Promoting and Developing Oromummaa (power point)

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PROMOTING AND DEVELOPING OROMUMMAA

A SEMINAR ON REVIVAL OF OROMUMMAA
THE OROMO COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION,
WASHINGTON, DC
SEPTEMBER 1, 2012
Introduction - 1

- Conceptual clarification: *Oromummaa* has two related meanings: (1) conventional *Oromummaa*, (2) national and global *Oromumma* (as political and ideological projects);
- Conventional meaning of *Oromummaa* - understood by most Oromos; and the second meaning - less understood; it involves several factors;
- Knowing all aspects *Oromummaa* - for building a more united national movement;
Five major points: (1) Features of conventional Oromummaa-major cultural-historical markers that make the Oromo different from other nations; (2) Ethiopian mechanisms for suppressing Oromummaa; (3) Oromo diversity and national unity; (4) Oromummaa as history, culture, identity, and nationalism; (5) Oromummaa - the foundation of survival and unity for social emancipation/national liberation;
The Essence and Meaning of Conventional Oromummaa

Conventional Oromummaa:
1) as the total expression of Oromo peoplehood, it developed from history, culture, and tradition;
2) encapsulates a set of fundamental beliefs, values, and moral codes;
3) emerged out of the Oromo experience of several centuries;
4) encoded and expressed in Afaan Oromoo;
5) the colonialists could not destroy this language and conventional Oromummaa;
6) Pushed underground in rural areas;
7) Our knowledge of conventional Oromummaa is fragmented and limited;
8) For generations, Oromummaa knowledge was transmitted though oral discourse; Oromo scholars and others were not allowed to adequately study about Oromo society;
9) Oromo self-knowledge has been suppressed to kill Oromummaa and replace it by Ethiopianism;
10) Lies and misinformation have been produced, packaged and disseminated about the Oromo;
11) the Oromo have been depicted as primitive and stateless people; the Oromo government was despised and depicted as a backward;

12) Gadaa/Oromo government has been the emblem of Oromo civilization and Oromummaa;

13) conventional Oromummaa was constructed on the principles of peace (nagaa) and the rule of law;

14) The rule of law was formed through involving all members of the community in active participation, debate, consent, and democratic means;
• 15) the rule of law was maintained through promoting accountability, justice and fairness for all;
• 16) the *gadaa* government protected the interests of all Oromos and others on the principles of equality and egalitarian democracy;
• 17) the *gadaa* system also helped in maintaining the relationship among *Waqaa*, nature, and society in a balanced way; it established accountability in all relationships;
18) Oromo institutions, such as gadaa, siqqee, qaallu, Waaqqeuffannaa, as well as Oromo worldview, philosophy, cultural Practices, and Afaan Oromoo have imprinted an indelible and enduring mark on Oromummaa;

19) How did Ethiopian colonialism suppress conventional Oromummaa?

20) Why do the Amhara and Tigrayan elites hate Oromummaa while promoting Ethiopianism?
Colonialism & Suppression of Oromumma -1

1) Consequences Euro-Abyssinian colonial war –
   a) societal destruction; b) the reduction of the Oromo population by half; c) the elimination of independent Oromo leadership and the creation of an Oromo collaborative class

2) the destruction or suppression of Oromo institutions, such as family, gadaa, siqqee, Waqeffannaa and their replacement by that of the Habashas;

3) The destruction and suppression of Oromummaa; how and why?
Suppression of *Oromummaa*-2

A) the partition of the Oromo under colonial administrative regions;

B) introducing the Habasha ruling ideas and religion – despising everything Oromo and glorifying everything Habasha;

C) introducing an inferiority complex and self-hatred;

D) internalizing these beliefs and changing an original Oromo religion and taking Habasha and Arab names, religions, values, and norms;
Suppression of *Oromummaa* -3

- E) internalizing borrowed identities and the values of colonial institutions; starting to use borrowed religious identities and sub-identities;
- F) *Oromummaa* of the *gadaa* republic was fractured and reduced to colonial regional identities and religious and clan identities;
- G) divided Oromos were led by colonial administrators and their subservient assimilated Oromo leaders;
- H) oppression without and within;
I) the Habasha/white/Arab values have been internalized and imprinted in our minds;

J) the Oromo worldview was replaced with that of the tormentors;

K) the colonial education produced Oromo elites who are totally estranged from the Oromo way of life; these elites are fascinated by the ideas and knowledge of their tormentors;

L) colonial education convinced them their inferiority;
Suppression of Oromummaa - 5

- M) colonialism sought to introduce to Oromo society the death of Oromo culture and identity;
- 4) The founding fathers and mothers of national Oromummaa (Oromo nationalism) in the 1960s and 1970s understood what Ethiopian colonialism brought to the Oromo nation:
  - A) These nationalists were challenged by both external enemies and internal enemies;
  - B) Oromo nationalist leaders were decimated, and Oromos were not allowed to develop liberation knowledge to challenge oppression without and within;
C) National Oromumma requires resisting oppression on three levels: 1) the level of personal biography; 2) the community or group level; 3) systematic level of social institutions and organizations;

D) our people have been denied these opportunities because of the decimation of the quality leadership and lack of education;

E) Political ignorance and lack of political consciousness are the two major enemies in addition to the colonial tormentors;
F) How can we defeat the two major enemies before we defeat the colonial tormentors?

