THE METAPHYSICS OF FRACTAL POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY*

By Tecola W. Hagos

PART ONE:
FRACTAL SOCIETY: ETHICS AS THE BASIS OF POLITICS

I. Introduction

From the outset, let me make it absolutely clear that the new Fractal Political Philosophy I am introducing into our discussion is not a diversionary tactic. My writing of this Article is not an underhanded and confusing intellectual endeavor aimed to divert the attention of heroic Ethiopians struggling against the brutal regime of Meles Zenawi and his *Mehale Sefari* supporters. They are equally responsible for the loss of our human rights and dignity. I believe Meles Zenawi and his *Mehale Sefari* supporters have committed treason against the Sovereign State of Ethiopia and Ethiopians. They are criminally responsible for compromising the Sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ethiopia. Thus, it is only because of my search for a solution to our cyclical suffering in the hands of brutal leaders that I came up with innovative political philosophy that might help us break away from this loop of suffering and underdevelopment.

The state of the opposition is not encouraging either. What ever is now billed as the opposition looks more and more an effort to change personalities rather than finding solutions to the political and economic debacle we are faced with. With famine and the AIDS epidemics added to the political oppression and economic deprivation, Ethiopians are being decimated and on the brink of extermination. This devastating situation is the main reason that made me rethinks accepted formats of struggle and the pursuit of democratic political changes. Maybe the solution is to look at our individuality with fresh eyes. Maybe the solution is not in changing the big picture, but in changing the more intimate picture of individual relationships thereby softening the ground for macro-changes of political structure and economic system.

II. The Need for a New Critical Look at "Democratization"

Much has been written about the development and evolution of modern political philosophy that is often identified as culminating in liberal democracy of the Western World. The rest of the world is urged and at times even forced to adopt political structures aiming at the same objective of liberal democracy of the Western World. Needless to say such effort very often has resulted in utter failure, violence, turmoil, and deep disappointment. There are several reasons why liberal democracy has failed so miserably in most of the world's nations. The modern world seems to have followed predictable processes of "democratization" that has left communities all over the world worse off than the states they started out with.

Even the so called "Second World" nations, for example, former Eastern Block countries, with far more shared history with Western liberal democratic nations, are still struggling trying to shade off the culture of totalitarianism and to replace that culture with the culture of liberal democracy. Developing nations are another group of nations where

liberal democracy has failed despite incessant effort by Western sponsors and local political movements. Is liberal democracy an impossible goal for nations other than Western states? Maybe this is not the right question to ask. Maybe the enquiry ought to focus on the basic tenet of democracy rather than on processes.

One important method that has been tried for years, at least for the last one hundred years, both to bring about social changes and to crystallize existing social structures, is the writing of constitutions. Constitutions have been written for aspiring socialist states as well as for aspiring Western styled democracies. It is amazing how "similar" written constitutions are, whether in their aspirations or essential provisions, both in totalitarian or democratic nations all over the world. However, when it comes to actual results, there are only very few nations that can be identified as democratic. It is a fact, for example, in non-Western nations, formal instruments of political structures, constitutions and secondary laws, have had very little success in bringing about democracy. More often than not, most non-Western constitutional governments have failed from delivering the goals and objectives of the aspirations of their respective citizens. The sad fact is that constitutional rights are as easily discarded or obliterated as much as constitutional demarcations are erased, and the fences erected to maintain the separation and balance of power among the many different organs of governments are as easily breached.

It is this persistent fact of failure that triggered my interest to look far more closely at this baffling phenomenon of failure, and specially to search for some underlying primordial base that might be overlooked or might be missing as to the reason why so many "constitutions" all over the Third and Second World nations failed to bring about democratic governments and societies. I even asked the "forbidden" question whether this phenomenal failure might have to do with genetic dispositions. One thing is absolutely clear now: constitutions are not remedies for social injustice. Thus, we can discount the importance of so called "democratization" processes and "written constitutions" in our search for social justice and humane social relationships in our communities. Our search must be focused on finding foundational social bedrock of ethical principles. It seems to me that constitutions are not vehicles for the establishment of liberal democratic tradition, rather they are manifest evidences of results than originating factors playing active roles in the achievements of liberal democracy. In fact, constitution based rights and allocations of power are secondary structures dependant on far more fundamental elements. Those elements are ethical principles.

It is not without reason that ancient forms of leadership embodied in a single person both spiritual and secular power. The spiritual aspect in the dual role-played out by ancient leaders provided not only the legitimacy but also the sourcing of fundamental ethical principles that allowed leaders to command authority and affect governance. In short, ethics has been the backbone of secular power. However, since the time of Machiavelli ethics has been delaminated from politics or government. Any number of people maybe apprehensive to introduce ethics as the basis for liberal democracy. Rightly, people may worry about that using ethics as the center of governmental objective would lead to the possibility of walking down some form of slippery-slope to religious fanaticism. Some

may think of introducing ethics in a constitution as a backdoor for religion to enter into the political life of a nation.

On the other hand Islamic countries have taken the opposite route in regards ethics and politics by amalgamating religion and governance as part of one single matrix. The result is a disaster. Despite the fact that some of the greatest centers of advanced science and technology and know-how were to be found in Caliphate and Sultanate of the Islamic world during the time Europe was in its dark ages; however, Islamic countries declined into the margins of history. Bernard Lewis has studied this phenomenon at great depth, and he is as puzzled of the situation as most are. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the Moslem nations as a whole, even though some of them are blessed with great wealth of oil and gas, are under oppressive governments, stifling religious practices and culture, and suffer the indignity of poverty.

It is imperative for people to understand that ethics is not dependant on any particular religion. However, many of the ethical principles that I will be suggesting later may have different religious basis and background. In other words, we need not worry about religious fanaticism and conflicts. Ethical precepts transcend narrow religious differences and directly engage the humanity of each member of society irrespective of particular religious affiliation.

The West has not truly discarded or separated ethics from its political system. What it did was subsume ethics in the many institutions of its society that are in fact the very building blocks of democracy even though on the surface it looks like ethics has been delaminated from politics. For the uninitiated eye, political process in the West may seem to have been cleared of religion and ethics. It is both a misrepresentation and a misleading effort when Western "experts" preach to us that democratization is achievable by drafting a constitution, making few cursory changes here and there in the economic policy of a country, effecting some cosmetic changes in the structure of a government, and above all disassociating religion (ethics) from public and civic matters.

The truth of the matter is that Western democracy is like an iceberg where most of its essential and supporting elements are not visible above water, and the tiny fraction that appears to be the case, in fact, represents only the formal aspect of the democratic process without exposing the vastly more important foundation that is out of sight. This lack of full appreciation of the depth of the huge support structure of liberal democracy, which seems to be under our radar, is the main problem in our misunderstanding of liberal democracy.

The "democratization" programs that we have witnessed being implemented in the last two decades were aimed at creating very specialized governments and economic structures or systems. Such democratization programs failed because the approach was all-wrong, and did not take into account the fact that communities all over the world are uniquely constituted. Even though I acknowledge the existence of a common nature of all human beings that overrides surface differences, we must recognize also the fact that historical incidents peculiar to a society must be understood in a limited context. The

apparent differences between communities come from the way human beings constructed social structures in order to meet survival needs or vise-versa. The needs remain the same in all of human societies. However, approaches and methodologies differ due to differences in pre-existing social structures and the environment. Thus, our focus is mainly an effort to identify how those social constructions are similar or different from each other, and how such similar or different structures were effective in achieving the intended goals of spiritual and material development of mankind. Thus, the emphasis is not on the exceptional but on the commonplace, the humble, the ordinary, or the elementary.

I cannot perceive something more fundamental than ethical precepts. Ethics is the foundation of law, of social and individual relationships et cetera. What is amazing is that such foundational ethical principles are on one hand simple behavioral patterns with easily understandable principles and on the other hand expressions of deep spirituality. The recasting and interpretation or recognition of ethical principles in the fabric of higher social structures is where the new metaphysics of fractal political philosophy comes into play.

There is an obvious contradiction if fractal political philosophy is perceived as categorical and clear-cut. I believe that as long as we are not dogmatic and inclined to using "either/or" type reasoning, there is much to be achieved by shifting our focus on to the foundational structures of ethics and individual relationships and away from our traditional line of attack of those who are in political and economic leadership or power. There should be no doubt that our leaders are monsters. For the time being let us focus on treating each other decently, let us restrain ourselves from abusing our children—let us start to see them as our most precious gift to our nation and thus treat them with love and respect with no form of corporeal punishment. Let us treat the female members of our society with respect and compassion and save them from our age-old horrendous abuse. Here is where fractal political philosophy comes into the picture.

