiopian state a popular name for an ensuing narrative (i.e. “image”) that gave it the justification and pretext to expand its territories for the “unity” of all Ethiopian peoples (Note: The cogency of the argument that the existence of Greater

Ethiopia is indeed a myth, never existing in the Horn—even in name—hitherto the late 19th century, will be thoroughly elucidated and expounded upon in later parts in this series).

Though Levine may have introduced the official term into the public lexicon that would inaugurate an official narrative, the principle ideas and conceptual framework behind the Greater Ethiopia narrative actually emanate from the 1940's machinations of British colonialists in Eritrea, who previously allied themselves with Emperor Haile Selassie's Ethiopia for an Allied victory in World War II.

It's hardly a coincidence that a disproportionate majority of today's leading Greater Ethiopianist figures (e.g. Clapham, de Waal, Plaut, Gilkes, etc.) arise from Britain, a nation with perhaps the most enduring colonial legacy; a nation that brought Africa the globally-unmatched barbarism of Cecil Rhodes and the most masterful—yet subtle—application of imperial Roman “divide and conquer” tactics upon its colonial African subjects, whom still have yet to recover. In fact, it was the British, itching for their “Cape to Cairo Red Line,” that were key in the Italian colonialization of Eritrea that “was connived at and, indeed encouraged by the British, who saw in the development of Italian influence in the Red Sea a useful counter to the French.” (Trevaskis, G.K.N. *Eritrea: A Colony in Transition, 1941-1952*. Oxford University Press. London. 1960. pp. 7-8.)

From the earliest days of the British Military Administration (BMA) in Eritrea, the British worked

to dismember the nation and extinguish all aspirations for independence by portraying it as fragmented and non-viable. Rather than using direct force, they employed cunning, covert action and political sabotage in order to deceive Eritreans into willingly buy into the illusion of a democratic “choice” and “free press”; to instigate division among the people and ultimately weaken their final bid for self-determination.

It is at this critical juncture in history, under the decade-long rule of the British that the seeds of the Greater Ethiopianist narrative on Eritrea would be cultivated to develop the sturdy roots of a conceptual framework, based on mythology and revisionism, that would mislead international audiences on the Eritrea-Ethiopia discourse for the next 75 years. Brigadier Stephen H. Longrigg, the BMA’s Chief Administrator from 1942 to 1944, wrote in his 1945 book *A Short History of Eritrea* that “rich or great, Eritrea will never become; it may, indeed, disappear as a political unit completely from the map.” Much like today’s Greater Ethiopianists, Longrigg employed fraud and propaganda to meet his objectives for Eritrea.

In an illuminating 2006 [study](#) published in the Nordic Journal of African Studies, Tufts professor Astier Almedom’s contextualized retelling of the account by Eritrean national hero *Ato* Woldeab Woldemariam about a high-profile fraud scandal involving Longrigg (first captured in Alemseged Tesfai’s popular history book *Aynfalale 1941-50*), highlights the essence of the British narration on Eritrea as well as the elaborate and deceptive lengths at which they went to divide

Eritreans and procure dominance of their narrative in the public mind.

Writing under the pseudonym “Hade Ertrawi” and impersonating a Tigrinya-speaking Christian highlander, Longrigg penned a highly incendiary essay in the August 3, 1944 issue of the Eritrean Weekly News (EWN) that cast the writer as a well-educated ethnic and religious chauvinist who argued, by misleading yet convincing reasoning, the following points: (a) Eritrean independence was no longer possible; (b) the need to partition Eritrea with the lands of Muslim Arabic-speaking lowlanders going to Anglo-Egyptian Sudan and the lands of Christian Tigrinya-speaking highlanders going to imperial Ethiopia; (c) the superiority of Tigrinya speakers; and (d) the reality that Tigrinya and Tigrayan ethnic groups were “one people” responsible for Ethiopian civilization that peaked when center on Axum (*i.e.* Northern Ethiopia).

With the essay, Longrigg crafted the precursor to the Greater Ethiopianist narrative on Eritrea that, much like today, markets the interior Ethiopian highland as the most natural and historic center of the region’s political gravity (Abyssinian-/Axumite-centrism) with the historic right to absorb the otherwise politically unstable peripheral territories of their long-lost Christian Tigrinya kin, who occupy Eritrea’s highlands and central coastlands.

The essay instigated tensions and was followed by a campaign of similar inflammatory submissions to EWN, both real and fraudulent. Violence followed. The

BMA countered by reducing the police force patrolling streets. The ensuing crime was branded as “banditry” by politically divided peoples (Foreign Office, 371/90319) and, according to Nene Mburu’s 2001 [study](#), was used to portray Eritreans as “hopelessly fractionalized along ethnic and religious lines” so that “the international community could accept [Britain’s] recommendation on Eritrea’s sovereignty”. In 1945, Longrigg’s publication “Disposal of Italian Africa” in the journal of *Royal Institute of International Affairs* echoed his fraudulent essay and proposed that Eritrea be partitioned and absorbed into imperial Ethiopia and Anglo-Egyptian Sudan (see Figure 1).

