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THE AMHARA NATIONALISM AND ITS IMPLICATION FOR NATIONAL UNITY OF ETHIOPIA

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BAHIR DAR UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE

**DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCES AND INTERNATIONAL
STUDIES**

**THE AMHARA NATIONALISM AND ITS IMPLICATION FOR
NATIONAL UNITY OF ETHIOPIA**

BY

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JUNE 2022

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The Amhara Nationalism and its Implication for National Unity of Ethiopia

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**Submitted for the partial fulfillment Degree of Master of Arts in political
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Advisor

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis entitled, *The Amhara Nationalism and its Implication for National Unity of Ethiopia* is my original work and has not been presented for a degree or any other purpose in any University/Institution and all the sources used for the thesis have been dully acknowledged.

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This thesis was submitted for examination with my approval as an advisor of the candidate.

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Tadesse Aklog (PhD)

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Acronym

ASA-Amhara Student Association

AMA-Amhara Medical Association

AYA-Amhara Youth Associatio

APPO-All Amhara People Organization

NAMA-National Movement of Amhara

AMDF-Amhara Democratic Movement Force

TPLF-Tigrai People Liberation Front

OLF-Oromo Liberation Front

ONLF-Ogden Liberation Front

EPLF-Eritrean People Liberation Front

EPRDF-Ethiopian People Revolutionary Democratic Front

AEUO-All Ethiopia Unity Organization or

AEUP-All Ethiopia Unity Party

Abstract

Although there were ethnic nationalism and ethnic based political organizations since 1970s, the introduction of ethnic federalism and the coming power of TPLF/EPRDF in the post 1991 opened a wider space for ethnic nationalism in Ethiopia. Many of ethnic based national groups competing in the current Ethiopian politics. Therefore the main objective of this study was the nature of Amhara nationalism challenges, causes and its implications for national unity of Ethiopia. Amhara nationalism has various implications for the current and future political discourse of Ethiopia in general and to people of Amhara in particular. Thus, the aim of this research was to identify and explore the causes, main challenges and its implications for national unity of Ethiopia. To achieve the main objective the study employed a qualitative research approach with exploratory and descriptive case study research design through dealing with highly relied on primary sources of data; however secondary sources of data were also used. The tools used to collect data were in-depth interviews and FGD. Purposive sampling techniques, a type of non-probability sampling was also used to select the participants for in-depth and FGD. The data obtained from both primary and secondary sources were analyzed through the use of thematic analysis. The finding of the study revealed that, structural oppression, Anti-Amhara narratives, existential threat and socio-economic marginalization were major causes for the formation of Amhara nationalism. More over the finding of the study revealed that, Amhara nationalism in its very existence has been a centrist ad it is as a centripetal force for national unity but political alienation and massive attack might led to centrifugal force for national integrity of Ethiopia. On the other hand problems residing from within and without are the challenges of Amhara nationalism. The major conclusion drawn from the findings of the study reveals that, the Amhara nationalism is a political ideology which established in response to holistic attacks of people of Amhara in the Ethiopia political arena. Currently, an emerging Amhara nationalism is a phenomenon and a determinant force in the national politics of the country. Finally, the researcher recommended that, the existing regime should be treated Amhara nationalism fairly and properly. Even though Amhara nationalism is a centrist, due to century old accumulated grievances, it might tend from a maker to a breaker of a state.

Key words: Nationalism, Ethnicity, Ethnic nationalism, National Unity, Amhara Nationalism

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

The concept of nation and nationalism as a political phenomenon has started to appear in the world politics following French revolution (Heywood, 2007). Since then, nationalism continued to be the most notable characteristics of international politics (Özkirimli, 2000). Even today, nation and nationalism are shaping contemporary world politics (Ichijo and Uzelac, 2005), because the twentieth century is unlikely to see nationalism fade away (Tamir, 1993). Nationalism would take different forms in different eras and countries. Hence, it can be violent and destructive, tolerant and constructive, and civic and ethnic nationalism. In its violent form, nationalism leads to ethnic cleansing, xenophobia and racism, to mention few consequences. Several empires had failed between 1890s and 1940s due to nationalism, and numerous new states came into existence (Upreti, 2006). Moreover, the two world wars were associated with the experiences of fascism and Nazism in Italy and Germany respectively. During the cold war period, nationalism had revived as a significant force of mobilization in many European countries (Gerrits, 2016). Even at the age of globalization, radical political nationalism threatens state survival and it is a shock to many countries including European Union. The disintegration of former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia (Alem, 2005), Basques separatism in Spain, the Quebec question in Canada and the issues of Walloon in Belgium are evidences that attest the durability of nationalism (Kellas, 1998).