III. Fractal Society/Philosophy
Fractal political philosophy is a metaphysical explanation that tells us that the smallest part of society has as much complexity and as much importance as the large[r] social structures, thus one need not waste time trying to change such large structures through massive effort when such desirable change can be achieved by exerting a fraction of such effort by focusing on and changing small structures. This concept coheres beautifully with the principle of "complex adaptive system" that tells us tiny imperceptible changes in simple and primary structures over time result in the creation or changing the paradigm or restructuring of large systems. If we base our effort to promote and instill, especially in the young, ethical principles, at the very foundation of social structures, it will be far easier to bring about democratic government structures into the political life of a community. This means, although well intentioned, we have been doing the wrong thing in our effort to democratize our community by focusing on large social and political structures such as constitution drafting, elections, economic development programs et cetera. Instead, we should have focused on refining and enforcing our ethical principles,

on our social relations, our treatment of our children and the female members of our society.

With increased cultural and economic globalization, human society has acquired a striking resemblance to a fractal model. [1] Thus, it is appropriate to identify all of the different communities in the world as explainable as intimately interconnected in a single fractal system. The types of differences in culture, economic and industrial development used by classical economists and sociologists to identify and categorize systems and structures no longer holds true in as far as such categories are disjointed or isolated from every other. The fractal nature of society is very obvious. Even between extreme situations the basic human values and norms are repeated in all human communities, creating a tapestry of surprisingly similar patterns of behavior and institutions. And when we add to this fractal conception of human societies the hidden system of chaos [2] or randomness, human nature and institutions in all of their manifestations in distinct groups become much more understandable and much less threatening, even pitiful. The limitations of earlier concepts of social development such as structuralism on one end and the idea of intuitionism or 'Divine' interferences in human affaires (fatalism) on the other, can be pulled closer into this understanding of society as a fractal system, which approach is profoundly more enlightened and understandable. The human family truly can be perceived of as a 'family' organic in all its dimensions. Thus, obvious contradictory and opposed views may in fact be seen as part of a larger fractal structure and not as opposites.

IV. The Process of Maximalism (the circle within a circle, within a circle…)
Thought contaminates individualized reality, in the sense that thought contains not only observation but also judgment, i.e., realignment, comparison et cetera. The difficulty of articulating the issue of what is being observed from the interpretation of such observation or the question of an underlying reality that can only be partially transmitted by way of a medium or a vehicle has been the core point of discussion by philosophers from Plato to philosophers of our own time. Plato's attempt to distinguish between "form" and "matter" is similar in essence with Kant's effort to make a distinction between "phenomenon" and "thing-in-itself." The suspicion of the existence of a reality that may not be what seems to be observed by our senses or recorded by our instruments (extension of our senses) is a very serious and legitimate point of inquiry. [3] We are not talking here about judgment, but about a much more fundamental stage in the process of judgment - observation or recording with least intellectualization or interfacing.

One graphic example that may shade light to the problem at issue (phenomenon vs. thing-in-itself) is the phenomenon we call color. We know that a particular color is reflected light frequency while the other different frequencies are absorbed by the thing that light was shined on. In both Platonic and Kantian way of thinking color would have a very tenuous connection with the "thing-in-itself" or matter. However, such perception might have unduly discounted the fact that such event of reflection and absorption might indeed be an essential aspect of the "thing-in-itself" or matter under the particular circumstance. This does not in any way change the fact of observation or recording as an important aspect of our reality, since such observation or recording in similar circumstances can be

repeated universally and the out come will be the same. Without light the classical world observation would not be possible. However, such view is unduly limiting; there is gravity in addition to light to observe within the modern world.

Our worldviews are essentially photic, for a lack of a better word. Our reality is intimately dependent on light and sight, thus our tendency to concretize. Both time and space make sense only with our attunement or sensibility to light. And to be more correct, light in a specific range of frequencies. The fact of our relationship to light does not exclude the development of other forms of sensibilities, however, it is safe to assume that our brain is essentially wired with light as its medium of conceptualization. We are creatures essentially dependent on the matrix of space and time, and we carry all the entailing limitations (fragments) which are aspects of our internalized sense of time and space. Outside of human sight, time will not make much sense.

At the preliminary stage, my effort will focus in establishing the individual as the most important player in this new fractal political philosophy. Thus, any deliberate attempt at an elitist purity of ideas or concepts is very much doubtful to succeed; it is like trying to catch a shadow. However, intuitively created ideas or concepts maybe the closest to being free of contamination. Here, I am attempting to restate succinctly what I have elaborately stated throughout. "Intuition" as stated earlier is a form of reasoning the logic or premises of which are subsumed and are not accessible through deliberative process. I was warned a long time ago when I was a young often-cantankerous child that little knowledge was dangerous. After two scores of years of life with books and some form of an academic career, I realized that no knowledge no matter how small is as dangerous compared to blind ignorance. Even if one makes mistakes because of inadequate knowledge, that mistake is exceedingly more desirable than being an inert being.

We, every single one of us, from urbanites to dwellers of the deepest and most remote rain forest, at the present time, represent the longest, the most painful, but also most successful struggle for survival. In each one of us is a tread of life, which is unbroken, and stretching back all the way into eons of incredibly remote past. We should feel great about our success, and shout above our voices congratulating each other. This is also a good time to start thinking of a new "beginning" and a more rewarding life than the one that we have successfully come through.

When we started out we were a frightened, weak, ignorant lot; there was not much going for us. Along the way, we acquired creative insight. And in order to help us survive through the uncertainty and the mindless violence around us, we created our gods in our own image and in the image of the violence that surrounded us. We tried to control the unpredictability of the violent world around us and the uncertainty of our circumstances through our intellectual ideas. We anchored the violent physical world by recreating it in our minds and endowing it with distinct personality in the form of superhuman beings so that we may be able to control and bring the physical violence of nature under our command.

We truly have traveled quite far from where we started out not only in terms of temporal-space but also in our knowledge of the world around and within each one of us. We have evolved and developed strategies which are at times quite charming even though some of them had been destructive. We are not frightened cave dwellers who mistake shadows for the reality of our existence. We have pulled ourselves out of the pit of ignorance on to next stage of hopeful life of enlightenment. Our bright future is inevitable, and it is only a question of time and not of unfulfillment. I used to be afraid that such an exquisite and complex bundle of life would disappear. I am not afraid any more. I believe we have acquired the necessary built-in mechanism of restraint as part of our ethical nature a result from our millions of years of struggle for our survival.

Compared to our God or Gods, we are exceedingly more interesting and infinitely more deserving of recognition and respect. The world we have created within us and around us is a testimonial to our bright future. It is high time we consider ourselves as gods and behave in a lot more responsible manner. We are the precious pearl found between the two shells of Earth and Space or, if you want, between matter (energy) and field. We sometimes belittle the significance of our consciousness, our faculty of reason and passion.

Just because there is a rejection of old beliefs and rebellion against old social institutions, it does not mean that there will be an automatic degeneration back into brutish existence. Our nature will not allow us to collapse back into our remote past. The distance we have traveled away from our humble primordial beginning itself is an impenetrable barrier with no risk of anyone of us falling through. Can a man enter back his mother's womb? Take heart by the fact that we are moral beings even though we may have started out with nothing of the sort. We have overcome much and had in the process completely transformed our relationship with nature and with each other.

I do not think that a world without a god or gods is a frightening place. It might probably feel a little lonely at times, but a far more liberated place uninhabited neither by a hysterical and lascivious god or gods nor with the terror of burning in hell after death. Man liberated from the anxiety of living inside such a cosmos will be able to give unbridled effort to his creative impulses. It might even be a far more conducive environment for the creative process. The world we know with a god or gods extends the fear and anxiety felt by our ancestors who devised the belief in super beings in the first place. Mankind without a feeling of sin may evolve a different kind of mind conducive for further ethical development. At any rate, the idea of a god or gods involved in human affairs has been to me an uncomfortable thought and a concept too self-serving to be worth taking seriously. Invariably, I ended up with questions and making up absurd answers dealing with such assumptions or beliefs.

However, no one should criticize a person for trying to be close to his God or Gods. It is mankind's search for the perfect and the ideal. What is so bad about any one trying to be close to the ideal? What we must seek is knowledge and wisdom, which process is not incompatible with an ideal (God or Gods) we may hold within us, but a tool that will help us move away from dogmatism and vicious self-importance. If there is a blurring

between our thought and the assumption of a fundamental realty which does not depend on our thought for its state of being, such uncertainty is the price we pay for having a free will and analytical brain. Schopenhauer in his conception of the "world as will and representation" has laid bare the problems of cognition and intuition. And far more to the point of the reality of our individual capacity and in the words of Jung we are dealing here with "the splendor within"—the human yearning for the realization of the perfect and the eternal within the confines of the fragile and finite individual self.