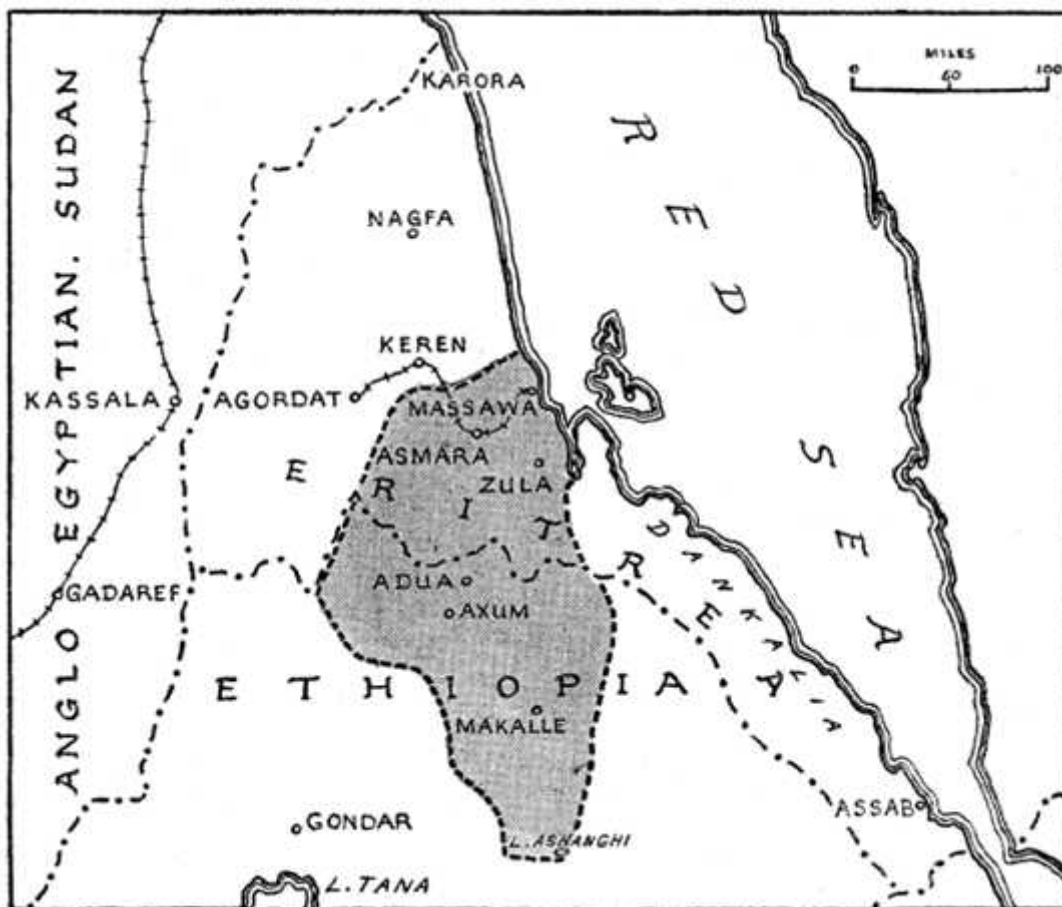


Figure 1. Longrigg’s map of proposed partitioning of Eritrea with (1) North going to Sudan; (2) the

southeastern “Dankali coast with Assab (useless to Eritrea, invaluable to Ethiopia) should be handed without restriction to the Emperor” and (3) the central region (shaded dark) that he infamously called “Greater Tigrai” to be “administered, at least for a considerable term of years, on the Emperor’s behalf and authority, by a European Power in alliance with him” because central Eritrea was “highly developed: it has superb roads, a railway, airports, a European city as its capital, public services up to European standards” that its conferral to imperial rule that has the “sort of administration seen today elsewhere in Ethiopia” would usher “the loss in progress, the increase in human misery, would be too tragic.” Source: International Affairs [Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-], Vol. 21, No. 3 [Jul., 1945], pp. 363-369.

Though Eritrea was the second most industrialized country in Sub-Saharan Africa after only South Africa, the British misled the world about its economic viability as a sovereign state, going so far as to dismantle, destroy and uproot entire Eritrean industries to strengthen its case. On April 18, 1946, a memorandum from the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to the British Cabinet deemed British-administered Eritrea as “disunited and economically non-viable” such that it provided “no good reason for preserving it as an administrative unit under any form of administration.”

By 1952, US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, addressing the UN Security Council on the Eritrean question, infamously stated, “From the point of view of justice, the opinion of the Eritrean people must receive consideration. Nevertheless, the strategic interests of the United States in the Red Sea Basin and world peace make it necessary that the country be linked with our ally Ethiopia.”

In essence, it was the British narrative that portrayed Eritrea as unfit for sovereignty and in need of Ethiopian unification that afforded the US to present before an unwitting world public the claim, on superficially reasonable grounds, that Eritrea had negative strategic value as a sovereign state and would make for a more peaceful world under Ethiopian rule. Ethiopia ultimately federated and illegal annexed Eritrea, leading to the Eritrean people’s 30-year liberation war (1961-91)—then Africa’s longest.

The Rise Greater Ethiopianist Experts

In the same vein as the British colonialists, a small circle of Ethiopianist academics and experts, some of which linked to intelligence agencies, surfaced during the twilight, famine-stricken years of Haile Selassie’s reign to undermine Eritrean liberation war efforts by marketing Longrigg’s narrative on Eritrea—rebranded as Levine’s “Greater Ethiopia”—and perpetually reframing it thereafter to withstand the inevitable barrage of honest critiques without ever veering from the same false storyline.

The leading voices among the pre-liberation Ethiopianists were the following three: (1) Paul Henze, CIA Station Chief in Ethiopia from 1969-72 who wrote on Eritrea and Ethiopia for the RAND Corporation from 1985-92; (2) British former journalist Patrick Gilkes, who covered the HOA for BBC, worked for Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) and lectured at Haile Selassie University; and (3) British professor Christopher Clapham, who lectured on African studies at Addis Ababa, Lancaster and Cambridge Universities and has written extensively on Eritrea and Ethiopia since the 1960s.

All three spent extensive time in Addis Ababa and served as the go-to academic authorities on the unfolding “insurgency” in “northern Ethiopia” (i.e. Eritrea). All three were notorious for repeatedly failing to acknowledge major Eritrean battlefield victories, blatantly lying, downplaying the changing tides of war, peddling anti-Eritrea bias and projecting unduly gloomy forecasts about Eritrea’s prospects. Other journalist and academics followed in suit, misinforming policymakers and public opinion.

