

Awet Tewelde Weldemichael

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Crucially influenced by my upbringing in a refugee camp in Sudan (from infancy into adolescence), my academic and non-academic engagements have had policy implications and/or outcomes in mind. My areas of expertise are in the contemporary history and comparative politics of the countries of the Horn of Africa: Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia and Sudan. I have especially worked in, conducted independent, multilingual research on, and offered analyses of fragile, conflict, and post-conflict environments across the region. I have also supervised students (graduate and undergraduate) and junior academic and non-academic colleagues, and coordinated research outputs of established and upcoming experts.

EDUCATION

September 2018	Queen's University, <i>LL.M. in Public International Law</i>
September 2008	University of California Los Angeles, <i>PhD in History</i> Dissertation: "The Eritrean and East Timorese Liberation Movements: Toward a Comparative Study of their Grand Strategies"
December 2003	University of California Los Angeles, <i>MA in History</i>
September 2001	University of California Los Angeles, <i>MA in African Studies</i> (comparative politics & history)
September 1999	Addis Ababa University (Ethiopia) and University of Asmara (Eritrea), <i>BA in History</i>

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

July 2019 – Present	<i>Professor and Queen's National Scholar</i> , Queen's University, Kingston, ON History Department Cultural Studies
Sept 2019 – Aug 2020	<i>Hubert H. Humphrey Distinguished Visiting Professor</i> , Macalester College, St. Paul, MN History Department (on leave from Queen's)
July 2016 – June 2019	<i>Associate Professor and Queen's National Scholar</i> , Queen's University, Kingston, ON History Department Department of Global Development Studies Cultural Studies
July 2014 – June 2016	<i>Assistant Professor and Queen's National Scholar</i> , Queen's University, Kingston, ON
July 2012 – June 2014	<i>Assistant Professor of History</i> , University of Kentucky
Sept 2011 – June 2012	<i>Fernand Braudel Fellow</i> , Université Paris Diderot - Paris 7
Nov 2010 – Aug 2011	<i>Hiob Ludolf Guest Professor of History</i> , Hamburg University
2009 – 2011	<i>Research Fellow</i> , Institute of Advanced Studies, University of Bologna
2008 – 2009	<i>Visiting Assistant Professor of International Studies</i> , Trinity College
2003 – 2007	<i>Teaching Fellow</i> , Department of History, UCLA
2002	<i>Lecturer</i> , Department of History, University of Asmara
1998 – 1999	<i>Graduate Assistant</i> , Department of History, University of Asmara

NON-ACADEMIC WORK EXPERIENCE

December 2016	<i>Consultant/Instructor</i> , the Rift Valley Institute, Nairobi, Kenya
October 2016	<i>Consultant</i> , International Peacebuilding Alliance (Interpeace; Program Development)
Aug/September 2015	<i>Consultant</i> , International Peacebuilding Alliance (Interpeace; Somali Program)
May/June 2014	<i>Consultant</i> , International Peacebuilding Alliance (Interpeace; Somali Program) <i>Resident Researcher</i> at Peace and Development Research Center (PDRC), Somalia
June/July 2013	<i>Consultant</i> , International Peacebuilding Alliance (Interpeace; Somali Program)

July/August 2012	<i>Resident Researcher</i> at Peace and Development Research Center (PDRC), Somalia <i>Consultant</i> , International Peacebuilding Alliance (Interpeace; Somali Program)
January – March 2012	<i>Resident Researcher</i> at Peace and Development Research Center (PDRC), Somalia <i>Consultant</i> , International Peacebuilding Alliance (Interpeace; Somali Program) AND <i>Resident Researcher</i> at Peace and Development Research Center (PDRC), Somalia
Aug/September 2011	<i>Consultant</i> , International Peacebuilding Alliance (Interpeace; Somali Program)
March – May 2010	<i>Long Term Election Observer</i> in Sudan, The Carter Center Democracy Program
January – March 2007	<i>Political Affairs Officer</i> , United Nation Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT).
July 2002	<i>Consultant</i> , World Bank-funded Emergency Reconstruction Program in Eritrea.
2001 – 2003	<i>Communications Director</i> , Thirst for Learning (Los Angeles-based NGO).
2000 – 2005	<i>Tutor and Tutor Supervisor</i> , UCLA.

LANGUAGES

English, Arabic, Amharic, Tigre, Tigrinya, Indonesian (intermediate), and Italian (basic).

