

Eline Kleppe

The impacts of ethnic politics on conflicts in Ethiopia

How the shaping of ethnic identity has challenged nation-building and a 'unified' Ethiopia



University of South-Eastern Norway
Faculty of Humanities, Sport and Education
Institute of Culture, Religion and Social Studies
PO Box 235
NO-3603 Kongsberg, Norway
<http://www.usn.no>
© 2022 Eline Kleppe
Word count: 29965
This thesis is worth 45 study points

Abstract

Although wars between states have decreased, today's conflict picture is characterized by increased civil wars. Civil wars are often rooted in the role of identity and often ethnicity. In this thesis, Ethiopia will illustrate the tremendous global problem of interethnic violence and conflict.

Ethnic violence and war in Ethiopia have dominated the last decade. In 1991, ethnic federalism was established to solve the political and ethnic unrest and give minority rights to self-determination up to secession.

Studies of ethnicity in Ethiopia often lack historical anchoring. Its historical development must also be understood to understand the growing role of ethnicity and why such a controlling solution for power-sharing was established. Therefore, it is a historical review of the most important eras, further divided into the imperial, socialist, military, and federal eras.

Ethiopia's history is both politicized and ethnicized in its complex history of nationalism, conflicts, civil wars, and political tensions. after a history of oppression and assimilation. By dividing the country along ethnic lines, Ethiopia has gone further than any other country by politicizing ethnicity. Today, there is a two-year ongoing civil war connected to crimes against humanity and cleansing in the Tigray region. This thesis explores ethnonationalism's role and connection to ethnic identity in Ethiopia's armed conflict and civil war. Further, the assignment seeks to understand how ethnic federalism challenged nation-building processes and a 'unified' country.

Keywords: ethno-nationalism, power-sharing, ethnic federalism, ethnicity, nationalism

Acknowledgements

Suddenly and finally, it is over. Two years of master's writing have been demanding and characterized by Corona and the feeling of the greater distance between the 'normal' everyday life and the world. Establishing more evident national borders also led to greater distances and, at times, to those in the same household. News in this writing period has also dominated a world threatened by peace, including on my own continent. Here, one is reminded of how important the role of a good neighborhood and a present world community is, which has been an important experience in my writing process.

I would like to thank my supervisor, Oddvar Hollup, for your motivation, patience, and knowledge throughout the period. You have constantly inspired me.

Thanks to Kjetil Tronvoll for the inspiring exchange of mail and tips for further reading.

I feel immensely lucky to be surrounded by friends and family providing world-class care. This has been crucial to achieving my goal.

A special thanks to Dad, for good conversations and discussions, professionally and elsewhere in life. Your wisdom and generosity create enormous ripple effects in my life. And dear Mom, thank you for your unconditional love and presence in all you are; it has amounted to more than you think. Amanda, thank you for always having time and space for me, no matter how I am. I could not have done this without you. And to Mie, who has become an important reminder that small four-legged creatures can create the feeling of harmony and tranquillity in the most extraordinary situations. I am eternally grateful.

Oslo, 17th October

Eline Kleppe

List of Abbreviations

ANDM	Amhara National Democratic Movement
AU	African Unity
AAPO	All-Amhara People’s Organization
BoA	Battle of Adwa
CoE	The constitution of Ethiopia
ECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
EPLF	Eritrean People’s Liberation Front
EPRDF	Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Front
ESM	Ethiopian Student Movement
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
GoE	Government of Ethiopia
HoA	Horn of Africa
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
MEISON	All-Ethiopia Socialist Movement
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisations
NNP	Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples'
NPP	Nobel Peace Prize
NRC	The Norwegian Refugee Council
OAU	Organization of African Unity
OLA	Oromo Liberation Army
OLF	Oromo Liberation Front
OPDO	Oromo People’s Democratic Front
SEPDF	South Ethiopian People’s Democratic Front
SNNPR	Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region
TDF	Tigray Defence Forces
TPLF	Tigrayan Peoples’ Liberation Front
UN	United Nations
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WWII	World War II

Table of Content

Abstract

Acknowledgement

List of Abbreviations

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Historical background of Ethiopia and its context

1.2 Problem statement

1.3 Motivation for choice of topic

1.4 Thesis outline

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Research methods - Qualitative and quantitative methods

2.2 Selection of Secondary Data

2.3 Ethical Considerations

2.4 Positionality

2.5 Limitations to my study

3.0 Research Literature

3.1 Conceptualizing ethnic identity

3.2 Understanding Nation

3.3. Nationalism

3.4 The rise of identity politics and multiculturalism

3.5 Power-sharing

3.6 Causes of ethnic conflicts

4.0 The shaping of Ethnic Identity in Ethiopia

4.1 Imperial era

4.1.1 Socialist era

4.1.2 Military era

4.2 Federal era

4.3 Abiy's Ethiopianness era

5.0 Discussion and Analysis

5.1 Historical legacy: state and nation building

5.2 Secessionist claims for self-determination

5.3 Civil identity and nationhood

5.4 Comparison to other states in Western and Horn of Africa

5.5 Ethiopia's development

6.0 Conclusion

7.0 Bibliography

1.0 Introduction

War and conflicts have shaped societies, boundaries, and people in the world at all times. Although state-conflicts worldwide have diminished, there is an increase in internal-conflicts within states. These internal civil war-like conflicts involve separatism and secession threats relating to majority-minority issues and deal with issues regarding ethnicity and religion as a basis for nation-building. Ethnic latent conflicts are a large part of the world's current conflict picture. The role of ethnicity and racism has at different times and ways affected countries. Globalization and mobilization have led to various nationalities meeting and influencing each other. The consequence is discrimination in everyday life, and in social constructions, leading to ethnicity's increasing complex role. In addition to the western continent, the wounds of colonialism continues to affect the policies of national-borders and the fate of people, resulting in so-called new conflicts and crises (Muriaas, 2011; NRC, 2021). Human rights continue to be a part of globalization and its interrelation with integration-policies. It is always dynamic and changing.

Within nation-states, violence has recurrently served as an instrument of ethnic competition for power, and as an inescapable precursor of nationalism. Often, nationalist-movements originate from complex sentiments around popular resistance to colonial-violence, or as a reaction against imperialism and racism. In international politics, the power of ethnicity has had a largely negative significance created by the Cold War and the battle between communism and capitalism. The competition between the superpowers has now been replaced by ethnic cleavages and hatred that have led to bloodshed and repression around the world (Onwudiwe, 2001)

There are many examples of recent ethnic tensions and civil wars, like Rwanda, Yugoslavia and Bosnia, constant reminding us that history may be at a turning point but is far from over. The new challenges to world-peace are found almost randomly in ethnonational-conflicts, and in multiethnic-states (Huntington, 1996). In such states, citizens manage to have dual political sources of protection and identities. This advocates that they recognize sources of simultaneous legitimate authority, modern sovereign-states, and traditional ethnic authorities for resolutions of identity and protection. Therefore, the main political loyalty of people may be given to their ethnonational-group, and not their country. Consequentially, scholars have cautioned that this will lead to the collapse of states into smaller and weaker units. These states will not be capable to preserve their sovereignty and territorial integrity. According to United Nations (UN), this 'new order' will

increase the population of nation-states, with people belonging to cultural areas with common historical backgrounds, philosophical beliefs, and religions (Onwudiwe, 2001).

Each year, The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) publishes a list of the ten most neglected displacement-crises in the world. For 2020, 8 of them were in Africa, and among those Ethiopia. These countries are those who experience the largest gap between the actual degree of media-coverage, political-management, and financial-assistance, and their actual need for this. Africa has experienced several humanitarian-crises from armed-conflicts, sexual-violence, gang-wars, epidemics, famine, and natural-disasters over the years, leading to massive relocations and millions of people fleeing, both within and outside national borders. Therefore, Africa has been labeled with the largest number of internal displaced people (IDPs) and refugees and accounts for half of the IDPs worldwide (NRC, 2021).

Modern conflicts of nation-building are often based on ethnic and tribal divisions, especially in Africa. Since the end of the colonial period, the Horn of Africa (HoA) has been affected by many inter-state and civil-wars, like 1977-1978 war between Somalia and Ethiopia, the 1990-2000 war between Eritrea and Ethiopia, and more recently between Sudan and South-Sudan (Dias, 2013). Because of the disruption, HoA is the region in the world with the highest number of new states. South-Sudan is the newest state we have, which became independent in 2011. The core of the civil-war advanced a power-political starting point in Sudan with the division within the liberation-movement with Muslims and Christians. The civil war increasingly became an ethnic conflict, where questions about affiliation, security, and access to resources became important driving forces. This is the longest continuous civil war in Africa and had a unifying effect on what is still called Sudan today. Fighting a common enemy has been unifying and important for nationalism in South-Sudan and has been important in the definition of the nation (Rolandsen, 2015). Somaliland for instance has existed for over 20 years without any international recognition. Still, Ethiopia remains the country that shares the most international borders with other HoA countries. Due to the interconnectedness of conflict and the region's security dynamics, each country's domestic politics are intertwined with the regional political arena (Dias, 2013).

The conflict in Ethiopia arises for the recognition and status of ethnic identities and nationalities. To understand ethnicity, one must understand social conditions and structures. The emphasis on ethnicity has come at the expense of Ethiopian national identity and has contributed to increasing ethno-nationalism. This has been encouraged by constitutional changes in the government of

Ethiopia. Ethiopia's ethnic federalism is considered by many to be a recipe for unrest. The Government of Ethiopia (GoE) is involved in the conflict and deliberately chooses not to protect all citizens. In this way, we can see that states are reluctant or unable to provide protection, especially in conflict situations. In this case, GoE is also responsible for causing the expulsion (Abbink, 2011). Even though ethnic federalism has been an important tool for calming conflicts in Ethiopia, it has also become the reason why it is increasing. As part of this recognition of difference, GoE adopted a Constitution (CoE) in 1995 that introduced a new form of government, a federation that divided the country into 9 states based on ethnicity. This model of ethnic federalism was made because of the complex ethnic composition and relations. This gave all ethnic groups equal rights, including the right to participate in government at all levels, to use their own languages, and to develop their traditional cultures. This also gave nations and nationalities the right of self-determination up to secession. Since then, the ethnic identity discourse has become central to Ethiopia's geopolitical, social, and economic policies (Assefa, 2006) In total, there are 100 different ethnic groups in Ethiopia and 85 different languages. The two 'nationalities' Amhara and Oromo each represent approximately 30% of the total population, but the Oromo constitute the largest ethnic group. The remaining ethnic groups make up only 35%, with the next largest group making up approximately 6% in total. Therefore, many groups that do not have their own territorial base or their own regional state and will not be able to survive in terms of cultural survival, if they do not get specific rights. Ethnic minorities do not have that sort of protection. Ethiopia uses ethnic federalism as a political system to accommodate and manage diversity. They want a separate state, a multiculturalist state. In Ethiopia, the state of The Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region (SNNPR) is the most conspicuous example, which is the only state not named after an ethnic majority within the region. This has led to a political power struggle within the region because of ethnic federalism (Turton, 2006).

Power-sharing is seen as a conflict-management tool but may not always be so (O'leary, 2013). The different groups are given different rights. They can exercise their own cultural identity. Power-sharing seeks to talk about options like the introduction of the federation, devolution, federalism, asymmetric federalism, and autonomy. Despite the definitional disagreement, there is general recognition that several characteristics appear as hallmarks of ethnicity. Not all of them are present in every case, but many will be. They include features shared by group members such as the same or similar geographic origin, language, religion, foods, and traditions. The major challenge of multicultural coexistence today is ethnic civil wars, that has up to 2 million deaths since 1978 (O'leary, 2013). Power-sharing strategies intend to hold the existing state together with active

participation and content of its minorities, as they argued for strong minority rights. Integrationist strategies do not seek full cultural homogenization of minorities but coffin their homogenization ambition to the public sphere. They prefer a common public language, public symbolism and are relaxed about the preservation of minority cultures and their specific language and religion. They argue for strong individual rights. In Ethiopia's blurred boundaries: is it possible that power-sharing can reduce conflict and guarantee minority rights within the minorities?

Options for handling minorities in deeply divided places are often genocide, politicide, ethnocide, ethnic cleansing, integration, accommodation (power-sharing), and separation. To understand an ethnic conflict, we must look at the history of ethnic diversity in each country. Ethiopia has tried to solve its latent ethnic rivalries over power with ethnic federalism (O'leary, 2013; Abbink, 2011).

The role of ethnicity often leads to centuries-old disputes also among groups of pastoralists such as the Dinka and Nuer in South-Sudan over communal land or pastures. These are now categorized as inter-ethnic conflicts if they involve different ethnic groups. The reason for this is that land ownership activates an ethnic group, which requires recognition and rights to self-determination, which means having its own administrative unit that leads to political power and resources further involved in social inequality, oppression, and discrimination (Dias, 2013; Merera, 2006).

In terms of the inclusiveness of ethnic federalism in Ethiopia, the thesis tries to discover what the impact of ethnic federalism really is. Is ethnic federalism inclusive or exclusive? The claim-making is directed at the public at large and the state. Whether they embrace or oppose multiculturalism is reflected in attitudes towards minorities, indigenous, national minorities, or ethnic minorities. Multiculturalism policies are reflected in the integration policies, and its critics is that you are not embracing cultural diversity but are regarded as a threat to the national identity. These policies are also showing to what extent they are different, so how can they function as a unifying mechanism for a country? Ethnicity in Ethiopia, as in other African states, is observed in various spheres of life, such as activity in parties, functioning in government bodies, military, social and economic relations, and culture, etc. For most people, ethnicity is more important than their national identity (Turton, 2006). Armed conflicts have taken place in Ethiopia, occurring at regional and local levels, in zones, districts (woredas), and neighborhoods (kebeles). The borders are marked by armed ethnic groups and refugees that create tensions and often result in clashes with the local population (Assefa, 2006).

Ethnic conflicts starting as interstate disputes may evolve being regional or international crises involving countries and powers. The ethnic conflict has further developed into a civil war, with huge human rights-violations, human suffering, ethnic-cleansing and even genocide. Neighboring states, such as Eritrea, are starting to get involved, with regional powers and foreign actors. These actors have further agendas and interests, inflaming, fueling, and increasing human suffering and violence with common enemy. However, international involvement can be crucial in negotiating and implementing peace-agreements. Although, Ethiopia is an interesting example viewing their history of peace-agreements as political agendas. But to further investigate past human rights-violations, and give humanitarian, military, and economic assistance may be crucial at this point. Paradoxically, it can be argued that the Nobel Peace Prize (NPP), trust, attention, and economic attributions gave political support to ethnic groups and further inflamed the current ethnic conflicts. This shows the complexity of ethnic conflicts, and how regional instability is as much a source, because of ethnic conflict (Brown, 2001; Tronvoll, 2021).

Ethiopia's recent past provides little fertile ground for a united Ethiopia and more sustenance for ethno-nationalism and federalism. In the period 1991-2018, Tigrayan Peoples' Liberation Front (TPLF) governed through a coalition of several political parties where the different parties were based on different ethnicities as dividing lines.

In April 2018, this balance changed when Abiy Ahmed become prime minister. With this, the TPLF's national power base was weakened, and the TPLF tried to increase autonomy in Tigray, against the will of the central Abiy-government in Addis Ababa. The conflict intensified when the national parliamentary elections were postponed. The TPLF responded by conducting local elections in Tigray province, an election that was annulled by the central Abiy-government. At the same time, Abiy extended his term in office without elections being held. Thus, a central line of the conflict with historical and ethnic content flared up. Increased ethnic nationalism and calls from Tigray for a state of its own weakened the idea of a pan-Ethiopian society, and a well-functioning state based on ethnic federalism (Tronvoll, 2021).

1.1 Historical background of Ethiopia and its context

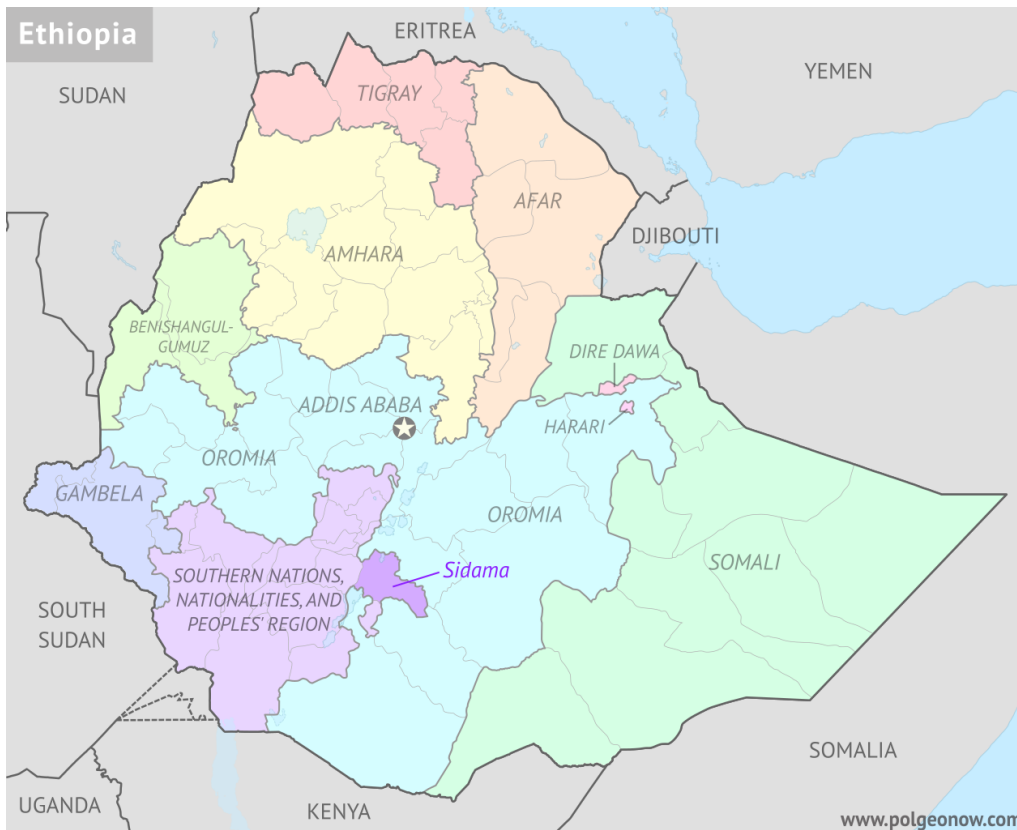
Like several states in HoA, Ethiopia continues to be troubled by ethnic violence and conflict. Today, there is an ongoing civil war in Ethiopia. Ethnic violence is alleged to be rooted in the establishment and development of ethnic politics. The formation of the Ethiopian country as we know it today, and its present state-borders takes us back to the colonial era.

Ethnic federalism

The Derg-regime used the ethnic card by calling TPLF a threat to Ethiopian unity. The winners of the ethnic resistance movements overthrew Derg and created The Coalition of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) in 1991, consisting of four parties: TPLF, Amhara National Democratic Movement (ANDM), Oromo People's Democratic Front (OPDO) and South Ethiopian People's Democratic Front (SEPDF). They came together wanting to create an Ethiopia without war. Therefore, EPRDF agreed to be a multi-ethnic federal state. If all ethnic groups in the country gained their politically independent autonomy, no one would fear the center anymore. CoE implemented in 1995 is in fact a national peace-agreement based on trust, seen in the light of those who created it (Merera, 2006). Historically, the previous governments were viewed as Amhara-governments. This time, EPRDF was viewed as a Tigray-government (Assefa, 2006). Previously, Eritrea was a federal state in Ethiopia, which finally gained its independence after one of the longest wars on the African continent in 1991. In the EPRDF-formation, TPLF carried out their democratic manipulation and repression in 1992. This opened a new civil war between the TPLF and the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF). The TPLF immediately managed to arrest about 20,000 Oromo, and OLF-fighters were imprisoned for over 20 years. Therefore, The OLF/TPLF-relationship is a historical dimension of conflict. The border war in 1998-2000 is known as a war between Eritrea and Ethiopia but was actually between Eritrea and Tigray, Meles Zenawi, or TPLF, and Isaias Afewerki (Tronvoll, 2009). Finally, when the communist Ethiopian-government was toppled by TPLF, Eritrean forces earned their independence in 1993.