Attempting to tie the myth of Eritrean disunity into supposed Eritrean battlefield weaknesses, Henze wrote in his January 1985 RAND [report](#) that “There is no Eritrean nationality or Eritrean language. Eritrea is a patchwork...language and religious divisions overlap. Eritrean insurgents were sharply divided...and these cleavages remain important today.” Knowing full well that any connection to the Soviets would deter Washington support for Eritrean

liberation fighters, he alleged, “Soviets played an active behind-the-scenes role in supporting [the Eritrean] insurgency through East European and radical Arab proxies and...Cubans.” In actual fact, were it not for staunch Soviet support for the beleaguered Derg in 1977 bringing endless MiGs, tanks, Katyusha rocket launchers and advisers liberation would have likely come a decade earlier.

His December 1985 [report](#) prepared for the US Undersecretary of Defense for Policy warned that “Catering to separatist delusions serves no purpose. Tactical support...serves no purpose...They are more anti-Derg than anti-Soviet.” Boldly, he asserted, “An independent Eritrea could never secure broad recognition in Africa.”

In their book *Ghosts and Shadows*, which explores African immigrant communities’ varied perceptions of their home-nations, John Sorenson and Atsuko Matsuoka explain that the “discourse on Eritrean nationalism remained marginal until the final years of the war, when an EPLF victory began to seem inevitable. Even then, many journalists and academics continued to endorse Ethiopian hegemony.” For example, only eleven months before the Eritrean People’s Liberation Front’s (EPLF) March 1988 victory in the Battle of Afabet, which saw [20,000 Ethiopian troops killed in 48 hours](#) and [hailed](#) by Basil Davidson as “the most significant conventional battle in the Third World...since Dien Bien Phu”, Clapham published a [paper](#) claiming that the Derg’s socialist economic transformation was a success and would lead

to a defeat of Eritrea—a nation “of marginal economic importance” (*African Affairs*, V86, No. 343, 1987).

Contrary to their assertion and distorted misrepresentation of facts on the ground, the Eritrean people, under the leadership of the EPLF, militarily and politically defeated the Ethiopian occupation army and declared Eritrea’s independence on May 24, 1991. On May 27, 1991, the forces of the Tigrayan People’s Liberation Front (TPLF) also took full control of Ethiopia. From 1991 to 1998 peace prevailed between Eritrea and Ethiopia with free movement of goods and people. The Ethiopian people were given full access to the ports of Eritrea free of charge.

In the wake of liberation in 1991, a traumatized and disgruntled Gilkes, writing in *African Affairs*, complained that “writing on Eritrea has been...a product of the ‘guerilla groupie’” that has taken “EPLF, at its own evaluation, and its historical claims as fact” resulting in a “distorted national mythology” (V90, No. 361, 1991). In essence, Gilkes, who witnessed EPLF’s popular nationalist narrative wholly supplant his own anti-national Greater Ethiopianist version, was simply making a case to support development of new, revisionist, non-nationalist narratives mirroring his own.

With peace between the Eritrean and Ethiopian people after 1991, the veteran Greater Ethiopianists all went into hibernation disgraced by their analytical failures. In 1998, however, Eritrea and Ethiopia returned to war under the pretext of the contested border town Badme. Immediately, Henze, Gilkes and Clapham resurfaced.

As proven, long-time Greater Ethiopianists, their biased coverage of the war was not lost on Eritrea-Ethiopia observers. According to Sorenson and Matsuoka's book, "Gilkes's own coverage of the war conveyed sympathy for Ethiopia, although he hardly matched the fervent boosterism of Paul Henze...Henze's 18 January 2000 essay 'Eritrea's War Against Ethiopia,' posted on Ethiopian government websites, claimed that 'all problems derive from Eritrea's invasion of Ethiopian-administered territory...Historian Christopher Clapham consistently attacks any scholar he judges favorable to Eritrean or Oromo nationalism, deriding them as blinded by sentiment while denying his own emotional commitments."

Although there were certainly other notable pre-1991 Greater Ethiopianists, which included Peter Schwab, Hagai Erlich, Richard and Sylvia Pankhurst, Harold Marcus, Sven Rubenson and John Markakis—just to name a few—these experts lacked the (1) authoritative agenda-setting status, (2) longevity of Eritrea-antagonism and (3) close association to the British, American and Ethiopian foreign policy apparatus. However, all were toxic to improving public understanding, opinion and debate on the Horn to varying degrees, while some were employees of intelligence agencies. For example, while driving from Filfil to Asmara during a visit to Eritrea in 2015, a geriatric Markakis revealed to a group of three others, including this author, that he was recruited in his youth by the Central Intelligence Agency and sent to Ethiopia to field intelligence under the cover of

conducting “research.” Notably, Markakis is an editor of journal *Review of African Political Economy*.

A New Generation

Emerging alongside the three bona fide pre-liberation Ethiopianists was a new generation of academics and experts, taking a more leftist, activist position that would be palatable to Eritrean audiences tired of overt Greater Ethiopianism, to continue propagation of a rehashed Greater Ethiopianist narrative in the ensuing Eritrean-Ethiopian War. The new breed included Martin Plaut, Dan Connell and Alex de Waal.

British journalist Martin Plaut, a former Africa editor for BBC World Service news and adviser to both the UK FCO and US State Department (USSD) with a leftist leaning that spans back to his days as a Young Fabian in Apartheid South Africa, worked under the tutelage of his close friend and fellow BBC journalist Gilkes. Writing books together and covering the Eritrean-Ethiopian War, they used their influence within BBC to tailor reporting against Eritrea and worked incessantly to portray Eritrea as the aggressor in a petty “border dispute”, exactly as suggested by Sorenson and Matsuoka. Plaut, unlike openly anti-Eritrean Gilkes, was considered friend of Eritrea during his time there as a journalist in the 1980’s.

Alex De Waal, a social anthropologist by training who studied famine in Sudan during the mid-1980’s, worked for the Africa Watch division of Human Rights Watch (HRW) from 1989-92 and was peace mediator in the Darfur crisis. In September 1991, four months after

Eritrea was already liberated, he published his “Evil Days” report for HRW chronicling the egregious human rights abuses in the 30 years hitherto by the Ethiopian occupying regime, giving him just enough credibility in his Eritrea dossier to call him an expert on the Horn. Like Plaut and Connell, de Waal was initially considered to be a friend of Eritrea.