PUBLICATIONS (peer-reviewed works, policy reports and paper, encyclopedia entries, and commentaries)

BOOKS (monographs and edited volumes)

A Derailed African Decolonization: Eritrea's Stride toward Independence, 1960s-1990s (Forthcoming in 2026).

An African Revolution Reclaimed: A Memoir of an Eritrean Freedom Fighter Mesfin Hagos, co-authored with Mesfin Hagos (Red Sea Press, 2023).

Piracy in Somalia: Violence and Development in the Horn of Africa (Cambridge University Press, 2019).

*Winner of 2019 Best Book in the Study of Organized Crime, International Association for the Study of Organized Crime.

*Finalist for the 2019 African Studies Association Best Book Prize, ASA.

African Liberation Theology: Intergenerational Conversations on Eritrea's Futures, co-authored with Ghirmai Negash (Red Sea Press, 2018).

Changing Horizons of African History, co-ed. with Anthony A. Lee and Edward A. Alpers (Africa World Press, 2016).

Maritime Terrorism and Piracy in the Indian Ocean Region, co-ed. with Patricia Schneider and Andrew C. Winner (London and New York: Routledge, 2015).

Third World Colonialism and Strategies of Liberation: Eritrea and East Timor Compared (Cambridge University Press, 2013).

TECHNICAL REPORTS and POLICY PAPERS (does not include works done as a consultant)

“Will Sudan’s New Center Endure as a Periphery? The Implications of Moving the Capital to Eastern Sudan” (London: XCEPT 2025): <https://www.xcept-research.org/publication/will-sudans-new-centre-endure-as-a-periphery-the-implications-of-moving-the-capital-to-eastern-sudan/>

“From Halayeb to Fashaga: Eastern Sudan Conflict Dynamics.” A Report for a peace and mediation organization working on the Horn of Africa (Unpublished, December 2024).

“Climate Dislocation in Somalia: Preliminary Findings from Puntland.” A Technical Report for the Puntland Development and Research Center, (PDRC, March/April 2023), with Abdullahi Abdurahman Ahmed “Cayrow” and Muctar Hersi: <https://pdrcsomalia.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Climate-Dislocation-in-Somalia-Preliminary-Findings-from-Puntland-2.pdf>

- “Between a Rock & a Hard Place: Eritrean Refugees in Tigray & the Ethiopian Civil War,” with Yibeyin Hagos Yohannes, Meron Estefanos and Anonymous (IPRA, February 2022).
- “Ethio-Eritrea Peace Deal: Implications for Regional Integration,” *Tana Papers and Policy Briefs* (Tana Forum 2019): 4-9.
- When Elephants Fight, the Grass Suffers: A Report on the Local Consequences of Piracy in Puntland.* (Dalhousie Marine Piracy Project, Marine Affairs Program Technical Report #12, 2014):
http://www.dal.ca/content/dam/dalhousie/images/faculty/science/marine-affairs-program/Technical_series/Dalhousie-Marine-Affairs-Program-Technical-Report-%2312.pdf
- “Threats, Prospects and Trends in Eritrean-Yemeni Waters,” *Strategic Insights: Global Maritime Security Analysis*, No. 34, September 2011.

BOOK CHAPTERS

- “Eritrea and International Law of the Sea” with Henok G. Gebrezgabiher and Senai W. Andemariam in *The Law of the Sea: Contemporary Norms and Practice in Africa*, Patrick Vrancken and M. Tsamenyi, Tafadzwa Pasipanodya (eds) (Juta and Company, Pty, FORTHCOMING).
- “Sources and Research on Liberation and Revolutionary Movements in the Horn of Africa,” 307-318, in *Africa as Method. A Handbook of Sources and Epistemologies*, Uoldelul Chelati Dirar and Karin Pallaver (eds) (Springer, INC., 2024).
- “*Mal d’Africa* and the Postcolony: From Nostalgia to New Forms of Exploitation in Somalia” 116-129, in *Longing for the Future. Mal d’Afrique and Afro-Optimism in Perspectives on Somalia*, Rosetta Giuliani-Caponetto et. al. (eds.) (Routledge, 2024).
- “Neither Old nor New: Ethio-Eritrean Relations through the Dawn of Change in Ethiopia,” 523-548, in *Ethiopia in the Wake of Political Reforms*, Melaku G. Desta et. al. (eds), (Hollywood, CA: Tsehai Publishers, 2020).
- “The Horn of Africa from the Cold War to the War on Terror,” 401-417 in *A Companion to African History*, Charles Ambler, William Worger and Nwando Achebe and (eds.), (Wiley-Blackwell, 2018).
- “From Hostage Taking to (Ab)use of Ransoms in 21st Century Northeast Africa: The Life Cycle of Piracy in Somalia,” 307-329, in *Ransoming, Captivity & Piracy in Africa and the Mediterranean*, Jennifer Lofkrantz and Olatunji Ojo (eds.), (Africa World Press, 2016).
- “Maritime Corporate Terrorism and its Consequences in the Western Indian Ocean Region: Waste Dumping, Illegal Fishing and Piracy in 21st Century Somalia,” 4-20 in *Maritime Terrorism and Piracy in the Indian Ocean Region*, Weldemichael, Schneider and Winner (eds.), (London and New York: Routledge, 2015).