Knowledge ultimately is a positive attribute, even maybe a morally good one. All the warning coming from leaders about the danger of a breakdown of civil society et cetera if there is no formal structure of government and religious institutions may be an overstatement, and a simple expression of fear and anxiety and a lot of times self serving. Ignorance and uncritical acceptance of dogmas is a hindrance to mutual respect and acceptance of differences between people. People are taken advantage of by leaders through manipulation of their fears and ignorance. Ironically, the fact of human vulnerability also confirms that human beings by nature are not inclined to harming each other.

Considering mankind as a whole, the time of our rapid transformation into an informed and industrialized people took place in the last one thousand years. Even by a conservative estimate, we were around for at least two hundred thousand years in our present form. And up to that point for millions of years we were engaged in fine-tuning our inner working mechanism. The time we spent fine-tuning our own system seems to be almost 99% of our existence. I do not mean to imply that we were consciously engaged in creating and developing ourselves like the 'hands' drawing of M.C. Escher creating themselves (drawing each other).

We are not little children any more who need fairy tales and myths in order to keep us straight and act responsibly, and contribute our share to the development of society. We can be trusted with the truth and can deal with it intelligently. The types of crimes associated with development and urbanization are manifestations of our inadequate government structures and due to the exploitative profit motive ingrained in our economic systems, and not a reflection of our individual inability to lead a civilized life. If we start with a different premise the type of crimes we have would decline greatly. More often we criminalize activities that are nothing more than the overt manifestations of a failed social system which at times is submerged in rituals, taboos and symbols. It is a fact most crimes are committed for economic reasons or for reasons indirectly connected with economic matters.

It is quite ridicules for anyone to shut out people on the ground of citizenship or kin relations. The oneness of mankind is not just a theological escapade but rather a biological and historical fact. The threat to peace and mutual support and mutual development comes from those groups of people who see them as specially entitled to privileged place in their theology or mythology. There are very many human groups who believe their right supersedes those of other individuals or groups. As a survival strategy it is understandable to protect the interest of a manageable group size, however, to think

of the group as 'the ultimate' goal would led to an error and unsolvable conflict with the possibility of inbreeding and stagnation.

Although I may not agree with the pessimistic view of Schopenhauer concerning human life, I do agree with his emphasis on the human "will" replacing all other sources or calls for action. More so now than ever before, since our God or Gods have atrophied and have become weak because our faith is intellectualized and our resolve compromised. Thus, we have to depend on our will alone. In the past, because of the fact of too many variables in play, and because of our own inadequacy and ignorance, we failed to guide willfully our development. We depended much too much on the "blind watchmaker" (to use an apt description of life by the great scientist Richard Dawkins)[4] to charter our destiny. This time, however, through our "will" we should be able to guide ourselves into a realm of higher existence of ethical and commitments and respect to others.

It is good that we are mortal. Human life cleans itself, from the overburden of the human-garbage we become in the process of our struggle in living out our individual lives, at least every one hundred years. Imagine the situation if man had a much longer life, what a disastrous system it would have been. Death is a renewal process where the old is recycled and transformed into a sparkling and fresh new life, and more importantly new hope. How can that be a frightful process? We should do our very best by cleaning up the place, recording and insuring the availability our very best scientific findings, and our very best creation for the coming new life so that it will be able to build and enjoy more of what we have achieved and aspire for. In this struggle we meet each other only in a single time continuum. Thus, we should cherish the moment to acquaint each other with our efforts and help and cooperate with each other. Against the backdrop of eternity, the span of our individual life is quite limited. However, as one aspect of life we are as eternal as time. Should we not make the best of what we have and aspire to all our potentialities? If such is the case, should not we be more courageous to face our tormentors and oppressors?

We hear too often how different and "superior" the Western mind is. The claim that the Western mind is the only analytical mind is a self-congratulatory remark. Analysis is an attribute of all human beings. There is also a non-structured way of thinking which maybe as significant as analysis, where non-Western people exceed. Every single one of "Us" on Planet Earth is a manifestation of the triumph of life over entropy and living proof of our successful struggle and process of actualization. We have done quite well to the extent we need to survive. Life is not wasteful even if a lot of times most of its effort might seem pointless to our individual human perception. The current difference in cultural and creative outputs between developed and underdeveloped nations is simply a response to different environmental demand.

The way to fulfill our individual aspiration and our collective human purpose is to recognize and guarantee human rights universally not in its reduced form as an aspect of particular culture or as a reward for performance or as a privilege but as an inherent and fundamental attribute of being a person - a human being. A poignant observation by a great scholar of constitutional law succinctly illustrated the paradox between fundamental

rights and guaranteed rights. Corwin, writing about the Constitution of the United States, stated that "the course of our constitutional development has been to reduce fundamental rights to rights guaranteed by the sovereign from the natural rights that they once were."[5] The concentration on ethics brings forth the correct state of mind of universalism without having to forgo our identity and our search for justice for a particular group of people.

We judge without knowing, and we try to know without critical judgment - thus, our problems. There are parallel cultural and institutional developments in human groups or in different "racial" groups or nations that have effectively met the survival demands of their members. If there was no such success, we will not be talking about different groups. The consideration of looking at one "being" superior to another is a misreading of the fundamental process of our becoming. In the 1970s Benoit B. Mandelbrot developed (The Fractal Geometry of Nature, Freeman, New York, 1983) a new field in geometry capable of generating complex structures exceedingly more intimate to nature than those achieved through Euclidian method. The basic concept of an enduring pattern repeated endlessly (stretching to the infinitesimal and as far to the gigantic into infinity) is adopted in my concept of "fractal society." Each human group has a system that responds in a kind of a social and evolutionary Parieto optimum [6]—whereby meeting precisely an acceptable degree of survival demands of its members. It does not reflect the abilities of individual members to excel, but a common minimum satisfaction for all with available resources. At any rate, the human genetic pool is made of diverse human groups and so dramatically commingled that it will be stupid for anyone to talk about a pure racial group. In a properly balanced environment, where the demand of individual survival is satisfied with ample resources, we all would have been amoeba-like. Even if we acknowledge mutation as random variation from the norm, without challenge there is no possibility of firming up that mutation as a new feature of that life form. No environmental challenge, no variation in life forms.

Why do people want to go outside of a group to propagate? It is a survival strategy - expanding the genes pool; thereby insuring survival by meeting the demands of unforeseen circumstances. It has been recorded that some Monkeys had been observed to sneak out and mate with strangers occupying the lowest ring of the totem pole. Experts saw this as a most puzzling phenomenon. However, when you think about it - it does make sense. After all the best possible combination is also in all probability the least restricted i.e., the most chaotic one. This fact is such expanded random sampling is most useful in statistical work to reach a most representative property or characteristics of a group.

Does this mean that it is necessary that we must engage in adversarial confrontations to insure the development of our country? Not at all. There is enough challenge in nature that we need not concentrate our effort against each other. Our native curiosity will keep us going for some time - for a long time. It seems to me after reaching a certain stage of development, rational thought need not be fretted out of each one of us. I believe at a certain stage knowledge will be her own propellant, in other words our search for knowledge will be self perpetuating ever pushing us into more complexity. Complexity

will insure to us that the issue of political power and economic development will not be a bone of contention, but [will be dealt with as] a matter of course.

Conclusion

The ultimate evidence of our limitation as human beings (discreet entities) is the fact of our mortality. I do not believe that we will be able to appreciate significantly the specialness of our individual lives if we do not consider our mortality at all times. The briefness of our individual lives paused in the face of eternity should make us appreciate and respect all life not just human lives. If we do not feel the Earth under our feet trembling, or the fact that we are precariously hanging on a thin crust of silicon and carbon that protect us from the furnace below, or the fact of our timeless journey to no where being thrown from a slingshot of unfathomable force with such jarring speed, then may be we should try harder to appreciate the least significant lives around us in order to see later the full splendor of our souls.

I believe that the Universe is permeated with life, that life is not unique, but widespread; nevertheless, not cheap. The very fabric of the Universe seems to be understandable and explainable through reason. And more importantly, life shapes the Universe at some level making it inner directed as opposed to just being a "field" or inert. These considerations along with my own personal spiritual inner glow has given me the right to state that there are no illegal human beings, that all human beings are a marvelous universe unto themselves individually or otherwise and must be respected and, if possible, adored. With that in mind, it will be absurd to think that one human being is worth less or more than any other human being. And this is not a question of semantics or sentimentality but a reality that goes beyond culture or history. This is the base understanding for my suggestion that our struggle should be conducted based on ethical grounds.