His political bias towards Eritrea first surfaced in 1999, after he cofounded the London-based human rights organization Justice Africa with an Eritrean regime-change activist of dubious history during his time as leader of the once-prominent Eritrean Relief Association (ERA). De Waal’s own ex-wife and former colleague at Tufts, Astier Almedom, [gave some background](#) on de Waal’s collaborator:

“Brutal disinformation campaigns aiming to penetrate and break up the Eritrean leadership continued even after the border conflict ended. Eritrean (insider) pundits also played their part. For example, the organizer of the meeting of Eritrean ‘intellectuals’ who drafted of the so-called ‘Berlin Manifesto’ of 2001, a former civilian member who had deserted the EPLF in 1990 amidst allegations of fraud and misappropriation of ERA funds in Khartoum...working for reputable European NGOs who funded in good faith his campaigns against Eritrean unity cloaked under a ‘human rights’ banner.

Interestingly, this same Eritrean collaborator, in addition to others, worked closely with Connell in

South Africa following the signing of the Eritrea-Ethiopia peace agreement in Algiers in 2000.

Connell worked as a freelance journalist in Eritrea since the 1970's and, like Henze, appears to be linked to US intelligence (agent or asset). According to a leaked September 23, 1978, US embassy cable from Khartoum, he was sent under the cover of a journalist "to observe the military situation" in Eritrea "as a guest of EPLF" and "expected to brief [EMBOFF] after." Since his emergence as an Eritrea "expert" in the late 1990s, Connell has published a large body of publications, ignoring Ethiopian failures and aggression while vehemently attacking the failures of the Eritrean leadership, the People's Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ; formerly EPLF). Later articles in this series will cover Connell in greater detail.

According to Sorenson and Matsuoka's book:

"Those journalists and academics who have lived and worked in Ethiopia echo the discourse of Greater Ethiopian nationalists while denouncing opposing views as biased. They emphasize Eritrea's belligerence by citing previous disputes with Sudan, Yemen, and Djibouti, even while downplaying Ethiopia's own disputes with neighboring states. Under the guise of objectivity, they exclude alternative perspectives, thereby denying identity and history to groups such as Eritreans or Oromos. Their goal is less to defend truth than to produce a version of it that excludes and discredits dissident voices.

In this fashion, Connell, de Waal and Plaut have worked together against Eritrea, citing each other's publications as once did Henze, Plaut and Clapham, and are now the leading proponents of the Greater Ethiopianist narrative on Eritrea. Unlike their predecessors, who spent significant time inside Addis Ababa, they have focused more of their work on human rights activism from Western capitals.

Whereas the pre-liberation Ethiopianists focused on cold geopolitical strategy and propaganda that sought to shape pro-state perceptions of the war (pro-Derg), the neo-Ethiopianists instead focus more on civil society activism and human rights campaigning that seeks to promote anti-state sentiments (anti-PFDJ). In both cases, the target remains the same: the Eritrean people's leadership.

Connell, de Waal and Plaut, all of whom have histories of leftist orientation and/or human rights advocacy, may have been recruited by older Greater Ethiopianists on the basis of their progressive resumes better enabling them to make prodigious use of the rapidly growing body of institutions, instruments and treaties designed to enforce international human rights law.

With the grooming and subsequent rise of their protégés following the 1998-2000 war, Henze and Gilkes went to Addis Ababa to work as advisers of the ruling ethnic minority regime, the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (TPLF). Henze sat on the Ethiopian National Security Council until he passed away in 2011. After working as a Horn of Africa expert for the

UK FCO from 2002-04, Gilkes has since moved to Addis Ababa (married to an Ethiopian), serving as strategic advisor to the Ethiopian Foreign Minister. Clapham, continues to publish and speak at seminars about Eritrea-Ethiopia, using his global influence as former, long-time editor of *African Affairs* and as professor at the Centre of Africa Studies at Cambridge University to sully Eritrean leadership and depict Eritrea a “tragedy”.

Instead of the MFA in Addis Ababa, the post-1991 Greater Ethiopianists convene at invite-only conferences on Eritrea under the banner of “African studies” or human rights activism in Western academic and political centers such as London, Brussels, Boston and Washington. However, the downward spiraling of the situation in Ethiopia has forced this new generation to Addis Ababa and take on new frenzied campaign to allay concerns about Ethiopia and provoke fear about Eritrea.

Notably, there are a number of honorable mentions for other supposed experts who help buttress official narrative on Eritrea and Ethiopia to fit the Greater Ethiopianist agenda. One can point to Richard Reid, Michaela Wrong, Kjetil Tronvoll, Nicole Hirt, Mirjam van Reisen, David Bozzini a handful of other names. However, unlike these smaller players, Connell, de Waal and Plaut have been groomed, like Henze, Gilkes, and Clapham to become the agenda-setting experts that collaborate closely with the USSD, UK FCO and Ethiopian MFA to ultimately continue the same

divisive 1940's Greater Ethiopia policies in the Horn of Africa.

It appears that the common thread among most of today's Greater Ethiopianists experts on Eritrea is that most of them started their careers as friends of Eritrea (e.g. Connell, Plaut), lived or taught in Eritrea (e.g. Hirt, Wrong) or were in intimate relationships with Eritreans (e.g. de Waal, Reid). After gaining a following during an incubation period, they often turn against the state—almost overnight—referring to their former closeness to Eritrea as proof of their credibility. Soon enough they publish papers with the older, more established Greater Ethiopianists, repeating their same narrative and working to turn their honest Eritrea-sympathizing colleagues against Eritrea (as Connell attempted to do with the renowned Africanist scholar Basil Davidson). This is the modus operandi of today's Greater Ethiopianists.

This concludes the first part of this series. Subsequent parts will cover the recent publications and work of the individual Greater Ethiopianist over this past year, who have essentially told us that “everything is okay in Ethiopia” and that “everything is falling apart in Eritrea.” We give these claims by these specific persons a closer look.