Although EPRDF seeks to function as a democracy based on ethnic federalism, power is shared directly in relation to the population of ethnic-cultural societies. CoE 1995 grants self-determination up to secession to all ethnic federal states named after the ethnic majority within each state, with SNNPR as an exception. Thus, superiority will result in more power for the largest ethnic group. The consequence is conflicts between ethnic groups, and competition between wealth, resources, and power. Ethnicity is used to monopolize power and perpetuate conflict. Manipulation, repression, persecution, revenge, and kidnapping were used against people standing against EPRDF-propaganda. The EPRDF government has been both a solution to and a cause of ethnic tensions (Abbink, 2011; Habtemichael, 2019). Furthermore, the conflicts can be linked to the growing militant ethnic nationalism against the fragility of the state and the party. Since 1991 the painful tensions in the centralized federal system have remained strong. When ethnic movements finally infiltrated the state and political institutions, the weak institutions contributed to the emergence of violent municipal conflicts. Nevertheless, EPRDF regained control through

repression and imprisonment. Most of the population felt ignored in an economic downturn. TPLF thus lost its grip on power, and then the former Prime Minister and EPRDF leader resigned (Yusuf, 2019)



Since the formation of ethnic federalism, there are now 11 states in Ethiopia: Afar, Amhara, Benisangul-Gumaz, Gambela, Harari, Oromia, Somali, SNNPR, Tigray, Sidama and South-West Ethiopia. According to the country's Central Statistical Agency Census, the largest ethnic groups in the country are Oromo 35%, Amhara 28%, Somali 6%, Tigray 5%, Sidama 4%, Gurage 2.5% and Afar 1.7% (Abbink, 2011).

Ethiopianness

In 2018, Abiy Ahmed became Ethiopia's new prime minister. He has sought to create an Ethiopia where everyone is politically and economically equal. The reforms consisted of the release of political prisoners, a peace agreement with Eritrea after 20 years, and a final indictment of the EPRDF for human rights violations and corruption. Through comprehensive political reforms, he wanted to achieve a unified force for the country's 100 different ethnicities and make diversity a strength. In this way, Abiy quickly became a symbol of diversity himself as an Oromo with a Christian mother and a Muslim father who married an Amhara. Abiy spoke of a so-called 'Oromo first rhetoric' and did not hide being Oromo as previous political leaders. Finally, the largest ethnic

group would rule Ethiopia. He was to achieve the impossible, becoming a symbol of hope for an entire population, not only in Ethiopia but in HoA as well. According to the Nobel-Committee, this deserved both recognition and encouragement awarding him with the Nobel Peace Prize (NPP) in 2019. Aligned with this international prestige, attention, and money to revitalize new measures to solve old problems, Ethiopia enjoys a high reputation as a peacemaker in HoA. Despite Abiy's seemingly positive direction, the history of prices shows no guarantee of progress either locally, regionally, or globally (Tronvoll, 2021).

Paradoxically, this so-called peace treaty was a war treaty against another ethnic state in Ethiopia. A peaceful change of leadership and transfer of power took place during social unrest and a new State of Emergency (SoE) in 2018. Abiy Ahmed as then Oromia Vice President and OPDO took over the leadership roles. This gave hope to the population about the country's future improvement but led to the flare-up of old and new violent ethnic conflicts. Ethnic groups' desire for self-determination led to a clash. This resulted in ten thousand lost lives and 3 million IDPs (Faleg, 2019).

Immediately after receiving NNP, Abiy established his new unity party and abolished and dissolved the old ethnic coalition government party. Abiy stated that he has international support to act like he does and points back to the NNP and this international stamp that was then given. Even though Oromo is Ethiopia's largest ethnic group, it is the first time that one of the Oromo people reaches the top of the power apparatus. Abiy's vision of an inclusive Ethiopian policy of building national unity is based on creating a national community despite ethnic dividing lines. By creating a new national identity based on Ethiopianness, he promised a policy of forgiveness and reconciliation (Tronvoll, 2021). The struggle to weaken the authoritarian rule of the EPRDF has led to a major political power struggle. In Ethiopia's different regions, there is a battle between those who want more centralized governance and those who want to be more independent. Thus, violence between ethnic groups has also flared up. Recent modern Ethiopian history shows that it is difficult to strike a balance between the periphery and the center is a key policy issue. Abiy was to build the nation-state of Ethiopia and bring unity to diversity, after a history of oppression that has embezzled dialogue for so many years.

The sudden peace-agreement with Eritrea, traditionally TPLF's archenemy, made Tigrayans feel threatened, also by the capital, surrounded by enemies. When Abiy developed government forces along the border with the Tigray region in the summer of 2020, TPLF allegedly attacked. Abiy and the President of Eritrea started a new war of resistance against TPLF. Firstly, they marginalized and pushed TPLF out of power in Addis Ababa by using the new alliance and taking revenge on TPLF.

(Abbink, 2011; Tronvoll, 2021). Abiy's soldiers quickly regained control 'to restore law and order'. Soldiers from Eritrea marched into Tigray to support Abiy, as did special forces from the neighboring Amhara region. At the beginning of November 2020, the civil war in Ethiopia was a fact. Tronvoll (2021) argues that this is Africa's best-warned war, knowing it would come over a year before it broke out.

According to the UN, close to half a million people in Tigray are living in famine, while 5.2 million have a 'desperate need' for humanitarian aid. 1.2 million people have been forced to flee Western Tigray since the conflict began. Within Ethiopia in general, 23,8 million need emergency aid. Deliberately politically created hunger, the GoE wanted to starve and kill as many of the Tigrayan as possible. This is a strategy that Abiy seems to have learned from Mengistu Haile Mariam, the former dictator of Ethiopia who fell in 1991 when the Tigrayan resistance army entered Addis to overthrow his military rule. This is a strategy he called 'you have to drain the sea to catch the fish'. The population must starve for the resistance army to break down (Tronvoll, 2021). All of this has led to several ethnic groups also wanting to fight for the liberation and establishment of new ethnic states.

1.2 Problem statement

The topic of my master's thesis involves the role of conflict in Ethiopia and seeing how this is interlinked with the construction of ethnicity and national identity. Ethnicity, nation, and nationalism are elements closely linked to each other and important aspects of world history and important to be understood in the shaping of modern society. Conflicts arise for the recognition and status of ethnic identities as nationalities. To understand ethnicity, one must understand social conditions and structures. The emphasis on ethnicity has come at the expense of Ethiopian national identity and has contributed to increasing ethnic nationalism (Abbink, 2011).

The federal structure of the country, based on ethnicity, is unable to stem latent and manifest conflicts. My problem statements will therefore be:

- 1) *What role does ethnonationalism play, and how is this interlinked to armed conflict in Ethiopia?*
- 2) *How has ethnic federalism challenged nation-building processes and a 'unified' Ethiopia?*

The aim is to reveal the role of ethnicity and nationalism and to connect this to the current conflict and war. How do ethnicity and politics of identity shape conflicts because of ethnic federalism? I want to look at the process of what is happening around ethnonationalism and political mobilization. Federalism is meant to mobilize peace based on conflict. What policies unite in a

nation where one learns that differences are more important than similarities? What does it do with a county's politics, and how is one equated in a country that divides federations based on ethnic identity?

I will use theoretical perspectives linked to power-sharing and federalism. This master thesis will therefore involve theories on nationalism, power-sharing, multiculturalism policies, and minority rights to illustrate how power appears in Ethiopia. I try to address redistribution power asymmetries between and within groups and between groups and the state. Here, access to state power, control, and accountability is important. Further, I seek understand how cultural identity becomes social mobilization and creates boundaries toward others. How can people in the same country demand and claim specific rights as a group? I want to look further into how multiculturalism is a response to nation-building, and how minority rights as compensation for the injustices of legitimate nation-building. In the ethnic federalism and politics of segregation in Ethiopia, will people be excluded or included?

Multicultural theories can also be applied outside the western liberal democratic states. In Africa, ethnicity is an important part of politics and people's everyday life. Power or demands tend to control the groups. In Ethiopia, it seems to be differentiating between minority rights, and some minority rights undermine individual autonomy, which denies rights to certain kinds of people. This can further lead to internal restrictions, to implement the group's rights to protect itself against internal dissent from its own members. Another option is external protection, to implement group rights to protect itself against assimilation pressure from larger society (Kymlicka, 2006). Does ethnic federalism as a form of multiculturalism policies overlook the power of the GoE while defining the ethnic group's needs? Will Abiy's Ethiopianness solve peace in Ethiopia, or did it develop into today's civil war? I will analyze how time, space, and power relations shape ethnic group boundaries, and explain how the social-political setting in these groups exists within the identification to it and why and under what circumstances ethnic belonging becomes important.

1.3 Motivation for choice of topic

The motivation for selecting this topic for my master thesis is interlinked with my education and work experience. I have a bachelor's degree in development studies. This has become my further starting point for my motivation in the world order and made me want to try to do something about how the world is where I am. Since then, I have worked in different organizations such as Red Cross, at Trandum and in 'Kors på Halsen', and with the international NGO Doctors without

Borders. Today, I work in at UngOrg, guiding young adults, often with diverse cultural backgrounds, into everyday life in relation to rights, work, and education. In other words, I have learned and seen for myself that human rights, even in my own country, is not as easy to access for everyone. I therefore seek to understand the consequences of the historical past, the western influence, and colonialization. In this thesis, the historical background of ethnicity, nationalism, and when this becomes important will be my focus. It can seem to be important when things get hard, as in conflicts, to feel the need to separate ourselves, and protecting the identity aspect becomes crucial. Therefore, the understanding will be influenced by how history has shaped the conflict in Ethiopia today. I want to understand the borderlines, and when and why the solution of federalism and segregation becomes important. This is interlinked with borderlines, the role of ethnicity, belonging, identity, multiculturalism, recourses, goods, and rights.

1.4 Thesis outline

The remaining parts of the thesis are further organized into five chapters. The second chapter is involving methodological issues, where I give attention to how I have gained access to information in my research context, where official permit is not easily achievable. Here, I have also tried to implicate the nature and usage of secondary data pertinent to this study. The third chapter deal with research literature involving theoretical issues and important literature for my assignment. Here, concepts involving ethnic identity, politics of identity, intergroup conflicts and violence are examined and analyzed. Thus, the fourth chapter the historical development of state and nation-building is being presented, structured in five specific periods: the imperial, socialist, military, federal era, and lastly Abiy's Ethiopianness. Here, how state building has affected identities, relationships with other ethnic groups and the implications of conflicts and violent over time. The fifth chapter presents discussion and examination on aspects of my research literature, theoretical issues, background, in line with my research questions. This evolves around implications of past governance, the shaping of ethnic identity, and how this has caused conflict and violence in Ethiopia. The examination in this chapter also implicates possible violation of basic human and collective rights.

2.0 Methodology

In this chapter, selected research methods and methodology will be explained with an overview of research methods and data collection. The sources are treated as secondary data, collected from various sources. To get a general overview, various descriptions and statistics, books, articles, podcasts with complementary theories, and international reports have been used for the historical background to identify the role of ethnic identity and conflict in Ethiopia. Even though this study is collecting secondary literature, I will give an introduction to qualitative and quantitative methods. Then I will justify and explain my selection of secondary literature and my criteria. Afterward, I will write about ethical considerations, positionality, and lastly limitations of this study.

2.1 Research methods - Qualitative and quantitative methods

Many researchers on methodological issues find it helpful to distinguish between quantitative and qualitative research. Both methods can be viewed as showing a set of characteristics yet opposing concerns. These further reveal the epistemologically based views about what creates adequate knowledge. This is further divided into the epistemological undertakings and the ontological foundation by studying the relationship between variables (Bryman, 2016).

Quantitative methods

The secondary research of existing data is an effective quantitative technique. Quantitative methods are intensely influenced by a natural science approach that illustrates acceptable knowledge. This kind of research emphasizes measurements and generalization, by using statistics and samples focusing on numbers and frequencies of a large group of people. Measurement carries a number of advantages, concerning reliability and validity. Their findings may be a generalized context in conducted research. The quantitative data gives a broad perspective, but less information about further survey units. This method is systematic and a structured collection of data, by using a questionnaire with fixed answers. Although, the reality may differ from the conditions you want to study. This view is interested in the relationship between different variables, by viewing it from the outside. Quantitative researchers want to say why things are the way they are. This is called causality and explains the relationship between cause and effect (Bryman, 2016).

Qualitative methods

Qualitative research's purpose is to understand the significance of people's reality, culture, and how they view a particular issue. Qualitative research use text and description in the presentation of analyzing the society, wanting to understand and asking why a phenomenon is happening. This method gives a deeper perspective, with a lot of information from small samples. In contrast to the quantitative method, it is unsystematically and unstructured in collecting data, without fixed answers. The data is further collected in the reality you want to study. By viewing the phenomenon from the inside, it seeks larger connections and structures. To goal is to understand situations, beliefs, or attitudes. Qualitative researchers seek to view events and the social world through the eyes of the people they study. The social world must be interpreted from the perspective of the people being studied rather than the subjects' incapable of their own reflections on the social world. Qualitative researchers require an illustrative feature through reporting their research and are concerned with description and understanding interpretations. Many qualitative studies provide details important for the qualitative researcher as it provides an account of the context within which people's behavior takes place. Behavior, values, or whatever must be understood in the context of the social group. For qualitative researchers, concepts and theories are usually inductively emerging from the data that are collected (Bryman, 2016).

Ontological and epistemological foundations

It exists various philosophical views about the nature of knowledge and truths. Therefore, various methodologies and frameworks are employed in the study to understand this knowledge. The ontological and epistemological assumptions should be justified by the choice of methodology of the researchers. The choice of data collection, data analysis, and data interpretation should be informed by and understood through the ontological and epistemological assumptions being made.

Positivism is an epistemological position that views the independent social reality as given and external to the actors. Facts and values are further distinct, favoring objective and value-free research. Empirical observations and methods of natural science are appropriate while studying social phenomena. This is also how knowledge is produced. The social world is approached through the explanation of human behavior. The epistemological view, interpretivism is a contrasting epistemology to positivism. This position claims the researcher and the social world impact each other, and that facts and values are not divided. It further states that it is not possible to be objective and value-free as findings are influenced by the researcher's perspectives. Knowledge is further produced through exploring and understanding the world of the people being studied. Therefore,

knowledge is personal, subjective, and unique. The world is understood by using their own understanding, and the participants' point of view. Therefore, interpretivism views the social world approached through the understanding of human behavior (Bryman, 2016).

Ontological foundations are philosophical considerations within research, concerning the nature of social entities. This can further be divided into whether they are objective entities existing independently from social actors, or are social constructions in themselves built on perceptions, actions, and interpretations of the individuals in the society. Objectivism is an ontological position implying reality exists independently of our beliefs and understanding. The reality can further be observed directly and accurately. The position has a clear distinction between how the world ought to be, and how the world really is.

Constructionism challenges the suggestion by claiming that external reality exists through human minds with socially constructed meanings. It is only different individual constructions of it, meaning reality is subjective. Social phenomena are further produced through social interactions, which are constantly changing. Life is estimated, where individuality is appreciated (Bryman, 2016). I agree with this ontological position.

2.2 Collection of secondary data

'Secondary Research' is information previously collected by somebody else. The 'past data' is available through researchers, government records, or various online and offline recourses. In opposition to the primary analysis, when you collect the data yourself, secondary analysis involves re-analyzing, interpreting, or reviewing existing research. My role as a researcher is to specify how this data informs my current research. I use secondary data in isolation, by re-assessing data with a different research question in mind. The most common types of secondary research are quantitative and qualitative methods. Even though quantitative secondary research is more common, you can use both methods. Qualitative research data is used when you want to test the information obtained through qualitative research by implementing a quantitative methodology. The data is also collected from external sources data obtained through government sources, national and international institutions, and scientific journals (Bryman, 2016). For instance, Keller (2014) with his background in political science, based the study on a limited survey of randomly selected respondents in the regional states to illustrate the increasing ethnic identity. Turton et. al (2006) uses comparative methods, comparing Ethiopia's federalism to other states with a background in social anthropology. Tronvoll (2009) has a background as a professor of peace and conflict studies and human rights, considered an expert on Ethiopia since 1991. Tronvoll has during this time collected primary data during personal interviews and observations, using qualitative methods. By

using different authors with different perspectives and methods, it complements the thesis by complementing gaps.

The literature review provided an overall understanding, helping to create my problem statements. This kind of research is economical, less problematic, and provides a source of comparison. A practical methodology for this issue is to focus on selecting data that is suitable for the research question, and the resources available for the researcher (Bryman, 2016). Certain research areas require historical data to answer specific research questions. The secondary data has been important for me to understand how the situation in Ethiopia developed, and to understand the situation today. In this way, I benefit from using concepts and theoretical perspectives from researchers in the field of multiculturalism, human rights, and sociology, meaning primarily high-quality data. Although, this kind of research may identify biases in the primary research. An example of this is that many countries include a system of data archives in which survey data files are collected and distributed and are easily available for me as a secondary researcher. In this way, I can get an extensive study and obtain a nationally representative sample (Dale, 1998).

2.3 Ethical considerations

Ethical issues come in different ways of representation. This will be related to publishing material and research findings. It is important to clarify who wrote it, and for what purpose to further find it trustworthy. Credibility is a relevant criterion as it refers to what extent they are free from errors according to sufficient principles (Bryman, 2016). Since I have not dealt with personal interviews, I have no ethical considerations regarding, for instance, informed consent. Although, I must assume that this is considered. The study of ethnicity is often related to social anthropology, focused on traditional field methods such as participant observation, personal interviews, and surveys. The empirical focus is traditionally based on ‘us’ vs. ‘them’ (Eriksen, 2010).

By consulting secondary sources in the Ethiopian context, I met challenges. Secondary data may not always be easily available, especially when concerning national populations. Since ethnic violence and war in Ethiopia are current issues, several newspaper articles are used as sources for updated information. However, it has been challenging as parts of the task have also had to be changed along the way, in step with Ethiopia’s internal changes. Data assessments from organizations are often not approved by the GoE, and they do not cooperate with other regional states or organizations. The data may therefore be unreliable as it is a part of the war effort during periods of conflict. Collecting and verifying these data is difficult. It is important to keep in mind that neither national nor international newspapers and articles can be 100% neutral. Therefore, I

have used several sources to confirm so-called claims, and taken nuances into account. I think this is necessary to give a balanced, holistic, and reliable impression of events and so-called facts (Bryman, 2016).

I had an intentional aim of looking for Ethiopian sources when researching and writing this thesis, as the people of a country understandably have the best insight into its politics and history. I came to discover that academic literature in Ethiopia, both of Ethiopian origin and elsewhere, is largely written with a political undertone. Tales of history will always have positive or negative interpretations of events, thus asserting a set of values. The writer also necessarily must make judgments on what are more or less important parts of history. In the historical context, the literature was written by and according to an Amharic assimilated tradition. Consequently, many documents are Amharic, and others have not been published. The Oromo literature is largely political and sensitive to the Oromo cause. Thus, it is difficult to navigate between different sources of politics and history. Although, after the social revolution in 1974 this alternative view was reinforced (Tronvoll, 2021). Although, different perspectives affect definitions and methods. This is particularly evident in CoE 1995. In such a linguistically diverse Ethiopia, it is difficult to contextualize the concept of nationhood, which also affects political ideology. Nevertheless, it is necessary, as they have implemented Stalin's concept. Teshale (2008) illustrate this by returning to the Semitic language Amhara meaning that has dominated Ethiopia's discourse. This has been important to implement in the work, to illustrate a counterpoint to a field historically characterized by biased anthropology.

2.4 Positionality

I approach this thesis as impartial, but impartial is not necessarily neutral. In this master's thesis, I want to give an impression of the size, proportions, and dynamics of the conflict.

This is further interlinked with the relationship between the minority and majority, power-relations, and human rights. Like the social constructivist approach claims, I agree meanings are constructed in the interaction with others. By doing secondary literature, I am not involved with the actual process of collecting data. This reduces biases that may result when doing primary research (Bryman, 2016). Although, I believe my presence as a researcher cannot be value-free. As meanings are constructed in interaction with others, it is hard to not be influenced by what I read, how the media paints the so-called reality of war and cruelty, and how I see the world.

However, the media and the world society have changed radically in how Ethiopia now both is illustrated and written. In two years, a lot has happened in Ethiopia, which I think makes this study

quite interesting, but also made it hard for me to write. How I write my study, may justify reason or method over another, but there is always analysis by others based on reasonably justifiable means. I do not think that it is required for me to use relativism to favor an oppressive institutional order or power to justify death and injury to hide the suffering of people. My position as a researcher is trying to be rational with the values of peace which is further influenced by my findings in secondary data. I am a white woman, with a background in development studies, and even though I try to be neutral and rational in how I view things, how I am as a person may influence my research. My selection of secondary data and the theoretical frame was to highlight the importance of ongoing interactions, and intersubjective realities, where views and actions are contested and compromised for the creation of peace. By viewing multiculturalism to restore peace, the goal is to influence culture in non-violent ways by using progressive, pragmatic, and holistic that is based on empirical, critical, and constrictive insights. I approach this thesis as impartial, but impartial is not necessarily neutral. In this master's thesis, I want to give an impression of the size, proportions, and dynamics of the conflict.

The political climate is tense and polarized, and the information and analysis about events often appear as unbalanced. There are few international actors present outside Addis Ababa, which involves limited objective information from the regional states. The fact that the authority is close in communication and connection with riots and military operations, limits the supply of information about events while they are happening. The information in the note is taken from various written sources; research articles and analyzes from human rights organizations. This research is mainly a synthesis of available written information.