JOURNAL ARTICLES

- “The Peace that led to War: Ethio-Eritrean Relations since 2018,” *afriche e orienti* No. 2, 2021 [published in 2023] (special issue on “the Specious Dividends of Peace in the Horn of Africa”): 57-74.
- “Crimes within Crimes in Somalia: Double-dealing Pirates, Fraudulent Negotiators, Duplicitous Intermediaries and Treacherous Illegal Fishers,” *Journal of Territorial and Maritime Studies* Vol 6 No. 1 (Winter/Spring 2019): 51-63.
- “The Law of the Sea and Il/Legal Fishing in Somalia,” *The Nautilus* IX (Spring 2018): 29-52.
- “Ransoming in Contemporary Northeast Africa: Piracy in Puntland,” *African Economic History* 42 (2014) (published in May 2015): 215-237.

- “Formative Alliances of Northeast African Insurgents: the Eritrean Liberation Movement and the Ethiopian Armed Opposition between the 1970s and 1990s,” *Northeast African Studies*, Vol. 14, No.1 (2014): 83-122.
- “African Diplomacy of Liberation: the Case of Eritrea’s Search for an ‘African India’,” *Cahiers d’Études africaines*, Vol. 4, No. 212 (2013/4): 867-894.
- “Maritime Corporate Terrorism and its Consequences in the Western Indian Ocean Region: Waste Dumping, Illegal Fishing and Piracy in 21st Century Somalia,” *Journal of the Indian Ocean Region*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (December 2012): 110-126.
- “Grand Strategies of Liberation in Eritrea and East Timor,” *Africa (the Italian Journal of African and Oriental Studies)*, LXV, 1-2, 2010: 40-57.
- “The Eritrean Long March: The Strategic Withdrawal of the Eritrean People’s Liberation Front (EPLF), 1978–1979,” *The Journal of Military History*, Vol. 73, No. 4 (October 2009): 1231-1271.
- “The Challenges and Pleasures of a Comparative Fieldwork,” *UFAHAMU. A Journal of African Studies*, Vol. XXXIII, No. 1 (Fall 2006): 99-112.

ENCYCLOPEDIA ENTRIES

- “Tedla Uqbit” *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, Vol. 5.
- “Andom Tesfatsion” *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, Vol. 5.
- “Jose Ramos-Horta” *World Book Encyclopedia* (2009).

COMMENTARIES, AND MEDIA AND INVESTIGATIVE PIECES (SELECTED)

Guest appearances in different languages on the BBC, NPR, Voice of America, SBS Radio (Australia), WBAI Radio NYC, Straight Talk Africa (VoA’s live TV show), Al-Jazeera, CBC and others.

- “Writing Piracy in Somalia: Who Controls the Narrative and How?” *African Arguments*, 19 August 2022: <https://africanarguments.org/2022/08/writing-piracy-in-somalia-who-controls-the-narrative-and-how/>
- “José Ramos-Horta in Timor Leste Politics/History and in my Book,” *Tafara News*, 4 May 2018: <https://tafara.tl/jose-ramos-horta-in-timor-leste-politics-history-and-in-my-book/>
- “The Significance of Africa Day,” *Straight Talk Africa*, 20 July 2017: <https://www.voanews.com/a/3869772.html>
- “African Reactions to the U.S. Republican National Convention,” *Straight Talk Africa*, 24 May 2016: <https://www.voanews.com/a/3427591.html>
- “Bringing Eritrea in from the cold: we need to un-break the US-Ethiopia-Eritrea triangle,” *African Arguments*, 17 January 2014: <http://africanarguments.org/2014/01/17/bringing-eritrea-in-from-the-cold-we-need-to-un-break-the-us-ethiopia-eritrea-triangle-awet-t-weldemichael/>
- “Understanding Somali Piracy on Land and Sea,” November 28, 2012; with Abdisalam Warsame Hassan: <http://www.fairobserver.com/region/europe/understanding-somali-piracy-land-and-sea/>
- “Timor-Leste: Expediting Elections won’t Resolve the Current Crisis; Delaying them May” in *Suara Timor LoroSae*, 1 September 2006.