Greater Ethiopianist Narrative on Eritrea: Agent Dan Connell-Part 2

Thoughts and rants of an Eritrean-American.

This article is the second part in the series on the “Greater Ethiopianist Narrative on Eritrea.” This part takes a closer look at the central role of Dan Connell in promoting the Greater Ethiopianist narrative.



Dan Connell. Source: hornofafrica.de

Over this past year, a small coterie of individuals branded by the media as “experts” on Eritrea have initiated a dogged campaign to buttress the checkered [Greater Ethiopianist narrative on Eritrea](#). Chief among them has been Dan Connell, a former journalist and professor covering Eritrea.

On March 28, 2016, Connell [gave an interview](#) in Ethiopia’s capital Addis Ababa on Tefera Gedamu’s *Meet EBC* show about the current situation in Eritrea.

Note, the subject of conversation was not Ethiopia but rather Eritrea.

In the interview, Connell talks about Eritrean migration, calling it an “exodus” and painting migration from the country as a totally exceptional phenomenon without compare elsewhere in the world. Despite worldwide acknowledgement, including the European Union’s, that “pull factors” in Europe are largely responsible for driving Eritrean migration, Connell calls these factors a “myth” and states, “the reverse is true that it’s the push—first from Eritrea.”

He blames Eritrea’s national service program while wholly ignoring the fact that military service policies in Eritrea, a nation of only 3.5 million people, are merely a secondary response to the very real and unrelenting existential threat from Ethiopia, a nation of almost 100 million people whose military is currently occupying Eritrean territories.

What does he prescribe as a solution? Rather than decisively addressing root causes like the ongoing illegal Ethiopian occupation of Eritrean territories, surprisingly, he tells Tefera, a long time media and culture spokesman for the Tigrayan People’s Liberation Front (TPLF) regime in Ethiopia, that the world should invest in—instead of Eritrea—*Ethiopian* refugee camps to “stabilize the flow and keep people in the region.” Why not directly invest in Eritrea or in ending Ethiopian occupation?

He adds a divisive ethnic dimension to his analysis of Eritrean migration, focusing on the alleged persecution

of the Afars and the Kunama by the Eritrean government. He states, “the Kunama and the Afar—those two—have a distinctive experience. They have gone through everything that the Tigrinya speakers have gone through in terms of political repression and manipulation with the additional fact of ethnic discrimination.”

He then goes on to corroborate the politically-motivated accusations made in the UN Commission of Inquiry report about human rights abuses in Eritrea. According to him, abuses emanate from “the system”, which he says “resembles Pinochet’s Chile....where terror and fear were basically used to cow a population into submission”, rather than from the isolated actions of individual state officials.

He states that “every armed liberation front that has made a transition into governance has had problems with that transition,” which seems to echo claims in a 2012 [paper](#) by Connell’s predecessor and elder Christopher Clapham, which attributes the failures of the Eritrean government to the inability of all African liberation movements to transition to functioning governments.

These extreme views of Connell regarding Eritrean migration and human rights are more propagandistic than evidence-based and clearly play part in a politically-motivated “Greater Ethiopianist” agenda against Eritrea. Although Connell purports to be a “journalist” and, more recently, a “researcher”, the evidence on Connell strongly suggests that he is a U.S. intelligence officer that has long sought to dethrone

Eritrean leadership through covert action in order to reverse Eritrean sovereignty.

History in Intelligence

Dan Connell's intelligence activities have long been known to the Eritrean leadership and people as far back as the 1970's, a period that included the 1974 fall of Emperor Haile Selassie, the rise of the Soviet-backed Derg regime in Addis and the exit of US intelligence chief in Ethiopia, Paul Henze.

At around this time, members of the Eritrean student movement active in Washington, D.C. were approached by two American journalists seeking to gain more information about the Eritrean liberation war. They set up a meeting in a Washington home and started asking the young students about the inner workings of the budding student movement in Asmara in an interrogation-like manner. Surprised by the obvious bait-and-switch from journalism to intelligence gathering, they dismissed the questions and left the house, deeming the "journalists" as likely intelligence agents. They later learned that they were employees of the US State Department.

Sometime later in the late 1970's, Connell returned to the U.S. from reporting in Eritrea and stopped by the Eritrean community center in Washington, asking to be dropped off at home after his visit. In what appears to have been a case of the "left hand not knowing what the right is doing", Connell directed the aforementioned EPLF members to drop him off at the very same Washington house as the other suspect

“journalists.” Concerned, the Washington-based Eritrean students sent word back to the Eritrean People’s Liberation Front (EPLF) in Eritrea warning their leadership about Connell’s intelligence links only to later learn that EPLF leadership had already been long aware of his clandestine work from their observations of him in Khartoum.

Evidence of Connell’s intelligence links run much deeper than mere anecdotal evidence and are, today, revealed by Wikileaks and the Kissinger cables. On September 23, 1978, a leaked diplomatic cable entitled “Eritrean Liberation Front Appeals to USSR and Cuba; Claims Victories” was sent from the U.S. Embassy in Khartoum, Sudan to the U.S. State Department in Washington stating the following: “American reporter Dan Connell told Emboff September 21 that he would enter Eritrea to observe military situation around Keren. As guest of EPLF, Connell hoped to make extensive tour of battle areas. He did not know how long he would be able to remain in Eritrea, but can be expected to brief us after his return to Khartoum.”

By Connell covertly gathering intelligence on the field movements of EPLF, the precursor to the current ruling government of Eritrea, he was clearly engaging in intelligence operations on behalf of the US government. This cable strongly suggests that Connell, working as a journalist—or, at least, under the cover of a journalist—served as an intelligence officer or asset.

A follow-up cable was sent on December 18, 1978 from Khartoum to Washington. The cable is classified and unreleased. From the withdrawal card, however, one

can evaluate available metadata. Quite tellingly, the cable is entitled “Observations on Eritrean Fighting Summary: American Journalist Dan Connell Who Was In Eritrea During Campaign For Keren” and marked with the tag “EPLF”, “Combat Operations” and “Foreign Assistance”. Thus, any rational person can reasonably surmise that Connell did indeed report back with intelligence for the US embassy in Khartoum.