Using secondary data, allows you to have an extensive study allowing a more detailed and useful statistical analysis. Original research may fail to collect sufficient information on how their research was conducted as information may be lacking control over the quality of data, reliability, and validity. This may require taking extra steps to obtain this information if possible (Bryman, 2016).

2.5 Limitations to my study

Being less involved in the collection of data can also be a disadvantage. Although secondary data may provide a large scope of professionally collected data, it is unlikely to be fully appropriate to your own research question. As the primary data collection allows the researcher to address issues specific to their own study, the data may not directly address my study. As the data is relevant for a particular population, in a specific geographical region, and collected during a specific time frame,

it may be fitting in a different population or different region or for a long time ago (Bryman, 2016).

In such a complex topic, this thesis has some simplifying categories and statements. Záhórik (2014) claims that simplifying narrows the study of ethnicity neglects other factors that may have played a larger role, as land, social changes and power-relations. There is published plenty material on nationalism, ethnic conflict, and identity issues in Ethiopia, but often with thin historical research. This can be the reason why the study of nationalisms in Ethiopia is so much politicized and ethicized. Although, being aware that this is simplifying and generalizing, a complex reality need this to further gather an understanding of the topic.

By using secondary data, I also lack control over the data collection process. This further brings out reservations about the unknown problems that may have followed during the data collection, which may have consequences for the data quality. The original data may have limited or biased information. Reports of these issues may not be readily available, so the secondary researcher must find hidden meanings and think of what problems might have happened during the data collection process. Further difficulties may concern definitions, categorization, and the absence of variables. This can mean that the variables of the original data may have been defined differently than the secondary researcher (Bryman, 2016; Dale, 1998). Even though I have not done an empirical study in this research, it is hard for me to engage in qualitative studies and their claims. In this way, I cannot criticize their work, which would be a weakness. My thesis is affected by the corona epidemic, which has made both the topic and access to data difficult. Travel became impossible also as the war increased. Data collection addition to access to sources has made it difficult to get an overview of what is happening in today's Ethiopia.

3.0 Research literature, concepts, and theoretical perspectives

Ethnicity, nation, and nationalism are three distinct and determinative elements within world history that have been marginalized by history and politics. A clear definition of the key terms is important as authors use them in different ways. In this section, I will review the research literature on these background concepts and then examine the literature related to my topic. The subjects are closely interlinked and intertwined (Hastings, 1997). Additionally, I will review a selection of works used in my study. I will try to analyze and critically evaluate the literature to give a clear picture of the state of knowledge on the subject. In this sense, I will first demonstrate my familiarity with the topic and scholarly context and further develop a conceptual and theoretical framework with the methodology of my research. By doing so, I will try to position myself in relation to other researchers and theorists and show how my research addresses a gap or contributes to a debate.

This study explores perceptions and experiences of ethnic federalism in relation to ethnic identity, ethnic conflict, and civil war. Reviewing related literature widens the research problem, which enables refinement and focuses on the problem under research.

To understand the current situation in Ethiopia, we need to understand the terms ethnicity and nation in the Ethiopian context. In this chapter, different theoretical models of ethnicity and nationalism related to our understanding of ethnic identity, nation-state, and power-sharing are explored. Additionally, the chapter illustrates explanation models that influence ethnic conflict and war. By researching the debates and examining the wholes within the literature, I will later seek to request my own dimension to understand the development of ethno-nations in Ethiopia, and how this is interlinked to ethnopolitics, identity, and armed conflict. These findings will further be analyzed within themes to find meaning and explanations for my research questions. This study will therefore be based on constructivist and primordialist theory, power-sharing theory, and concepts within ethnicity and nationalism. Nevertheless, ethnicity and nation are highly contested in western nationalism scholarship as there is great variation in definitions. These perspectives can further be divided into primordialism, ethno-symbolism, modernism, and constructivism (Smith, 1991).

3.1 Conceptualizing ethnic identity

The most common approach in the literature is to see ethnicity in a group's relationship to another ethnic group. Isajiw (1992) writes about the meaning of identity, depending on several other

concepts, especially 'ethnic group' and 'ethnic identity'. The ethnic group is the most fundamental concept, as other concepts are based on this (Isajiw, 1992).

A major change in the understanding of ethnicity occurred with the publication of Barth's 'Ethnic Groups and Boundaries'. Barth (1969) defines ethnicity as something that differentiates one from others, by using kinship as a metaphor within ethnic groups. Ethnicity is an aspect of a relationship, not a property. In this essay, Barth argues that group identity is created with relational group boundaries when different social groups interact with each other. Therefore, ethnicity is not an objective reality that exists. Markers, such as language, religion, or rituals serve to identify these ethnic boundaries. Ethnicity is situational, relational, and subjective. By separating ethnicity from culture, Barth made boundaries with ethnicity as an ever-changing, socially subjective concept (Barth, 1969; Jenkins, 2001). Further, the theory explains the fear of domination, expulsion, or even extinction, being fundamental to most ethnic conflicts as relational aspects of ethnicity.

In the review of the literature, the conceptual overview of ethnicity's history and meaning is related to the term 'race'. Cornell and Hartmann (2007) define 'ethnicity' as recent, as 'tribe' was used in pre-modern societies and 'race' in modern. In African anthropology, 'tribe' is used during colonialism. Therefore, it may be subjective, and still provides a damaged image of the continent, claiming African identity and conflicts as more primitive than other continents (Cornell, 2007). Consequently, the discussion of ethnicity is complicated as various related terms are used to designate similar phenomena, like race, tribe, nation, and minority group. Some scholars use these terms interchangeably, and others as unrelated concepts. In ethnic conflict research the terms ethnic group, communal group, ethnic community, people, and minority are mostly used correspondently (Eller, 1997).

Van den Berghe (1981) describes 'race' as a special marker of ethnicity by using biological characteristics. In this study, race is not an issue since there is little or no phenotypical difference between the national or ethnic groups. The term 'minority group' refers to a sociological group, such as an ethnic group, that constitutes a politically dominant plurality of the total population of a given society (Van den Berghe, 1981). This is relevant for Ethiopia, as each of the national groups is a majority group in certain geographic regions and a minority group in others. This is the basis for the federalism policy.

British scholars typically refer to ethnicity only as minority groups in a society. Ethnic groups are therefore defined as a distinct collective group of the population with a different culture within the larger society. Cashmore (2003) defines 'ethnic group' as a creative response of a people who feel marginal to the majority. However, in the European tradition, ethnicity is understood as a synonym for nationhood or peoplehood, not as a synonym for minority groups (Cashmore, 2003). In this tradition, everyone belongs to an 'ethnic group', not only minorities. In this thesis, I follow the European usage of the term.

The most prolific writer in the field is Anthony D. Smith. Smith (1991) views the defining elements of ethnic identification as psychological and emotional, emerging from one's historical and cultural background, including historic territory or a homeland, both currently inhabit or not.

Contributing the identity-feeling, ethnic groups share culture, beliefs, or common physical visibilities. Consequently, ethnic groups may feel threatened, resulting in a confrontation.

Therefore, ethnicity becomes politicized, becoming a way to create solidarity among members of a particular ethnic group, and to exclude 'the others' (Frödin, 2003; Joireman, 2003).

Within the theoretical framework, there are disagreements about how ethnic identity changes over time. Ethnic identity is unique in defining self-identification and communal distinctiveness.

Mobilization of ethnic identity and ethnonationalism is a powerful tool to engage the group in political struggle. Consequently, ethnic divisions and ethnic conflicts are considered essential and common to multiethnic societies (Abbink, 2011). Resultingly, globalization- and modernity-processes have blurred identities at a collective level and the feeling of rootlessness at the personal, leading to fluid understandings of ethnicity. Eriksen (2010) argues that recent debates in anthropology pull away from notions of integrated societies or cultures, towards a vision of a more fragmented, paradoxical, and ambiguous world. Here, studies of identities rather than cultures have entailed a focus on conscious agency and reflexivity.

Gellner (1983) states that conflicts are seen when ethnic and cultural marks are visible, accentuating the differences in resource access and power. This is shown when small ethnic groups in powerless forefront determination transform their marginalized culture into the center. Here, ethnic nationalism becomes a powerful weapon of the powerless in the contemporary world. Anthropological theories of ethnicity can be grouped into three basic categories: Primordialist theories, Instrumentalist theories, Constructivist theories, and postmodern theories. By giving specific assumptions of the origin of ethnic identity, different causes of ethnic conflict are reflected.

Ethnic conflict is defined when at least one group defines their goals in exclusively ethnic terms, in a confrontation with ethnic variation (Brown, 2001; Gellner, 1983).

Primordialist Theories views describe 'ethnicity' as fixed and at birth, becoming a member of a particular group. In this way, ethnic identification is based on deep, unchangeable 'primordial' attachments that further establish a nation as descent (Malesevic, 2004). This perspective was popular until the mid-1970s. Primordialism is an 'objectivist theory' or cultural essentialist, viewing human society as a conglomeration of distinct social groups. At birth, a person 'becomes' a member of a particular group. Ethnic identification is based on deep 'primordial' attachments to that group, established by a nation of descent. One's ethnicity is thus 'fixed' and an unchangeable part of one's identity (Isajiw, 1992).

Smith's perspective is a soft form of primordialism, that he now calls ethnosymbolism. Smith emphasized the 'extraordinary persistence and resilience of ethnic ties and sentiments, once formed' and argues that they are essentially primordial since they are received through ethnic socialization into one's ethnic and are fixed (Frödin, 2003; Joireman, 2003.)

Connor (1994) views primordialism as explaining the underlying drive for massacres and one of the worst genocides in history, like Rwanda and Yugoslavia. The acts are explained as feelings of fear, hatred, and anxiety. Although the primordial theory emphasizes the irrationality of ethnic violence, the hopelessness is described as permanent and ineradicable, it fails to explain the structural, economic, and political processes within the conflicts. It also fails to explain why conflicts outbreak at the time, and not later. Although, I find this theory useful in explaining the emotional dimension explaining the passion-driven behavior of ethnic groups (Connor, 1994). By focusing on fixed identities, the primordialist approach fails to recognize variations in ethnic group formation.

Furthermore, a second approach instrumentalist was developed to understand ethnicity as a device to further achieve political goals. Instrumental Theories describe ethnicity based on people's historical and symbolic memory, as something created, used, and exploited by leaders and others in the pragmatic pursuit of their own interests (Malesevic, 2004). The theory is also explaining elite manipulation, arguing that leaders in a modern state use and manipulate perceptions of ethnic identity to further their own ends and stay in power. Proponents of instrumentalist theories view ethnicity as something that can be changed, constructed, or even manipulated to gain specific political and/or economic ends (Eriksen, 2010). Elite manipulation was also a major feature in

Rwanda, as political elites politicized the differences. Ethnicity is created in the dynamics of the elite competition within the boundaries determined by political and economic realities and ethnic groups are to be seen as a product of political myths, created and manipulated by cultural elites in their pursuit of advantages and power (Horowitz, 1985). This often includes self-governance, autonomy, access to resources or power, respect for the group's identity and culture, and minority rights. Outside the political process, ethnicity has little independent ranking. Ethnic conflicts arise if ethnic groups compete for the same goal, such as power, access to resources, or territory. The theory also explains why some ethnically fragmented societies choose to fight or cooperate, and why some people take part in ethnic conflicts by following the crowd. Connor (1994) explains ethnic conflicts as an 'us-them' syndrome. Although, the theory often needs help from the primordial theory to explain political instruments interlinked to emotional drivers at the individual level. This approach is criticized by those who argue that ethnicity is rooted in and regulated by society.

Constructivist Theories describe ethnic identity as something they construct in specific social and historical contexts to further their own interests. It is therefore fluid and subjective (Malesevic, 2004). The basic notion in this approach is that ethnicity is something that is being negotiated and constructed in everyday living. Ethnicity is a process that continues to unfold (Isajiw, 1992). Ethnic identity is created by social interactions between individuals and groups and is therefore beyond a person's choice. It may change as the social condition changes. Ethnic differences cannot be avoided but choose what to make of it. Ethnic conflicts depend on the group's opportunities to reach their goals. The theory further draws attention to the historical construction, like the maintenance of colonial and post-colonial ruling elites for political and social control (Jackson, 2002). Therefore, ethnic conflicts are a consequence of concrete historical processes that further affect relations between ethnic groups. Violent conflicts are usually caused by social and political systems leading to inequality. Changes in social interaction, such as increased tensions or violent conflict influence this nature of ethnicity. The theory reflects both underlying and proximate causes of ethnic conflict, explaining why societies with similar historical processes and structural features commonly associated with conflict, do not have the same conflict histories. Although it seems comprehensive it fails to explain the timing of the conflict outbreak. Constructivists further explain genocide, mass rape, and ethnic cleansing by virtue of ethnicity, meaning everyone will be involved in the conflict, regardless of their intentions. With a macro-level perspective on state-building, it fails to give an understanding of what is happening at grassroot level (Jackson, 2004).

Postmodern theories are concerned more with nations and nationalism than with ethnicity. Attention shifted to the issue of group boundaries and identity. Scholars' operation is the paradigm felt that terms like 'group', 'category', and 'boundary' connote a fixed identity, something they wanted to avoid. Ethnicity has become a social discourse and social competition and its salience and effectiveness have become more attractive to all sorts of collectivities (Eller, 1997). Psychocultural interpretations, describe ethnicity as deep cultural with psychological roots, making ethnic identity determined. Ross defines ethnic identity as originating in 'shared, deeply rooted worldviews', shaping group members' relationships, actions and motives. This means that ethnic identity cannot be changed, only made more tolerant and open-minded. Ethnic conflict engages central elements of each group's identity and invokes fears about real and potential enemies. Ethnic conflict is not only a political event but challenges the existence of the groups by contesting their identity. This is an explanatory model of why ethnic conflicts are difficult to resolve. Some ethnic groups have identities with deep historical roots, and some have static identities and other dynamics. Ethnic identities are adaptable and activated by unexpected threats and new opportunities. Ethnicity cannot be politicized unless an underlying core of memories, experiences or meaning moves people to collective action. There is no theory that will explain the origin and dynamics of ethnic conflict, although each and one of them contributes to an understanding of the phenomenon. Each of them has limitations in their explanation of the origin of ethnic identity. It further requires a framework including ethnic geography, intergroup policies, elite politics, historical processes, and socio-political and economic factors (Eriksen, 2010).

3.2 Understanding Nation

For us to understand the current political situation in Ethiopia, the meanings of 'ethnicity' and 'nation' are crucial in the Ethiopian context. Both concepts are illustrated in western nationalism scholarship, although scholars explain the concepts differently. In the study of nation, primordialism, ethno-symbolism, and modernism stand out. The primordialism approach views "nation" as a given, natural and transcendental entity (Smith, 1991). This is further defined by common descent and maintained by inmarriage (Van den Berghe, 1981). Therefore, nations evolved out of pre-existing ethnic communities defined by myth and symbols which further explains ethno-symbolism (Smith, 1991). The modernist approach, on the other hand, views "nation" as a product of modern processes of capitalism, industrialization, and urbanization within a modern bureaucratic state (Gellner, 1983). Tilly (1975) points out the complexity of nations, by stating that the term continues to be one of the most 'puzzling and tendentious items in the political lexicon' (Tilly, 1975). Nation formation establishes itself by interpretations of historical phenomena and is thus a contentious theme in nationalism scholarship. The modernist school defines nation

with the elements of borders, legal-political community, nationalist legitimation, and intergovernmental system and mass citizenship of 18th century Western Europe. Connor (1994) further argues that claims about a nation that existed before the late 1800s should be treated carefully.

Gellner (1983) writes from a historical perspective about the idea of one nation, one state. Here, definitions of state and nation are central in terms of their evolution. For a state to create legitimacy, everyone should have equal rights and opportunities, not just one or some groups within the country. Here, the relationship between the state and ethnicity can be explored. In this view, there are two concepts of nation, either referring to the nation by virtue of political community. These can further be divided into *Demos* vs. *Ethnos* as a socio-political construction is a project with strong undertones of belonging that automatically excludes others. As an ideology, the national identity is associated with political programs that must be protected and preserved. Integration and multiculturalism vary according to the character of the nation-state and how the nation is defined. Normally, there are two types of nations, civic-based nations (*demos*-political subjects) and ethnic-based nations (*folk*-by descent) (Gellner, 1983).

The modern meaning of civic nationalism belongs to a nation by virtue of the political subject, and civil and political rights of the nation-state, where one has a perception of the citizens. Citizens are different than a nation defined as a community, as ethnic belonging. Nation defined in the German term is related to 'Das Volk'. The ethnic civic nation is a society that shares folk descent, often without common territory. There is no universal consensus on a complete nation because there are always exceptions. The so-called nation-state project involves forming a unit from many different identities, into a distinct group (Gellner, 1983).

In this definition, people are quickly excluded. In this term, Sami in Norway is considered to be a nation as well. This can be problematic as Sami are also not completely unified, producing interaction and coexistence with others over several generations related to mobilization. In this issue of nationalism and identity, politics is central, relating to citizenship rights and exclusion by minorities (Eriksen, 2010). Here, ethnic nationalism is constructed as a solution to the conflict. Repressive policies make them vulnerable. These regions, or states, have their own rights protection, natural resources, and land rights (Tronvoll, 2009).

Most political scientists distinguish between two ways of structuring society in a nation-state; ethnic and civic nationalism. In popular usage, civic nationalism is often called 'patriotism'. Civic nationalism is often referred to as political, claiming political ideals in the composition of national identity. Ethnic nationalism is involving cultural nationalism, suggesting the ethnic group is the fundamental basis of nationhood. In ethnic nationalism, one defines oneself as a member of an ethnic group, rather than a nation. This is reminiscent of Barth's emphasis on ethnic groups based on subjective self-description, including society's institutional framework of ethnicity (Barth, 1969; Eriksen, 2010)

Ethnic nationalism excludes anyone who is not a member of the same ethnic group from the 'nation'. Civic nationalism defines the nation on a territorial basis. While using Ramet's terminology, civic nationalism is based on guarantees of individual rights. Ethnic nationalism is based on the doctrine of 'collective rights' involving one particular community and culture. During the Enlightenment, Ramet (1997) further argued for a new category of social differentiation, a membership of the nation defined as citizenship, where the state was to protect the rights of all citizens equally. For many postmodern, the state is seen as ideally constituting itself as the state of a specified people, not a citizen's state, but a national state. In a national state, those citizens not of the majority nationality enjoy fewer rights than other citizens (Ramet, 1997).

One of the most influential doctrines in modern history is that all humans are divided into groups called nations. This understanding provides the ideology of nationalism. A developed model of the term is people constituted by a common language, religion, territory, and government (Hastings, 1997).

According to Smith (1991), three issues remain within the discussion of nations and nationalism. The first is questioning how we should regard the nation and national identity as an end or to other ends and values. The second is political and concerns the social definition of the nation. What kind of community is the nation and what is the relationship between the individual and the community? Has the nation a fundamentally ethnocultural character, a community of members that are bound together by kinship ties, common history, and shared language? Or is it a social and political community based on common territory and residence, on citizenship rights and common laws? The third is historical and sociological, as it concerns the nation's history of humanity. Should we regard the nation as an evolving community rooted in shared ties and culture? Or should nations be treated as recent social constructs as a typical product of history and the special conditions of modern

society, that will pass away when its conditions no longer apply (Smith, 1991)? Of these three grouping of debated issues, the second set about the anthropological and political is of particular to this study.

The Nationalist theories argue that nations have existed as long as man has and that it is a natural part of being human to seek nations. Modern nation-states are seen as direct descendants of ancient primordial ethnic groups. The theoretical foundations of this approach rest on a primordialistic view of ethnicity. This primordialist view argues that nations existed for a long time and have changed shapes during history. National forms may change, and nations may dissolve, but the identity of a nation is unchanging. The historical past is of great importance. This group of theories sees ethnic groups as stable, even ancient units of social cohesion. The first European nations were formed out of pre-modern ethnic foundations. Smith labels these ethnies a collective group that falls between ethnic groups and nations. He further lists the six main attributes of an ethnic community: a collective proper name, a myth of common ancestry, shared historical memories, one or more differentiating elements of a common culture, an association with a specific 'homeland', and a sense of solidarity for significant sectors of the population (Smith, 1991).

Before the rise of nation-states, citizens owned loyalty to the ruling dynasty. Communication and education, knowledge of history expanded one's local community, which developed a feeling of collective cultural identity with a common language and religion. This growing sense of collective identity further arose the nation-states. Hastings (1997) views a similar perspective claiming that in contrast to ethnic groups, a nation is a far more self-conscious community. It processes or claims the right to political identity and autonomy as people, with control of specific territory, comparable to independent individuals in a world thought of as nation-states. The term nations have a common western understanding as it emerged in Europe. Since these nations were 'powerful and culturally influential' they became models for the formation of nations in the world (Spencer, 1996).