- “Eritrea and Ethiopia: Where to Now?” 10 August 2004, www.asmarino.com
- “Arbitration: the Eritrean Experience,” 2 December 2001, www.asmarino.com

PRESENTATIONS/LECTURES AND EXPERT PARTICIPATIONS

NB: this list does not include several invited talks (virtual) on my book on Somali Piracy and on the conflicts across the Horn of Africa, as well as expert meetings and briefing.

- African's Strategic Vulnerabilities: the State of Ratification of the Lomé Convention and Africa's Maritime Zones*, the 2nd Lomé Peace and Security Forum, Lomé, Togo, 11-12 October 2025.
- Somalia after Piracy: at the Crossroads of Conflicts, Maritime Resources and Geopolitics*, 57th Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, Chicago, IL, 11-14 December 2024.
- Local Manifestations of the Global Challenge of Illegal Fishing*, PDRC Talks, Garowe, Somalia, 21 June 2022.
- Neither Old nor New: Ethio-Eritrean Relations through the Dawn of Change in Ethiopia*, presented at the First Anniversary Conference of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, April 2019.
- Marching in Garuda's Nest: East Timor's Path to Independence through Jakarta*, a lecture at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Asian Institute, Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy, University of Toronto, 10 January 2019.
- Discourse of the Powerful, Criminality of the Weak: Shipwrecking and Piracy in Somalia*, 61st Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, Atlanta, GA, 29 November – 1 December 2018.
- Illegal Fishing and the Rising Spectre of Piracy off the Coast of Somalia*, presented at the "Africa-Asia Conference: A New Axis of Knowledge," University of Dar es Salaam, 20-22 September 2018.
- Discourses and Meta-Narratives of Piracy in Somalia*, presented at the International Conference on "Pirates, Brigands, and Smugglers in the Indian Ocean World," Indian Ocean World Centre, McGill, 17-18 May 2018.
- The War in Yemen and its Impact on the Greater Horn of Africa*, presented at the workshop "The Middle East Un/Rebound: Crisis, Response and Recovery over the Long Durée," Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, 28-29 April 2017.
- Crimes within Crimes in Somalia: Double-dealing Pirates, Fraudulent Negotiators, Duplicious Intermediaries and Treacherous Illegal Fishers*, 59th Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, Washington, D.C., 1-3 December 2016.
- European and African Colonialisms: Decoloring a Political Economy of Exploitation*, Harriet Tubman Institute seminar series, York University, Toronto, ON, January 28, 2016.
- The State of IUU Fishing and the Local Fisheries Sector in Somalia*, 58th Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, San Diego, CA, 19-22 November 2015.
- Piracy off the Coast of Somalia*, a public lecture at St. Mary's College of California, Moraga, CA, November 5, 2015.
- Field notes from Somalia: On Resource Pirates and Ransom Pirates*, Seminar on National and International Developments (SNID) series, Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, October 15, 2015.
- Licit and Illicit Lives in the Indian Ocean: the Piracies off the Coast of Somalia*, Workshop organized by the Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies (KITLV), Leiden University, the Netherlands, October 12, 2015.
- Maoism and African Armed Struggles for Liberation*, Inaugural Conference of the Association of Asian Studies in Africa (A-Asia): "Challenges and Prospects of a New Axis of Intellectual Interactions," September 23 – 25, 2015, Accra, Ghana.
- Of Cannons and Mosquitos? Metanarratives of Somali Piracy and International Counter-piracy*, 2nd International AEGIS Thematic Conference on Africa and the Indian Ocean: "Fluid Networks and Hegemonic Powers in the Western Indian Ocean," University of Lisbon, Portugal, April 9-10 2015.
- The Somali State and the Mis/Management of Somalia's Maritime Space*, 39th Annual Meeting of the Social Science History Association: "Inequalities: Politics, Policy, and the Past," Toronto, Ontario, Canada, November 6-9, 2014.
- African Security Challenges: Corruption, Resource Management/Control, and Sectarian Politics*, Thomson Reuters Foundation Global Security Seminar, London, UK, October 22-24, 2014.
- Piracy off the Coast of Somalia: Global Causes and Local Consequences*, a lecture delivered at the Indian Ocean World Center, McGill University, Montreal, October 9, 2014.
- Reflections on the Liberation of the Decolonized in Africa*, presented at the Debating Decolonization Conference at Queen's University, September 29, 2014.