1) Achieving liberation knowledge and engaging in the processes of self-discovery and self-definition;

2) Restoring the best elements of our traditions like gadaa and siqqee;

3) Raising political consciousness;

4) Building national Oromummaa, recognizing and celebrating Oromo diversity and unity;
Diversity, Unity and *Oromummaa* - 1

1) Recognizing our diversity and national unity by openly discussing them;

2) Exploring how adherents of *Waaqeffannaa*, Islam, and Christianity can promote *Oromummaa* by recognizing the positive role that religion and ethic play;

3) Consciously preventing the divide and conquer strategy of the internal and external enemies based on religions and regions;

4) Knowing that the Oromo are a diverse and heterogeneous people;
Diversity, Unity and Oromummaa- 2

5) The Oromo diversity is applies to professional, religious, class, regions, and gender divisions;
6) National Oromummaa facilitates the social construction of an Oromo national identity;
7) Collective identities are not naturally given, but are outcomes of the political mobilization process; we have to reach a common understanding of our national identity through hard work and open discussion;
8) avoiding cliquish or group practices in Oromo national or organizational affairs;
Diversity, Unity and Oromummaa- 3

9) Understanding and practicing national Oromumma through the mobilization of all Oromo groups; using *gadaa principles in dealing with Oromo diversity and unity*;

10) Overcoming the lack of political consciousness through political education;

11) National and global Oromummaa can be built on diversity and unity by overcoming the following three Oromo political problems:
Diversity, Unity and *Oromummaa* - 4

- A) Low level of cognitive liberation; B) Low level of global awareness; C) Low level of political experiences and organizational deficits;
- 12) The Oromo national movement must also accomplish the following:
  - A) Creating a platform using an alternative knowledge of liberation;
  - B) Overcoming organizational shortcomings on many levels;
  - C) Embracing the ideology of national *Oromummaa*;
1) The Oromo national movement started to restore and revitalize national *Oromummaa* by overcoming several obstacles;

2) The movement has been confronted by external and internal enemies; the response from the Oromo was slow because of several reasons;

3) It took the founders of the movement almost four decades to introduce national *Oromummaa* to the Oromo people – this introduction happened in 1991;
4) Realizing the responsiveness of the Oromo to national *Oromummaa*, the new *nafxanyas* with their Oromo collaborators opened a war on the movement;

4) The TPLF/OPDO has stagnated the maturation of national *Oromummaa* by denying it national organizations and institutions;

5) All these happened before the emergence of ideological coherence and nation organizational capacity;
6) What is the difference between national *Oromummaa* and Oromoness (or being Oromo)?

- A) you may be an Oromo and lack national *Oromummaa*;
- B) national *Oromummaa* goes beyond being Oromo;
- C) having national *Oromummaa* is demonstrated by understanding the Oromo issues and participating in the Oromo national struggle;
- D) involves in participating in the restoration and development of Oromo history, culture, identity, and vision;
E) struggling for empowering the Oromo nation to achieve individual and collective human liberation;

7) What is national Oromummaa?

A) It is an aspect of Oromo history, culture, identity, and nationalism;

B) It is an intellectual and ideological project and vision;

C) It is a complex and dynamic national and global project – national Oromummaa and global Oromummaa – both reflect Oromo democracy
8) How can we acquire all aspects of Oromummaa? Through learning about Oromo history and culture from antiquity to present and restoring Oromo democracy and sense of justice;

9) The necessity of recognizing and intensifying the development of national and global Oromummaa for unifying and consolidating the Oromo national movement;

10) National and global Oromummaa as the national ideology enables us to engage in the process of self-discovery and self-definition to promote the Oromo national struggle for liberation and democracy;
Oromummaa as the Unifying Ideology of the Oromo National Movement -1

- Packaging national and global *Oromummaa* into national symbols, norms, values, and policies:
- A) developing a common denominator for understanding and forming unity among Oromo communities and political forces;
- B) Mobilizing the best elements of Oromo cultural and political practices for building national institutions and organizations;
- C) Agitating and mobilizing the nation for well-organized and coordinated collective actions;
Oromummaa as the Unifying Ideology of the Oromo National Movement -2

D) Knowing and overcoming our ideological and political crises, such as lack of political experience, borrowed cultural and political practices, abandonment of our democratic tradition, lack of open dialogue and conversation, and political fragmentation;

E) Building dynamic and effective Oromo-centric national leadership from bottom-up;

F) Overcoming inferiority complex and defeating an Oromo collaborative class;

G) Educating our people the importance of diversity and unity in our national movement;
H) Intensifying the struggle for cognitive liberation to revolutionize our people on individual, group, and collective levels;

I) Teaching our people the importance of open and democratic dialogue and conversation based on the principles of Oromo democracy, justice, *nagaa* (peace), and fairness;

J) Building national institutions and organizations that protect *Oromummaa* while expanding it;

K) Struggling for restoring a *national assembly of Gumii Oromiyaa* and a democratic state of Oromia in a multinational context;