In Africa nationalism is not as old as that of western political nationalism (Curtin, 1966; Lonsdale, 1968). African nationalisms had developed during the colonial era (Kiwanuka, 1970) as a resistance force against European colonial scramble. The ultimate aim of the then nationalism was to overthrow alien rule and influence with major ideological motive of seeking the right to self-determination and national independence. Rooted from divide-rule policy and arbitrary ethnic boundary of colonial rule (Thomson, 2010), state nationalism is degenerated into ethnic and religious nationalism in various African countries. Due to historical, linguistic and territorial heritages of European colonialism, ethno-nationalism has surfaced indifferent parts of Africa (Záhořík, 2014). The secession of Eritrea and South Sudan, the failed status of Somalia and Rwandan genocide are some vivid examples of ethnic nationalism triggered by the legacy of colonialism.

State nationalism is introduced in modern Ethiopia during Tewodros II (Andargachew, 1993). When he projected united Ethiopia. The invasion of Egypt, Sudan and Italy (Levine, 2011) had used as a factor of social mobilization for state nationalism during emperor Yohannes IV and Menelik II. For instance, the battle of Adwa provoked strong sense of state nationalism (Ethiopianism) not only in Ethiopia but also in Africa. The second invasion of Italy (1936-1941) also promoted Pan-Ethiopianism considerably. However, ethnic nationalism got momentum in 1960s when students entertained the issue of nationalities under the banner of national questions (Bahru, 2014). The failure of Emperor Haile Selase and Dergue to answer national questions paved venue for the proliferation of ethno-national movements in a large scale (Young, 1998). As a result, in 1960s and 1970s ethnic nationalism gained greater significance at the expense of state nationalism. Eritrean People Liberation Front (EPLF), Tigray People Liberation Front (TPLF), Oromo National Liberation (OLF) and Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) were among the major ethno-national movements advocating ethnic nationalism with the motive of independence and self-determination, which threatened the survival of the state. Remarkably, the official commencement of ethnic federalism in 1991 undermined Pan-Ethiopianism and gave legal basis for the entrenchment of ethnic nationalism (Abbink, 2006). However, Ethio-Eritrea (1998-2000) war and 2005 national election were some dramatic shifts to Pan-Ethiopianism (Bach, 2014) in contrary to the political philosophy of ethnic nationalism.

Many ethnic groups started ethnic nationalism particularly since 1960s. Eritrea, Oromo and Tigray are at the forefront of ethnic based nationalism led by EPLF, OLF and TPLF respectively. Despite such facts, Amhara remained Pan-Ethiopian with neither ethnic based political party nor movement. Remarkably, Amhara rulers had considered themselves as Ethiopia with no ethnic inclination to any ethnic group (Tegegne, 1998). However, in the post-1991 period, following the mass displacement and killing of Amharas in different parts of the country. All Amhara People's Organization (AAPO) who was founded by Asrat Woldyes as a remedy for the threat posed against Amhara. Even though AAPO was Pan-Ethiopianists party strongly demanded the unity of Ethiopia (Joireman, 1997), it served as breakthrough for Amhara nationalism. However, after the death of Asrat-a prominent political figure, AAPO changed into All Ethiopian Unity Organization (AEUO) and Amhara nationalism retreated to Ethiopianism. Nevertheless, since the year 2016, Amhara nationalism has been starting to be entertained by the people of Amhara significantly. Since then, in many occasions, the feeling of Amhara nationalism is increasing

