Civilizational Rupture and Political Responsibility: A Critical Examination of General Tsadkan Gebretinsae's Role within the TPLF Askaris and Bandits

Introduction

Ethiopia's recent political and military conflicts cannot be fully understood through the lens of contemporary power struggles alone. Debates surrounding Ethiopia's recent conflicts often move beyond conventional political analysis into the terrain of history, identity, and civilization. Ethiopia's recent political and military conflicts are deeply entangled with questions of historical memory, civilizational continuity, and identity formation. For critics of the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), the conflict represents not merely a political rupture but a challenge to a shared Geʿez-derived civilizational framework rooted in the Aksumite past. This article examines the role of General Tsadkan Gebretinsae within the TPLF as part of a broader ideological and historical shift that, according to critics, contributed to the fragmentation of a long-standing integrative narrative in northern Ethiopian Habesha Agaezi history and legal territorial integrity.

For many critics of the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), the issue is not merely one of military conduct or governance, but of a perceived rupture in a shared Geʿez-derived civilizational continuum—encompassing language, historical memory, moral order, and territorial imagination rooted in the Aksumite world. This article examines the role of General Tsadkan Gebretinsae within the TPLF through this lens, not as a legal indictment, but as a political and cultural critique grounded in history and ideology. The argument advanced here is that certain political and military choices associated with TPLF leadership, including those involving Tsadkan Gebretinsae, contributed to the erosion of shared historical narratives and civilizational cohesion, particularly as understood within the broader Habesha and Geʿez cultural sphere.

Geʿez Civilization and Aksumite Continuity

Geʿez civilization constitutes the linguistic, religious, and symbolic foundation of the Aksumite kingdom and its successors. It represents more than a classical language or liturgical tradition. It is the foundation of a **civilizational memory** spanning millennia, linking the Aksumite kingdom, the Red Sea world, religious institutions, kingship traditions, and a shared moral vocabulary often described as *Agaʿezi* or Habesha ethics. This civilizational framework historically transcended modern ethnic boundaries, operating as a **unifying cultural grammar** across the northern Horn of Africa. Scholars such as Munro-Hay (1991) and Phillipson (2012) emphasize that Aksum was not only a political entity but a **Red Sea–oriented civilization** integrating Africa, Arabia, and the Mediterranean world. Geʿez functioned as a vehicle of religious continuity, legal tradition, and royal ideology, later sustaining the Solomonic state through ecclesiastical and literary institutions (Taddesse Tamrat, 1972).

Importantly, this civilizational framework historically **transcended modern ethnic categories**, operating instead as a shared symbolic and moral order across northern Ethiopia

and Eritrea (Levine, 1974). Political movements that redefine identity exclusively along modern ethno-national lines have been perceived by some scholars and communities as **disruptive to this long-standing synthesis**, particularly when they reinterpret history in ways that fragment shared narratives or territorial continuity.

The TPLF's Ideological Reinterpretation of History

The TPLF emerged in the 1970s from a Marxist-Leninist revolutionary tradition deeply influenced by theories of national oppression and self-determination (Young, 1997). In this framework, imperial Ethiopian history—particularly its Solomonic and Habesha narratives—was reinterpreted as an instrument of domination rather than integration.

Scholars note that the TPLF's ideological project involved:

- Recasting Ethiopian history as a series of internal colonialisms
- Rejecting civilizational continuity in favor of ethnonational liberation narratives
- Reframing Aksumite and Geʿez legacies as politically contested rather than shared (Vaughan & Tronvoll, 2003)
- Foreign installed Ethno-national self-determination, Revolutionary struggle and Rejection of imperial and pan-Habesha narratives.

Critics argue that this historiographical shift weakened the integrative role historically played by Aksumite symbolism and Geʿez culture, entailed a reinterpretation of Ethiopian history that diminished the integrative role of Aksumite and Geʿez heritage in favor of narrower and divisive political identities.

This ideological shift had consequences not only in governance but also in historical narration, education, symbolism, and territorial discourse—areas central to civilizational continuity.

General Tsadkan Gebretinsae: Political and Intellectual Responsibility

General Tsadkan Gebretinsae has been widely considered not only as a military commander but also as a **strategic thinker and public intellectual** within the TPLF. His writings and interviews reflect a commitment to revolutionary legitimacy and armed struggle as necessary tools of political transformation (Young, 1997).