Tecola W. Hagos
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Endnotes: [Part One]
*This article is an extraction from a book manuscript just completed under the same title.

1. In the 1970s Benoit B. Mandelbrot developed (The Fractal Geometry of Nature, Freeman, New York, 1983) a new field in geometry capable of generating complex structures exceedingly more intimate to nature than those achieved through Euclidian method. The basic concept of an enduring pattern repeated endlessly (stretching to the infinitesimal and as far to the gigantic into infinity) is adopted in my concept of 'fractal society.'

2. For basic explanation of the theory of chaos, see James Gleick, Chaos, New York: Viking Penguin, 1987.

3. See Immanuel Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, trans. N. Kemp Smith, New York: St Martin's Press, 1965.

4. Richard Dawkins, <u>The Blind Watchmaker</u>, New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1986.

5. Edward S. Crowin, <u>The Constitution and What it Means Today</u>, 1978 (14th) edition, rev. Harold W. Chase and Craig R. Ducat, Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 1992, 440.

6. Parieto optimum is an economic term which is described as: "When the economy's resources and output are allocated in such a way that no reallocation can make anyone better off without making at least one other person worse off then a Parieto optimum is said to exist." <u>The MIT Dictionary of Modern Economics</u>, ed. David W. Pearce, Fourth edition, Cambridge MA: The MIT Press, 1994, 324

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PART TWO:
FRACTAL POLITICS: THE CASE FOR ETHIOPIA

I. Focusing Issues and Questions
In my first article on "fractal political philosophy," I have stated, "[I]t is only because of my search for a solution to our cyclical suffering in the hands of contemptible and brutal leaders that I came up with new political philosophy that might help us break away from this loop of suffering and underdevelopment." And further on I have stated, "At the preliminary stage, my effort will focus in establishing the individual as the most important player in this new fractal political philosophy." Those statements and others have instigated people to ask three important generic questions dealing with points about 1) the "newness" of fractal political philosophy; 2) the magnitude or degree of importance of the individual; and 3) the role of the state of Ethiopia. The first question mainly deals with questions of semantics and is not as important as the second and third questions that deal with equality, justice, economic and political development, and decency.

Some of my readers of my first article on "fractal political philosophy" were concerned about the implication of "fractal" theories in social and economic issues because of the possible implications or emphasis on individuality and/or the reduction and transfer of important public issues into questions of private matter. The initial problem with such concern has to do with basic understanding of what is meant by "fractal" concept. The theory takes its inspiration from fractal geometric structures and the concept of "complex adaptive system," both interpreted in such a manner to explain economic, political, and social structures in a non-linear or hierarchical manner in anticipation of finding long term solutions.

I have adopted a holistic approach when I discussed several issues in connection with Ethiopians from all background and ethnicity. I have generalized statements that may only be true in particular communities in Ethiopia and not true in others. This way of writing, on the surface, may look like very misleading since Ethiopia is a multi-cultural society and certain values or activities may not hold true in all of the many cultures and communities of Ethiopia. I avoided making a series of conditional statements because such approach cuts into the very essence of the argument and minimizes the true import of my statements. I rather assume that Ethiopia is like a mathematical set of many members/parts, and as such the characteristic of such parts is the characteristic of the set itself. At least for the duration of this article, let us not forget the fact that Ethiopia is an aggregation of several parts, but also a lot more than the parts, best characterized as a synergy of the many in the power of a singularity or unity.

Since the issue of newness has been raised by some of my readers about my use of fractal concepts in Ethiopian politics as a new approach, I will briefly discuss why I wrote about "fractal philosophy" as a "new" approach to solve our social, political, and economic problems. It seems the offending word was the word "new" because it suggested something extraordinary to some people. This qualifying adjective is simply a descriptive statement of fact and not a normative judgment. It meant that the fractal concept, which has its base in mathematics, is being used in political and philosophical understanding of events taking place in a particular nation of Ethiopia for the first time--a simple ordinal identification. The application of fractal concepts to Ethiopia's political situation is a "new" use of the concept. I checked tens of thousands of entries as follows:
- under the word "fractal" over three million;
- under the words "fractal philosophy" about forty three thousand;
- under the words "fractal political philosophy" about eleven thousand;
- under the words"African fractal political philosophy" about eight thousand
- under the words "Ethiopian fractal political philosophy" about eighty.
I searched also the Library of Congress online data banks, with different search engines with similar results.

Despite the staggering numbers of items identified by the research tools or servers I used, through proper search command, a kind of algorithm, it is possible to eliminate millions of entries that are simple cross references or word identifications, and as a result the number of actual essays (books) on the subject of "fractal political philosophy" seems to be quite limited almost non-existent. There was some effort by philosophy departments in some universities to link the concept of "fractal" to the social sciences, which attempt seems to have been inarticulate and cursory. What I read from seminar papers, departmental announcements et cetera attest to the fact that there is a lack of intellectual conceptualization to formulate the interface stage between concept and discipline. Articles or books whether in a form of structural analysis of the application of concepts of "fractal" to political philosophy or a generic discussion of the subject would not be that difficult to a researcher to find.

Thus, the above large numbers of entries are meaningless if used to compute the number of actual works dealing with fractal political philosophy. In fact over 99.9% can be

discarded as non-responsive. Most of the items entered were cross references for one or the other triggering words. And a large percentage of that limited number of essays dealing with the concept of "fractal" deals exclusively with subjects like mathematics, economics, computer program, chemistry, biology, and art (design). In other words the actual number of items written on "Ethiopian fractal political philosophy" comes down to a set consisting of a single article--my article.

I would recognize here a couple of individuals who took up the concept of "fractal" in an African context, but for a different analysis than mine. Abdul K. Bangura and Ron Eglash [1] in separate works have discussed "fractal" concepts in an African setting. Moreover, their discussion focused on mathematical questions (in design, art; knowledge base) with cursory reference to sociological issues dealing with extended African family and aggregation of tribal strictures--topics far from political philosophy of any sort.

Now, let me focus your attention on the more important concerns and issues that I believe must be discussed in earnest for some time. There are other diversionary schemes being pushed by Western governments such as the moronic forum on "African Unity." A discussion of that sort is totally anachronistic and amateurish to bring up at this stage of African political and economic development. There is such a back-log of unresolved heap of problems that it is immoral to come up with a discussion topic as "African Unity" at this time. African leaders could not even handle their "allotted" territories of the Continent let alone handle highly unitary and infinitely more complex structures and operations.

The basic ethical standards in all of human communities have always been about both individual and communal interests. I have not come across any community where only one set of ethical norms favoring the community or the individual exclusively has been the case. It is with such fact as background that I introduced the idea that the promotion of ethical principles to be the main function of a government. The reason for this shift in the role of the Ethiopian government is to break the cycle of violence and poverty that has characterized life in Ethiopia for so long. In a way, it is a positive step of self-empowerment by the people of Ethiopia taking charge of their own lives and not waiting for any government to provide them with what is inherently their own to begin with. It is in this sense of change of trajectory and adoption of a new role for a government specifically and clearly articulated as such that I claim the fractal approach I have adopted to both philosophy and Ethiopia is new.

We Ethiopians have wasted almost fifty years focusing all of our effort and having adopted the wrong premise that political rights and economic development could only be achieved by going after political leaders and by introducing alien political structure replacing existing systems to the exclusion of anything else. At least our struggle should have been two-pronged: one group focusing on building the integrity and ethical strength of the individual Ethiopian, and the second group focusing on dislodging the leadership. I am not undermining what poverty can do to a person's self-worth or life, nor am I overlooking the fact that even a minute spent in poverty and oppression is a lifetime experience that no one should go through. In my effort to refocus our attention on what

we can do as individuals for each other before we attempt to change the "big picture," I am not conceding and accepting as final a defeat in our struggle against an oppressive government and brutal leaders. On reflection, as a matter of personal assessment of the current situation, I do not think much of the opposition's present or past effort to dislodge leaders; we would have been far more effective had we invested even half the time [i.e., we wasted thirty years fighting Haile Selassie, Mengistu and now Meles] just on building the individual Ethiopian. The way we have brought about change and removed Ethiopian leaders skewered us in a perpetual self-mutilating loop from which we will never escape as long as our aim is simply to change just personalities.