dramatically. Moreover, ethnic based parties and organizations like National Movement of Amhara (NAMA), Amhara Democratic Movement Force (ADMF), Amhara Students Association (ASA) and Amhara Youth Associations (AYAs) are establishing to supplement the cause of Amhara nationalism. Therefore, exhaustive investigation of the causes of Amhara nationalism and its implication for national unity is imperative. This thesis, thus, intends to explore the nature of Amhara nationalism and its implication to national unity.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Nationalism is a double bladed phenomenon. It has both destructive and constructive effect. It the emergence of radical political nationalism becomes the source of shock and embarrassment in many countries (Gerrits, 2016; Özkirimli, 2010). Besides, despite the widespread assumption that nationalism is over and the age is the threshold of post-nationalism era, nationalism is still the potent force (Tamir, 1993). The rise of Fascism and Nazism, the outbreak of the two world wars and their atrocities revealed the destructive potential of nationalism (Gerrits, 2016). Still, at the end of Cold War, ethnic nationalism has been increasingly politicized (Keller, 1995). Radical nationalisms posed the risk of disintegration and secession in many countries even in the post-cold war period. Especially, ethnically inspired nationalisms are threat to national survival and regional stability. Fuelled by the legacy of colonialism, in the post independent Africa, ethnic nationalism appeared to be the source of political instability, tension and unrest (Abbink, 1997). Hence, ethnic nationalisms become the source of ethnic antagonism and polarization. The Rwandan genocide (Straus, 2012), disintegration of Soviet Union and Yugoslavia (Aklilu, 2006), Darfur crisis in Sudan (Straus, 2006, 2012), the secession of south Sudan and Eritrea, the failed status of Somalia all attributed to the emergence of ethnic nationalism gives rise to state formation and regionalism (Gerrits, 2016; Zimmer, 2003). Furthermore, nationalism brings regional integration and economic interdependence via globalization. It is also the way to self-determination and independence from alien rule and oppressive systems (Assefa, 1999). On the other hand, nationalism can be an irrational and reactionary creed that invites military expansion, war and racist attitude (Heywood, 2007). Radical nationalism may degenerate into collective aggressiveness, belligerence and pathological behavior of ethnic cleansing, murder and genocide (Karolewski and Suszycki, 2011). In its extreme form, ethnic nationalism belongs to the same group of sinister political concepts like totalitarianism, fascism, racism and chauvinism. Even

worse, globalization failed to harmonize social identities nationalism has created (Semir, 2009). In the age of globalization, ethnic nationalism becomes the point of divergence and exclusive political hot spot. Therefore, nationalism is the maker and breaker of state, an agent of peace and progress as well as a cause to horrendous bloodshed, destabilization and destruction.

Ethiopia has encountered by various ethno-national movements since 1960s. After the collapse of the military (Dergue) regime in 1991, ethno-national movements assumed state power. Following the official launching of ethnic federalism, ethnicity and ethnic nationalism gained great importance throughout the country (Belachew, 2009; Záhořík, 2011). Regardless of the theoretical rationale of federalization, Pan-Ethiopianism has been deemphasized and focus shifted into ethnic nationalism under the guise of ethnic politics. Oromo nationalism and Tigray nationalism, to mention a few, continued to be the factor of social mobilization and political organization. Since ethnic identity becomes the basis of Ethiopian politics (Abbink, 2009; Asnake, 2010; Merera, 2004), ethnic groups disregard the notion of Ethiopianism and focus on promoting their own exclusive [ethnic] nationalism (Getachew, 2019). In spite of the fashion of ethnic nationalism, Amhara, the most Pan-Ethiopianist ethnic group has remained Pan-Ethiopian with less ethnic inclination until recently. Nevertheless, since 2016 Amhara nationalism started to be reverberated rapidly. Ethnic based political parties and organizations like, National Movement of Amhara (NAMA), Amhara Democratic Movement Force (ADMF), Amhara Students Association (ASA), Amhara Youth Association (AYA), Amhara Medical Association (AMA), and others came into being to supplement Amhara nationalism. Moreover, books are written, and Amhara nationalism is entertained in the social and broadcast media at different stages in different occasions loudly. Notwithstanding such facts, experiences show that the proliferation of identity-based nationalism becomes the source of clash, violence and polarization between/among ethnic groups. Therefore, the rise and multiplication of ethnic based nationalism might push the state to the edge of dismemberment.

Different scholars have conducted studies at different times on nationalism. Peristian(2008) studied the emergence of Cypriot nationalism in Greece and its relation with nation, state and national identities. Leith (2006) studied Scottish nationalism in the politics of United Kingdom. Likewise, Saylan (2011) comparatively analyzed Scottish, Basques and Kurdish nationalism and

the implication on European integration. Ökem (2006) too studied Kurdish ethno-nationalism in Turkey.

In the Ethiopian context, Assefa (1993, 1995) examined the emergence of Oromo nationalism, Ethiopian reactionary to it and its implications on Ethiopian politics. Mesfine (1990) elaborated Eritrean nationalism and the motives for independence. Moreover, Tewodros (2013) has studied the history of Ethiopian nationalism in a historical periodization (1941-2012). However, many of the studies on nationalism gave more emphasis for state nationalism despite the growing ethnic nationalism and its potential to crisis. Being political hot spots, the cause of ethnic nationalism and its implication for national unity is not well researched unlike its revival.

