

# Tekie Foundation

[Home](#) | [About the Foundation](#) | [Contact Tekie Foundation](#)

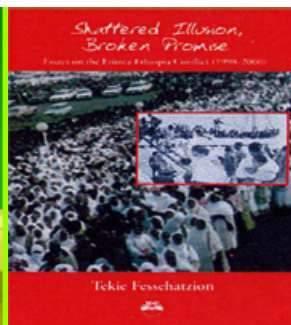

**Life**  
About his life



**Photo Album**  
His life in Pictures



**Works**  
Writtings & Contributions



**Books**  
Published Books

"A brother, a friend, a colleague and a beautiful human being. I will miss you, your kindness, affection and courtesy. May God welcome you in paradise. May God Bless your family at this difficult time. Good Bye my friend, with all my affection."

-- M'Bare Ngom, Baltimore, USA

"It was with deep sorrow that we have learned Prof. Tekie Fessehazion has passed away. On this sad death, I would like, on behalf of the staff of the Embassy of the State of Eritrea and on my own, give my sincere condolence to the family of Professor Tekie, all his friends and relatives. May the Almighty God bless his soul."

-- Alem Tsehay, Ambassador of the State of Eritrea, New Delhi, India

"Four years ago, I became chair of the Morgan Philosophy Department, and I often turned to Dr. Tekie (as he was affectionately known) for advice and encouragement. He was always kind, always so obviously concerned, and always so insightful. I cannot imagine our little community on the third floor of Holmes Hall without him. It saddens me very deeply that he is gone--that I will be looking for his face and not find it here."

—Janice McLane, Baltimore, MD, USA

"I know Professor Fessehazion to be a very bright economist and a renowned commentator. His campaign on behalf of Eritrea during the 1998-2000 border war is vividly remembered and recorded."

-- Asmerom Kidane, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

## Professor Tekie Fessehazion: Brief Life Story



Ph.d. in development economics from the University of Pittsburgh (1976).

Upon graduation, he worked as an Assistant Professor at the Department of African American Studies, University of Pittsburgh (1976-1980), as an Associate Professor at Jackson State University (1980-1991), and as a Professor and Chair of the Department of Economics at Morgan State University.

Through his prolific writing, he was a champion of the Eritrean people's right to selfdetermination to which he gave all he could. In this endeavor, he was Eritrea's finest. His ability to explain complex matters in simple language was unmatched. He was a master word-smith, excellent teacher, and superb researcher. Dr. Tekie was an expert in all aspects of Eritrean history, but the focus of his work was the history of the ill-fated Eritrea-Ethiopia Federation of 1952-1962, the result of the 1950 UN Resolution 390 A(v) that denied the people of Eritrea their right to independence and led to a 30-year long war of independence. Dr. Tekie was an expert in the history of this federation from its inception to its unilateral abrogation by Ethiopia. His 1990 monograph, *Eritrea: From Federation to Annexation, 1952-1962*, published by Eritreans for Peace and Democracy (EPD), is a prime example of his deep understanding of that period. His 1997 Eritrean Studies Review article: *A Brief Encounter with Democracy: Eritrea in the Federation Years*, stands as another testimony to his expertise.

Dr. Tekie was also a member of the Eritrea Constitution Commission that drafted the Eritrean Constitution. In this capacity, he was one of three Eritreans who tirelessly toured major U.S. and Canadian cities in 1994 to 1997 to ensure the participation of all Eritreans in the constitutionmaking process.

In the few years before and after Eritrea's independence, Professor Tekie was hopeful that the countries in the Horn of Africa would realize the benefits of economic cooperation about which he wrote and lectured a great deal. Two prime examples were the topics: *Prospects for Economic Cooperation Between Eritrea and Its Neighbors* (1991) and *Economic Cooperation in the Horn of Africa* (1996). Unfortunately, his hope was shattered when Ethiopia declared war on Eritrea in May 1998. That prompted him to pen his seven-part series, "An Economist's Lament." Between 1998 and 2000, Dr. Tekie's pen was busy explaining to the world the complex Eritrean- Ethiopian conflict in simple and clear language. His numerous essays from this period have been compiled in his book, *Shattered Illusion and Broken Promise: Essays on the Ethiopian-Eritrean Conflict*, published in 2003 by the Red Sea Press.