Therefore, the movement is from 'ethnic group' to 'ethnie' to 'nation' to 'nation-state'. Not all ethnic groups become ethnies, not all ethnies become 'nations' and not all 'nations' are 'state-forming nations'. Smith (1991) saw ethnic unity as the existence of mythology, and symbolism of history and culture in an ethnic community and argued that it is difficult for an ethnic community to become a nation-state without these ethno-symbolic factors. This is relevant to the case of Ethiopia.

Modernist theories are a view of constructivist theories, arguing that nations are entirely modern and socially constructed. The past is largely irrelevant. The nation is a modern phenomenon and

socially constructed, the product of nationalist ideologies, which themselves are the expression of modern, industrial society. This is currently the most prevalent scholar position. Both modernist and postmodernist views 'nation' as modern, essentially artificial constructs. Gellner (1983) was the leading proponent of modernism arguing that both nations and nationalism are modern phenomena emerging after the French Revolution with modern conditions like industrialism, literacy, education systems, mass communications, secularism, and capitalism. Nationalism, Gellner argues, is a 'new form of social organization, that is based on deeply internalized, with education and high cultures protected by its own state (Gellner, 1983; Eriksen, 2010).

Bellamy (2003) summarized the basic difference between Gellner and Smith as the 'great debate' in nationalism studies is between so-called 'primordialists' and 'modernists'. Primordialists argue that the nation derives directly from ethnic groups and is based on kinship ties and ancient heritage. For their part, modernists insist that the nation is entirely novel from identity and political organization, which owns nothing to ethnic heritage and everything to the modern dynamics and industrial capitalism (Bellamy, 2003).

The nationalist rhetoric is rooted in an imagined family group or an imagined society. States that mark this helps to strengthen and maintain an identity. This further creates a metaphorical kinship that brings loyalty and belonging, which creates nationalism. Nationalism has a unifying effect on a group of people. Gellner (1983) believed that the ideal nation-state is one ethnic group and one nation. It is easier for a state to create a sense of community if one is ethnically homogeneous. In the same way that focusing on values can be inclusive, it can also be exclusive. Political legitimacy helps to create unity in huge political entities. Nationalism thus becomes an ideology that is created because it is necessary. A prototypical nation is an ethnic group that has its own state, creating a common identity as dedicated members of a national community. The nation-state is made up of a metaphorical kinship and uses cultural manipulation as strategic use of symbols and rituals (Gellner, 1983).

Post-modern theories argue that while nations are modern and the product of modern cultural conditions, modern nationalist leaders, and elites 'use' the past for their own ends, as they select, invent, and mix traditions from the ethnic past and offer them as justification for their actions. The present creates the past in its own image. Anderson (1983) is the most well-known proponent of the postmodernist perspective of nations. His definition of 'nation' is probably the most widely quoted definition by modern scholars. In the anthropological spirit, I propose the following definition of

the nation, as an imagined political community, and imagined as both fundamentally limited and sovereign. All communities are larger than primordial villages of contact and maybe even these are imagined. Communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity or genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined (Anderson, 1983).

3.3 Nationalism

Nationalism is a contentious and controversial term that can be used in many ways. There may be an exaggerated loyalty to one's own nation, as it takes precedence over that of others. Nationalism can also have significance as national consciousness, national feeling, and national identity. As an ideology, all nations are equal and independent. National movements aim to convince others to be a nation by defending their interests. The powerful impact of nationalism is shown in the making and unmaking of nations in many multi-ethnic states in the third world. Nationalist movements shake states, empires, and multicultural nations (O'leary, 2013; Wimmer, 2002).

Nationalism is loaded with traces of ethnicity, race, religion, socio-economy, and emotions. Today's wars are associated with the national principle, the idea that most people should be self-ruled in belonging to the same ethnic group. Nationalism is an important tool for marginalized groups within nation-states to further challenge democracy and authority by claiming political power or self-determination (Wimmer, 2013). A violent internal conflict is often referred to as a civil war. The conflicts tend to not be about ethnic differences themselves, but over political, economic, social, cultural, or territorial matters. Often the political goal of ethnic mobilization is self-determination, this movement is called nationalism. The use of the term nation is problematic, as it both can refer to the state as the population of the state based on citizenship. A nation is also referred to as a politicized ethnic group, based on ethnicity rather than citizenship (Eriksen, 2010).

The nation-state as a common national identity within the state's territorial boundaries coincides with a population group that feels unity based on a common language, religion, history, ideology, and perhaps most importantly, values. In the Global North, nationalism is the essential marker of identity that creates legitimacy for states. At the heart of nationalism is the idea of community. Anderson describes a nation as a socially constructed society, represented by people who see themselves as part of that group. The nation does not arise by itself but is accelerated by heavy indoctrination for people to think alike. Hobsbawm & Rangers describe nationalism as an invented tradition. Thus, nationalism looks back on a common history (Eriksen, 2010).

Nationalism works in the same way as ethnicity and builds on the same ideology. An 'imagined community'. Nationalism is a special case of ethnicity, namely an ethnic group that has its own

state. In the same way that nationalism is inclusive for the state in question, it is also exclusive. If the inhabitants do not attach a sense of identity to the state, it is challenging to mobilize them for actions in favor of the state (Eriksen, 2010). Nationalism presents problems in the postcolonial world, in the light of state formation and borders. Ethnicity involves groups that may have been one ethnic unit once but have been divided over centuries into ‘races’, ‘tribes’, ‘nationalities’, and ‘castes’ (Horowitz, 2000). Colonialism drew unnatural boundaries that transcended ethnicity and belonging. The result was multi-ethnic states and the same groups in different countries, which developed the diaspora. This may be a factor that contributes to reducing the state’s legitimacy and identity. Furthermore, it may result in low participation and may explain why there are many weak states in the Global South (Di John, 2010; Wimmer, 2002).

3.4 The rise of identity politics and multiculturalism

Multiculturalism is an ambiguous, complex, and challenging concept rarely discussed meaningfully. Previously, it referred to the co-existence of diverse ethnic groups in the same geographical setting, living harmoniously with mutual respect, maintaining their unique values and identities. Today, it is often discussed negatively with the result of notorious ambiguity in the debates. As a concept, it describes culturally and religiously complex societies where minorities with a majority must coexist in peace and harmony. Normatively, cultural complexity is described as a problem to be solved, as well as a resource or good. Multiculturalism is also seen as contributing to increased inequality and fragmentation in society. Individual beliefs may be categorized against their will. There are several theories that can provide norms for politics and interactions in multicultural societies.

Fedorowicz (1997) describes multiculturalism as social integration where distinctiveness retains in order to people’s possibility to interact. Therefore, multiculturalism provides multiple cultures living with respect and understanding without dominating and oppressing. Multiculturalism celebrates cultural differences by encouraging tolerance and acceptance between ethnic backgrounds (Fedorowicz, 1997).

Historically USA, Canada, Australia, and Britain have adopted a multicultural policy to manage diversity represented by natives and immigrants (Kymlicka, 2006). The composition of social movements for social justice and recognition of human rights along with the rise of immigration is central to the development of multiculturalism in the western world. In this way, multiculturalism has manifested countries with multiple cultures, ethnic groups, and religions. As this has been widely studied and analyzed in the western world, it also exists in countries that are recognized to be more culturally homogeneous. Multiculturalism can be seen as an attempt to do something about human rights violations against minorities. It is a way to accept that a stricter law and a dialogue are

needed and to listen to the minority. A lot of theorists are dealing with different angles and focuses and are missing something. It is very complex, so you easily neglect some aspects of it. Laws may not solve it, as it requires respect for rights and policies, and unlearning the neglect and discrimination of groups and peoples. It is important to make a distinction between multiculturalism on the one hand, and multiculturalism as a policy. Multicultural policies imply policies to provide benefits, such as rights, to individual groups to overcome past discrimination and increase the cultural acceptance and recognition of minority groups to provide basic services that are culturally sensitive (Kymlicka, 2006; Eriksen, 2010).

The essence of multiculturalism is to develop harmonious coexistence among other ethnic communities, as they become marginalized and treated as second-class citizens. This has been the official discourse of Ethiopian ethnic federalism and multicultural policies that have emphasized the liberal values of diversity, tolerance, and recognition of minority groups. Multiculturalism implies diverse perspectives people develop and maintain through their experiences. In this way, it stems from racial, ethnic, gender, sexual orientation, and class differences in society. This is further reflected in the social sphere, political system, economic landscape, geographical areas, and international relations. In Ethiopia, diversity is becoming a common feature of their people. In addition, some scholars indicated that multiculturalism has a counter-productive effect since it promotes fragmentation and is against unity. African nationalism has led to the merging of ethnic nations into one territory. This has necessitated a supranational identity, which may be a part of the origin of displacement on the continent. In many African nations, there is a fear of integration with others, and to loss of identity ethnically and nationally (Wacker, 2019).

3.5 Power-sharing

Power-sharing emerged in the late 60s to provide democratic stability in ‘deeply divided places’.

There are different types of power-sharing arrangements depending on the conditions of each country. Power-sharing is originally discussed by Lijphart, presenting consociationalism, characterized by an ethnically and linguistically divided society, with none of them being large enough to be a majority. The theory focuses on the role of social elites in order to stabilize democracy, and all groups should be represented and included. Lijphart (1977) presents key characteristics such as a grand coalition representing different societal segments, minority veto that allows groups to reject decisions detrimental to their interests, proportionality in political representation, and cultural autonomy to groups (Lijphart, 1977).

O’leary (2013) claims consociationalism is the best way to solve immediate conflicts and create the needed stability to create peace. Further, the key-conditions being argued for are that elites need to

be motivated in conflict regulation, deferential segments, multiple balance of power, and stable sub-cultures.

Although, Horowitz (1985) claims that grand coalitions are unlikely because of the interethnic competitions. Centripetalism implies compromising politics by reinforcing the center to depoliticize ethnicity to encourage the establishment of multi-ethnic coalition to generate ethnic competition.

O'leary (2013) defines power-sharing as one route to controlling the violence of states, not only the violence of civil wars. States are the most powerful agencies of exclusion, governments the major murderers in human history, and many state-builders and nation-builders have been people-killers and nation-killers. Over 170 million people were killed within their borders in the twentieth century. Governments have been the prime architects of policies of discrimination, control, and exclusion. Genocide, expulsion, and unilateral partition of territories are ways of homogenizing peoples that are now internationally outlawed. Apartheid in South-Africa is caused by decolonization, desegregation, autonomy, language rights, and civil rights movements. Power-sharing is one of the most important elements in 'inclusion'. It is a standard prescription for protracted national, ethnic, and communal conflicts in deeply divided places, especially ones focused on antagonistic self-determination claims. Power-sharing is often constitutionalized and encoed in formal constitutions. A constituting may be nonamenable, or powerfully entrench some identities at the expense of others. A set of constitutional arrangements that prevent one agent or organized collective agency from being the winner who holds all critical powers, whether temporary or collectively, accommodation democracy. Majority democracy fails to prevent majority tyranny. The discussion is not about individual rights, or the various forms of power-sharing (O'leary, 2013).

Federalism is a form of power-sharing based on the territorial autonomy of regional subunits to form jurisdictions that are 'cooperative but independent'. There are many classic examples of this, such as Canada and Switzerland, created to meet the needs for administrative convenience and bureaucratic efficiency to accommodate ethno-territorial pluralism within a single-state framework. From a liberal philosophical system, the foundation is based on being more concerned about individual than group rights. Federalism was also used by the colonial powers, like Nigeria and India, to further attempt to unite territorial units with different origins and antecedents into a means of accommodating the claims of ethno-national or ethno-linguistic subnational groups. As a counterpoint, federalism was the theory developed by Lenin, as an outgrowth of the Russian

Revolution, to provide autonomy and self-determination for minority groups in the Soviet Union (USSR). It is precisely this model that probably inspired the FDRE which came into force in 1995. This was to maintain Ethiopia as a multi-ethnic state (Turton, 2006).

In ‘deeply divided places’, there can be more than one ‘civil society’. All moderately complex societies are divided in ways that may be political, class, and status. Within ‘deeply divided places’ it is further divided of nationality, ethnicity, race, tribe, language, or religion, potentially or actually sites of intergovernmental wars. Functioning states are defined by their recognized sovereignty and control over the entry and exit of persons and entities. If states lack these capabilities, they cannot protect human rights or share power effectively. Interests and demands of communal groups can be accommodated only by the establishment of power-sharing, and constitutional needs of countries with deep ethnic cleavages. The role of ethnicity is bigger in not-yet-democratic countries. Requires power-sharing and group autonomy. Power sharing denotes the participation of representatives of all significant communal groups in political decision-making, especially in education and culture (O’leary, 2013).

3.6 Causes of ethnic conflict

To further answer my research question of how ethnic identity is interlinked with ethnic conflict and civil war, I want to understand more about what causes of ethnic conflict. Ethnic conflicts are usually not about their ethnic differences themselves but are over political, economic, social, cultural, or territorial matters. As one of the major threats to international peace and security, it is among the deadliest examples of conflicts in our time. The consequences of ethnic violence destabilize provinces, states, or even whole regions. These conflicts are often further associated with human rights violations, genocides, and crimes against humanity. It is often further interlinked with state failure and refugee flows. Violent ethnic conflicts lead to the cruelty of human suffering (Tronvoll, 2021).

I found Brown’s book ‘Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict’ relevant. Brown (2001) provides a useful approach to further understanding the causes of ethnic conflict. Here, he distinguishes between underlying and proximate causes. Underlying causes include factors such as structural, political, economic, social, cultural, and perceptual. Structural factors are related to weak or failed states. Proximate causes include factors such as conflict triggers in four ways, internal mass-level factors, in what he calls bad domestic problems, external elite-level factors, in what he calls bad neighborhood, external elite-level factors, in what he calls bad neighbors and internal elite-level factors, with what he calls bad leaders. Bad domestic problems include rapid economic changes,

modernization, political or economic discrimination, and internal migration. Bad neighborhood is created when radicalized politics in a region leads to contagion, diffusion, and spillover effects. This may also occur when refugees or fighters from neighboring countries cross the border and bring violence and unrest with them. Bad neighbors are when governments make decisions to provoke conflicts in weak neighboring states for political, economic, secure, or ideological reasons. This can further develop into ethnic violence as ethnic minorities want to achieve political gains or international support. Bad leaders include power struggles by leaders of different groups, ideological disputes over how the country should be organized, or organized crime by leaders. As leaders may use the 'ethnic card' to further invoke ethnicity in situations leading to increased tensions between ethnic groups (Brown, 2001).

Scholars may differ in their views on the impact of colonized states. As some blame poor political institutions, others blame imperialism. Undoubtedly western imperialism played a significant role in maintaining their power and control within and among countries in the region. Imperialism alone cannot explain why the political elite choose violence to retain their fragile power (Záhořík, 2014). Although Ethiopia was never colonized, the country still withdrew the colonial legacy from the Italian Colonial policy 1936-1941. The divide and rule further favored different ethnic groups and religions in different ways, further developing in colonizing and oppressing each other (Merera, 2006; Záhořík 2014).

4.0 The shaping of ethnic identity and nation-building in Ethiopia

For us to understand the ethnic conflict, we need to see how ethnicity has been shaped over time. In this chapter, I will therefore see how the history of Ethiopia is interlinked with the role of ethnic identity. Although the ethnic federal system usually is blamed for the increasing ethnic violence, it must also be understood as an attempt of solution after years of oppression, injustice, and assimilation. To understand the complexity shaping of ethnicity, we need to look at Ethiopia's governance. This further requires for us to go back 100-150 years back in time. I have further divided the history into the imperial, socialist, military, and federal era, and lastly the pan-Ethiopian era.

4.1 The imperial era; the historical legacy (1884-1974)

Ethiopia was created as the Queen of Sheba became pregnant with King Solomon of Jerusalem. The child Menelik(I) was sent to Abyssinia, present-day Ethiopia, and became the first emperor. The historical complexity is related to the emperor's expansion of Ethiopia. The authorities tried to establish a common culture, language, and religion, at the expense of the peripheral groups. Although, efforts to strengthen the nation began with Emperor Tewodros' II desire to modernize the country in 1855. Tewodros II further centralized the monarchy by cutting off regional nobles from their power bases and chose trusted officers and members of the royal family as administrators in charge of these territories. Following this lead, Emperor Menelik II expanded Ethiopia's territory and military power. In order to do this, both Tewodros and Menelik II reached out to European powers searching to establish diplomatic relations by drawing the Ethiopian Orthodox Church to appeal to European Christianity and emphasize a sense of kinship (Merera, 2006). At the end of the 19th century, Ethiopia expanded from the highlands of Tigray, Amhara, and partly Eritrea, in competition with the European colonies Italy, France, and Britain. At the same time, Emperor Menelik II's army went inland to subjugate the independent kingdoms and sultanates that existed. Ethiopia is the only state in Africa that entered into direct border agreements with the colonial powers, to consolidate the new Ethiopia which expanded radically from 1882-1904 (Záhořík, 2014)

Italy continued to try colonizing Ethiopia, which illustrated that Ethiopia's sovereignty only existed to a certain degree and that Ethiopia's territorial integrity was viewed as one of Italy's colonies. This did not change until 1896 when Ethiopia finally successfully defeated Italy in the battle of Adwa (BoA), consequently, Europeans viewed Africans in a different light. BoA was the first stage

of the rise of nationalism in Ethiopia in the creation of the African power defeating a European power. Although, the concept of Ethiopian unity was challenged by Italy as the colony of Eritrea in 1890 disputed further development of Ethiopia. This weakened the hegemony of Tigray and approved the rise of Shewa as the dominant core of Ethiopian expansionism. Shewa today, is divided between Oromo and Amhara. These two centers of power have a long history of rivalry (Záhořík, 2014). As a result of the BoA Great Britain, France and Italy agreed to the boundaries of Ethiopia by Menelik II. Ethiopia further aligned with Europe gaining technology, weapons, administrative and military expertise, and skills needed for the construction of a modern state. The BoA further expanded to the expansion of Christian Ethiopians as the dominant group within the heterogenous state. People who belonged to diverse ethnicities in the newly developed territories were often enslaved by the ruling groups of Christian Ethiopians, namely the Amhara and Tigray. Oromo, Agao, Ogaden-Somali, Afar, Sidama and Walayita, was some of many being enslaved by the Christian Ethiopians further subjected to genocide, war, disease, and war-induced famine. The discourse of ethnicity and religion justifies their actions (Merera, 2006). The descendants of the slaves of Jamaica worshipped Selassie as the Black Messiah. His name was originally Ras Tafari, which is thus the origin of the Rastafari, which also has made a diaspora-nationalism throughout other colonialist parts of the world (Tronvoll, 2021). Selassie, who ruled as regent from 1916-1930 and as emperor from 1930-1975, created a constitution in 1931, reforming the political system of Ethiopia. The constitution ‘fractured the power of the feudal lords through the development of the authority of the central government’ (Tronvoll, 2009).

Ethiopia was occupied by Italy for a brief period from 1936-1941, slowing Selassie’s progress as he was forced into exile. He returned in 1941 after Ethiopia combined forces with Great Britain which expelled Italy. Selassie’s return became a symbol of an independent Africa that nationalistic leaders under colonial rule tried to achieve, remaining the power throughout the period of decolonization (Tronvoll, 2009). Being surrounded by colonial powers made a significant impact on Ethiopia’s foreign relations at the time, and its development during the period of decolonization. Ethiopia had an effective monarchy that lasted since antiquity, modernization, and an organized military successfully warded off the colonializing of the European powers. By having resisted foreign invasion and rule, Ethiopia aligned with the imperial powers through trade, peace treaties, political negotiations, and similar patterns of expansion in Africa. From a colonial perspective, Ethiopia is viewed as a colonial power, conquering territories being implemented by the Empire despite its independence during the spread of imperialism. In newer academia, it is stated that Ethiopia is a colonial state of the Amhara’s that colonized dozens of ethnic groups, such as Oromos or Somalis

that before 1855 were independent territories (Záhořík, 2014). This statement needs to be examined from a broader perspective. Ethiopia was one of the few African states that defeated a European army due to militarization and expansion. Ethnized histories are based on each group's collective memory, constructed along nationalist lines (Merera, 2006).

The absence of European colonialism in Ethiopia contributed to a rather different development of nationalism due to many different historical factors and experiences. In 1941, Selassie immediately acquisitioned Eritrea and Somaliland into the Ethiopian state. Although, after WWII Eritrea was considered more autonomous by the British colonial powers along with Somaliland. Shortly after, both Eritrea and Somaliland were annexed to Ethiopia. For Selassie to create a national community between the various ethnic groups, Amharic became the only language of education and administration in the country in by the 50s. This assimilation project also portrayed history in a way that was favorable to nation-building (Merera, 2006; Muriaas, 2011).