Connell did not work alone. Notably, he was married to his now ex-wife Gayle Smith, a former State Department official and National Security Adviser to President Obama who was recently appointed as head of USAID. According to a 2002 article by Peter Rosenblum in the New York Times’ journal publication *Current History*, “Smith was an activist and sometime journalist in the Horn of Africa, known for her contacts in Eritrea and Ethiopia, but *particularly close to the Tigraean leadership of Ethiopia*” [emphasis added]. Furthermore, Roy Pateman’s 2003 book *Blood, Land and Sex* indicates that Smith “developed extremely close links with the leaders Of the Tigrayan People’s Liberation Front (TPLF)—most notably with Meles Zenawi” and after “May 1991, Smith became an advisor to Meles Zenawi.” In other words, Connell’s ex-wife Smith is a long-time and ongoing supporter of the very TPLF regime that is currently in an all-out war of attrition against Eritrea.

The Connell-Smith marriage is significant for the fact that it took place in October 1980 in Khartoum while they were covering two separate “Ethiopian” guerilla

movements in a common struggle against the Soviet-backed Derg regime that occupied Eritrea and Ethiopia's Tigray province—EPLF and TPLF, respectively. In his 2003 book *Taking on the Superpowers*, Connell described the marriage with Smith as a “stormy relationship that ended in less than four years”. Under the cover of this temporary marriage, TPLF-journalist Smith and EPLF-journalist Connell were afforded a very convenient excuse for regular cross-border meetings to exchange intelligence notes in the nascent Soviet period immediately following the exit of Henze and US intelligence in Ethiopia and Ethiopian-occupied Eritrea.

Misappropriating Aid to Fund Subversion

Connell and Smith's work did not appear to be limited to merely intelligence-gathering but also included lead and integral roles in covert action funneling US and Western aid across the Sudanese border (illegal under Sudanese laws) and across enemy lines into rebel-held territories under the guise of humanitarianism. Such aid operations in conflict zones have long been considered murky business with little accountability whereby donor funds are often diverted by conduits for their own political and economic motives. Today, the evidence suggests that this was most likely the case with Connell and his then wife Smith.

Citing the director of TPLF's Relief Society of Tigray (REST), Teklewoini Assefa, a leaked June 11, 2008 diplomatic cable from Addis to Washington indicated that “Gail Smith worked for three years for REST, working, eating, and sleeping with the TPLF's relief

arm. Teklewoini also noted that USAID began funneling humanitarian and relief assistance through REST in 1985.” Thus, Smith, who ostensibly was an impartial journalist, worked for the rebels and took sides with a war party.

A May 31, 1991 [Christian Science Monitor piece](#) reaffirmed that Smith “worked for Tigre’s relief agency, REST, during the 1985-6 drought”, coinciding with the exact same period that, according to a March 2010 [BBC investigation](#), saw TPLF steal a staggering 95% of \$100 million in humanitarian aid raised by the global LiveAid and BandAid campaigns in order to purchase weapons. After the war concluded in 1991, Smith, who actively worked for REST as it diverted USAID relief and misappropriated funds away from more than one million Ethiopians who would later starve to death, was immediately hired to work as an adviser for USAID and, astonishingly, became the national agency’s Chief of Staff by 1994. Today, she is USAID’s leader.

The controversial USAID program, which was [expelled](#) from Eritrea in 2005, has a long and checkered history of politicized operations in developing nations that provide cover to US intelligence agents. According to the [Washington Post](#), “In South Vietnam, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) provided cover for CIA operatives so widely that the two became almost synonymous.” An August 2014 [investigation](#) by the Associated Press of USAID in Cuba, found that the Agency established a fake HIV-prevention workshop that used “young operatives

posed as tourists...to recruit political activists” and “to gin up opposition in Cuba.”

In 1983, Connell founded his own relief organization, Grassroots International (GI). Claiming to be a disillusioned employee of an increasingly centrist Oxfam America that he felt failed its Lebanese relief-needy subjects in 1982, he explained that he started GI to be a more genuinely leftist relief organization. Along with GI and Connell’s humanitarian organizing in the early to mid-80’s emerged a dubious group of Eritreans working within the humanitarian wing of the EPLF, the Eritrean Relief Association (ERA), that were later found to be closely linked to the U.S. State Department and engaged in nefarious and/or clandestine activities anathema to EPLF’s founding principles based on self-reliance.

These characters included Paulos Tesfagiorgis, Kassahun Checole and Bereket Habte Selassie, who were the founders and leaders of ERA that used the organization to meet ulterior political and personal aims and would, a decade later, work in concert with Connell and TPLF leadership to cultivate a US-sponsored, Eritrean regime-change movement.

The 1975 head of the Khartoum office of ERA and [adviser](#) to Connell’s Washington-based GI, Bereket Habte Selassie, from his very beginning, demonstrated links to US-intelligence and dogged Greater Ethiopianism in support U.S. anti-Eritrean policies. Diplomatic cables from the mid-1970’s identify him as an American World Bank employee in direct contact with the Bank’s powerful President Robert McNamara.

A [leaked confidential cable](#) from Addis sent on November 25, 1974 states that he “was playing sensitive role as intermediary” between the Derg’s top leaders and was in fear of his life in the wake of the murder of his supposed Derg friend and interim Head of State, General Aman Andom (Eritrean officer of imperial Ethiopia).

A [follow-up cable](#) from Asmara dated February 17, 1975 and classed as confidential reveals a fleeing, Khartoum-bound Bereket as an unmistakable U.S. intelligence operative: “Source reports that Dr. Bereket AB is now in Kassala and plans to return to us. According to source Dr. Bereket Ab has taken many pictures of Eritrean scene in past month.” Joined by common efforts to scope the “Eritrean scene” for the US, Bereket and Connell were natural comrades in their clandestine assignments to protect U.S. interests.

