



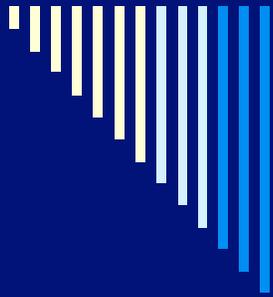
*OROMO SELF-KNOWLEDGE
FOR BUILDING
ORGANIZATIONAL
CAPACITY AND VICTORY*

*OROMUMMAAN OF BEEKUU FI CAALAATI
IJARAMANI NYAPHA MO'UU*

Asafa Jalata



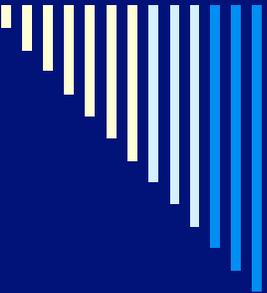
The Oromian Community Members
In Alberta, Canada, October 10, 2009



INTRODUCTION

- ❖ Inadequacy of Oromo self-knowledge
- ❖ Oromo national and sub-national identities:
 - Before and after Ethiopian colonialism
- ❖ Problems of uneven development of *Orommummaa* and organizational shortcomings
- ❖ Necessary steps for building Oromo self-knowledge and organizational capacity





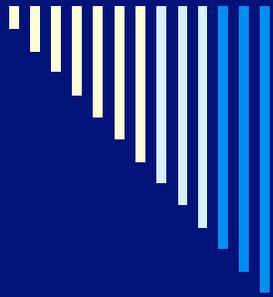
Inadequacy of Oromo Self Knowledge and the Problem of Developing Oromummaa

Inadequacy of Oromo Self-Knowledge

- Ethiopianism and Oromo collaborators - the gap between claims and reality of *Oromummaa*; e.g. Oromo members of the Ethiopian rubber stamp parliament; Oromo soldiers joining the Ethiopian army and killing their brothers and sisters for money
- Confusing clan and colonial regional identities with the Oromo national identity; its political and cultural consequences

- *Oromummaa* as a national ideology: 1) having pride in developing Oromo national culture, identity, nationalism; defending the Oromo national interest by all means. 2) as a complex and dynamic national and global project; example - the founding fathers of MTSA and the OLF; Haile Mariam Gamada, Elemo Qilixu, Baaro Tumsa and their comrades

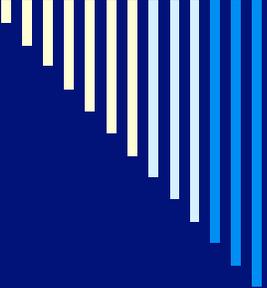




Oromummaa as National Culture, identity, and Nationalism - I

- As a national program - retrieving cultural memories, assessing the consequences of colonialism, giving voices to collective grievances, mobilizing cultural resources, interlinking sub-identities with the national identity, assisting to develop Oromo-centric political strategies and tactics to mobilize the entire nation for liberation
- As a global project—requires to be inclusive and democratic; facilitates forming alliances with political and social forces that accept and promote the principles of self-determination and multinational democracy to promote a global humanity

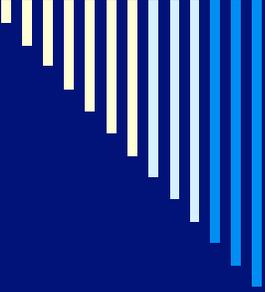




Oromummaa - II

- *Oromummaa* promotes individual and collective freedom, justice, popular democracy, and human liberation; it is built on the concept of *saffu* (ethical and moral order), *gadaa* principles, and the concept of *Waqaa* (God)
- It also goes beyond historical and cultural traditions and envisions a new social order for Oromos and others
- *Oromummaa* cannot be built on the fragmented identities of clan and colonial regional identities that are disconnected from the Oromo national identity and agenda

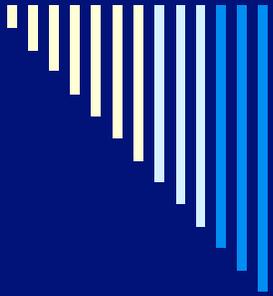




Oromo Sub-identities and the Oromo National identity before and after Colonialism- I

- The Oromo were under the *gadaa* republic of historic Oromia between 16th and mid-17th centuries
- This republic was organized in alliances, federation, and confederations to maintain cultural and political unity and solidarity and to defend sovereignty and the national interest from the common enemies
- Our ancestors knew the importance of unity and democracy in building national security, sovereignty, statehood, and national defense than most contemporary Oromos





Sub-identities and the Oromo National Identity - II

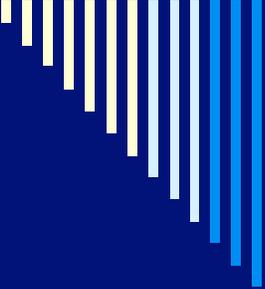
- Our ancestors knew the importance of *gadaa* and *siqqee* for national mobilization during the times of war and peace
- The Oromo unity and democratic institutions were dismantled by colonial and internal forces such as Turko-Egyptians, European/Ethiopian colonialism, and Oromo collaborative class
- These forces attacked the Oromo-self and reduced it to personal and groups levels; colonialism also dismantled independent Oromo institutions and prevented Oromos from forming national institutions



Sub-identities and the Oromo national identity - III

- The Oromo national identity has been targeted for destruction
- Colonial administrative regions were established in Oromia and institutionalized and glorified. There are Oromos who today brag about these archaic and oppressive identities because the lack of Oromo self-knowledge
- Oromos who did not yet develop their *Oromummaa* fully also consider their clans or religious identities as their central identities; such Oromos can be easily manipulated to abandon the Oromo national struggle and engage in destructive politics knowingly or unknowingly