4.1.1 The socialist era; decolonialization and new independent states (1950-1974)

In cases such as several independent African states, where colonialism created unnatural boundaries and breaking up and merging of groups, we see that this contributes to weakening the state's functionality and legitimacy. Some ethnic groups or tribes are distributed over and across territories belonging to various states, like HoA (Wimmer, 2002). Decolonization was the rise of civil society, trade unions, student associations, ethno-regional political parties, and the growth of bureaucracy and private business. The postcolonial state in Africa was ranging from optimistic hopes to a pessimistic approach, 'alien model of a nation-state' considering a postcolonial state in Africa. Many African states ended up under an authoritarian rule supported by former colonial powers dealing with historical and colonial heritage. It is important to distinguish between state nationalism and ethnonationalism, as ethnonationalism was a consequence of failed hopes and dreams of the early generation of intellectual elites. Therefore, socialist, and Marxist tendencies became popular in both Africa and Ethiopia as a powerful contrast and alternative against European capitalism as an association with colonialism, giving solidarity and equality to the people (Záhořík, 2014). The great resistance in 1970 is therefore related to the colonial legacy.

In the 1950-60s anti-colonial ideologies dominated in the post-colonial world, especially in Africa and Asia. The rise of Marxism happened at the same time as the development of nationalist movements in Africa and Europe. In Africa, many of these movements started as student movements, teachers, or trade unions. After WWII the middle class grew, paralleled with educated elites that further got the young generation to study in Europe and to contribute to the socio-

economic development of its homeland in return. This was the idea of France, to ‘Europeanize’ Africa under colonial rule with a modern African working class. Before 1941, education in Ethiopia was conducted in French, and many Ethiopians studied in France with the French Revolution as the model. At the end of the colonial rule European powers allowed larger numbers of students to higher education, leading to development and improvement. In the 60s, the number of students and teachers grew, that consequently helped the middle class develop in bigger towns. Farmers lived in the same conditions. Because of the cold war and the fear of outside interference, African governments preferred single-party politics, with the hope of keeping the integrity of states. In common in Africa, centralization of administration dealt with different demands of class, ethnic, and regional entities (Merera, 2006; Záhórik, 2014).

After WWII Ethiopia was no longer seen as an island on the continent with little communication between the country and the continent. Ethiopia became an active member of Pan-Africanism with Selassie seen as a man with a great reputation as the leader of a great African nation surviving European colonialism and defeating one of the colonial powers. In this way, Ethiopia became a moderator for other African states, allowing it to persist as a nation with a special status, which further led to the choosing of the permanent headquarters of the UN’s Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) in 1958, and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1963. Although Haile was seen as a symbol of strength across the continent, his progressive attitude towards societal development began to stagnate. Still, he lingered on his power with help from both church and family by controlling and owning land and therefore also the livelihood of millions of peasants. This authority was further aided by the army in regions of unrest within Ethiopia, but Haile further got involved in the whole of Africa as he got more involved in the cases of newly independent African states, as they ‘spoke to an authority based on a unique history with independence’ (Tronvoll, 2009).

Pan-Africanism applauded Ethiopia as a symbol of purity and independence but failed to create a homogeneous continent. Although, Pan-Africanism played a remarkable role in the decolonization period and impacted nationalist movements. Thus, Pan-Africanism was a contrast to the African colonies seeking independence and not as a federation with former colonies. Therefore, many federal projects failed such as in Ghana and Mali, as they did not overcome the historical, linguistic, and territorial heritage of European colonialism. Although, it was not before WWII that emancipation and independence reached Africa. Nationalism in Africa can be divided into several groups depending on the political and social environment it was rooted. The main nationalisms were Pan-Africanism, Pan-Arabism, Pan-Islamism, and Ethno-nationalism. Despite many

differences between Ethiopia and the rest of Africa under colonial rule, there are also similarities in the process of the development of nationalist movements and social transformations (Záhořík, 2014).

When the civil war broke out in 1962 and Eritrea began to fight for independence, it had a direct impact on other nationalist movements in Ethiopia itself, namely the Oromo nationalism. Moreover, in the era of decolonization, Marxism played a role of an inspirational revolutionary ideology in many corners of Africa. The same can be said about Oromo nationalism, as it was the main bearer of Marxism which then resulted in a series of uprisings leading to the deposition of Selassie (Tronvoll, 2009).

However, domestically, Ethiopia entered the 50s and 60s with frustration about Haile's regime that further stagnated with economic development, although the USA gave military and civilian aid more than any other African nation. Haile did not want to give up his power as his regime grew bigger. Consequently, demonstrations and unrest, especially about land reform were increasing as the majority of the population worked as farmers were struggling under Haile's land policies and famine. This further led to strikes and armed forces, which further resulted in a revolution (Tronvoll, 2009). Amhara elites perceived minority languages as an obstacle to the development of Ethiopian national identity. As language and policies were influenced under Amhara and Christian Orthodox as the religion, ethnic discrimination occurred. Ethnic minorities were assimilated and forced upon the Amhara culture and language. The Oromo language was legally banned from education, public speaking, and use in administration. Harari people were persecuted, resulting in many leaving Harar. The Marxist-Leninist student groups made an ideology directed against the feudal and capitalist order. In the early 60s, protests accused Selassie of repression and torture. Although ethnic issues were a part of this, it was not mentioned directly (Merera, 2006).

Understanding the history of Oromo, Tigray, and Somalia can also explain the development of the liberation movements in Ethiopia at the same time. Therefore, there are many political waves and processes in Ethiopia. The socialist wave that spread across Africa in the 60s with decolonization must therefore be seen in the context of the rebellion against the assimilation of the Amhara, the Orthodox Church, and imperial rule throughout Ethiopia's existence, leading to pan-Africanism on the continent and nationalism that could legitimize liberation. New African heads of state were to rule over a heterogeneous population with different languages, beliefs, and different economic and social development. The one-party state was supposed to be an effective form of government that

could limit ethnic conflicts and create a common national consciousness. The consequence of national mass parties created an impression that there was not a ruling class, but an elite group consisting of various ethnic groups. The one-party state thus became an obstacle to creating national integration. The lack of an establishment of a legitimate state institution still existed after the alienation of the state during the colonial period (Muriaas, 2011).

The defeat of the colonial powers led Ethiopia to be a state of great recognition on the continent. Thus, Ethiopia became a symbol of independence that gave hope to the whole of Africa, rooted in nationalism, and Pan-Africanism on the continent. Still, within Ethiopia, ethnic groups are still seeking their independence. Ethiopia is known as one of the oldest countries in the world.

Although, when it comes to the emergence of the modern state, is a result of European imperialism and colonialization. Therefore, Ethiopia, as we know it today, is not older than most African countries (Merera, 2006).

4.1.2 Military era (1975-1991)

In 1974, Selassie was overthrown by the Derg-regime, taking the power away from the regional kings. Thus, the dynamics between the center and the periphery still have a tense relationship, regarding where the power should lie, and how the future of Ethiopia should look (Tronvoll, 2021; Tronvoll, 2009). Merera (2006) claims that the historical complexity is related to how Ethiopians view the expansion and presents ethno-nationalist groups' perspectives divided into nation-building, national-oppression, and colonization. This can also explain their political goal, and why many states within Ethiopia want to reclaim their sovereignty- something they lost under Ethiopia's colonial expansion at the end of the 18th century. This was the foundation of the great resistance wars of the 1970s and 1980s, started by EPLF, TPLF, and OLA, and a dozen other ethnic resistance movements that managed to control the military junta and the centralized government in 1991 (Assefa, 2006).

With Marxism ideology, the Derg was a military administration, which elected the military rule coup Mengistu Haile Mariam as the new leader of Ethiopia. Ethiopia as an imperial regime was now over. The centralization remained within a narrow elite, this time in the military forces that first were supported by the student movements. The military forces were seen as a replacement for the Imperial regime. In this way, Marxism influenced Ethiopia and especially its younger generation of students under decolonization. The rise of the Derg-regime gave opportunities for many Oromos, especially, to become a part of the ruling class. This happened at the same time as the regime fought against any kind of ethnic nationalism emerging in the mid-70s. Consequently,

the Oromo society was polarized between supporters of the Derg regime, and those wanting a higher level of self-determination (Záhořík, 2014).

Now Ethiopia was a socialist nation aligning with the Soviet Union until its collapse in 1991, thus Ethiopia's previous relationship with the USA. The Amhara domination continued under the Derg-regime. Tigrayans, Afars, Eritreans, and Somalis were strongly discriminated against (Merera, 2006). Here, three different perspectives were developed. The 'nation-building' thesis where cultural, linguistic, and religious values to the dominating subnational Amhara group, meaning that the expansion was historically necessary to create the modern Ethiopian 'nation'. The 'national oppression' - and 'the colonialization' -thesis came with the growth of ESM in the 1960s. Terms of struggle and social injustice increased the political arena, inspired by Marxism-Leninism. This perspective is influenced by viewing the Amhara nation as the oppressor, and Oromo and Tigray as the oppressed. In the socialist era, the 'national question' became a major issue related to these perspectives. The colonial perspective lies in the military feudal colonialism, that created and expanded modern Ethiopia (Merera, 2006).

As decolonization spread across Africa and more and more states became independent, Ethiopia managed to maintain its position of esteem and became a continental leader in state building. However, as political, and economic development began to stagnate within the country, across the continent newly formed states surpassed Ethiopia's economic development, and the emperor and his regime became increasingly more corrupt, revolution exploded as dissent with the government could no longer be contained. Unfortunately, in their efforts to reform immediately after the revolution, the Derg, Ethiopia's new political party simply grabbed onto the trend of Marxism without a clear plan for the future of the country. As a result, Ethiopia was unable to significantly recover from its immobility and remains at a slow rate of development even today (Merera, 2006; Záhořík, 2014).

Levine (2004) argues that Ethiopian nationhood was established in the 600s. The perception of Ethiopia's nationhood is also characterized by the division of multi-nations which at the same time reject the Ethiopian nation. This is further institutionalized after 1991, as a product of the ESM's radicalism that has further obscured Ethiopianness with contradictions of the Ethiopian nationhood (Turton, 2006). Today, Ethiopia is surrounded by ethnic carnage, displacement, and war because interlinked with the politicization of ethnicity and competing for ethnonational movements. Social change tends to create stronger communal identities (Záhořík, 2014).

It is important to state that Derg had a great impact on social relations in Ethiopia. The establishment of the land-reform and the authoritarian centralization, divided families and changed collective relations in villages at any local level. In this way, Marxists were privileged and those who acted 'inactive' or 'silent' would be imprisoned. Also, the ethno-nationalist movements in the 70s were inspired by Marxism-Leninism, like the EPLF, with Eritrean nationalism, feeling the necessity to create a nationalist liberation army resistant to social, ethnic, regional indigenous, religious, and ideologic divisions (Záhořík, 2014). These internal aspects could shape the nationalism in Eritrea's well as external forces during the cold war. African conflicts are largely prolonged and influenced by foreign and global dynamics. This is why EPLF sought to isolate itself through exile leadership or supportive regional states.

The nation-state model under the Derg-regime was stripped of cultural characteristics, especially orthodox Christianity. The empire rewrote Ethiopia's nationalism which was supposed to be representative of the entire country. The EPRDF's later takeover, on the other hand, proved that this assumption was not correct, as the basis further became exclusively ethnic division (Clapham, 2006). Merera (2006) relates this to the 'prison-house' perspective, composing the theory of the 'national-question'. The modernization and reform change among intellectual and political elites led to the 'national-question', as the core of the Marxism ideology (Merera, 2006). To further understand Marxism's influence on national questions, Hobsbawm's quotation from Anderson (1983) states that Marxism's movements and states have become national not only in form but in substance (Anderson, 1983). Here, the conviction that a break from the past is necessary to free Ethiopia from the ethnically discriminatory centralization associated with the previous regimes is deeply rooted in history. This break could only be achieved by guaranteeing the autonomy of all nationalities, which may further lead to separate independence. Ethiopia's basis for the hegemonic conception of its modern invention is disputed and under different interpretations. Merera (2006) claims that the different perspectives can explain the diverse political-structural and historical phenomena in the formation of ethno-nations in Ethiopia. In Ethiopian history dichotomies such as 'settler vs. indigenous', 'colonizer vs. colonized', and 'oppressor vs. oppressed' have challenged the nation-building in Ethiopia. The same perspectives may help explain recent developments in Ethiopian politics. The theory states that Ethiopia is a homogenous culturally and linguistically country, with territorially demarcated each with a right to self-determination as a distinct nation. With over 100 different ethnic groups and 80 different languages, with large variations in size, all must be included in this definition. Only 8 of these have their 'mother state' named after them. Amhara and Tigray in particular are referred to as 'nations'. None of these states is culturally or

linguistically homogeneous, although, not surprisingly, Tigray is the closest to the so-called ideal. The other states are not large enough for their own regional state. These are referred to as ‘nationalities’ or ‘people’. Because the constitutional division does not require a distinction between nations, nationalities, and people, the terms can therefore be used as desired by referring to ethnic groups with inhabitants that vary between thousands and millions as if they are equal. The definition also indicates that even the smallest ethnic groupings have a right to self-determination in the struggle to obtain a bigger share of state and national resources. This may further explain why the implementation of ethnic federalism in multi-ethnic Ethiopia has seen some of the worst ethnic-based wars since the Derg (Turton, 2006).

4.2 The federal era; fragmentation in diversity (1991-2018)

In the era of decolonization, Marxism played a role of an inspirational revolutionary ideology, such as Oromo nationalism, being the main bearer of Marxism resulted in a series of uprisings leading to the deposition of Selassie. Suddenly, demands on democratization, self-determination, equality, and human rights began to be articulated with the same intensity as, for instance, in Rwanda. Later, demands on ‘decolonization’, dismantling of ‘traditional’ Imperial regime formed a part of the ‘social revolution’. It had also a direct impact on national identity because the nationalist movements redefined centuries-long maps of Ethiopia by giving an accent to the diverse nature of Ethiopia’s population (Záhořík, 2014).

Ethiopia’s history is marked by long conflicts with Eritrea, Somalia, and Sudan. The Eritreans and others had fought for secession while there was no article that allowed secession in the previous constitutions. This implies that omitting the right to secession from the constitution does not prevent a secessionist movement. Empirical evidence from the Nigerian and Indian constitutions also clearly demonstrates that even though secession is not part of their constitution, secessionist movements have remained to be part of their political life (Turton, 2006). But its existence, at least in principle, enables ‘peaceful’ rather than ‘forceful’ secession. Any attempt at domination will ultimately face a tough challenge from those who are already aware of their right to secession. In this regard, I would rather argue that the best way to halt secessionist movements depends on developing effective democratic governance and respecting individual and collective human rights as well as avoiding any form of domination by any group. Self-determination, as human and democratic rights, implies self-administration using one's own language in education, administration, court, and other affairs of the sub-national groups concerned. Hence, bringing together the majority and minority ethnic groups automatically negates either the majority or the minority's language rights. Nevertheless, this could be done based on negotiation and the consensus

of the parties involved as is the case in the SNNPR where about 56 indigenous ethnic groups come together to form one regional state but then adopted a neutral language (Amharic) as their working language. In fact, this might happen since they do not have a predominant majority group among them (Assefa,2006).

In Sub-Saharan Africa, ethno-nationalism challenged Pan-Africanism. Ethno-nationalism aimed to serve various nationalities to proclaim independent states and fragment existing states into smaller territories. Ethno-nationalism served social mobilization in the formation of political parties in African states, where people got instructed to vote for their ethnic parties. Nigeria, D.R. Congo, and Kenya are examples of countries with a lack of national identity feeling and political parties with strong ethnic and regional attachments making it difficult to get a national consensus. These countries were one of the biggest obstacles to Pan-Africanism as African unity, African government, and parliament. As one country struggles to get a consensus, it would be impossible to reach a consensus among all the states in Africa to reach the goal of unity. There are many examples that national unity in Africa is hard to reach, like in Rwanda or Burundi (Záhořík, 2014). The relationship between multiculturalism and ethnic federalism is linked to cultural diversity and how cultural diversity is managed by the state. In 1990, the GoE restructured the country using the discourse of ethnic federalism. Ethnic federalism divided the country ethnically-linguistically and provided many rights to these regions including governing and cessation abilities. The implementation of ethnic federalism created a constitution that transformed the country from a centralized state into a federation of ethnic territories. CoE 1995 also changed a controversial article that granted nations, nationalities, and the people of Ethiopia the right to secede. Further, Ethiopia's social and political policies were reformed around ethnic federalism with an emphasis on multiculturalism. Trying to contain the rivalries of the different ethnic groups, Ethiopia developed an ethnic federal constitution (Assefa, 2006).

Aalen (2002) claims that the political past, historical, and cultural accounts are based on the view of the imperial ruling class, which is essentially the Amhara. From the early 20th century until 1980s this imperialist view has been dominant and hardly mentions the dominant groups who were victims of the empire-creation process. Consequently, many documents are Amharic, and others have not been published (Aalen, 2002). According to Tronvoll (2009), the imperialist view was challenged after the 1950s as teachers from competing ethnic groups or others reflected on the cultural, political, and economic lives of dominated groups. The revolution of 1974 that ended the monarchical political ideology of the Ethiopian empire state, further reinforced this alternative view

(Tronvoll, 2021). With this acknowledgment, it is important to have in mind that both interpretations may present a polarized and ideologically based view. Still, history can only be written from the present perspective. These sources show a complex reality in the state of Ethiopia and make it hard to find written sources not dominated by the imperialist view, especially in historical representations. Luckily, there are accounts of foreign scholars who witnessed the conquests themselves, but often sometime after. With the 1991 political reform, based on ethnic federalism to aim the end power imbalance between dominant groups, many studies focus on both the opportunities and challenges of this reform. Although, this period also marked a shift in the relationship between the ethnic groups. For my research study, the works of Tronvoll (2021) have been valuable.

The Ethiopian federalism that is defined by ethnicity could not manage the Eritrean nationalism that was defined by territorial colonialism, and thus unequal historical anchoring (Clapham, 2006). This can be further connected to Merera's (2006) perspectives, which show precisely that the historical anchoring has a lot to say for Ethiopia's further categorization. For what is Ethiopia, with its deeply divided boundaries precisely lacking a common history, language, and philosophy? Is Ethiopia a nation-state, where nationhood represents the assimilation of the population and imperialism with an orthodox Christian core? Or is Ethiopia a prison of various nationalities subordinated to an Amhara empire, thus demanding to be freed to embrace its own destiny? Or does Ethiopia consist of a group of colonies that require a similar process of decolonization as its neighboring countries? Or is Ethiopia a multi-ethnic state where all individuals can and will be free regardless of their nationality and affiliation (Merera, 2006)?

In CoE 1995 I have focused on article 5, regarding languages, article 8 about sovereignty of people, article 39 regarding NNP and article 40 right to property, article 50 structure of the organs of state. These will further be discussed in the next chapters.

4.3 Abiy's Ethiopianness (2018-

Today, a lot indicates that the war in Tigray was not a 'forced war' that Abiy claims, but a 'chosen war' that was in the making even before the NPP. Today, more than a year after the start of the war, warning of human rights abuses, mass rapes, extrajudicial executions, and the use of hunger as a military strategy have grown from unconfirmed rumors to mountains of evidence (Tronvoll, 2021). According to the UN, GoE and the federal launched a complete blockade and boycott of Tigray, making humanitarian aid not reaching the region and cut the internet etc. In this way, the public remains shielded, with no TV, video reports, journalists showing these images. Consequently, to

many, the war does not exist. Paradoxically, the information provides evidence it is a crime against humanity, massive war crimes, and war of genocide, also reflecting on international political decision-makers. The civil war involves many conflicts with different actors with different ambitions. There is a territorial war over Western-Tigray, to whom they should belong, between Amhara and OLA, and the conflict over the center in general.

Although, no side of the conflict can claim innocence. When TPLF retaliated against the GoE closer to the capital, hundreds of civilians from Amhara-people were massacred, looted, and raped- Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch reported expulsion of Tigrayans by Amhara-forces. When Abiy came to power, he started questioning the peace agreement, undermining the constitution. He explicitly stated that he wanted to decentralize power, and build a strong unified Ethiopia, so that the federation might be changed. Abiy highlighted many ancient emperors as symbols of the new Ethiopia, such as Menelik. Menelik was to many Ethiopians regarded as a genocide-emperor, and was now singled out as a new national symbol by Abiy. This created insecurity and fear of the new center. Abiy also portrayed himself as the seventh king, referring to God's prophecy that will unite Ethiopia again as the Bible writes.