The [last cable](#) of note, sent on July 23, 1974 from Addis, highlights Bereket’s anti-national position on the “Eritrean Situation”, which he states is “now in critical stage and Eritreans must now be granted ‘something more’ than just basic democratic rights in [a] unitary state. Good solution would be regional autonomy for both Eritrea and Ogaden.” Joining the EPLF in the liberation struggle only one year later, one might find it paradoxical that he opts for mere appeasement of his fellow Eritrean people by giving them “regional autonomy” rather than the genuine support for their common, collective aspiration—total national liberation by self-determination.

Concealing his Greater Ethiopianist desires, they [inevitably resurfaced](#) in his more honest moments almost two decades later whereby he rather frankly admitted, “I’ve been part of Ethiopia. *We are all Ethiopians*—historically, culturally speaking—as I tried to explain today and my wish and *my hope before I die is that we will come back together in a larger unity* transcending all these divisions.” Keep in mind that this is the same guy that served as leader of Eritrea’s Constitutional Commission, which puts into perspective recent efforts to write [a new constitution](#).

Likewise, naturalized US citizen Kassahun Checole, an early board member of ERA and an official [adviser](#) to Connell’s GI organization, also worked very closely with Connell since the days of the Eritrean struggle. His Red Sea Press, a publishing house founded in 1985 as a subsidiary of his Africa World Press, has served as the principle publisher of all of Connell books on Eritrea promoting his regime-change propaganda.

Similarly, Paulos Tesfagiorgis, the head of ERA’s Khartoum office from 1975 to 1989 and close collaborator with Connell in South Africa in the early 2000’s, has worked very closely with Connell since his early days leading ERA’s Khartoum office to funnel money and supplies from USAID into various activities in Eritrea and Tigray. According to USAID annual reports, the Agency [gave money](#) to Connell’s GI, which was then given to ERA. However, it appears that Paulos was later found to be misappropriating these funds. According to EPLF leaders working in ERA, Paulos was forced to leave ERA in 1989, following a

meeting of Eritrean leaders in Germany in which he was present and was accused of embezzling ERA's funds. Before he could be formally charged and stand legal judgement before EPLF's military courts, he defected from his EPLF post in Khartoum for Canada where he attended McGill University.

In the early to mid-2000's, Paulos went on to work closely with Connell in [training and organizing regime-change activists in South Africa](#) within an organization going by the name of the Eritrean Movement for Democracy and Human Rights (EMDHR) that was supported by the U.S. State Department [through grants](#) by the National Endowment for Democracy. Since their time in South Africa, Connell and Paulos have gone on to strengthen their ties to the TPLF regime in Addis Ababa.

In his 2015 book *The Real Politics of the Horn of Africa*, fellow Greater Ethiopianist Alex de Waal wrote about clandestine meetings, as of 2007, between his good friend Paulos Tesfagiorgis and former PM Meles Zenawi:

“These encounters began when Paulos Tesfagiorgis, a veteran Eritrean freedom fighter, patriot and staunch advocate for human rights and peaceful cooperation, approached Meles discreetly in 2007 to explore for peace between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Meles asked Paulos to convene a small group to engage with him on a wider range of issues, in a confidential but frank setting. Other members of the group were Abdalla Hamdok, Charles Abugre and Andre Zaaiman.

Paulos, *persona non grata* in Eritrea on allegations of treason and sedition, clearly cannot act as a shuttle diplomat for “peace” in an Eritrea-Ethiopia conflict in which he can only engage one side (*i.e.* Ethiopia) and would surely focus on these mysterious, so-called “wider range of issues”. Again, another convenient excuse for him to make his way to Addis Ababa.

Back into the Field

Like Paulos, Connell found his convenient excuse to frequent Addis, the seat of the TPLF regime. Formerly reluctant to visit Ethiopia for fear of losing the long dwindling support of the oft-vigilant Eritrean population, desperate measures have forced an about face. Left with little choice, Connell has recently taken a new cover as a “researcher” of Eritrean migration in need of regular travel back-and-forth to Ethiopia in support of the famine- and protest-stricken TPLF regime. Thus, one now may understand and contextualize his recent and unusual interview with Tefera Gedamu.

In an [interview](#) in Addis Ababa in September 2015 with a group calling itself the UnitedVoices Media Center, he explained, “I started in 2012 by coming to Ethiopia and going to the Shire camps. I was teaching full time so I can only travel during my breaks. So, in June I came to Ethiopia...then in June 2014 I retired from teaching and took this issue up full time...While I have been here I have been up to the four camps in the Shire region and up to the Assaita camp in the Afar region.” Once again, Connell finds himself as a roving journalist

on an Eritrean border without a clear sense of who's financing his paychecks.

Of late, it appears that Connell has sought to become the resident expert on Afar persecution, focusing much of his work on the persecution of the Afar ethnic group by the non-ethnicity-based Eritrean government, which he himself even admitted multiple times in his book *Against All Odds*, while turning a total blind eye to the laundry list of inter-ethnic crimes of the openly ethnocentric minority TPLF. By focusing on the Afar and the Kunama, both of which are cross-border ethnic groups located along Eritrea-Ethiopia borderlands contested by the two countries during the 1998-2000 war, Connell is setting the ground for yet another pretext for TPLF invasion.

As suggested by the very telling headline “Addis banks on Afars against Afeworki” from a September 5, 2014 [article](#) by African Intelligence, Addis is pinning its hopes on the Afar issue to bring about regime change in Eritrea.