It is not because of any sympathy for past dictators or current ones that I am critical of our method of struggle or the way we set our priorities. The emphasis we have placed on the acquisition of state power should have been a secondary item rather than the primary place we have accorded it. It is quite disconcerting to me when I read in programs of several political organizations unabashed provisions dealing with issues of the acquisition of state power. With this in mind, let me investigate the fractal alternative that I believe is a way out of our predicament.

It is in the later stages of development of the notion of the "state" as of 16th Century that ethical standards were decidedly disassociated from the function of the state in Western nations. By contrast Ethiopian political leaders had always throughout Ethiopian history separated the secular power of their governments form the spiritual leadership that was properly assigned to religious leaders. However, ethics/morality was never disassociated from the power of the Sovereign. This may have to do with the concept of "kingship" as divinely endowed to the individual, and the Sovereign was seen as God's instrument through whom His divine purpose is carried out. Even though the Ethiopian king or emperor was claimed to have been anointed by God to rule over Ethiopia, there was a validation process for the anointment process that was controlled by the Church leaders. It was an amazingly sophisticated system that worked quite well for thousands of years helping preserve the viability, sovereignty, territorial integrity, and independence of Ethiopia even though some of the most tumultuous history of conflict and war in the world took place in Ethiopia.

II. The Individual in a Fractal Society
A. Childhood and Social Integration
The manner Ethiopian children [2] are brought up and how they are treated in schools by their teachers [the few lucky ones who attend schools], neighborhood communities, and society in general determine on how Ethiopians relate to their fellow citizens, and how they handle disagreements, confrontations, and authorities when they become adults. Instead, generations of Ethiopians had to suffer irreversible damage to their self-esteem and humanity in the hands of parents or their caregivers, and "sadistic" teachers and principals all over Ethiopia. It is in fact amazing that Ethiopia is not populated by millions of neurotic (even psychotic) individuals considering the prevalent degree of child abuse.

In books and articles, I have discussed the harm inflicted on Ethiopian children by dysfunctional families acting as the most destructive breeding ground for traumatized, antisocial and insecure children who in time grow up to become controlling and manipulative adults. It is quite sad to watch thirty, forty years old adult Ethiopian men and women acting with timidity and insecurity like ten year old boys and girls in front of people. Such behavior is a result of years of abuse in the hands of parents, teachers, and the community in general of defenseless children.

The fractal structure of normal activities such as personal relationships, earning a living (work), family life, child rearing et cetera at the individual level has tremendous effect on large structures dealing with the power of the state and government leaders. All children encounter the world first in their interaction with their parents or caretakers, and as they grow older their interaction expands and they are initiated into becoming a useful and important member of the larger community. Not discounting the importance of genetics in the building of personality, nevertheless, the first few years of interaction with parents and caretakers are extremely crucial in the formation of the character of children. The violence and abuse children encounter in their formative years last them for the rest of their lives. I have thought of this particular problem for years.

In my own life the strong memories I have are those from early childhood feelings of being helpless against the violence at home, in grade school, and on play grounds. I have talked to very many Ethiopians/friends who seem to be in denial trying to paint a rosy picture of family life and grade school experience free from violence and abuse. Unless we face head on this evil that has stunted the development of very many ethical values of millions of Ethiopians, we will never solve our economic and political underdevelopment. We must also accept the fact that next to parents and early childhood caretakers, no one is more important in the life of a person like grade school teachers. Students learn not only science, mathematics, and history from their teachers, but they also learn from the behavior of their teachers how to behave in society. Such lessons are far more important than mere technical knowledge because students learn from good teachers how to be good human beings and responsible citizens.

In all of my essays, the individual is acknowledged not only as a means, but also as an end. For those familiar with Kantian ethics this might remind them of the "formula of the end in itself," which idea is not an innovation, but only an articulation by Kant of an idea/fact that has a rather long tradition and is to be found in all societies in some form or another. In fact, I consider such ideation instinctual, and deeply embedded in every human being who ever existed. I believe it comes with the package that may be identified as self-awareness. In general, when it comes to questions of human rights, I suggest that we dispense with the question of crediting to a western philosophy/philosopher, or western influence principles or ideas dealing with basic human rights.

If we cannot see "the individual" as an agent of civilization, of communal life, or of family life, it would be impossible to think of civilization, communal life, or family life at all. By the same token, if we have not accepted the autonomy and the individuality of "a person," there would have been no community. The inverse is also true; it is mind

boggling to think of "the individual" independently existing without a civilization, a communal life, or a family. The question to be resolved is where to strike a balance that would result in bringing out the best result for the individual and for society. All this polemic is elementary, but need be stated.

One can easily fall into cyclical argument trying to figure out where to start: with the individual or with society. Since this "exercise" has no "reality," let us work with some thought-experiment focusing on the one road that may branch out and develop into constructive systems that will give us tremendous benefit. If we start with the assumption that the community is of greater importance than the individual, we might never go beyond the infancy of the individual for the individual as a child could be discarded for any number of reasons by the community. It is important to remember that both in the past and at the present time a form of infanticide is practiced in both developed and undeveloped nations. Abortion in developed nations terminates tens of millions of fetuses every year, and neglect and starvation kills even more millions of children in undeveloped nations.

On the metaphysical aspect of this thought-experiment, one can bring into consideration the added fact that both past and recent history is littered with infantile civilizations or civilizations that deteriorated back into their infancy because of overwhelming distortions as a result of shifts that set communal importance to override the importance of the individual. In fact, the present world crisis is the result of distortions coming from such camps. The losers are those communities that have undermined individual rights and submerged their societies in totalitarian religiosity of one kind or another.

The danger of putting the community ahead of the individual results in situations far more dangerous compared to a system where the individual climbs the arduous ladder of power and turns against the community. In other words systems are far more difficult to change than individual dictatorships. True, the brutality of some dictators such as Adolf Hitler, Saddam Hussein, Mengistu Hailemariam et cetera has no measurement for its depth of evil, but one must remember that those dictators were hiding behind ideologies that gave overwhelming precedent to communal interest above and over individual rights. On the other hand, if we start with the individual as our starting point, we do not run the risk of infanticide or stagnation right away. However, one need not get into this form of chicken-egg dilemma. At a certain developmental stage, the individual is wholly dependant on parents, family, and then the community. The initial stage of socialization sustains the physical well being of the individual, and also constructs his/her identity to a stage that the individual will be open to several possibilities where the individual's free will comes into play.

The worst we can say of unfettered individualism as a societal ideology is that it might deteriorate into an aristocracy with tyranny as one aspect of its deformity, and in our own time-line into an elitist and unbelievably corrupt political and economic system. It has been pointed out by several philosophers including Adam Smith, Friedrick Hayek et cetera that self-interest is more of a preservative of communal tranquility rather than an agent of disequilibrium. Of course the former is coming from a totally different trajectory

of compassion for the poor, and against the pre-industrial crude capitalism of exploitation and monopoly, while the later is simply fearful of the Soviets socialist takeover of individuality and enterprise that may result in perpetuating poverty and oppression rather than growth and freedom. Though their approach is crude to my test, it has some merit in as far as we consider "self-interest" as part of the essential preliminary stage(s) of human social development only. Beyond the initial stages of communal development, no matter how well we argue for individual liberty, such "liberty" will simply get corrupted into greed and hedonism unless tempered with communal interest as an essential aspect of the individual's mental, physical, and moral development and ultimate survival. A clear example of such deterioration can be seen in the absurdities that surround Nozick's extremism in his libertarian ideas.

For example, in Christian ethics, the admonishment of the Christ to us all is to love our neighbors as much as ourselves. Mind you, even the Christ did not instruct us to love our neighbors more than ourselves. Thus, the validation of the individual is the building block of all civilized communities, but always tempered and checked by communal concerns. I am not advocating naïve Rousseauesque individualism, or unfettered capitalism in any form. As a matter of fact, I hold the opposite view. For example, I see certain non governmental structures such as the World Bank, the IMF et cetera as tools that further help the exploitation of poor and weak people around the world by huge multinational corporations and interests. And the political as well as economic justification to support those large and powerful structures mainly is presented as the "globalization" of the movement of capital. That is a euphemistic description of the old "colonialism" resurrected in new dresses. How about a non-exploitative movement of labor from under developed nations to the developed nations? What was needed was democratic governance and economic empowerment through fractal structures that could meet the needs of the people who needed the most help.

B. Social Responsibility and Paying Debts
When I say those of us educated in Ethiopia (at least for our first degree) owe Ethiopia much, I am not speaking figuratively or in the abstract. I mean we, each one of us, owe real money expended to educate us by the people of Ethiopia. This is not some metaphysical money-debt owed based on some legal abstraction, but real wealth created through the blood and sweat of millions of Ethiopians spent on our behalf. What have we done to repay that money? Except for the occasional thirty, forty, fifty dollars we grudgingly throw in collection boxes for famine relief, we have not paid back our debt. It is even worse when we consider Ethiopian physicians and others well paid professionals who are very successful living in million-dollar mansions, contributing so negligible a fraction of what was expended to train and educate them. Especially in case of physicians their excuse of political persecution for being in the West is utterly nonsensical, for they are a pampered lot back in Ethiopia.