Right Goals, Wrong Methods? African Liberation Wars and Their Outcomes, presented at Brock University conference on “People of African Descent: Recognition, Empowerment and Equity,” Brock University, St Catharines, Ontario, Canada, September 22-23, 2014.

“Captain Phillips”: the Story Behind the Story, a lecture to African Students Association, University of Kentucky, January 29, 2014.

Piracy and Immobility in Somalia: The Unheard Voices, 56th Annual Conference of the African Studies Association, Baltimore, MD, November 21-23, 2013.

Maoist Transformations in the Eritrean and East Timorese Liberation Movements, presented at the “Maoism in Translation” conference at Stanford University, Palo Alto, CA, October 31 – November 1, 2013.

Maritime Corporate Terrorism and its Consequences in 21st Century Somalia: Waste Dumping, Illegal Fishing and Piracy, 53rd Annual Convention of the International Studies Association, San Diego, CA, April 4, 2012.

Regional Expert at the “*Tackling Insecurity in the Horn of Africa: The role of China and other international actors*” workshop organized by Saferworld and Africa Peace Forum, 11-12 January 2012, Nairobi, Kenya.

Compromised by/ in the Process? Revisiting African anti-Colonial Insurgencies and their Quest for Liberation, 54th Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, Washington DC, November 17, 2011.

Toward Asmara through Addis Ababa and Dili via Jakarta, London Southbank University, March 2011.

Whose Responsibility? Peacemaking in the Horn, A Grassroots Panel Discussion on “The Challenges and Prospects of Peace in the Horn of Africa,” Oakland, California, August 2009.

The Challenges and Prospects of the Crisis in Darfur, A Public Awareness Forum, Congregational Church of Long Beach, Long Beach California, May 2007.

Darfur: The Prospects for Peace Talks AFTER the Peace Agreement, A public lecture on UCLA’s Darfur Day, UCLA, November 2006.

Africans in the Americas, Guest Lecturer for Kevin Terraciano, UCLA, November 2005.

Why Do People Rebel? Workshop on Eritrean History/Historiography, Asmara, Eritrea, September 2005.

Eritrea and the UN (1950): Self Determination of the People or Self Interest of the Super Powers? Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, April 2001.

The Eritrean Struggle for Independence: the Case of the 1978/79 Strategic Withdrawal, 43rd Annual Conference of the African Studies Association, Nashville, TN, November 2000.

Honeymoon, Confrontation and Elimination: the Relationship of the Eritrean and Ethiopian Armed Movements, 1974-1991, Graduate Students Conference on African Studies, UCLA, April 2000.

Convener, “Workshop on Transitions to Democracy: Pitfalls and Opportunities,” October 7-9, 2025, Gorée Institute, Senegal.

Convener, “Migration and Sociopolitical Mobility in Africa and the African Diasporas: International Conference Honoring Edward A. Alpers,” April 11-12, 2013, UCLA.

Member of the Law and Governance Intersectoral Working Group in the “*Integrated Working Groups on Global Piracy Initiatives*,” 25-27 July 2012, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Canada.

Convener, “Piracy Off Somalia: Origins, Current Dynamics and Global Ramifications” (a half day workshop), July 13, 2011, Hamburg University.

Member, Organizing Committee, 2018 Annual Conference of the Canadian Association of African Studies, Queen’s University, January 2018 – May 2018

PROFESSIONAL AND HONORIFIC MEMBERSHIPS AND SERVICE

Member, Editorial Advisory Board, <i>Journal of African History</i>	February 2025 - Present
Member, Editorial Advisory Board, <i>Canadian Journal of African Studies</i>	December 2023 – Present
Member, Queen’s University Faculty Association (QUFA) Bargaining Team, 2022-2025 Collective Agreement	May 2022 – February 2023
Member, Royal Society of Canada, College of New Scholars	September 2020 – Present

Member, Editorial Review Board, <i>African Studies Review</i>	January 2019 – Present
Member, Editorial Board, <i>Journal of Indian Ocean World Studies</i> (JIEWS)	September 2017 – Present
Member, Queen's University Senate	September 2017 – August 2019
Member, Queen's University Board-Senate Advisory Committee	September 2017 – August 2019
Member, School of Policy Studies Transition and Implementation Working Group, Queen's University	April – June 2018
Member, Steering Committee, Association of Asian Studies in Africa	September 2015 – 2018