Particularly the rise of Amhara nationalism, which is recent phenomenon in Ethiopia, and perhaps be seen as anomalous to many scholars, need to be explored and researched.

As far as the knowledge of the researcher there is no academic research to excavate on Amhara nationalism especially in its implications for national unity of Ethiopia. But there is some studies undertaken with a particular emphasis in the area.

However they are limited and non-academic studies and most of these studies are focusing on the genesis of ethnic nationalism. For instance, Melkamu (2018) has conducted his study on the “Amhara nationalism”.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

1.3.1. General Objective

The overall objective of this study is to examine the nature of Amhara nationalism, its causes challenges, and its implication for national unity of Ethiopia.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

To address the general objective, the following specific objectives were answered by the study:

- To identify causing factors of Amhara nationalism
- To explore the challenges of Amhara nationalism
- To explore the implication of Amhara nationalism to the unity of the country

1.4. Basic Research Questions

- What are the causes of the Amhara nationalism?
- What are the implications of Amhara nationalism for national unity?
- What are the challenges of Amhara nationalism?

1.5. Core Argument

Nationalism can be of civic and ethnic in its nature. While civic nationalism has been conceived as positive and civilized way of political movement, ethnic nationalism has been conceived negatively as destructive, radical and even dangerous to the unity of state. Amhara nationalism appears to be categorized under ethnic based nationalism. Unlike many case of ethno nationalisms elsewhere the researcher argue that Amhara nationalism could play positive role to the unity of the state.

1.6. Methodology of the Research

1.6.1. Research Method

Despite the indistinct understanding of the difference between research methodology and methods of conducting a specific study, I favored putting ‘research methods’ at the whole activities of various research techniques used below. This is due to the reason that, research methodology is a system that studies research methods. While research methods is a procedure or technique applied by the researcher to undertake a specific study. Lee (2019) also states the research method is a framework guiding a research project. Therefore, since methods are an inclusive concept about research issues, I applied the concept method for stating which techniques, procedures, or approaches are best fit for this research.

1.6.2. Philosophical world view of the study

The study will be conducted on the basis of constructivism research philosophy. Constructive research philosophy focuses on how individuals develop subjective meaning or understanding about their life experience towards particular events or programs (Creswell, 2014). In line with this assumption, I will applied this philosophy to analyze the causes, challenges, motives of Amhara nationalism and its implication for national unity.

1.6.3. Research Approach

This study applied a qualitative approach for exploring the problem at hand. The qualitative research approach helps to explore the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of things and understand the meanings the participants ascribe to their experiences as well as suggestions, comments, or opinions of different individuals to provide evidence and supports for one's arguments (Berg, 2001). Similarly, Lincoln (2000) argued that the need of choosing a qualitative approach is to study things in their natural setting, interpret phenomena, and getting in touch with everyday social events.

According to Casley and Kumar (1992), qualitative research is useful to describe situations, events, interactions, case studies, and to collect information to understand more the views, attitudes, and perspectives of the study areas. This is because the qualitative approach aims to describe certain aspects of a phenomenon and subject under study to broaden the understanding of the issue involved (Thomas, 2005). Then, as far as the main focus of this research is to describe the challenges, prospects and its implications for national unity of Ethiopia, this type of research is usually described by qualitative research methods. Therefore, the researcher found out the perception, perspective, and interpretation of the informants about the existing Amhara nationalism and its implications to the central political and national unity. Thus, data were collected, processed, and analyzed following a qualitative research approach.

1.6.4. Research Design

Concerning research design, in this research, the researcher employed a qualitative exploratory and descriptive case study research design. Thus, the rationale for selecting this from than others is that this study has different significances with general and specific objectives which has to be treated throughout the research independently because exploratory research design is helpful for qualitative data to be explained or built up for a research problem when the researcher has no previous data or only a few studies for reference (Brown, 2006; Kothari & Garg, 2014). Exploratory designs intend only to explore the basic research inquiries and it does not aim to give a last and decisive solution to the existing problems, but it supports having a better understanding of the problem (Bantayehu, 2016). So, as far as the knowledge of the researcher, there is no study undertaken with particular emphasis in the area this study is concerned with.