It is Quixotic to me to witness physicians from the Western world volunteering (Doctors Without Borders, Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF)) to help the millions of destitute, starving, and very ill Ethiopians back in our Homeland, while Ethiopian physicians are running away in droves to the West and ending up building a fantasy life of luxury in the

West. It is especially hurtful when one considers most of these Ethiopians grew up in modest homes and some in single-room shacks and dilapidated *tukuls*, and thus are familiar first hand with the deprivation and needs of most Ethiopians. Of course, there are exceptions; there are few Ethiopian physicians and other professionals who try to help Ethiopian refugees and immigrants in their new homes in the West, but that is a drop of compassion (delivered at times with much fanfare) in a sea of indifference and betrayal.

Other groups of immigrants whose contributions are greatly sought after back in Ethiopia are our Church Fathers including the Patriarch and the Abuns. Their search for safety is quite contradictory to their vows of service and commitment to follow in the footsteps of the Savior, the Christ, symbolized in His painful walk bearing His heavy cross to his crucifixion at Golgotha. I am not denying the fact that our great Church Fathers do help us (Orthodox Christians and others) by keeping Ethiopian communities together out in the West; however that could have been done through proper evangelist structure coming from the Mother Church not as a result of the act of rebellion, dissent, or fight. I am not endorsing the election or the leadership of the current Patriarch of the Church of Ethiopia. However, I believe religious hierarchical matter should not be handled the way political fighting is done by politicians who most often turnout to be no better than street thugs. I hold our Church Fathers to high standards and expect greater degree of sacrifice than I expect from Ethiopian politicians.

C. Raising a Labor Force and Work Ethics
The focus of the fractal method suggested herein is on the idea that we give as much importance what happens at the individual and family level as much our focus on large government structures. In the fractal methodology there is an acceptance that government structures are direct reflections of the activities of the individual and the individual's family in a nation. If there is sufficient attention paid to the individual and the family, the state structure will take care of itself. There are a number of simple steps that can be taken by individual citizens to insure that their children are not victims of violence and abuse in the first few years of their lives. This is a new approach in the sense that there is a very drastic change of emphasis on small structures as opposed to large ones such as governments.

Fractal philosophy has profound explanatory power when it comes to changing the attitude of most Ethiopians about physical work that involves even marginal physical engagement. Respect of physical "work" as a part of communal life need be inculcated at an early age. There is dignity in any work. It must be considered as part of the induction of children into society as responsible and respected members. I am not saying Ethiopians are lazy. Far from that, I believe that Ethiopians are among the hardest working people in the world. You will not find that many communities around the world facing up to the types of hardship Ethiopians face as part of their daily routine. However, Ethiopian farmers, daily laborers et cetera go about their work grudgingly, and who would not under similar circumstances. What I am questioning is their attitude to "work" given a choice. As a matter of fact, certain types of professions like working as blacksmith, potter, *qoda-faqi*, et cetera were most frowned upon occupations and their practitioners were shunned and ostracized from the larger community. In fact, in traditional Ethiopia,

if a man or a woman is a blacksmith or potter, such person is considered to have the evil-eye, a *budda*, and feared by the community, and forced to live in separate communities far from the general public.

Other than the fact of the desire for individual independence, there is also the desire to avoid physical work, an attitude inherited from a culture that seems to have negative perception of labor. Being a *zebegna* seems to be the most desirable occupation in urban centers around Ethiopia. There is not much physical engagement in being a *zebegna* except the occasional opening of gates for the "master's" car. Some Ethiopian communal behavior seems to suggest that in the eyes of such public "begging" is preferred to physical labor. One can write much on the psychology and sociology of the work habit of Ethiopians. From my own "unscientific" observation in Washington, it seems that many Ethiopian immigrants seem to prefer jobs that require less physical exertion. That may be one reason why one finds more Ethiopians in jobs that require less physical labor. There are more Ethiopians working as doormen, parking lot attendants, restaurateurs et cetera more than Ethiopian construction workers. Of course, there are tens of thousands of Ethiopians who are professionals, such as medical doctors, engineers, accountants, entrepreneurs et cetera too.

The Ethiopian education system and core curriculum emphasized non-vocational courses and did not introduce children to courses that concentrated or encouraged students to be engaged in activities that are physical. Even sport is limited because of proper infrastructure and facilities. We ought to encourage contests and awards that glorify physical labor. This could be done both at the family-community level and at the national or state level. For example, every Ethiopian child at a young age should be inducted into a profession, in other words become a member and learn the craft in his or her pastime, just for fun. In my own childhood, the one impression that remained with me to this day is the fascination I have with handicraft work. As a young boy of six or seven years old I used to sneak out to a neighborhood black-smith's workshop, and I used to watch for hours end mesmerized by the glowing coal and the rhythmic bellowing as air was pumped by a colorful assistant who used to make faces at me as he goes about his work. Much later I learned that he was merely five years older than me. The most important part to me was watching the master ironsmith shaping scrap steel and iron like pieces of paper into all kinds of familiar household items. It was magical. In my young eyes he was a "god" bringing to life fascinating objects.

III. The Role of the State in a Fractal Political Philosophy
There are certain indicators we can use to see if large political structures are reflective of intimately valued ethical standards derived from individual horizontal relationships. Trade or labor unions and professional associations and to a greater extent private clubs (mahibers, eders) are very important intermediary structures that are highly valued in fractal methodology. Where there are an abundance of such subsets, it is an indication that the state's structure will be also highly reflective of the community and the individual. These structures or subsets are not something new to most state structures, but are being appreciated here in different light hermetically without any hemorrhaging into some form of political ideology.

The state as a corporate entity, which is distinct from the sovereign, is a modern concept. Even Machiavelli, who is thought of as the father of "Political Science," did not make a clear demarcation between the state and the sovereign. And much later, when Louis XIV declared "L'etat, c' est Moi," he was not really exaggerating his importance in the political power structure of the time, but merely stating the obvious. Even now, for some traditional societies there is no such distinction; however, in some cases such distinction or separation has occurred much later. [For example, the 1960 Civil Code of Ethiopia makes reference to the fact that the Government of Ethiopia is a legal entity on its own separate from the Emperor, and such concept was as alien as anything that could be imagined vis-à-vis Ethiopia.] Starting in mid Twentieth Century, with the rise of Fascism, Nazism, and Socialism the state became the one single force that mattered in national political structures. In the 1960 a large number of former colonies became independent states; they were established *prima feci* as "states" without any consideration as to the legitimacy of political authorities. This lack of legitimacy of the political power structure was the real reason why so many governments of new nations in Africa ended up being overthrown by military leaders leading to the current mess of African nations.

It is often argued that the state plays a far more important role as an agent of change, economic and political development, and in the preservation of civil society in "Third World" nations than in nations that already have advanced political and economic systems. Thus, most liberation or freedom struggles are aimed at replacing state power structures by replacing or overthrowing governments. The most recent and much acclaimed tool is the "democratization" process involving the drafting of constitutions and holding periodic elections, and adopting "market" economy system. These novel undertakings require large structural changes in order to be of some effect, and that is where the problem is. For example, elections inevitably create losers and winners, and the losers could not be absorbed into existing social and economic structures away from public offices because those essential secondary structures (social and economic) are not yet developed and in place such that losers can wait for another day to win an election. Rather what is created is another cycle of freedom and liberation fighters by the losers and their tag-ons.

It is in this situation that I am claiming the virtue of fractal political philosophy in dealing with monumental political and economic problems faced by developing nations. The one important feature of this approach is the acceptance of the idea that there is no compelling need for violent conflicts in trying to dislodge existing state structure and leadership in order to bring about desired economic development and democratic government. Such changes could be achieved at the individual-family-community level with enduring results without recourse to violence. In other words students, agitators, liberation or freedom movements were not exactly on the right track in their great effort and sacrifice by directly engaging government forces for leadership of the nation. Both political and economic changes would have been possible with less death and destruction had leaders of popular movements focused on horizontal change of relationships first rather than concentrate all of their resources fighting to change vertical structures.