One year of war has so far cost at least 50,000 civilian lives in the Tigray region (Amnesty, 2020; Tronvoll, 2021). In addition, there is increased mortality due to diseases and a damaged health care system. It is estimated that hundreds of thousands of lives have been lost in the country as a direct or indirect consequence of the war. Following, Abiy has referred to Tigray as Ethiopia's 'cancerous tumor', Tigrayans as 'weeds', and TPLF as 'rats that have ended up too far away from their hole', showing dehumanizing as a classic tool in genocide theory. The rhetoric makes killing the enemy almost a duty. In addition, Abiy has been criticized for apparently supporting sexual violence to his parliament, saying Tigrayan woman only have been penetrated by men, while his soldiers have been penetrated by knives. By the summer of 2021 tens of thousands of women have been affected and that only a 'small proportion of the total amount of stigma, shame, and fear' has led to gender-based violence. In this way, Abiy deliberately creates and deepens enemy images towards Tigrayans after the war broke out in initial tension between the factions of Abiy's EPRDF morphed to open hostility when he dissolved the coalition and crafted PP from its ashes. TPLF declared EPRDF illegal (Amnesty, 2020; IOM, 2020; Tronvoll, 2021)

In recent years, Ethiopia has experienced strong economic growth, but unequal distribution still represents high poverty and hunger. Behind the NPP scenes, ethnic conflict was still going on under

the surface. At the same time, Abiy did transform his political coalition, EPRDF, into the PP. Now TPLF, as the liberation movement that became a political party and set the terms for Ethiopian politics for 27 years, was pushed to the sidelines. TPLF withdrew to their region in the north of the country and refused to take part in Abiy's vision. Abiy dismissed the experienced generals and officers at the top who were Tigrayans, which weakened the military-strategic competence of the federal forces. Immediately after the war, Ahmed arrested 15,000 Tigrayans when he launched his attack on Tigray (Tronvoll, 2021).

5.0 Analysis and Discussion

Ethnic conflicts occur within, between, and among the countries in the HoA. An unavoidable notion with identity construction based on differences marking a boundary between ‘us’ and ‘them’, defined by the groups involved. This is further defined and shaped by narratives of mutual exclusion that become self-sustaining over time. The claim for territory through wars defines one's identity within a group while simultaneously defining the ‘other’ outside of the group as the enemy. Identity politics can, therefore, consequently, include systematic discrimination and exclusion from national, regional, and local decision-making, marginalizing ethnic minorities that increase tension and conflict. Therefore, ethnic conflicts enormously impact society (Tronvoll, 2009). In light of this changing landscape, researchers have become increasingly interested in the specific effects of ethnicity. I focus on philosophical and constitutional issues in any discussion of federalism, impact, and policy using the primordialist and constructivist theory and power-sharing models. In order to continue being a multi-ethnic or multi-nation state, does it exist another alternative to ethnic federalism (Turton, 2006)? Therefore, this section aims to place ethnic federalism in Ethiopia in a larger historical context to further understand the federal system's impact and link this further to ethnic conflict.

5.1 The historical legacy – state and nation building

According to the primordialist perspective, identity is linked to an ethnic group, claiming it is a natural phenomenon. Even before the colonial era, several ethnic groups existed with varying degrees of hierarchy and autonomy. The turning point in the conception of ethnic politics is related to Menelik’s expansion or ‘unification’ which shows that nation-building processes in the Ethiopian state tried to vanish the existence of prior nation-states (Merera, 2006). This is just one of many examples showing a historically complex relationship between the central Abyssinian core and peripheries as newly incorporated territories. This power imbalance marginalizes most of the population. In other words, the consciousness of an ethnic group can transform from ethnicity to nationalism when the group is led to demand the creation of a state of its own (Smith, 1991). Therefore, it may be more convenient to use the concept of ethnic nationalism. The national question has influenced the political dynamics in the socialist era and within the ruling circle. The goal of awakening the working class was increasingly ethnically politicized and mobilized. This is especially clear in the value of using ethnicity to get within the population's mindset by mobilizing

it with a goal defined by the struggle of class (Merera, 2006). In this way, identity politics became important in Ethiopia, resulting in the rise of multi-nationalism (Kymlicka, 2006).

The legacy of colonialism also influences the conceptualization of ethnic issues as the major problem in Ethiopia. During the five years of occupation, Ethiopia was divided along ethnic lines to activate the rebellion of non-Amhara populations, such as Oromo and the Muslims, by co-opting ethnic and religious differences. Colonialism laid the foundation for Ethiopian politics by promoting communal hatred in racial, ethnic, linguistic, religious, and class terms to end Ethiopian nationalism. By deliberately favoring one ethnic group, ethnic groups turn against each other, as shown in the examples of Amhara vs. Oromo and Muslims against Christians. The legacy of the Italian colonial era continues to challenge the Ethiopian state. Later, during the struggle periods, the ethnicization of the Eritrean question popularizes ethnic nationalism. The ethnicization of Ethiopian politics has subsequently supported the dominance of ethnic-based political movements, which continues to dominate politics cannot anticipate this will be the case. In reality, it maintained the centralization that culminated in today's civil war (Merera, 2006; Muriaas, 2011). The nation-building in Ethiopia continues to be dominated by ideologies of certain political and ethnic groups.

A constructive attempt to refine and elaborate Lijphart's (1977) approach to consociationalism and centripetalism would be the ultimate solution to clear out ethnic-based cleavages in Ethiopia. Horowitz (1985) claims that consociationalism tried to solve political problems by establishing a regime of agreed guarantees, including proportional groups participating in government activities and minority vetoes of ethnically sensitive policies. The essence of this is to replace the adversary-democracy of government and opposition with a grand coalition of majorities and minorities whereas, centripetalisms do not proffer to substitute a consensual regime for majority rule, but attempt instead to create incentives, principally electoral incentives for moderates to compromise on conflicting groups claims to form interethnic majority rule (Horowitz, 1985).

The Ethiopian power-sharing model lacks the necessary motivations for sustained elite cooperation and intergroup accommodation. Although there is no exact similarity between the territory of the states and the ethnolinguistic groups, there is an attempt to grant a mother state to some of the dominant nationalities. This has further fragmented rather than unified Ethiopia. To create the ethnically heterogeneous states the constitution claims Ethiopia is, further federal restructuring is needed. In some cases, historical provinces need to be restored in national borders. The ethnic federation has created individuals living in a regional state not belonging to them, which further has oppressed them with fewer political rights than those being included in the ethnic federal state

(Lijphart, 1977). The Ethiopian example shows that the dominated political system makes the regional states less autonomous.

The other problem is the lack of acceptance of the diverse nature of the country by some segments of the country. These groups are openly unsympathetic to the federal system and are also those being excluded from it. According to these groups, ethnic federalism would disintegrate the country. This has been affecting national consensus and integration (Assefa, 2006; Oleary, 2013; Lijphart, 1977).

Ethnic federalism has contributed to increased ethnic awareness and confrontation. Consequently, competition for resources and chiefly political control have given access to resources and benefits. Therefore, it has become necessary for ethnic groups to have their administrative units. In this way, Ethiopia illustrates two forms of state creation, both federal and regional states, special zones, districts, and neighborhoods prescribed by both consociationalism and centripetalism can be identified in Ethiopia. Ethnically homogeneous states are created for geographically and demographically large ethnic groups like Oromo and Amhara. Ethnically heterogeneous states are also created to hold together several minority groups. Although, this includes excessive centralization of power and the dominant role of the ruling party. Ethnic federalism has made little progress in improving the ethnopolitical situation and eliminating tension from ethnic relations. At the same time, ethnic federalism has expanded the state's constitutional powers. It has created local governments, making it possible to solve problems in preserving ethnic and cultural diversity and inter-ethnic relations (Habtemichael, 2019).

Previously the government has tried to force unity by assimilation, oppression, and violence with a highly centralized system. This further led to ethnic violence and conflict, marginalizing the cultural right of ethnic groups. Fueling ethnic rivalry is the drive to take full advantage of group benefit. In Ethiopia, the context where the political marketplace is only accessible to those powerful groups organized ethnic groups, and it appears obvious that mobilization of ethnic solidarity is a new necessary strategy to realize political aspiration and to enhance group solidarity. The ethnicized nature of politics has emphasized the differences for the last 30 years, and it is challenging to find a way out of this as it remains intact—the pervasive impact of ethnic nationalism in the unity of the contemporary Ethiopian state. Ethnic federalism has been very radical in the implementation of self-determination in theory but may fail in the devolution of power. Federalism and

decentralization are great ways for divided societies with geographically concentrated communal groups to provide autonomy. In Ethiopia, the solution was to divide component units into small states to be relatively homogeneous to avoid dominance by large states on the federal level (Lijphart, 2004). Despite the federal and regional unity, Ethiopia has remained a highly centralized unitary state (Turton, 2006). This is pioneering because Ethiopia has gone much further than any other African state, including worldwide, in using ethnicity as a basic principle for organizing (Clapham, 2006). This does Ethiopia's experiment in ethnic federalism highly relevant in the growing debate on the accommodation of ethnic diversity in democratic states (Turton, 2006). Power-sharing agreements are widely used in Africa to further create peace after civil wars. Although, it is to be expected that the results should be more stable with greater participation and inclusiveness and with democracy. Consociationalism, democracy, and federalism are suitable for transitional and consolidating democracy trying to achieve legitimacy and stability in diversity. Ethiopia's ethnic federalism can be described as federal consociationalism. It was supposed to create a balance between the major groups and to unify the country despite the differences (Lijphart, 1977). The historical parallels between Ethiopia and the former USSR were both empires challenged by a nationalist question that later led to the creation of many independent states in the former USSR and the dismemberment of Eritrea from Ethiopia in 1993 (Merera, 2006).

5.2 Secessionist claims for self-determination

Since 1991 the political elite managed to establish a constitutional government that would stabilize potential conflicts between ethnic groups and act as a unifier in a divided population by adopting power-sharing and accommodation of deep diversities (O'leary, 2013). In addition, the conquest of the center by opposition parties or alliances of the periphery challenges the existing cultural basis of the Ethiopian state. In contrast to universalism, Ethiopia could only be united in diversity, officially becoming a multi-ethnic state due to the rise of ethnic consciousness (Záhořík, 2014).

CoE 1995 acknowledges the ethnic groups' past of oppression and exploitation and gives constitutional protection of diversities. Recognition becomes the basis of FDRE by expressing the ethnic states' self-determination, autonomy, linguistic and cultural rights, fair representation, and the possibility of secession at will. Although, if EPRDF abuses their rights, they can avail themselves of their unconditional self-determination and detachment in Article 39. Any ethnic group can, in theory, create its state, which makes the CoE unique. Therefore, the consent of each NNP is at the core of Ethiopian federalism (Assefa, 2006). The Constitution is committed to

building a political community by promoting sustainable and mutual respect, rights, and collective interests. In federalism, a shared vision is essential. For autonomy to function, solidarity is the basis and the opposition to separatism. EPRDF's accommodationist policy is a strategy of nation-building that stresses the 'primordial' belonging to the NNPs as the basis of Ethiopians' identity (Záhořík, 2014). This can further be related to Barth's relational aspects of ethnic boundaries, where ethnicity becomes markers in forms like language and religions are subjective situational, and relational (Barth, 1969).

The constitutional right to secession is the most controversial issue in contemporary Ethiopian politics giving degrees of autonomy and going further than any other country before. Although, there is a gap between the constitutional theory and practice regarding implementing ethnic federalism. All constitutions that require legal, historical, and philosophical expertise to be fulfilled are a function of the 'myth of origin' for all states. Ethiopia's constitution presents a group of formerly independent sovereign entities, the NNPs. Assefa (2006) points out, although being historical provinces, that since these subunits have no previous independence, the reality is quite different. The FDRE was shaped by a delegation of power from the center to ethno-territorial regions instead of the other way around. So-called 'holding together', rather than 'coming together'-federalism. This distinction is perhaps most easily seen analytically on the basis that all federal systems combine different elements of unity and diversity and, therefore, combine different elements of holding together and coming together. EPRDF sought to interpret a union of NNPs as a political settlement to the previous internal conflicts to accommodate diversity in the long term. For many scholars, the EPRDF has been insidiously creating and politically manipulating ethnic tensions and conflicts among the dominant groups to fracture potential political alliances that might threaten its political supremacy (Keller, 2014; Markakis, 2011; Merera, 2006). Unlike its predecessors, the EPRDF-government was accused of deliberately targeting the Amhara and, to some extent, Oromos and Somalis. One of Ethiopia's fundamental political departures in the post-1990s period is the reformulation of the idea of NNPs in the constitution's preamble (Affesa, 2006).

This is also shown in article 5, promoting language policy by promoting multiple languages and thus recognizing the broad linguistic prevalence in the country. Here, all NNPs have the right to preserve and protect their identity, develop their history, and use their language. Amharic remains the working language of the federal government, but regional states decide for themselves, which also appears at the zone and woreda level with many different official languages. In other words,

the constitutional guarantees contrast with the policy of assimilation in the past. Although, due to the wide range of languages spoken in SNNPR, Amharic is still the language of the state administration. This shows that it will take years for the smaller groups to practice their constitutional right to receive an education first. SNNPR's ethnic-based zones have created local tyrannies involving majority owners of the mother state against minorities of different ethnicities or by an ethnic minority in a multi-ethnic state language (Assefa, 2006; Vaughan, 2006).

Article 50 enshrines legislative, executive, and judicial powers to the State relating to matters located locally. The GoE shall respect their power of attorney. Nevertheless, a delegation of power is possible from the center to the regions (Assefa, 2006).

In line with consociationalism, ethnic parties help reduce conflicts by distributing claims through legal channels. The FDRE has created an institutional space by encouraging the formation of ethnic parties that compete not so much at the national level but locally and regionally. The EPRDF represents four major regions/ethnic regions based on so-called equality. The coalition's maintenance was deliberately chosen to ensure political power and resources between different NNPs. Ethnic, regional states and many zones, districts, and neighborhood associations were created for the administrative status of ethnocultural minority communities. The creation of ethnically homogeneous states is created for geographically and demographically large ethnic groups, such as the Oromo and Amhara, but is created to hold together several ethnic minorities.

The role of ethnicity is rooted in all spheres of life as it determines access to cultural, political, and social rights. Although, the state cannot give equal rights to all ethnic groups in a multiethnic country. Therefore, the right to political representation and participation in the state government is hard to accomplish in a state with over 100 ethnic groups. The growing ethnic politicization comes with disadvantages. This further manifests in fights among ethnic groups for self-governance and power, leading to ethnic conflicts. Identity politics has led to the revival of institutions, resulting in further separatism within social structures such as clan hierarchy and occupational castes. In some states, these structures are legalized, like in Sidama, This further illustrates the dilemmas of power-sharing, with the dissatisfaction with excessive centralization of power explaining the continuous demand for new states, zones, and woredas (Merera, 2006).

So far, we have seen a difference between single-party domination of the entire federation and federalism in democratic mobilization. The danger of moving to a single-party dominance is always present, as we can see in the case of ethnic federalism in Ethiopia. The constitutional protection of

diversities does not protect all ethnic minorities as promised, as some ethnic groups are being excluded. The devolution of power overshadows Ethiopian federalism because it was not made for Ethiopia but the former Soviet Union, as it failed to provide its promises (Clapham, 2006). Internal conflicts, military violence, and repression by state organs characterized Ethiopia under the previous regimes. Restructuring Ethiopia as an ethnic federation has prevented the violent partition, provided peace and security for most of the population, and created a legal basis for democracy. Although, as shown in this assignment, the ethnic federation does not fulfill its promises and expectations. Resultingly, many ethnic groups have suffered under the same circumstances, where the majority in the state has been allowed to maintain its rights and power. In this way, these ethnic groupings have been subjected to an assimilation process, but this time by a new ethnic group and the regional majority (Turton, 2006).

Compared with modern western states are often built on the destruction and sometimes genocide of forms of 'national' identities in minority groups. 'Nation-building' in the West is synonymous with 'nation-destroying' (Connor, 1994). Many Ethiopians also share this perspective, considering their ethnic group as colonized or suffering from 'national oppression' or expansion (Merera, 2006). Assefa (2006) claims that the GoE is threatened by national liberation movements, the commitment to self-determination, and the establishment of local governments based on ethnolinguistic will. This is shown in the lack of democratic institutions that affect the accommodation of diversity, which can further solve the problems related to local tyranny among ethnic minority groups and marginalization economically and politically. In the CoE, the EPRDF is silent on how formal intergovernmental mechanisms are. The institutions that exist transcend party political politics (Assefa, 2006).

A common way to explain ethnic conflicts is the competition for resources. As revealed in the background section, the conflict in Ethiopia is complex and interlinked to marginalization, inequality, and political power. This has further appeared to be bloody inter-ethnic clashes. The main factor remains kinship and ethnicity, as traditional and social institutions strengthen the trust-lacking public institutions. Consequently, conflict and tension continue as ethnicity has become the central ideology. Even belonging to a small ethnic group gives grounds for claiming the right to self-determination and becoming an autonomous territorial unit, meaning power and resources. With ethnic federalism, all power in the state, district, zones, or woreda belongs to indigenous people. Newcomers of other ethnic groups are discriminated against outside their states and cannot

participate in any legislative body. This is an important reason for ethnic tensions. All of them are represented in the House of Federation and the Council of Nationalities of the state. Others are referred to as 'non-indigenous people.' The territorial conflicts between ethnic minorities made GoE create 'special zones' or 'special woredas' within the existing zone or provide autonomy between them (Tronvoll, 2021). As the zones are a way to make peace in Ethiopia, they also separate the inhabitants. Autonomy may be seen as a logical way to give the people what they need, but it also emphasizes and reinforces the differences in the country. This has led to more ethnic groups claiming the same rights and ways to retain their individuality. These zones have further led to the disintegration of other ethnic groups and the struggle for resources.

Inside SNNPR, the two majority groups are structurally trapped in a conflict in an eternal battle for competitive alliances with the other various minorities. Significant internal inequalities in the largest ethnic groups also categorize regions based on nationalities. A further division will, therefore, not resolve the conflict but will continue an ongoing conflict in the possible new regions, as not all ethnic groupings recognize themselves in state borders and categorizations (Clapham, 2006).

Both in Gambella, ethnic conflict between the majority groups Neuer and Anywaa, and in SNNPR between Welyata and Gurage, struggles to gain ownership of the states. Struggle dominated by the efforts of ethnic elites to create separate ethnic-based zones over which they can claim ownership of federal states and resources. This further shows that the mutual intelligibility of language has become a highly politicized and contested issue within ethnic federalism in Ethiopia. The ownership of lands by ethnic groups encourages Anywaa to claim ownership of their own state, even though they do not make up the majority. For Anywaa, being divided into two political zones lives in fear of ultimate extinction at the hands of the Nuer (Turton, 2006).

Kymlicka (2006) states that recognizing minority languages and their use in education was important in the multinational federalism in the West but as a gradual transition. In Ethiopia, this all happened very fast, meaning it is also expected that language, as a vital part of ethnic identity, will become a primary focus of political mobilization. Although, individuals do not easily fit into language and ethnic categories anymore. This is because the language and ethnicity in Ethiopia are very much politicized. Although Ethiopia is already a highly multi-lingual society, there is no need that linguistic diversity should necessarily undermine national unity (Turton, 2006).

It does not seem that one can proceed very far by focusing on institutional mechanisms in the constitution. It has a very soft center and lacks formal mechanisms influencing regional state governments and endorsing federal laws. The center has a high degree of control over every level of regional administration due to the centralized party structure by EPRDF since 1991. It clearly shows that those ethnic groups who still adhere to the principle of unified Ethiopianness are labeled xenophobes by viewing other groups as enemies (Tronvoll, 2009). These exclusive political narratives further intensified the dynamics of ethnic nationalism in the country. It has also been argued that EPRDF has succeeded in putting ethnic groups against each other through its policy of ethnicizing the country's politics (Assefa, 2006). No less importantly, the new dynamics in the country are more pervasive and far wider than before as millions of ordinary citizens mobilized for collective actions across class, religious and regional divides (Záhořík, 2014).

5.3 Civil identity and nationhood

In deeply divided societies, the interests, and demands of communal groups can be accommodated only by establishing power-sharing and constitutional needs of countries with deep ethnic cleavages. The role of ethnicity is significant in not-yet-democratic countries. Power-sharing denotes the participation of representatives of all significant communal groups in political decision-making, especially in education and culture. The process of modernization would lead to traditional institutions based upon communalism leading to liberal institutions characterized by individualism. The thought behind this was that conscious national government policies of political integration; cultural diversity would give way to more homogeneous national cultures. Although, in the context of Ethiopia, ethnicity seems to be more critical than ever, at the expense of the nation's identity (Keller, 2014). By focusing on the primordial ethnic identity and belonging, it is possible to argue that the reconfiguration of the Ethiopian state along the ethnic line is marked by the end of civic-nationalism ideology as it is not yet attempted or fulfilled (Záhořík, 2014).