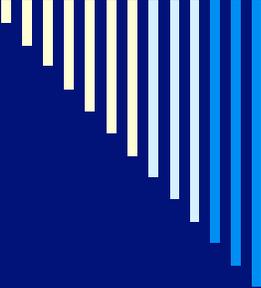




Sub-identities and the Oromo National Identity - IV

- Challenges to the Oromo national identity and struggle:
 - The separation of Oromos from one another prevented them from exchange of good and information
 - Oromos have been exposed to different cultures such as religions, languages, customs, Ethiopianism, and values
 - Some Oromo elites have internalized externally imposed identities because of their low level of political consciousness, opportunism, and their limited knowledge of Oromo-self and the world

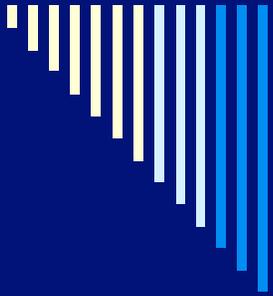




Sub-identities the Oromo national Identity - V

- Opportunist and naive Oromo elites misuse colonial regional and clan identities to get support for their personal group political projects while claiming promoting the Oromo national interests
- Since there was a moral and ethical order in pre-colonial Oromo society, Oromos never used clan and clan families to divide the Oromo people; rather these identities were used to build local, regional, and national institution to promote the common cause.
- Can we effectively organize ourselves as a nation based on fragmented identities and ideologies and compete with our brutal enemies in the capitalist world system?

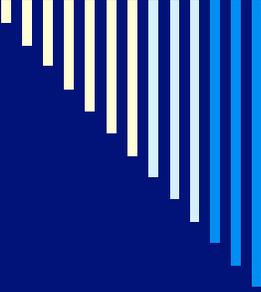




Sub-identities and the Oromo National Identity - VI

- People who were organized based on regions, religions, and clans failed to compete with their enemies and destroyed.
- The ignorance of Oromo elites and the Oromo people in their history, culture, and world politics; the lack of critical understanding between knowledge for domination and liberation; the lack of critical political education for our people
- In the ocean of ignorance and opportunism, the attack on Oromo leaders and nationalists is increasing; our enemies are disarming us by using our ignorance and their Oromo agents

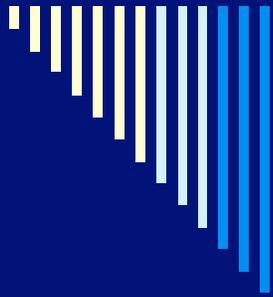




Unity, Diversity, and Nationalism - I

- Building *Oromummaa* and challenging the foundations of fragmented identities and political opportunism; consolidating our national identity and nationalism require recognizing the unity and diversity of our nation.
- Oromo nationalists must encourage an open dialogue among adherents of indigenous Oromo religion, Islam and Christianity; recognizing that we are first Oromos regardless of religions and other differences
- Educating every Oromo about their grievances, history, culture, national identity and organizing them for building a national organizational capacity

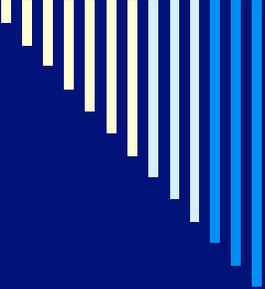




Unity, Diversity, and Nationalism - II

- We need to openly discuss about clans and colonial regions and their impacts
- Since Oromos are a diverse and heterogeneous people, the exploration of the concept of diversity is an essential element of *Oromummaa*; the concept of diversity applies to Oromo cultural, religious, political, professional, class, and gender divisions.

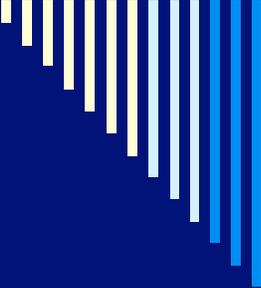




Unity, Diversity, and Nationalism - III

- Collective identities are not automatically given, but they are essential outcomes of the mobilization process and crucial prerequisite to movement success
- Oromo nationalists can only reach a common understanding of Oromoness through open, critical, honest dialogue and debate
- Fears, suspicions, misunderstandings and hopes or aspirations of Oromo individuals and groups should be discussed by invoking Oromo cultural memory and democratic principles

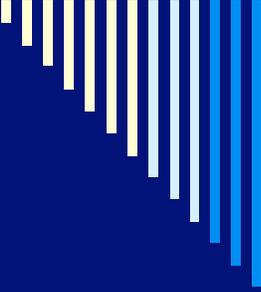




The Oromo National Movement and its Organizational Capacity - I

- Oromo nationalists cannot build effective national institutions and organizations without taking Oromo personal, interpersonal and collective-level Oromo selves to a new level
- The Oromo collective-self develops through relations with one another. Good interpersonal relations and good treatment of one another create a sense of security, confidence, openness, belonging, strong and effective bonds, willingness to admit and deal with mistakes and increase commitment to political objectives and organizations.





The Oromo National Movement and its Organizational Capacity - II

- Revolutionizing the Oromo-self through a liberation knowledge; the Oromo self is the central point at which personality, cognitive schema and social psychology meet. The Oromo self consists both personal or individual and social identities.
- When most Oromos internalize *Oromummaa*, they will be able to unite and speak with one voice and take a collective action both in Oromia and worldwide. True unity and organizational strength emerge from these processes
- We must believe that we will win our victory by any means necessary