As now TPLF adviser Patrick Gilkes wrote in a March 2, 1999 BBC [article](#), “Ethiopia...has recently set up an Afar Red Sea Democratic Organisation to try and build up Afar resistance to the Eritrean government.” It is worth noting that Ethiopia, an official U.S. ally in the war on terror, created and supports RSADO, which is a known [international terrorist organization](#) according to the Global Terrorism Database that is financed by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Writing in an article in *Foreign Policy in Focus* in December 2015, Connell—much like de Waal has recently done—circumstantially [links](#) the Eritrean government to the Houthi rebels in Yemen, forwarding the anecdotally reported claim that when the “Houthi militiamen captured Mokha [an Yemeni port], Djibouti Afars came to evacuate the many Eritrean Afars there” who “feared staying in Djibouti because Eritrean security services sometimes kidnapped high-value refugees.” Taking this anecdote at face value, the retired professor’s “research” methodologies hardly signify sound research and analysis. As will be shown later in this series, Eritrea’s links to the Houthis are based on politically-motivated, unsubstantiated and erroneous claims.

Exploitation of the Afar issue has long been on the CIA’s docket. The Agency’s [October 1995 Report on Ethnic Conflict](#) stated, “Now, with Eritrea an independent state, Ethiopia is landlocked—its political future far from certain. In addition, Eritrean ethnic unity is a myth; for example, the Afar (who extend into Djibouti and whose domain centers on the port of Assab) have a claim to nationhood that will reemerge in the future.” Thus, Connell is only forwarding a narrative and acting on CIA intelligence.

Undue Influence

It’s worth noting how Connell has been able to garner significant, undue attention of Africanists, the scholars on Africa. According to his website, Connell is a “visiting scholar at Boston University’s African Studies Center”, which is well known as a historic CIA hub

within the nation's African Studies community, teeming with intelligence agents and activities. Ami Chen Mills' 1991 groundbreaking book *CIA Off Campus* explained that "while not all university foreign studies programs are CIA-inspired, a number have worked in close cooperation with the Agency. Spinoffs of the CIA-founded African-American Institute include Boston University's African Studies program, created in the same year [1956] and headed by William O. Brown, a member of the State Department's Office of Intelligence."

The largely non-black-led ASA, a recipient of the CIA's National Security Education Program funding, has long been seen as a stooge of the State Department and CIA, which led to an internal crisis that drove the pan-African black caucus within the ASA, led by John Henrik Clarke, to form the African Heritage Studies Association in 1969 as a more independent alternative with blacks in decision-making positions. Conferences of the ASA, which often came to Boston, were attended by CIA representative agents (Louis Wolf, "News Notes," *CovertAction Information Bulletin*, No. 30, summer, 1988, p. 68.). Thus, it's little surprise that Connell chose his 2003 official anti-Eritrea coming-out party to take place at the meeting of the ASA that year. AllAfrica.com [published an article set in Boston](#), reprinting his coming-out paper prefaced by the following note:

"Having marched and sheltered under fire alongside the liberation fighters, he came to know the leaders of the country intimately. But in recent

years, increasingly troubled by the repressive stance of the Isaias Afwerki government towards the press and political opposition, he has found himself shifting from being a longstanding supporter to a critic. He chose to make that shift public at the just-ended African Studies Association meeting in Boston...That Connell has undergone such a change of heart will be seen by all who know Eritrea – not least, the leaders themselves – as a tipping point.

Connell and his Eritrean collaborators often present at ASA events and receive awards from the organization. Connell has presented his work to the ASA almost annually since 2008. Kassahun Checole was the 2013 recipient of the ASA's Public Service Award. ASA presidents, have also been playing into the Greater Ethiopianist narrative on Eritrea, like UCLA Professor Edmond Keller, who explained on NPR's Talk of the Nation in 1999 that "The OAU [African Union] had to accept the reality of an independent Eritrea, which it didn't want to accept to begin with...if they could undo the situation and, you know, have Eritrea become a part of Ethiopia, I think a lot of members of the OAU would like to see that happen, too." Thus, the presenters, award-winners and presidents of the highly-centralized and influential ASA are Greater Ethiopianists playing integral roles in forwarding the skewed narrative on Eritrea that has led many astray. One can, therefore, understand the public's confusion about the narrative on Eritrea.

Even if one were to totally ignore Connell's links to intelligence agencies, he still would be found to have little credibility as an independent and impartial journalist or researcher on issues related to Eritrean migration or Eritrea vis-à-vis Ethiopia. In a May 2013 speech in Washington, D.C., later [posted on YouTube](#), Connell instructed a group of Eritreans—like a general before an army—to campaign around migration and human trafficking to help bring about the ulterior motive of regime change and topple the presidency of Isaias Afwerki:

“What’s going to generate the most response from a wider public that is not familiar with Eritrea? And what would *weaken Isaias’ ability to govern*? I don’t think you can organize a campaign for regime change but you can organize campaigns that can *make regime change more possible*...I would certainly *suggest an end to unlimited conscription into national service partly because it’s so easy to tie that together with so many other issues*: the refugee issue, the trafficking issue, and so on. And partly because the pressure on Isaias would weaken his ability to govern.

...A campaign should be simple direct and uncomplicated. Other obvious issues that can be in some way linked, *focusing our attention on the trafficking issue and always linking it to the source of the refugee flows*. This trafficking issue is a consequence of the situation inside Eritrea. *No other issue is likely to generate attention and support from the American public*. Calls for

increased financial and technical support for refugees in the support and for far better security in the camps are also simple issues to link them to this. Pressure on the US, Canadian, European and Israeli asylum seekers is another one that comes directly out of this.

Eritrean migrants appear to be cannon fodder or collateral damage to Connell in his war against the Eritrean government.

Thus, there are few questions regarding his neutrality and integrity since both seem to be compromised by his likely role as an employee of the CIA working to forward the Greater Ethiopianist narrative on Eritrea. He is part of the tradition of Paul Henze, Christopher Clapham and Patrick Gilkes but takes a disingenuous leftist, activist leaning to conceal his militant Greater Ethiopianist agenda and to promote greater acceptance of his propaganda. He must be seen for what he really is.

This article concludes this part in the series on the “Greater Ethiopianist Narrative on Eritrea”. Subsequent parts will investigate the specific roles of different experts in forwarding the Greater Ethiopianist Narrative on Eritrea.