Like western colonialism's ruthless borders across ethnicities, the Ethiopian empire did the same, both related to its former provinces and ethnic federalism. As a result, there are different ethnic groups in different ethnic states- the feared homogenization is still ongoing in some cases. Consequently, the state's legitimacy is impaired, and the civil identity is weakened. Identity and nation remain everchanging notions that rely on belonging with the essence of particularity. Nevertheless, identity is not always contextual. Identities are created in a society where social conditions create what binds us to a larger community. Ethiopian nationhood shows that concepts

and groupings are not a direct reflection of reality but an attempt to reproduce it. Ethiopian nationhood and national identity are and remain socially created and context dependent. The imagined community provides legitimacy when the state measures its citizens' national affiliation. Ethnicity and nationalism in Ethiopia continue to look backward. Perhaps it is the construction of the state that creates the problems. As the most widespread form of nationalism, ethnic nationalism should not necessarily be seen as a contrast to nationalism. In many contexts, and for some in Ethiopia's context, nationalism and ethnicity are the same with the same ideological approaches. Nationalism is thus a particular case of ethnicity-like groups with their own state. The problem in many places is that groups have become so conflated that it is challenging to categorize territory. Typically, ethnic groups do not necessarily have territory, which makes Ethiopia unique (Barth, 1969).

Creating cohesion in enormously large political entities goes back to political legitimacy. Nationalism is an ideology that is created because it is necessary. The nation is, therefore, a product of nationalism, not the other way around (Gellner, 1983). State and nationalism are built on contradictions between the state's rational universalist principles and the nation's emotionally controlled particularism. Although ethnicity is widespread, its importance of it socially varies greatly. Actors carry up notions of identity, which obscure interests related to politics and economics in cultural expressions. In Ethiopia, this has directly manifested itself in war and political games, which reinforce the various group ethnicities. Thus, it is not cultural differences that are why ethnic groups exist but how these are created (Eriksen, 2010).

Article 8 declares sovereignty inhabits on NNPs, referring to Stalin's definition. Although 'Nationalities' and 'nation' was to designate diverse groups of people, Messay (2006) claims that it further illustrates the Ethiopia Empire's failure surrounding Ethiopians of words, stating that the use of these concepts in the Ethiopian context is undigested and uncritical, setting the fundamentals for the 'nations' or 'ethnic groups' becoming a hegemonic political discourse in Ethiopia. Although, it is hard to know what definition fits the different ethnic groups and territories in the theoretical practice (Merera, 2006). Teshale (2008) suggests that the word 'beher' is more suitable in the Ethiopian reality. The concept of nation is required to be illustrated and understood within Ethiopia. Language signifies for many nations as a guide to understanding a community's worldview. Therefore, viewing this concept within the Ethiopian language will give the term meaning. Although, with over 80 different languages, I found the ancient Ethiopian Semitic language 'Ge'ez' the most suitable and think that the origin of the language's definition of 'ethnicity' and 'nation'

will provide a valuable perspective. 'Beher' in Ge'ez has been granted to develop the meaning of a nation in Ethiopia since the 1960s. Teshale (2008) defines the word 'beher' as 'place, region, and subdivisions in a region, as land, country, town, rural area, provincial administration within relatives and tribes, and people distinguished by language, state, administration, and law. For Teshale (2008), it shows regional, ethnic, and religious identity.

Stalin's publication of 'On the Question of Nationalities' provided a Stalinist understanding and conception of 'nation' as a historically evolved, stable community of language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a community of culture' (Merera, 2006) In this way, the Marxist meaning of 'nation' does not reflect on the Ethiopian realities of 'beher'. Still, the Marxist definition has further shaped the discourse of NNPs in Ethiopian politics. This was the fundament of the ESM-movement and is further stated in article 39. Here, the definition of nation in the Ethiopian context is viewed as the promordialist approach claiming the nation only to some members of a larger group (Hobsbawm, 2012). NNPs fail to be defined and distinguished. So why do we use different terms needed?

Specific social conditions affect the degree to which political organization takes place. Ethiopia, as a state, has dealt with ethnic diversity through assimilation, domination, oppression, and federal solutions. Likewise, minorities have three possible strategies, be assimilated, work for their rights in the federation, or independence. The question is whether the nation-state is the only framework for democratic rule. The nation-state remains the dominant arena for rights, participation, and democratic issues. This shows that the state must not be seen as a neutral apparatus, as the guidelines in Ethiopian history have demonstrably not necessarily been democratizing. Despite its history, Ethiopian key symbols, both culturally and politically and in the national anthem, are based on the country's diversity. The national anthem sings about the various entities that make up Ethiopia. Regarding cultural policy, everyone should receive equal recognition, respect, and development opportunities. CoE is based on federal consociationalism that would balance the small and larger ethnic groupings and unite a deeply divided society. The great goal is visible in CoE, namely maintaining constitutional recognition of diversity and promoting democracy by guaranteeing individual and group rights. More stability, participation, inclusion, and democracy are expected (Assefa, 2006). Both consociationalism and federalism enlarge opportunities for ethnic groups to achieve elected office, representation, and power in the political system and make power a good that is possible to share (Lijphart, 1977; Abbink, 2011).

Ethnicity is linked to power, and the politicization of it is linked to historical oppression when governments have adopted strategies primarily to improve their situation and thus emphasize their own identity. Even with the recognition of ethnic federalism, we still see ethnic minorities in ethnic states fighting for the same thing the territorial entities did before them. Although fewer and fewer are fighting the same battle, the injustice can feel greater to those involved. Historically always excluding some ethnic groups has thus also weakened national feelings. The lack of civil identity may be explained in Merera's (2006) perspectives as it is a typical disagreement in Ethiopia's state formation, creating division and doctrines such as 'settler vs. indigenous', 'colonizer vs. colonized' and 'oppressor vs. oppressed' challenging the nation-building. Although these distinctions are a more recent theme as it has to do with the dominance of the belief in homogenization, ethnicity and local identities belonged to the pre-modern, and identity related to the nation was part of modernization. Barth (1969) highlighted the importance of ethnicity by showing its prevalence. Barth did the opposite, bringing out the idea that modernity would not obliterate ethnicity and group action but rather become more central. Ethnicity is, therefore, closely linked to modernity, and the notion of group belonging will arise by being able to distinguish oneself from others. Thus, ethnicity is not a survival of history, but an awareness created by reinforcing one's identity with the modern.

It is difficult to see that such a system can mitigate the conflicts and not flare them up since ethnicity's situational and 'imagined' nature makes it a powerful and manipulative resource in the hands of ambitious political leaders (Assefa, 2006). This is related to the constructivist theory, showing ethnicity is used to gain political power and recourses, and therefore everchanging (Isajiw, 1992). The nation is a social-political community based on common territory, laws, and citizenship rights (Smith, 1991). The constitution remains contradictory as it is based on the primordialist approach but 're-maps' the country in contrast to the nationalist theory supporting primordialist views on ethnicity. However, Smith's (1991) six main attributes of ethnic communities are hard to accomplish in the landscape of ethnic federalism in Ethiopia. It is hard to give a collective proper name, common history and memories, common culture, and common association of their homeland in such a deeply divided country. Smith further argues that it is difficult for ethnic communities to become a nation-state without ethno-symbolic factors. This can further be linked to Esman's (1994) concept of an ethnic nation as a politicized ethnic community demanding their right to self-determination and political control over their homeland.

By focusing on differences than similarities, ethnic violence, and disintegration are continuous in the multi-ethnic state. This supplementary illustrates a constitution based on primordialist theory but with a constructivist practice that is a long way from the modernist theory claiming that history is irrelevant. Gellner claims that the nation-state is a made-up metaphorical kinship using cultural manipulation strategical, showing that many societies may not be a part of this modernization of the western definitions (Gellner, 1983). Ethiopia's boundaries are rooted in ethnic groups based on kinship but still reveal a form of imaginary family and society as it denies population mobilization. Trying to create a homogenous population based upon a coincidence between territory and culture.

The attempt to create a national identity has been unsuccessful in many places. Consequently, many multinational states search for mechanisms to peacefully bring together a diverse population under a democratic governing system (Clapham, 2006; Muriaas, 2011). This is essential for all forms of governance. Even though multinational states are universal, they have different social and historical roots within the constitution. Therefore, multinational federalism must be based on liberal democratic values, which Ethiopia lacks. Minority nationalism has been 'desecurized' in the conflict-infested HoA. Despite Ethiopia's nationalism in the Adwa victory, it is based on internal imperialism, which has further led to internal divisions because of discrimination. The lack of commitment to a strong democracy has further led to a competitive political system (Clapham, 2006). Ethiopia fails to find a common political vision. GoE failed to understand the cultural and historical complexities of ethnic policies in different regions, which relate to the 'national oppression thesis' (Merera, 2006). In other words, EPRDF defined the national question as a problem of the Amhara ruling class and ignored the competing interests. It fails to recognize the complexes of social and cultural life amongst local communities in the Ethiopian periphery, and to appreciate the multiple causes of conflict is entirely consistent with a general attitude towards these peoples in both governments.

Since ethnicity cannot be politicized unless an underlying core of memories, experience or meaning moves people to collective action, Esman (1994) claims that ethnic identity is usually located between primordial historical continuities and opportunistic instrumental adaptations. This explanation further distinguishes between 'ethnic community' and 'ethnic nation.' An ethnic community is a group of people unified by inherited culture, racial features, belief systems, or national sentiments. Esman further describes an 'ethnic nation' as a politicized ethnic community whose spokesmen demand control over what they define as their territorial homeland. Further, Esman argues that this includes a people that demands it actively exercise the right to self-

determination and political control within their homeland (Esman, 1994). These aspirations can eventually lead to ethnic conflict and the disintegration of multi-ethnic states. This approach is relevant to Ethiopia.

The constitutional endorsement of collective rights for minorities in Ethiopia has also led to controversy, where collective rights have endangered citizens' rights. Citizenship should confer legal rights in a modern state. Nevertheless, it is not always clear who are citizens in a poorly functioning democracy with artificial boundaries and a flow of people that complicates the problem. Thus, the rights in Ethiopia are not implemented in practice. This weakens national feelings and is related to nationalism.

Nation-formation is a long and arduous process that requires common cultural values such as history, language, and ethnicity. The efforts to make one's identity visible to distinguish oneself from others contribute to the goal of nationalism ideology (Gellner, 1983). The nation as a political community gives civic, equal rights. The nation-state helps to promote loyalty, solidarity, and belonging to the imagined community. Thus, the state becomes stable as it targets its national affiliation. With legitimacy, it becomes strong (Eriksen, 2010). It is essential to distinguish between state and nation. The state is an administrative apparatus with political bodies and sovereignty across its borders and is recognized by international organizations. A nation is an imagined community that identifies with a community based on cultural values such as language and identity. Thus, the national feeling is not always tied to a state. The nation is a product of nationalism (Eriksen, 2010). Although, as the CoE 1995 shows in article 39, it is hard to understand the distinction between the different terms, as the Marxist definitions of NNPs are used.

This chapter discusses challenges faced by the ethnic federal system entails a shortage of resources, controversial boundaries, and ethnic marginalization that contributes to violence and conflict. In this way, the ethnic federal states are a geographical, political, and ethnic divide. The nature of society has made it challenging to identify the nation. Consequently, the inhabitants have not developed a proper concept of the nation beyond sub-national identity. Ethnic groups denote a negative dimension to the political system and the democratic process. This increases alienation and exclusion in matters of rights and resources. The EPRDF-government represents ethnic minority groups, which negatively influence the population by favoring ethnic groups and political parties; Ethiopia's diversity is also excluded. Thus, the ethnic federal policy in Ethiopia is an important cause of conflict. Ethnicity is an integral part of all political activity (Abbink, 2011; Maru, 2017). This study has shown that Ethiopian multiculturalism has stemmed from the ethnic federalism

political system, and here the concepts of unity, division, difference, and allegiance will differ. The impact of multiculturalism in Ethiopia on inter-ethnic relationships includes the decline in social cohesion. Consequently, systematic discrimination and exclusion from national, regional, and local decision-making marginalize ethnic minorities, which increases tension and conflict (O’leary 2013).

Ethnic conflicts and cultural differences are essential issues shaping international politics. The study has shown how cultural affiliations and ethnic identity are strong factors shaping group relations, leading to the cruelty of human suffering and remaining threats to the international community. It is not an easy answer to why ethnic conflicts may occur, and the answer is not simplified by blaming ethnicity and ethnic identity itself. This further points to the direction of the politicizing of ethnicity, making it an ideological and leading politics of weak states bearing the legacy of colonialism. Despite that the ethnic federalism fell in December 2020, the change in politics has, in a way, worsened the fragmentation, dismantling national unity and ethnic conflicts, making it an ongoing civil war. Maybe Abiy’s thought of making the state neutral is a start, but his way of shaping the country is nothing but that. Prominent authors in this field did warn us. Still, we watch this from the outside, waiting for this to end. Peace seems far away if the so-called hope of Ethiopia, Abiy Ahmed, is leading the country.

One major problem within the study of nationalism in Ethiopia is using the same stereotypes as earlier European historiography and anthropology, creating the dichotomy between ‘us’ and ‘them’. To understand ethnic histories, it is necessary to understand the complexity and diversity of modern and contemporary history without preconceived notions and continuous stereotypes. This can further contribute to the politicization of history and relations between major groups in the country. The politicization of history and ethnicity and ethnic history can also be seen as a part of the underdevelopment political system of contemporary Ethiopia lacks civil society allowing politicized narratives without the ethnic lenses. The same debate as the role of ethnicity and ethnic narratives being simplified, the same debate over the colonial history of Ethiopia can be seen as a part of these issues by giving an advantage to only one of the studied issues. This is a limitation to my study, as I was going to explore this field as a focus area, but this is hard to do without including economic, social, religious, or political.

5.4 Comparison to other states in Western and Horn of Africa

Identity and conflict shape each other. Ethnic identity is intertwined with HoA’s politics. In most parts of Africa, people have been excluded by powerful currents of identity politics. Identities have

dominated group relations affecting both state and societal relations. The struggle, therefore, lies within the recourses of the state. History shows how dominant groups use their ethnic identity as an instrument of legitimation of their power and mobilize this identity for political purposes, leading to the exclusion of other ethnic groups' rights. Ethnic groups also overlap across the different states in HoA, like the Somali people being located in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia.

Legitimacy is based on identity. Identity acts as something binding between the individual and the system of government. A regime must have legitimacy, as it springs out to whom one feels belongs. No state can function for a long time without legitimacy. This is interlinked with nationalism as well by being the primary legitimacy of the modern state. This is generally the case in the Global North, where nationalism is often the essential marker of identity, which creates legitimacy. In cases such as several independent African states, where colonialism created unnatural boundaries and breaking up and merging of groups, we see that this contributes to weakening the state's functionality and legitimacy. This affects sociality and politics and takes on particular forms in Africa. Some ethnic groups or tribes were distributed over and across territories belonging to various states, like in West-Africa. Colonialism was not a good framework for introducing a new system that was to take root in the population, as it was an authority with little participation. This can give us an understanding of why there are many weak states in the Global South and why it can be said that there is little nationalism in these areas (Muriaas, 2011; Wimmer, 2002)

Should there be unique rights for people considering themselves as national minorities or indigenous people? A right to be different at the same time as the right to equal treatment and possibilities is the core of the multicultural debate. Kymlicka (2006) claims that this policy is riskier in African states than in Western ones. Ethiopia has adopted multinational federalism as its basic principle for its constitution but has often been considered 'surrounded' by enemies and is afraid of the extent to which the minorities will be loyal in the event of a potential war with its neighboring countries. This also confirms Brown's (2001) theory and interlinks to the terms 'bad neighborhood', 'bad neighbors', and 'bad leaders'. This can further explain the 'war agreement' between Eritrea and Ethiopia, which has Tigray as an element of uncertainty, and therefore, after many years of civil war and conflict, now united over having the same potential enemy.

However, Kymlicka (2006) does not focus on why Ethiopia stands out from other African states but on why other African countries have not followed suit or implemented the same policy. There is a contrast between the patterns of nation-building in the West and in Africa, which further shows that

Ethiopia is the exception that confirms the rule. African nation-building has often been based on colonial languages and an attempt at pan-ethnic national identity. Here Ethiopia also stands out, which was not formed by European colonialism, but by Western-like dominant group nation-building, from an ethnic-national group, the Shewan Amhara. Therefore, it is also not surprising that some Ethiopian minorities have reacted to this domination by wanting to achieve autonomy and even secession. It is also not surprising that multinational federalism has been used as an attempt to accommodate various sub-national identities within an Ethiopian national identity (Kymlicka, 2006).

It is difficult to see another way for the successful accommodation of ethnonational diversity in countries like Ethiopia, Sudan, and Nigeria. The two basic conditions that made multinational federalism possible in the West are missing, the ‘desecuritization’ of ethnic relations and the widespread Western consensus on liberal democratic states. Multinational federalism is not a result of democratic processes and politics but from the perspective of a power struggle. Kymlicka (2006) further sees this as a symptom of something more general, namely a mismatch between the growing demand for special status from ethnic minorities in multinational states worldwide, together with the possibility these states have of a peaceful way to accommodate these demands.

When African states became independent, there was no foundation for having democratic modern states. In large parts of Africa, the original political regimes were pulverized or destroyed with colonization. Although states tried to impose a democratic system, due to the history of the colonies and how territorial boundaries were created, the inhabitants lacked identity and loyalty connection to the state in many African countries and tribalism (Eriksen, 2010).

Borders between states were arbitrary and resulted from agreements between European states without consultations with Africans. The borders divided people who belonged to the same ethnic group or tribe. Rigid borders had consequences for trade, traffic, and communication that set obstacles to development through regional cooperation and unity. Thus ‘balkanising’ Africa, the boundaries bisected people, imposing different citizenships and educational, legal, and economic systems on the same ethnic, cultural, and linguistic groups.

In order to preserve the peace and unity of Africa, the OAU wanted to respect the borders and territorial integrity they inherited from colonial times. The imposition of boundaries and colonial administration constituted an intrusion into the historical evolution of the different peoples and polities (Ajayi, 1997). Any disintegration in Africa could inspire other emancipations or separatist movements (Záhořík, 2014).

The solution for most African countries was a 'one-party state', often ruled by a personal leader and split father figure. He could postpone conflict, which remained endemic as failure to democratize and promote legitimacy continued. Ethnic rivalries sometimes erupted into the civil war directly on the power transfer. In South-Sudan, the crisis became a civil war, as it rejected the idea of the federation in 1958. The renewal of civil war was then in 1992, as the government attempted to be taken. Ethnic factors influenced independence and the search for legitimacy in colonial policies. In Nigeria, the competition of various ethnic groups for control in the post-colonial state. In Somalia, the consequences of boundaries were disastrous. The Somali was divided between British, French, and Italian Somaliland, with some Somalis in Northern Kenya and the Ogaden region controlled by Ethiopia. The legacy of colonialism set the stage for the Somalis' unfulfilled ambitions. When the Ethiopian Revolution deposed the emperor, the Soviet Union became a necessary ally in eradicating the forces loyal to the emperor, and the USA allied with Somalia. The regimes in Ethiopia and Somalia became increasingly authoritarian and explosive, and the people became impoverished. The state system in both countries weakened and provoked further conflicts, and further interventions collapsed the Somali state completely. Ethiopia was forced to devolve power to provincial assemblies to recognize the independence of Eritrea, thus restoring the partition boundaries interfered with by decolonization (Muriaas, 2011; Záhorský, 2014).

Ethnic conflicts are likely to take the form of struggles for a share of state power at the central level rather than ethno-nationalists struggles for self-government and autonomy at a regional level. In this sense, forming the so-called 'ethnic federation' does not guarantee peace and prosperity as it depends on broader political and socio-economic aspects, including equal opportunities. Multicultural policies assume that minorities have a right to their own culture in the same way as the dominant group. In this sense, we face different terminologies, such as national minorities, ethnic minorities, and different minority groups (Kymlicka, 2006).

Ethnic groups' relationship in politics depends on the state's political structure. This is often divided by democracy vs. authoritarian regimes and factors such as the size and organization of ethnic minorities. In that way, ethnic groups will have different claims and use different ways to voice their demands. To further go into the political structure in Brown's approach, this section will involve ethnic federalism. In Africa, most countries have several hundred different ethnic groups. Most countries in Africa are colonial creations and federations of ethnic groups. Therefore, politics is often shown in ethnic lines.