From a critical perspective, his role is significant in three respects:

1. **Militarization of political discourse**, reinforcing armed struggle as a primary mode of political negotiation
2. **Normalization of ethno-political historiography**, aligned with TPLF ideological premises
3. **Delegitimization of shared civilizational narratives**, particularly those associated with Habesha and Geʿez continuity with its Red Sea.

These critiques emphasize **political responsibility for cultural and symbolic consequences** against Habesha Agaezi Ethiopians and their Red Sea.

Critics argue that:

- His leadership helped normalize armed confrontation as a primary political instrument
- His alignment with TPLF ideology reinforced fragmented historical narratives
- His role within the movement contributed to the delegitimization of shared civilizational symbols associated with Geʿez and Aksumite continuity

These all indicate a civilizational harm—the weakening of shared historical memory, moral cohesion, and symbolic unity through askaris and bandit political action and betrayal.

Geez Civilizational Harm and TPLF Generals like Tsadkan G.Tinsae

Scholars of cultural destruction emphasize related concepts such as:

- **Ethnocide** (Jaulin, 1970)
- **Cultural violence** (Galtung, 1990)
- **Symbolic annihilation** (Bourdieu, 1991)

Within this analytical framework, critics argue that the harm lies in:

- The erosion of Geʿez as a shared historical medium
- The fragmentation of Aksumite historical memory
- The weakening of moral and symbolic cohesion across communities

These outcomes are understood as **structural and ideological** segregation targetting the indigenous Geez Civilization in Ethiopia.

Civilizational Harm and Total Genocide

- **Ethnocide**
- **Cultural destruction**
- **Civilizational rupture**
- **Culturicide**
- **Historicide**
- **Democide**
- **Genocide**
- **Religiocide**
- **Scriptocide**

From this perspective, the alleged harm lies in:

- The marginalization of Geʿez as a unifying historical language
- The reframing of Aksumite history as exclusionary or adversarial
- The fragmentation of Red Sea–oriented historical identity
- The erosion of a shared moral and cultural inheritance
- The massacre and genocide of Geez intellectuals, leaders and patriots.

A civilizational betrayal and cultural destruction.

Key features:

A. Civilizational Framing

- **Geʿez civilization**
- **Aksumite continuity**
- **Agaezi Habesha kingship**
- **Sacred land and Red Sea identity**
- **Moral order ("Agaezi morality")**

This frames the conflict as: **A rupture in a millennia-old sacred civilizational lineage**, not merely political wrongdoing.

B. Betrayal Narrative

The charge is not only violence, but **betrayal from within**:

- "Repeated betrayal crimes"
- Targeting shared heritage
- Acting against ancestral continuity

This is a **traitor archetype**, not just an enemy archetype.

C. Symbolic Genocide

- Erasure of memory
- Destruction of historical narrative
- Severing people from land, language, and lineage

This is closer to what scholars call:

- **Cultural destruction**
- **Ethnocide**
- **Civilizational negation**
- **Total Genocide and democide.**

Comparison to Other Civilizational Accusation Patterns

Case	Framing
Serbian nationalist rhetoric (1990s)	"Destruction of Orthodox civilization"
Armenian genocide memory discourse	"Erasure of ancient Christian civilization"
Palestinian Nakba rhetoric	"Destruction of historical continuity"
Ethiopian imperial nostalgia	"Loss of Geez (Habesha Agaezi order"

It can be argued that General Tsadkan Gebretinsae, through his leadership within the TPLF, bears responsibility for political and military decisions that contributed to the erosion of shared Aksumite-derived cultural narratives, the marginalization of Geʿez heritage, and the fragmentation of historical Habesha identity and core of security and global diplomatic trade Geez Red Sea. These actions represent, a profound civilizational rupture and betrayal of a shared historical legacy that exposed three generations genocide and total destruction of all Habesha Agaezi Community. Under Tsadkan's influence, the TPLF imposed an ethnic and

tribalistic constitutional order that deliberately fractured Ethiopia's civilizational continuity by recasting the nation as a colonial empire, thereby weakening its historical state integrity.