Moreover, for this study, descriptive research can be used to recognize and classify the elements or characteristics of a theme under study and the descriptive tactic to suggest or explain why or how something is happening (Collis & Hussey, 2003). Therefore, this research was descriptive in its design. Descriptive research is very appropriate than the others to describe the current and ongoing nature, manifestation, practices of the Amhara nationalism. It was descriptive since it attempts to evaluate the nature of ethno nationalism in Ethiopia, particularly in line with the ongoing Amhara nationalism. Finally, the ultimate reason to use this both research design is to acquire a better understanding of the research problem than either approach alone, and primarily expected to come up with an answer to the research questions of the study figured out above as well as it helps to minimize shortcomings of each research design through integration of the two forms of data and analysis.

1.6.5. Sampling Design and Techniques

For the best accomplishment of the research objective, the researcher employed non-probability sampling mainly purposive and snowball sampling techniques. According to Patton (2002), Purposeful sampling is a technique widely used in qualitative research for the credentials and selection of information-rich cases for the most effective use of limited resources and mainly because of the characteristics of the target group and related factors (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). In this study, the criterion for selection of the research key informants was selected based on the research objective and some criteria including; individuals or groups of individuals that are especially knowledge, skills, political stance, and experience on the research topic.

The researcher was purposely select key informants from different target populations including civic nationalist, ethno nationalist party leaders and their members of each political party, scholars of political science and Activists and bloggers. As a result, different informants and experts were chosen based on their linkage to the Amhara nationalism. However, making interviews and focus group discussions with key informants was continuing until the researcher got sufficient data. Data saturation involves bringing new participants continually into the data set are complete. Moreover, the researcher selected a significant number of individuals from the area based on my belief that the individual will bring as much as possible information that is relevant for the study. This is because the verdict of the researcher as to who can provide the best

information to accomplish the objective of the research is the fundamental principle of purposive sampling.

1.6.6. Data sources and Instruments of Data Collection

There are two major sources of appropriate data-gathering instruments. These are primary and secondary sources. To collect obtainable and adequate data this study was used both primary and secondary data sources. To do so, both primary and secondary sources were employed that could answer basic research questions, selecting a proper and sound method of data collection to have extensive importance in justifying the result of this research. The selection of the data collection instrument in this study depends on only the objective and purpose of the research at hand. To attain relevant data from various sources, multiple data collection techniques, and tools was employed for triangulation purpose. Therefore, the following are the major data collection tools and techniques that were used to collect relevant data that helped to analyses the challenges, prospects Amhara nationalism and its implication to the national unity of Ethiopia.

1.7. Primary Data Collection

According to (Kothari, 2004) the primary data are those which are gathered a new and for the first time by the researcher and thus happen to be original (for instance, focus group discussion and in-depth interview) were applied to acquire firsthand information from selected informants. To get the essential data for successful completion of this study the following primary methods of data collection instruments was used:

1.7.1. Key Informant Interview

According to Thomas (2001), interviews are suitable to see miscellaneous perspectives, outlooks, attitudes, or behaviors about some topics of interest to individuals or groups of individuals. One of the major advantages of the interview is its key role to collected in-depth answers and information to gather data with minimum time, resource, energy and in a less restrictive as well as less standardized way. So, this study used semi-structured interviews because it allows inquiring many open-ended questions, permitting for a discussion with the interviewee rather than a straightforward question and answer format due to the research objectives. Semi-structured interviews are one method of data gathering instrument through which a researcher presents a set of preplanned core questions orally and the respondent gives the answer through

oral-verbal meanness (Kothari, 2004). The key informants selected based on their familiarity with the issue, who are supposed to be responsible for the concerning issues or subject matter and aware to ethno nationalism Ethiopia in general and Amhara nationalism in particular. In conducting this research, the interview around a set of pre-defined questions, checklists prepared are semi-structured and flexible ways that are presented to the interviewee to guide the conversation and obtain detailed information to answer the research questions.

In general, concerning the interview process, the interview was conducted in Amharic because Amharic is the common language of communication in the study area. Likewise, based on their consent, only a few of the interviewees were recorded using audiotapes, transcribed, and translated into English. Information collected from participants has been transcribed immediately to prevent the risks of losing collected data. Each interview session took between 30up to 40 minutes on average.