The role played by the Ethiopian Teachers Association (ETA) for the last thirty years could be used as a great example to illustrate how fractal methodology would have been utilized with much more effect than the crude struggle waged by ETA's leadership for political power so far. In Ethiopia, there were two important events in the last thirty years 1) the 1975 Military takeover of the government of Haile Selassie, and 2) the 1991 TPLF/EPRDF "liberation" of Ethiopia kicking out what remained of Mengistu's brutal military government after Mengistu run out of the country in fear. In the first watershed event, Ethiopian teachers overwhelmingly supported the military takeover to the extent of becoming agents of the military in hunting down dissenters. Of course that marriage of convenience did not last long, a few years into the rule of Mengistu, teachers were victimized too and their union or association fully controlled as part of the political structure of a totalitarian government. In the second situation, after the TPLF/EPRDF took power, the fate of teachers along with other professionals underwent far more complex processes. Thus, I shall concentrate more in laying down foundational material to help build the case for horizontal fractal structural change.

IV. Structural Weaknesses of Unions and Professional Associations
The Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE) and its successor government of Meles Zenawi have been anti-union, and have tried to destroy both CETU and ETA for the last thirteen years. The difficulties faced by the leaders of these associations have been a topic of extensive discussion both in Ethiopia and in the Ethiopian communities in foreign countries. The leaders of these associations such as Dawi Ibrahim [3] (the President of CETU), Taye Wolde Semayat (the President of ETA) and Gemoraw Kassa [4] (the Secretary General of ETA), have articulated the dispute between their organizations and the Ethiopian government. They have also addressed concerned members as well as the general public in different forums both in Ethiopia and abroad. They have provided their audience with clear pictures of the type of brutal persecution suffered by them personally and their organizations in the hands of officials of the governments of Ethiopia. Their interviews and press releases were truthful, believable and to the point. Nevertheless, the solution pursued by those leaders did not materialize for the simple reason that it lacked the structural strength of a popular movement.

The controversy between labor unions (professional associations) and the TGE on the issue of the role of the government in the organization of unions quickly turned into a political power struggle. The EPRDF took over the government of Ethiopia in May of 1991, and right away dismantled the power base of the defunct government of Mengistu - the WPE. The WPE was organized as the party of workers which included most everybody. However, membership was on the basis of individual registration, and there was no membership of unions or any other organization as such. The WPE was declared by the EPRDF and by TGE to be a criminal organization [5] and its office was closed, and its officials disbanded and some were put under arrest. In fact, one of the criteria for promotion, and government appointment to executive and ministerial office was the fact that the appointee was not a member of the WPE. However, such standards were not applied consistently to all similarly situated individuals. [6] Identical decision was also taken against the leaders of urban dwellers and peasants associations. The WPE was the backbone of the previous government, its leaders were officials of Mengistu's Ethiopian

government, and thus it was necessary to dismantle a subversive pseudo-governmental organization at that point in time. It is very misleading to portray labor unions as innocent victims of the current Ethiopian government before looking into the background of the development of unions during the previous government. The defunct unions had in their ranks individuals who have committed crimes against innocent citizens in their heyday during the time of the brutal dictatorship of Mengistu. As part and parcel of the WPE, union leaders manipulated the members to rally behind Mengistu's political decisions. However, this does not mean that the current Ethiopian government can commit similar crimes of Bolshevism, infiltration and control of the leadership of unions, in the manner Mengistu did. This is the background of the development of future political fallout between labor and the Ethiopian government.

In 1991-92 period, the Ethiopian work force was very amenable for restructuring and reorganization of the unions. The government stalled for a while because of the fact that it did not have a clear idea and policy on how to go about solving the problem of labor organizations. One problem has to do with the caliber of the individuals who were entrusted to deal with labor issues. Under an ad hoc committee the new organizational effort by industrial and service establishments were started. This lead to an immediate confrontation between the TGE and groups who had a certain perspective not favorable to the political policy that was adopted by the TGE in regard to the issue of the independence of Eritrea. There was also tremendous competition to fill the power gap left open due to the dismissal of all labor leaders installed by the previous regime which made it extremely difficult for the new officials of the TGE entrusted with the responsibility of reorganizing the workers.

Even with all these difficulties the initial response of workers/labor to the effort of the new government to reorganize the labor force was favorable. It seems that the controversy was started by overreaching official of the TGE who tried to install individuals whom they thought would be supportive, without question or deliberation, of the new leaders. The Ethiopian government started its attack and manipulative effort in order to get rid of the leadership of both the ETA and CETU because they were independent minded and that they were not the type of leadership that could be dictated to by Meles and his subordinates to support and participate in the Constitution drafting fiasco of 1994. This conflict ultimately resulted in the long imprisonment of ETA's President, Taye Wolde Semayat, who was released from his long imprisonment only a year ago.

Another reason why Ethiopians in general and labor union members in particular tend to be confrontational rather than cooperative with Ethiopian governments may have to do with the type of attitude and life-style displayed by government officials starting from the aristocratic rigidity of Haile Selassie's time to the flashy materialism of Meles Zenawi's "court." Soon after the EPRDF took over power in 1991, for example, EPRDF leaders were installed in the government power structure, they demanded the same "pomp and circumstances" and the "red carpet" treatment of traditional Ethiopia handed down from the time of Emperor Haile Selassie. Former guerrilla leaders were transformed overnight into government officials, and their first "official act" was to jump onto the fleet of

expensive cars left behind by the military regime, and move into the expensive villas vacated by the former officials of Mengistu. In other words, conspicuous consumption of the worst kind was the prevailing conduct of those "freedom fighters" who just arrived into towns and cities in dusty slippers and modest attire. The transformation was quite dramatic. Most importantly, it sent the wrong signal to the general population that nothing has changed except personalities. There was no reason for ordinary Ethiopians to change their mistrust of officials, or to change their attitude, work habit, relationships et cetera.

On the question of statesmanship, when EPRDF came into town it got suckered into associating itself with the Mehal Sefari individuals who undermined all grassroots movements because they knew that when power devolves to ordinary citizens their influence will be diminished. This phenomenon had been played several times through out the last one hundred years of Ethiopian history. The individuals who served Mengistu were now the initiators and molders of the crude and overambitious leaders of the EPRDF. The TGE appointed ministers, ambassadors and other lower level officials who used to be important officials during the government of Mengistu.

This form of relationships with former functionaries of a brutal dictatorial government is a clear example of a society that has not developed effective and solid civil society capable of influencing a government. The issue here is not to decry what should have been, but rather to find out what was missing that we failed to develop a strong civil society. This inquiry indicates the importance of the integration of the individual in the community in such a manner so that each draws on the power of the other. Fractal methodology is the best structural mechanism that could easily help us build such solid structure. Intermediary structures specially unions and professional associations are to be considered to be extremely important mediating structures between the individual and governmental structures.

V. Fractal Methods for Unions and Professional Associations (mahibers or eders)
If unions and associations had concentrated more on the enhancement and development of their work ethics and the relationship of members rather than focusing on how to make big-picture changes and prematurely challenging the political leaders and the government, they would have made lasting changes in the quality of life of their members and those of the community in general. The one single challenge to unions that brings them at loggerheads with the government deals with wages and benefits. Even such very important and justifiable goal could have been set aside in the interest of advancing the higher goals of the profession. "Work" should have been seen as a "religious" devotional experience, and everyone should have developed great sense of duty to do the best for the sake of future generations of Ethiopians. Such devotion does not require the government's approval or anyone else's either. There is much we can learn from the ways of the bee in its beehive, without becoming one.

Such bonding process of members primarily creates a strong group loyalty and solidarity. The members of unions and associations could have concentrated their energy and resources on how best their members would have discharged their duties to the public

rather than aspire for political leadership. For example, teachers associations would have developed code of conduct for their teachers in how best to treat, teach, and guide students. Such intimate devotion to the work at hand would have served Ethiopians far better than the useless struggle for political power waged against government leaders for the last thirty years. Governments around the world are simply a reflection of the norms and sentiments of their respective populations. It is a fallacy to try to make much of the distinction that is attempted by politicians and others about evil leaders and angelic underfoot constituency. There is no way that a brutal dictator could grow out of a population made up of individuals who are democratic minded and ethically respectful of individual rights, which statement affirms Montesquieu's brilliant admonishment of over two hundred fifty years ago. It is in this sense that I strongly argue that the primary focus of our struggle must be on small and intimate structures such as the individual, the family, the local community et cetera more than on the larger structure of power politics and governance. There is an element of inevitability of change if it is done from the ground up.