Betrayal as a Political and Symbolic Category

In political theory, betrayal often functions as a symbolic charge, not merely a moral one. It denotes a perceived abandonment of shared foundational norms (Arendt, 1963). Within post-imperial societies, elites who redefine historical narratives are often accused of betraying continuity, even when acting under claims of liberation or justice. The charge of "betrayal" in this context is not personal or moralistic but political and symbolic. It reflects the belief that leaders who emerge from within a shared civilizational tradition bear a responsibility to preserve its integrative foundations, even while pursuing reform or resistance.

Here, with the case of General Tsadkan and his TPLFites "betrayal" reflects:

- A rupture with inherited and shared Geez civilizational memory of millenia.
- A rejection of integrative historical synthesis and geographical integrity of all Habesha Agaezi Ethiopians and their Red sea.
- The replacement of shared narratives with permanent antagonism and tribalistic fragmentation of ancient civilizational state and institutions.

More specifically, when political movements are perceived to:

- Sever continuity with ancestral narratives
- Recast shared heritage as oppressive
- Replace civilizational synthesis with permanent antagonism

they are experienced by critics as betraying continuity, regardless of their stated intentions. By encouraging the replacement of the Geʿez script with Latin orthography, Tsadkan sought to erode the common civilizational values that historically unified Ethiopia, further advancing a project of cultural and political fragmentation.

In dismantling the central role of Geʿez and weakening the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, Tsadkan effectively attacked the civilizational foundations that for centuries connected Ethiopian identity, values, and social norms.

By endorsing the unlawful separation of Eritrea and siding with Egypt and other strategic enemies of Ethiopia, Tsadkan contributed to Ethiopia's geopolitical isolation and deepened its exposure to geoeconomic subjugation.

According to critics, General Tsadkan presides over or benefits from multibillion-dollar business enterprises, including Raya Breweries, Anbessa Banks, Gold mining (Shire), Huge farming land (Raya) and construction firms, while Habesha Agaezi Ethiopian populations endure man-made hunger caused by exclusionary political and economic systems.

Conclusion

This article argues that the most serious charge against such leadership is not only legal genocide, but also political responsibility for deepening historical rupture—a rupture that undermines the shared Geʿez-Aksumite inheritance that once served as a unifying civilizational framework within the Greater Horn of Africa and beyond.

Critics argue that Tsadkan and his traitor pagan TPLF actions contributed to a deepening civilizational rupture—one that weakened the shared Geʿez-Aksumite inheritance that historically functioned as a civilizational unifying framework that was similar to the Roman, Perisian, Indian, Chinese and Ottman empires.

Hence, General Tsadkan Gebretinsae's legacy, like that of the TPLF itself, must be assessed with historical and cultrual destruction that are contributors to a broader civilizational fragmentation that continues to shape conflict in the Horn of Africa. This article contends that the most consequential critique is not only legal genocide, but also political responsibility for symbolic and historical fragmentation. Addressing Ethiopia's future requires engaging these competing historiographies with rigor, restraint, and an openness to reconciliation rooted in shared civilizational memory.

General Tsadkan Gebretinsae and his repeated committed betrayals, treasons, genocides and democides, crimes within TPLF: He has committed genocide against the shared Geez Civilization, Shared Geez culture, shared geez heritage, shared Aksumit kingdom, Shared Geez narration that conitnued for millennia, and assassinated several patriots that defeated foreign invaders and acted against kings of Agaezi Habesha, against Agaezi morality, against geez land and Geez Red sea.

Historiography: Competing Schools

1. Integrative / Civilizational School: Levine (1974)**,** Taddesse Tamrat (1972) **and** Munro-Hay (1991. Emphasizes Habesha Agaezi Aksumite continuity, Geʿez culture, and integrative state formation.

2. Ethno-National / Revolutionary School

- Young (1997)
- Vaughan & Tronvoll (2003)

Focuses on national oppression, self-determination, and resistance to imperial narratives that doesn't relate with the case of Ancient Geez Civilizational State of Ethiopia. This is because Ethiopia has never been a colonial empire at all.

3. Critical Synthesis

Recent scholars attempt to reconcile these views by acknowledging both **real historical inequalities** and the **costs of civilizational fragmentation**.

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