In addition to his intellectual prowess, Dr. Tekie was a wonderful human being. No adjectives are sufficient enough to describe him.

Dr. Tekie was born on January 1st, 1941, in Asmara, Eritrea. He was the first born to his late parents ato Fessehazion Woldemichael and weizero Letekidan Ghebru. After completing his elementary and high-school study in Eritrea, he came to the U.S. to pursue higher education. He earned his BA in economics from the University of Connecticut (1968), an MA, again in economics, from the State University of New York at Binghamton (1970), and a

"It is a great loss for all of us who knew and came to admire Professor Tekie. Professor Tekie was a beacon of hope, aspiration, and a well respected and loved Eritrean. It is a great loss for us Eritreans in the Diaspora. May Allah bless him and give his family the strength in this time of sorrow that shocked all of us and saddened our hearts."--

Alamin Adam (wedi Haji), Minneapolis, MN, USA

"It is with deep sorrow that we learned the passing of Professor Tekie Fessehazion. On behalf of The Embassy of the State of Eritrea in Nairobi and myself I express my deep condolences to the family members in particular and the people of Eritrea in general. On this occasion, I also pray that The Almighty gives his family members the strength to deal with this difficult time. May God rest his soul in eternal peace! With heartfelt ympathies!"

--Salih Omer, Ambassador State of Eritrea, Nairobi, Kenya

"We lost a giant. He was a friend and a compatriot - witty, highly intellectual, humorous, compassionate and generous. He was an educator and a great mentor of the youth. His contributions to his country and people are immense. Words cannot describe the grief I feel at the loss of a great friend. My deep condolence to the immediate family. Let's plan to celebrate his life in a memorial after his is laid to rest in his beloved Eritrean soil."

--Gebre Hiwet Tesfagiorgis, Ames, IA, USA

"It is with such sorrow that I have heard the news of Tekie's passing away. The community has lost a good man and many of us have lost a dear friend of many years. I extend profound sympathy to his family."

"On behalf of the Embassy of Eritrea to the Nordic Countries and myself, I convey my sincere sympathy and express my condolences to the family of the late Professor Tekie Fessehazion."

--Yonas Manna, Charge D'Affaires, State of Eritrea, Stockholm, Sweden.

"Dr Tekie was a great economist, an excellent colleague and a wonderful human being. He will be greatly missed in the Econ Dept of Morgan State University. Our deepest sympathy and condolences for the Fessehazion family. May Dr. Tekie's soul rest in peace!"

--MG Quibria, Baltimore, USA

"Tekie was not only a former class mate from secondary school, but he was someone who never forgot his friends. He was always interested in seeing our country develop and he sacrificed a lot of his time in supporting the cause for independence and sovereignty of our beloved country. I want to extend my condolences to his family and may his soul rest in peace."

--Afeworki Abraham, London, UK

However, people who knew him will agree that he was a man of character, high intellect, humble and modest, patient and tolerant, kind and generous, and compassionate; the list goes on ad infinitum.

Tekie's plan was to retire in a year or two and go to live in Asmara, his childhood home. However, the Creator's plan for him turned out to be different. After a brief but gallant struggle against a brain tumor, and medical treatment at the Johns Hopkins Medical Center, he passed away peacefully in the presence of his family and friends on April 19, 2010. He is survived by his son Michael Tekie Fessehazion, his siblings Haregu, Asghedet, Kahsay, Ghenet and Teferi (Togorba) Fessehazion and thousands of his Eritrean compatriots who felt for years that he was speaking for them. Though the void he leaves behind is hard to fill, his gentle and humble spirit will live on forever. So long beloved father, brother and compatriot. May you rest in peace.

April 24, 2010

--Pam DeLargy, New York, NY, USA

"I spent a great deal of time with Tekie Fessehazion when he last visited Asmara a few months ago. He was his usual jovial and engaging self who showed no clue of this shocking and untimely departure. We have lost a man of great intellect and principle who never hesitated to say and do what he felt was right. His dedication to the development of Eritrean scholarship was vast and genuine. ... Farewell, Tekie."--Alemseged Tesfai, Edison, OH, USA

"My greatest condolence to all his family and friends. Everybody felt deep sorrow about the death of our beloved brother and friend. I hope to participate in his memorial in Asmara."

-- Gotie Tseghai, Rome, Italy