1.7.2. Focus Group Discussion

Focus Group Discussion is the second major data gathering method that was employed in this study. A focus group discussion is useful since it *“is essential to acquire deep, rich, and controversial issues in qualitative data based on the conversation of members in the group”* (Mathews & Ross, 2010, p. 235).Amhara nationalism is a very controversial issue because of the infant stage now. So, FGD is highly relevant. According to Bryman (2004: 247-8), using focus group discussion as a data collection tool help in many ways, firstly, focus group discussion as a data-gathering instrument plays an important role in the qualitative research approach. Secondly, it’s important to gather and know varied information about their collective awareness and perception regarding the study subject as well as focus group discussion reveals how the group participates and how they view the issues with which they have been confronted. Thirdly, it uses to study group norms and group understanding concerning a certain issue. The attention or thing of analysis is the communication inside the group.

The participants FGD were selected through both purposive and snowball because of the sensitivity of the issue and those key informants were out of different political parties, political scholars, Activists and bloggers especially in terms of types of participation and political awareness in the politics of Ethiopia. As a result, Snowball sampling has a crucial role to

complete the study by narrowing the Gap. While for conducted three FGD with at least 8 participants for each and was all held in Bahir Dar. Participants of the focus groups included the above mentioned informants.

1.8. Data from Secondary Sources

In this study, the researcher also used secondary data from different sources. Different secondary sources of data were also assessed and take into consideration their relevance to collect secondary data type for the study. According to Kothari, (2004), secondary data is defined as data that has been previously collected for some other purpose. In conducting this study, the researcher reviewed and analyzed various documents sources from its inception to finalization to obtain full meaning and understanding. Which include: books, journals, working papers, MA theses, PD dissertations, assessment and monitoring report, policies, strategies, annual plans, parties' program and manifestos and the like.

1.9. Method of Data Analysis

Thematic analysis employed in this study as a method of data analysis. Thus, thematic analysis is the analysis mechanism which is used to analyze the data by their themes (Dawson, 2007). The researcher will attempt to provide clear answer for the established research questions through thematically analyzed the collected data. By employed thematic analysis, the investigator will try to offer an explanation and understanding of the outcomes of the study in a compatible manner with identified research objectives. The data that will be collected from different sources via different instruments will prepared for analysis by arranged it in to themes through using techniques like coding and condensing.

1.10. Scope of the Study

This study has bounds and it did not cover all matters related to nationalism, nor does it cover the whole issues of ethno nationalism. Thematically, the focus of the study is on the challenges, of Amhara nationalism as well as its implication for national unity Ethiopia. Yet the study mainly focused on Amhara nationalism. Methodologically, the study would confine to a purely qualitative research approach. The study was carried out from the mid-1990s; a popular surgeon professor Asrat Woldeyes had established the All Amhara People's organization. Special focus

had given since 2016 the radical revival of Amhara nationalism in the national politics of Ethiopia.

1.11. Limitations of the Study

The researcher faced the following considerable challenges especially on encountered conditional and data limitations; firstly, the fact that the issue is complex and on-going as well as In fact Amhara nationalism is in its infancy stage, and very challenging to get organized data, adequate reference materials on the subject matter. Accordingly, because of unavailability of Books and Articles the researcher was forced to use Books written in Amharic by Amateur writers as a source. The Corona virus pandemic and personal health problem was another challenge in conducting these studies.

Due to the infant stage of Amhara nationalism, the dynamic nature of ethnic nationalism in Ethiopia was prevented to arrive at a certain conclusion. On the other hand, to get a much more balanced picture, it would have been important to critically evaluate different perspectives and different sides. Hence, there were some inadequacies while doing such research. Since it is connected to politics, some informants need to express it in their sight mainly due to the political/ideological sensitivity of the issues. But the researcher did his best techniques to overcome this limitation as possible.

1.12. Significance of the research

Studying the Amhara nationalism might help to appreciate the positive side of ethnic nationalism where many scholars have reservation to its relevance to unity of a multi-ethnic state such as Ethiopia. In so doing this research may be an eye opener to scholars in the area of political sciences, anthropology and even legal studies. The Amhara nationalism is in its infant stage, there are manifold patterns of causes, claims, aspirations, interests, nature, and manifestations without appropriate consensus. Therefore, this study can show and frame the bold cause, demanded and ideological frames manifested by different Amhara nationalist groups are important for the Amhara people and policymakers and practitioners.

Secondly, this research will be substantial to initiate other researchers in these study areas. There is no doubt that this study will help for future academicians, writers, and organizations to

conduct their research on Amhara nationalism. Thus, beyond its role as a reference, it will serve as a source of initiation and would inspire others to articulate the proper and core claims of the people of Amhara.