The current Ethiopian government is not much different than the brutal military regime of Mengistu. It even boasts among its leadership structure Mengistu's loyalists and officials. The central core is dominated by Meles Zenawi and his associates. These individuals, along with their sycophantic supporters from litif political groups, are some of the worst leaders Ethiopians ever had. They are greedy, selfish, violent in the extreme, and corrupt. They have no respect, compassion, understanding, or good will for the people of Ethiopia. In fact they have worked earnestly against the interest of all Ethiopians in their treasonous dealing with the leaders of "Eritrea" and the governments of the United States and Britain in the illegal independence of "Eritrea" and the signing of the Algiers Agreement that has effectively land-locked Ethiopia. That single act of treason by Meles and his government has resulted in the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Ethiopians, and the forced lose of citizenship of millions of Ethiopian citizens. Ethiopia also lost its historic coastal territories of Afar and its twelve miles of territorial waters of the Red Sea with unimaginable lose of natural resources of great wealth. Thus, in working with the fractal system, we ought to ignore and shun those monsters [Meles Zenawi and members of his government, and associates] socially, and not cooperate in any form with their political or economic programs. This is not passive resistance but a prelude to a far reaching revolutionary change in the making.

VI. Fractal Leadership
In the vertical structure of Ethiopia's traditional leadership and hierarchy, the personality of our leaders is incubated, molded, and nourished to adulthood. And the events of the last one century may give us some clue as to why we have been subjected to progressively mediocre leadership for so long. In order for us to synthesis common characteristics of Ethiopian leaders, and thereby to develop theories of leadership we may have to consider the physical appearance as well as other individual attributes of our past leaders. Haile Selassie, Mengistu, and now Meles Zenawi and most of their circle of associates were/are diminutive men, usually not over five feet and a half. I am not being frivolous when I suggest that there might be a connection between the short stature of our leaders and their maniacal desire to control and subdue everybody within their reach. The

phenomenon is well understood by psychologists for a long time. It is commonly known as the Napoleonic syndrome.

Of course, leaders are people too; they share in the culture and moray of communities. It is equally true also that the long established and independent societies of Ethiopia have as their organizing principles feudalistic or at best autocratic systems of relations. Even though, outwardly Ethiopian societies might look in a process of transformation from a traditional society to a hybrid of modernity, it is still vastly a traditional society. The feudal hierarchical relationships are in evidence even within the command structures of liberation movements; it is cherished and strictly observed by leaders and members alike. It is with great disappointment and disgust that I witnessed first hand the despotic tendencies and the love of pomp and circumstance of the leaders of the EPRDF and other tiletafi political organizations soon after the formation of a transition government in 1991.

The first act of the military leaders when they took over the government of Haile Selassie in 1974 was to jump on the cars and personal properties of the officials of the government of Haile Selassie. And in time, they expropriated the personal properties of rich business men and progressively nationalized private property every where, and created a state of political orgy for the next Seventeen years. Similarly, the current government leaders behaved exactly in the same manner as the soldiers behaved toward the officials of Haile Selassie over seventeen years ago. Why do people from so different background act in similar brutal and despotic manner? Is there an Ethiopian national character of despotism and brutality? In order to answer these questions one must assume in the first place that nations and communities do develop characteristics the way individuals do. The risk in this type of analysis is the possibility of oversimplified stereotyping of a very complex process of social interactions and character building.

However, this is not the first time that nations were identified with particular characteristics e.g. Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, Godless Soviet Union et cetera. So far as people are aware of the deficiencies of such characterizations, the limited use of such identification may be helpful for understanding why some leaders act in brutal and despotic manner while others are gentle and democratic. I am not offering here an excuse for the type of poor leadership for the last five successive generations in Ethiopia but a certain perspective not usually considered by political observers. Now, that being the case in Ethiopia, what would be the main features of a fractal leadership? I have stated earlier and in Part One of this Article that large structures need contain the essential characteristics of the intimate and smaller structures of society i.e., the individual/family/community.

The moral standard expected in the smaller and intimate structure is also an essential aspect of the larger structure of leadership and people associated with the leadership. Ideally, Ethiopians may chance upon the leaders of the country cleaning their streets, yards, and public parks in their free times as a matter of course. Do not dismiss this vignette outright as utopian and of no value. If society in its parts values compassion, generosity, hard-work, honesty et cetera, the leaders of that community have no other

choice except to be themselves compassionate, generous, hard working, or honest. People should be willing to disobey and confront leaders or officials if those leaders or officials violate the norms of the small structures.

Conclusion/suggestions

Where is all this polemic leading us to? What steps can we take in the process of redrawing a new political program for Ethiopia based on fractal political philosophy? Is fractal philosophy another form of wishful thinking no better than utopian ideas? There are very many activities that we can effectively carry out without the approval of any government official. These activities are profound and very dependant on our resolve and commitment. Let us put our effort where it matters the most among ourselves. We all know how some Ethiopians who work as domestics for other Ethiopians are treated. We all know how the rigid "class" system works in Ethiopia. Let us start breaking down those negative social structures and treat every Ethiopian with respect and fairness. A number of Ethiopian families who have maids and servants invite their "gereds and ashkers" to sit and eat with them at their family table. It does not require government approval to do that.

There are numerous polarizing practices that we do without even thinking about them. For example, let us start by minimize the use of honorific titles and stop our groveling, which we pass as our sign of respect, to individuals whose claim for such difference is based on their physical size, wealth, or age. Let us internalize the fact that it is the duty of parents to defend, feed, cloth, and teach their children. It is not a privilege to be taken care of as a child. It is a right. Let us respect children and young people. And those of us who are educated ought to volunteer to tutor, teach, young Ethiopians in our spare times. Let us minimize the time we spent in bars, azmari-bets, and visiting houses of ill repute. Those of us, who are not married, ought to start families rather than spend our most useful years scouring for encounters in red districts. Let us honor all female Ethiopians and respect each others humanity. These are least troublesome items to do, and no government official would interfere in our behaving decently. Here is where the greatest revolution needs to take place—within the privacy of the inner sanctum of each of us.

In deep respect to the tradition of our great moral teachers, I will sum up the usefulness of fractal methodology by reciting a parable (a story) I learned in the Third Grade, a life time ago. The story is about a tiny mouse that saved a lion from a certain death. A lion was caught in a net-trap set by a hunter. The more the lion tried to break the net and escape, the more it was hopelessly entangled and incapacitated. Under such helpless condition the lion could be speared or stabbed to death. A lowly mouse hearing the roar and wailing of the lion came by to investigate what was going on and saw the great lion helplessly crying for help. The mouse [probably with some understanding of fractal philosophy!] using its tiny teeth snipped off each small connecting piece of rope of the net thereby created a hole large enough for the lion to escape. Thus the tiny and insignificant mouse saved the life of the king of the animal world. This story is an excellent metaphor to illustrate how fractal method would work to change large and seemingly formidable structures. The mouse by changing the smallest structure (tiny connector ropes) was able to change the nature of the large structure (the net) thereby

making it possible for the lion to escape. Let us be like the seemingly weak mouse, and start changing small hurtful structures, so that we may be able to bring down the large tyrannical power-net structure that has been incapacitating and tying us down in bondage to poverty and in subjugation for years.
Tecola W. Hagos
April 2004, Washington DC

Endnotes [Part Two]
1**.** Ron Eglash, African Fractals: Modern Computing and Indigenous Design (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1999.

2. See Tecola W. Hagos, Democratization? Ethiopia 1991-1994, Khepera Publishers, 1994.

3. Interview With Dawi Ibrahim the President of the Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions (CETU), in Amharic, Ethiopian Register, July 1995, 59-66.

4. Interview With Gemoraw Kassa Secretary General of Teachers Association, in Amharic, Ethiopian Register, January 1996, 39-46.

5. The Preamble of the Charter set the tone of how organizations and institutions which were created during the seventeen years of the government of Mengistu to be treated. The Preamble stated that "to this end, all institutions of oppression installed by the previous regime shall be dismissed", and in Article 8 (2) of the Peaceful Demonstration and Public Political Meeting Procedure Proclamation No.3/1991 of August 12,1991 it was clearly stated as follows: "As long as the council of representative has not decided otherwise, no WPE or security member may participate in any political activity; the organizations being anti-democratic and criminal have been disbanded." Such pronouncement of the TGE at that time was proper in light of the circumstances that lead to the downfall of the repressive government of Mengistu.

6. This was not strictly followed. Depending on how the individual former Mengistu's official behaved towards the leaders of the EPRDF, and his abilities to serve under the new leaders made such individual acceptable to the leaders of the EPRDF. They were retained as officials and senior government advisors within the structure of the new government. This discriminatory retention of former high government officials in the new government (TGE) created a degree of skepticism and distrust that was never overcome by the EPRDF officials. One of the major problems of the current government is based on that initial distrust of its leaders.