Consequently, the ruling groups exclude other groups from sharing power (Merera, 2006). Even though Ethiopia has never been colonialized, Ethiopia has not avoided the consequences of colonialism. Ajayi (1997) claims that the ethnic relations of peoples across the boundaries are due to the colonial constructed borders. Ajayi further states that the so-called decolonization strengthened many colonial institutions. The influence of the colonial area has characterized the African state, explaining the 'chronic instability' and 'state of permanent crisis'. Few states existed before the partitioning, but Ethiopia was one of them, but the division of arbitrary states created borders between them. This further affected ethnic groups, peoples, and political entities. The states were created for current control, not to remain nation-states in the long run. The modernization of the nation-states was conflict-ridden and largely unsuccessful. The conflicts can be classified into those arising from disputes over borders and those from competition and rivalry of ethnic groups in the context of power. These can be traced to issues of boundaries or ethnicities (Ajayi, 1997). Muriaas (2011) claims that multi-ethnic African countries have developed different strategies to deal with this diversity and equal rights of all minorities. During the period of colonialism, African states had to reconsider ethnic identity. This was undertaken to prevent other conflicts from spreading and to create a society based on justice and functionality. Colonial African states left a legacy that new countries with the newly created government had to rebuild. In many countries, parts of the population were favored while others were marginalized. Ethnic cleansing, genocide, discrimination, and economic marginalization were used as 'legitimate' instruments of political struggle. Ethnic tensions in many African countries are usually solved through the formation of federal states or autonomy, where ethnic groups can be self-governed (Muriaas, 2011).

Huntington (1996) argues that multiculturalism rejects the shared values and aspects among diverse people. The discourse focuses more on 'differences' than diversity (West, 2005). The conflicts, expulsions, and competition within many African states are, therefore, a state internal negotiation process between many nations.

In most African states, the population comprises several small ethnic groupings where the majority perhaps make up approx. 30% of the total population. Therefore, few states demand self-government, seen in the light of how many ethnic minorities exist (Kymlicka, 2006). This is also shown in the Ethiopian context. The goal of determination and political power has dominated politics for the last 70 years. In this way, nationalism seems to be the preferred ideology of ethnic nationalists to establish their own state or gain political power.

Ethnicity is often understood as politics of identity and a present factor in African politics camouflaged by access to resources and positions. Most of the conflicts in Africa are not about independence but about elite groups' fear of being excluded from the national apparatus of power. Therefore, the various ethnic groups must agree on a constitution that can have a unifying effect on the entire population. There are many examples of such constitutions failing and ending in genocide. For instance, the distinctions between the majority and minority in Rwanda divided the society further between Hutu and Tutsi. After the genocide in Rwanda, the government tried to reconcile its state by emphasizing 'national unity' to limit political pluralism precisely. Like many other countries in Africa, parties based on ethnicity or religion are banned. In Rwanda, this has been used instrumentally to eliminate parties that might challenge the current party. Rwanda cannot, therefore, be considered a democratic state, as the fear of history repeating itself inhibits the establishment of freedom of expression and political diversity (Muriaas, 2011). Here, Ethiopia stands out.

The other central perspective, constructivism, claims that ethnic groups are not natural but constructed and in constant development (Muriaas, 2011). This becomes clear with the example of Somalia, where Greater Somalia wanted to unite the nation after colonialism. Somalia's nationhood was therefore deconstructed, leading to division rather than unification as an aspect of their identity (Clapham, 2006). The idea of ethnic belonging arose in the meeting between local African leaders on the one hand and the colonial masters on the other. The firm anchoring of ethnic identity is explained by the fact that those in power saw it as appropriate and a way of organizing the population. Therefore, ethnic conflicts are interpreted in this perspective as an ongoing power struggle. By cultivating the differences, political leaders have become leaders to secure a position within their ethnic group (Muriaas, 2011). Ethiopia was an important pawn for the colonial powers in Somalia, which resulted in Ethiopia receiving Somaliland as a gift in 1987 from the British colonial powers. Britain wanted the Somali population to retain its independence, but Menelik claimed sovereignty over the area. This conflict, therefore, also goes back to the 1960s, when Somalia finally gained its independence and had the ambition to unite Greater Somalia. The unrest since the 1960s led to the Ogaden war from 1977-1978 with the desire to regain the Somali region. Greater Somalia's consequences have further led to Somalia today being divided into four different parts according to which western colonial state they were colonized by. Puntland and Somaliland have claimed themselves as independent states since 1991 and 1998 but stand to this day without international recognition as unilateral states (Muriaas, 2011).

Both theories indicate that historical events have led to group differences in the population. The absence of a national identity makes it difficult for the citizens to join the existing legislation. Not

many new states have gained international recognition since Eritrea in 1991. Puntland, independence in 1998, and Somaliland in 1991. Only Wales has recognized Somaliland as a sovereign state. Otherwise, it is South-Sudan in 2011 (Muriaas, 2011; Záhorský, 2014). Previously, Tigray and Eritrea used to have Ethiopia as a common enemy. Internationally, we have seen the peace agreement as just that, but it is time we saw it as a war agreement. Because of Eritrea's independence, Tigray is no longer an allied pawn but a threat to Eritrea. People got forced to change ethnicity to get access to resources and power. This can also be linked to the assimilation politics within European states.

5.5 Ethiopia's development

Ethiopia's federalism must recognize its power limitations. There are greater differences than similarities among the governed. Federalism must develop political formulas since the power of all involved is limited, and that compromise between the actors is necessary to arrive at a solution. It is, therefore, crucial for Ethiopia's future as a multinational state.

The neighborhood in HoA was characterized by imperialism's awareness of ethnicity, which weakened a defined community in the African population. The division of society based on ethnicity is linked to resources, positions, and power. Ethnicity thus became politically significant, and ethnic coalitions were used to obtain resources in a patron-client relationship (Muriaas, 2011).

Ethiopia's unrest and conflicts are often simplified by blaming ethnicity and ethnic federalism. Few studies delve into the historical roots and development and forget to define ethnicity as something more than just cultural differences. Much literature and research postulate that ethnicity is used to gain access to power and resources and abuse them. The constructivist perspective on ethnicity is, therefore, historically relevant. It would be an oversimplification to say that borders and human development are static, as Ethiopia's historical development has helped shape the borders and groupings but also changed them. Both models have failed because the basic state apparatus does not work, and the population does not have confidence in it (Záhorský, 2014).

The border war with Eritrea aroused multi-faced Ethiopian nationalism, further fragmenting the country. The EPRDF, which had played down the notion of Ethiopian nationalism in favor of ethnic federalism in the years prior to the border conflict, resorted to nationalistic rhetoric to rally support in the war against the common enemy, Eritrea, in 1998-2000. Still, EPRDF was viewed as an

enemy by many Ethiopians capturing the state power. However, this was secondary compared to Eritrea's threat (Tronvoll, 2009).

The 'national question' that remained even after the fall of the Derg-regime received an answer through the ethnic federalism system. However, the ironic law of ethnicity has further radicalized ethno-nationalist movements in the country. However, the idea of the nation and nationalism in multi-ethnic states still provokes debates. Particularly, the feasibility of Gellner assumption of the nation as a congruence between state and nation in a multi-ethnic state is hardly possible. Hence, it deserves further engagement based on the existing realities. Ultimately, the conflict is about central politicians' fear of being excluded from the national apparatus of power. To understand the conflict today, we must understand the historical conflicts of interest between the people groups.

Ethiopia's history is complicated and complex and due to its populous, diverse population, has different representations of its history. Therefore, this is a study that will be perceived as very simplified. However, the aim is also to bring out how complex Ethiopia is today and that simplifications - even rightly so to understand a complex theoretical field- are necessary for my own limitation.

The colonial power's policy towards the local African population led to ethnic awareness and made African states multipolar. As a result, the one-party state was introduced to create social cohesion linked to a complex population pattern. The fear of being excluded is perhaps the greatest basis for understanding ethnic conflicts in Africa (Muriaas, 2011). A distinction between democratization and liberalization becomes important in discussing Ethiopia's state-building. The election results have long been associated with the ruling party exploiting state resources and ethnic differences by undermining press freedom and exercising physical violence against political opponents and their supporters. Despite Abiy's promise to hold Ethiopia's first democratic elections, it was no different this time either. Ethiopia needs a clear separation between state and party and Ethiopia's hegemonic control from the center. It needs to be replaced by genuine political pluralism. The problem lies in that it is not sufficiently federal, not that it is too ethnic (Turton, 2006).

As the ethnopolitical situation has become tenser and tenser, it has developed into an ongoing civil war involving issues such as political freedom, bad governance, and unaccountability. Ethiopian federalism needs to accommodate people's needs and demands. In the future, it further depends on its political stability and the state's relation to Amhara, Tigray, and Oromo (Merera, 2006). As s one of the underlying factors of state formation, ethnonationalism impacts democratization, peace, and development in highly divided societies. Consequently, this has received the attention of scholars.

Governing highly divided societies remain a difficult task. This is shown in the disintegration of several countries into smaller pieces. Ethiopia is among the highly divided societies where ethnonationalism is challenging territorial integrity and the state's existence. Due to failed nation-building at the local level, ethnic diversity threatens the Ethiopian state's national unity and territorial integrity due to ethnic federalism. This centralization and assimilation have suppressed group rights, inequality, and marginalization within the multination-state. The adoption of ethnic federalism did not solve the problem but deepened it as it decentralized marginalization and exclusion to the region. This has further continued suppression, ethnic marginalization, and identity-based killings. The violent ethnic conflicts threaten to tear the country apart (Abbink, 2011).

In Africa, the colonial presence became a significant factor that different groups tried to exploit in their historical rivalries, competitions, hostilities, and alliances. This further favored and injured the interests of others. Control was the watchword of colonial administration. Colonial powers further sought friendly states and signed treaties with them. By installing colonial administrations, colonial powers had allies and enemies who continued to fight against them. The differential impact stimulated rivalry and competition in seeking favors and access to the privileges of colonial rule. Colonial regimes are classified according to the tribe. Colonialism may have significantly promoted ethnic consciousness and redefined their ethnicity (Muriaas, 2011). Colonialism changed the historical relations between the different peoples inhabiting the new nation-states. As national movements wanted to end colonial rule, the ethnic factor loomed. The 'national' parties were usually an alliance of the educated elite of various ethnic groups. The so-called independence from the colonial power as subordination to rival African groups continued to marginalize and neglect. Colonial borders and conflict over resources have further trans-bordered the ethnic factor as crucial in the role of front-line states in the liberation of African countries (Merera, 2006; Muriaas, 2011).

Ethnic federalism is trying to be a consociational federal state. The territorial organization based on ethnicity is not necessarily ethnically related to the state. In this way, some ethnic minorities within the state have no or few political rights. The EPRDF's dominant party system makes regional states less autonomous (Lijphart, 1977). It may seem that the central board consists of strategic pieces more than representatives of its society. O'Leary (2013) claims that consociational democracy is a significant force across communities where each segment is represented in government with

multiple levels of support. There is also a lack of acceptance for the country's diverse nature in some parts. The EPRDF's exclusion of other ethnic minorities has also created ethnic tension in the country challenging national consensus and integration.

6.0 Conclusion

The relevance of ethnicity and nationalism in Ethiopia is rooted with the history of state formation. The reforms to the foundation of the Ethiopian state acted to protect from becoming a colony but could not shield the nation from the foreign influence of colonial powers. The historical social exclusion has further led to segregation consisting of class formation and ethnic divisions. Many ethnic groups in Ethiopia were associated with oppression, which in turn created distrust and tensions between the ethnic groups. In this sense, ethno-nationalism becomes counterforces against the incumbent central power. Paradoxically, ethnic federalism becomes a threat to the center.

In Ethiopia's patchwork of ethnic minorities, there is little degree of common nationalism. Sharing culture, history, and nationality in a multicultural society is challenging, where a stronger distinction is created between 'us' and 'them'. The unfulfilled ethnic federalism threatens a united Ethiopia when the demand for secession becomes stronger than the belief in a well-functioning federal state construction.

The absence of trust between the parties has contributed to ethno-nationalism becoming a divisive force in the efforts to hold the 'Ethiopianness'-project together. The core of the war seems to be disagreement of what Ethiopia is and should be, as a present factor throughout the history, and an underlying cause of war. Internal contradictions continue to dominate the policy. The question of how Ethiopia should reconstruct to create peace remains (Tronvoll, 2021). The ongoing civil war is a bloody example of what happens when attempts to secede from the central power by military means.

A multicultural state as Ethiopia needs a central power with inclusion and a distribution regime of benefits and burdens that creates trust and predictability, which can move Ethiopia forward economically and politically. Regional conflicts are tearing up such a development. 'The prison house of nations' becomes again visible when the EPRDF puts over 100 of ethnic groups into one nation, even though each ethnic group is their own distinct cultural identities including language. Ethnic minorities must have rights that lead to cultural survival. At the same time, cultural practices cannot be at the expense of the individual's fundamental rights. In this thesis, Ethiopia illustrates the core of the multicultural dilemma. This presupposes that the various cultural traditions remain as cultural traditions perpetuated as individual cultures as distinctive species. In this way, borders

must be crossed, and paradoxically, exist. Ethnic groups are already manifested as a nation-state. Put differently, almost all major ethnic groups are aspiring to either to declare their autonomy under the federal government or secessions.

Since the Ethiopians have a different vision of the future of Ethiopia based on the belonging of their ethnic group, is understandable that the division of present-day Ethiopia is an attempt to bring together an otherwise fragmented and divided population. Although, it can be questioned and discussed whether this has been the solution to this conflict. By seeing the development within the country, it is hard to say that this has been a unifying and a solution of peace. With that being mentioned, it is hard to bring other solutions. The increase of ethnic turbulence makes it difficult for political change to take place in a peaceful and democratic way. From a Western perspective, where identity is linked to individual rights created through socialization processes, the problem can appear to be the maintenance of democratic institutions, political pluralism, and respect for democratic values.

Multicultural societies are not a source of conflict itself, but the ethnic federation's segregation of people in relation to national belonging, has rose problems through a constructed reality where differences are pointed out and given great importance. The new conflicts are between groups within a state or region kept alive by national, ethnic, and religious contradictions. The approaches will create problems, either as cultural standardization or increased fragmentation. To build peace, it is important to work to demolish walls that separate the ethnic groups. Identity aspects can provide a new narrative. The development of national self-understanding and collective suffering becomes the interest of the nation. The processes have created the modern nation-state as a political entity and ideology.

7.0 References

- Abbink, J. (2011). Ethnic-based federalism and ethnicity in Ethiopia: reassessing the experiment after 20 years. *Journal of Eastern African Studies*.
- Ajayi, J. F. A. (1997). The legacy of Colonialism in Post-Colonial Conflicts in Africa. In K. S. Voden, D. (Ed.), *Causes of Conflict in the Third World*. North/South Coalition & Prio.
- Amnesty. (2020, 12. november 2020). Ethiopia: Investigation reveals evidence that scores of civilians were killed in massacre in Tigray state.
<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/11/ethiopia-investigation-reveals-evidence-that-scores-of-civilians-were-killed-in-massacre-in-tigray-state/>
- Anderson, B. (1983). *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Verso Books.
- Assefa, F. (2006). Theory versus Practice in the Implementation of Ethiopia's Ethnic Federalism. In *Ethnic Federalism: The Ethiopian Experience in Comparative Perspective* University Press.
- Barth, F. (1969). Introduction. In *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference* (pp. 9–38). Little, Brown and Co.
- Bellamy, A. J. (2003). *The Formation of Croatian National Identity: A Centuries-Old Dream?* Manchester University Press.
- Brown, M. E. (2001). *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict*. MIT Press.
- Bryman, A. (2016). *Social Research Methods* (4th ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Cashmore, E. (2003). Ethnicity. In *Encyclopedia of Race and Ethnic Studies*. Routledge.
<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203380703>
- Clapham, C. (2006). Afterword. In D. Turton (Ed.), *Ethnic Federalism: The Ethiopian Experience in Comparative Perspective*. University Press.
- Connor, W. (1994). *Ethnonationalism: The Quest of Understanding* Princeton University.

- Cornell, S. H., Douglas. (2007). *Ethnicity and Race: Making Identities a Changing World*. Pine Forge Press.
- Dale, A., et al. (1998). A Sociological Perspective on Secondary Analysis. In *Doing Secondary Analysis*. Allend and Unwin.
- Dias, A. M. (2013). *State and Societal Challenges in the Horn of Africa*. CEA-IUL.
- Eller, J. D. (1997). Ethnicity, Culture, and "The Past". In *From culture to ethnicity to conflict : an anthropological perspective on international ethnic conflict* University of Michigan Press,.
- Faleg, G. (2019). Resetting Ethiopia – Will the state heal or fail? *European Union Institute for Security Studies*. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep21117>
- Fedorowicz, H. (1997). The Multicultural Society in Central Europe: Towards a Communication Strategy. In *Cultural democracy and ethnic pluralism: Multicultural and multilingual policies in education*. Peter Lang Publishing.
- Frödin, O. (2003). *Anthony D. Smith revisited in light of the relational turn*
- Gellner, E. (1983). *Nations and Nationalism*. Cornell University Press.
- Habtemichael, A. (2019). Kan Etiopia bygge et velfungerende demokrati basert på etnisk føderalisme? *Afrika.no*.
- Hastings, A. (1997). *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism*. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511612107>
- Horowitz, D. L. (1985). *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*. University of California Press.
- Huntington, S. P. (1996). *Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. Simon & Schuster.
- IOM. (2020). Ethiopian Crisis Response Platform *IOM – UN Migration – Global Crisis Respons Platform*
- Isajiw, W. W. (1992). Definition and Dimensions of Ethnicity: A Theoretical Framework. In *Joint Canada–United States Conference on the Measurement of Ethnicity: Challenges of*

Measuring an Ethnic World: Science, politics and reality. U.S. Government Printing Office. <http://hdl.handle.net/1807/68>

Jackson, R. (2002). Violent Internal Conflict and the African State. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 20, 29–52.

Jenkins, R. (2001). *Ethnicity: Anthropological Aspects*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-08-097086-8.12062-8>

Joireman, S. (2003). *Nationalism and Political Identity*. Continuum International Publishing Group Ltd.

Keller, E. (2014). Federalism, Citizenship and National Identity in Ethiopia. *The International Journal of African Studies*, 6(37–69).

Kymlicka, W. (2006). Emerging Western Models for Multination Federalism: Are They Relevant For Africa? In D. Turton (Ed.), *Ethnic Federalism: The Ethiopian Experience in Comparative Perspective* University Press.

Lijphart, A. (1977). *Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration*.

Malesevic, S. (2004). *The Sociology of Ethnicity*. Sage Publications.

Maru, M. T. (2017). Causes, Dynamics, and Consequences of Internal Displacement in Ethiopia.

Merera, G. (2006). Contradictory Interpretations of Ethiopian History: A Need for a New Consensus. In D. Turton (Ed.), *Ethnic Federalism: The Ethiopian Experience in Comparative Perspective* Addis Ababa University Press.

Muriaas, R. (2011). *Afrikanske utfordringer: En innføring i afrikansk politikk*. Høyskoleforlaget AS.

NRC. (2021). *The world's most neglected displacement crises in 2020*. <https://www.nrc.no/shorthand/fr/the-worlds-most-neglected-displacement-crisis-in-2020/index.html>

O'leary, B. M., Joanne. (2013). *Power Sharing in Deeply Divided Places*. University of Pennsylvania Press.

- Onwudiwe, E. (2001). A Critique of Recent Writings on Ethnicity and Nationalism. In *Research in African Literatures* (Vol. 32, pp. 213–228). Indiana University Press.
- Ramet, S. P. (1997). *Whose Democracy? Nationalism, Religion, and the Doctrine of Collective Rights in Post–1989 Eastern Europe*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Rolandsen, Ø. H. (2015). Another civil war in South Sudan: the failure of Guerrilla Government? *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 9:1, 163–174.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/17531055.2014.993210>
- Smith, A. D. (1991). *National Identity*. Penguin.
- Tilly, C. (1975). *Reflections on the history of European state–making*. In Tilly, C. (Ed). *The formation of national states in Western Europe*.
- Tronvoll, K. (2021, 12. 11. 21). Hva skjer med verden? In *Hva skjer med Etiopia? Med Kjetil Tronvoll*.
- Turton, D. (2006). Introduction. In D. Turton (Ed.), *Ethnic Federalism: The Ethiopian Experience in Comparative Perspective*. University Press.
- Van den Berghe, P. L. (1981). *The Ethnic Phenomenon*. ABC–CLIO.
- Wacker, E. (2019). *Refugees and Forced Migrants in Africa and the EU – Comparative and Multidisciplinary Perspectives and Challenges and Solutions*. Springer VS.
- West, P. (2005). *The Poverty of Multiculturalism*. Civitas.
- Wimmer, A. (2002). Who owns the state?
 Ethnic conflicts after the end of empires. In *Nationalist exclusion and ethnic conflict : shadows of modernity*. Cambridge University Press.
- Yusuf, S. (2019). What is driving Ethiopia’s ethnic conflicts? *Institute for Security Studies, East Africa Report 28*.
- Záhořík, J. (2014). Colonial Perspective and Nationalism(s) in Ethiopia in the Context of African Decolonization. *West Bohemian Historical Review*, 4(1), 149–174.

Aalen, L. (2002). Ethnic federalism in a dominant party state: The Ethiopian experience 1991–2000.