

Ras Makonnen WoldeMikael Gudisa



Ras Makonnen's statue was placed in city of Harar, Ethiopia, in 1958, and destroyed by hooligans in 2020. (Photo: Equestrian statues by Gerard Huber)

Suppose a citizen intends to be candid and fair-minded. In that case, it will be essential to pay attention to conversations like Ras Mekonnen's statue, which hooligans destroyed in 2020, and the government's inability to repair it after two years.

This remarkable statue was developed by the collaboration of Ethiopian Laureate Afewerk Tekle and Croatian sculptors Antun Augustincic & Frano Krsinic in the mid-1950s. Both Augustincic and Krsinic are one of the greatest and top masters of equestrian sculptors and public monuments of the 20th century.

Ras Makonnen WoldeMikael Gudisa, (May 8, 1852 – March 21, 1906), was born at Derefo Maryam near Ankober, Amhara region, in what was then in the province of Menz. His father was Fitawrari Woldemikael Gudisa and through his mother, Leult Tenagnework Sahle Selassie, he was a grandson of Negus Sahle Selassie of Shewa.

Ras Makonnen was a first cousin of Emperor Menelik II. He was a military leader, the governor of Harar province in Ethiopia, and the father of Emperor Haile Selassie. He was

an effective general during the First Italo–Ethiopian war, including a leading role at the Battle of Adwa, where Ethiopian forces defeated the Italians. In addition, he has served as a diplomat and de facto foreign minister.

For all his excellence as a great leader and beloved by Harraians, the statue was erected to honor the significance of his contribution to his people and country.

Hoodlums and extremists destroyed Ethiopia's national relic because of hatred and animosity that was based on false Amhara's history. These young citizens are groomed to hate Amhara ethnic group based on false narratives. As a result, after Hachalu Hundessa and the NoMore movement, destroying statues was infectious around major global cities.

However, the instigation to destroy statues in several of Ethiopia's cities was based on false narratives. Hoodlums and extremists do not realize Ethiopian descendants come from multiple ethnic groups and faiths and that Ras Makonnen's father was an Oromo through his father's side. Ras Mekonen's wife was Woizero Yeshimebet Ali, the daughter of Woizero Menen Asfaw Amhara from Ambassel and her father, Dejazmatch Ali Gonshur, who was an Oromo from Jimma.

Individuals that participated in destroying the statue have not been arrested. The government's passivity to restore the destroyed statue after two years will give any global citizen the predisposition of the current government on Ras Mekonnen's contribution to Ethiopia and repudiate Ethiopian false history.

Sadly, our shared history is not respected by all citizens. However, most citizens perceive government officials' inactivity in restoring the statue as cheering behind the curtain and will encouraging other national treasures to be destroyed.

Another destroyed national treasure is King Mikael, the father of Lij Iyasu Museum in Wello. The relentless effort to destroy Ethiopian history by claiming the Amhara ethnic group as their enemy and destroying national evidence is another sad mark of our record.

See the URL link below to watch a documentary about the destroyed Menelik museum
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7EckON-2PyQ>

The criticism from genuine citizens is the relics at the museum should have been collected and protected when the war intensified. However, the government officials were unable to forecast the need to protect the national treasures from being destroyed and looted. Even though it is a standard operation to preserve national artifacts before any war begins, officials should know better to protect national treasures immediately after the battle starts.

Prime Minister Abiy has done a brilliant job and deserves admiration from citizens in encouraging the renovation of national structures and reminding citizens of the need to enjoy national resources and treasures. It would have also been a momentous signal of respect for our history to restore the statue of Ras Mekonnen, who served his country as a military leader and governor to defend Ethiopia's independence. Unfortunately, the current leadership of Ethiopia has not restored the statue after two years but preserved the figure of the Aanoolee sculpture. Aanoolee statue was erected based on a fictional book titled – Ye Burka Zemeta, by Tesfayea Gebreabe. The book is also categorized as fictional by the author.

The fact is the previous ostracized government by citizens erected the statue based on false narrative to widen animosity and hatred among Amhara and Oromos ethnic group.

The two great questions for the current Ethiopian leaders are:

1. Why is the statue of Ras Mekonnen not restored?
2. Why is the Aanoolee monument not removed?

PM Abiy should actively lead in encouraging the restoration of the statue that reflects Ethiopian history and a narrative that the world acknowledges and remove statues that are erected based on false history. Otherwise, this passivity could be construed as an indirect acknowledgment of accepting the destroyed statue and inspiring extremist groups to continue hostility to undermine the unity of Ethiopians.

Four years of leadership is a great time to evaluate a government. There are significant gestures that leaders can demonstrate to citizens. Unfortunately, fundamental actions such as arresting criminals that destroyed the statue are overlooked, and they are allowed to roam the city to commit other serious crimes.



Destroying the statue in 2020



After two years, a neglected and unrestored statue of Ras Mekonnen.

In today's world, the facts are available on our phones within hours. The days of peddling hatred stories for a specific audience in one city and deceitful messages in another will be available online before the sunsets.

Therefore, for Ethiopia to survive as a nation, genuine citizens should be the agent to assist in activities where professional involvement is required. In addition, citizens must be willing to inquire about the unfortunate wrongdoing of politicians, insincere advocacy groups, and individuals peddling diversion stories to gain personal benefit.

A reflection of concerned Ethiopian.

<https://concernedethiopians.org/independent-analysis/4798-ras-makonnen-woldemikael-gudisa.html>