Last, but not least, it will be substantial for analyzing current and the upcoming Ethiopian politics. Analysis demands deep evidence, knowledge and understanding about the thing that we analyze. This study will swell evidence to the knowledge gap we have on the practice of ethno nationalism in Ethiopia in general and Amhara in particular. Hence anyone interested in analyzing the prevailing Ethiopian politics should invest his time and resource towards searching the whole thing that determines, counterbalance, and reshape Ethiopian politics. The intensification of Amhara nationalism twisted with it up a wide-ranging change in the national political discourse of Ethiopia. Any logical spectator particularly for foreign scholars, international organizations, and media would swiftly find out how pervasive change Amhara nationalism carried. Thus, Amhara nationalism also should be study as one of the determinants and rising political force: If not the appropriate analysis will be misleading and doesn't have an understanding of the grass-root reality.

1.13. Ethical Considerations

Throughout this entire research, process ethics has become a mile stone for conducting effective and meaningful research. First and foremost, the researcher has an obligation obeying the ethics and principle of research to respect that all participants who were involved in the study are upon their willingness and consent. Research participants had informed about the objectives of the research before the interview starts. In this regard, whatever photographs, video recording, and audio-tapes are needed at any phase of data collection it was only be done with their consent. Regarding the right to privacy, this study withholds the identity of each participant from its inception to the finalization. In all cases, names had been confidential though there are political parties leaders and members, activists and bloggers, political science scholars that are legitimate to provide information for the role they are assigned the researcher was using coded and collective names as fundamental to refer the subject since it has a lot to do with the informants' confidentiality throughout the study.

1.14. Trustworthiness

Accordingly, the researcher was highly concerned to keep the study credible through setting appropriate research methods and principles for better accomplishment of this study. In this regard taking into account, the trustworthiness of the study is vital therefore data sources whether primary or secondary was fully acknowledged all the references mentioned in the paper. The varied data collection methods like focus group discussion, interview in, collecting data from different competing and arguable perspectives and collecting on time from appropriate respondents, recording the data by using audio or audiovisual equipment as well as analyzing the collected data in a correct manner giving secure the authenticity of the research. Over all, avoiding any partiality from its inception to the finalization of the analysis process would help the researcher to present a very reliable and trustworthy work. Thus, the researcher throughout the whole part avoids plagiarism, deception, or fabrication or falsification to uphold the trustworthiness of the study. Moreover, an attempt has been made to properly triangulating all the relevant data, theories and methods so as to ensure the creditworthiness of the finding.

CHAPTER TWO

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS, PERSPECTIVE AND REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. Conceptual Clarifications

Before getting in to the definition of nationalism, related concepts like ethnicity, ethnic identity and ethnic group need to be clarified.

2.1.1. Ethnicity

Ethnicity is an elusive concept usually referring to ethnic attributes that can be manipulated for social and political purposes (Vanhanen, 2012). According to Horowitz (1985) ethnicity embraces differences identified by color, language, religion, common myth of descent and race. Ethnicity is the sentiment of origin and descent towards distinctive population rather than geographical attachment (Heywood, 2007; Thomson, 2010). It is the feeling members of ethnic groups develop to their group. Ethnicity is the effect of common sharing of language, identity, race, religion and other social customs (Asafa, 2019). Members who is sharing similar manifestations grouped in to one ethnic category for the sake of common good.

2.1.2. Ethnic identity

Ethnic identity is membership to a category of race, language, caste or religion .Ethnicity consists of groups identified by color, language, and religion. It encompasses tribes, races, nationalities, and castes. It is our birth place and our parents who make us to chose among many alternatives of belongingness (Chandra,2005).For instance, our parents may born us from two ethnic groups. Therefore, the interest of us makes us to choose either of the two ethnic groups. Hence we can be the ethnicity of our father or mother.

2.1.3. Ethnic group

Ethnic groups defined as a collection of people that share similar cultural and linguistic identities which makes it distinct from others. According to Young, as quoted in Aluko, ethnic groups commonly share similar way of life, culture, language and boundary that makes the group very distinct from the rest of the group in the surrounding environment. It is important to understand

the existence of very minor cultural dissimilarity within the group itself. According to Yang (2000) "ethnic group is a social group based on ancestry, culture or national origin".

Other scholars like Cohen and Noli agree on the role of language, culture and other affiliations as the maker of ethnic group.

2.1.4. Nationalism

Nationalism is one of the most disputed and controversial concepts in social sciences. This is due to the fact that the concept is heavily laden with ideological, religious, ethnic, racial and socio economic emotional undercurrents. Indeed, nationalism has become a very powerful force in modern history. It could be described as a double-edged sword; it represents two ideological divides—domination and struggle for freedom. That is, nationalism arouses strong feelings—for some, it is tantamount to racism, but for others nationalist sentiment creates solidarity and stability, which are preconditions for freedom (Hoffman and Graham, 2009:264).

Nationalism in everyday language is considered with two connotations roughly, one being positive and one being negative. Positive connotation is considered in relation to "democracy, self-determination, political legitimacy, social integration, civil religion, solidarity, dignity, identity, cultural survival, citizenship, patriotism, and liberation from alien rule" while negative connotation is considered in relation to "militarism, war, irrationalism, chauvinism, intolerance, homogenization, forced assimilation, authoritarianism, parochialism, xenophobia, ethnocentrism, ethnic cleansing, even genocide". (Brubaker, 2004).

From this perspective such two-sided understanding of nationalism is cognate with two ideal types of nationalism in today's liberal-democratic public opinion: "civic" or "political" nationalism as being the positive one and "ethnic" or "cultural" nationalism as being the negative one.

Scholars define nationalism in multiple ways, focusing on its peaceful or violent nature, its objective or subjective foundations, its inclusive or exclusive character, and its end goals (Calhoun 1997). Definitions of nationalism primarily view it as a type of political ideology (Gellner 1983) or as a cultural construct (Brubaker 2004).

Nationalism as a political ideology is a form of state policy, or a political movement aimed at advancing the idea of an independent nation, its priority, or its superiority (Hechter 2000). According to this conceptualization, nationalism as an ideology can become normative because it sets certain standards, norms, and orientations in a society (Anderson 1991; Gellner 1983). The literature also presents nationalism as an element of culture, as a reaction of individuals and groups who feel disadvantaged culturally compared to others (Plamenatz 1976). In line with this conceptualization, scholars have offered an understanding of nationalism as being closely tied to ethnicity, rooted in similar traditions, language, and symbols (Anderson 1991; Fabre and Cassia 2007; Gellner 1983).

According to Khon(1946), modern nationalism originated in Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In the nineteenth century, it became a general European movement and in the twentieth, it has become one of the most explosive political philosophies that rule the world today. Accordingly, nationalism is basically a European concept and it exports to the rest of the world.

In addition, nationalism is conceptualized on multiple levels. Some scholars study nationalism as a form of individual attachment (Kimmelmeier and Winter 2008), others explore it as sentiments or actions expressed by a particular group/community (Anderson 1991; Gellner 1983 ;), or a feature of state policy (Hechter 2000). Consequently, depending on the definition, nationalism can take many forms and might be explained in various ways (Breuilly 1993). Some see it as essentially illiberal and violent, others think nationalism can be unifying and benevolent (Plamenatz 1976). The definitions of nationalism also range from broad generalizations (as a form of identification with a nation) to specific ones (perception of ethnic or cultural dominance) (Plamenatz 1976; Gellner 1983).

Over all, nationalism in everyday language is considered with two connotations roughly, one being positive and one being negative. Positive connotation is considered in relation to “democracy, self-determination, political legitimacy, social integration, civil religion, solidarity, dignity, identity, cultural survival, citizenship, patriotism, and liberation from alien rule” while negative connotation is considered in relation to “militarism, war, irrationalism, chauvinism, intolerance, homogenization, forced assimilation, authoritarianism, parochialism, xenophobia, ethnocentrism, ethnic cleansing, even genocide”. (Brubaker, 2004).

Such two-sided understanding of nationalism is cognate with two ideal types of nationalism in today's liberal-democratic public opinion: "civic" or "political" nationalism as being the positive one and "ethnic" or "cultural" nationalism as being the negative one. These two types of nationalism have two different perceptions of "national identity".

2.1.5. Ethnic Nationalism

The concept of ethnic nationalism has controversial and elusive since there is still no consensus among different scholars. Different context requires various approaches to the concept of ethno nationalism. Thus in the Amhara context as well, Tedla (2018) states that ethno nationalism is defined as a political movement and a sentiment that creates a sense of belongingness, loyalty, and devotion based on the unique ethnic group's common culture, history, territory, or race, a language which wants to be differentiated from others. Thus in the core of the concept lies the idea of "a political movement and a sentiment". It focuses on the preservation of the identity, solidarity, and tradition of the ethnic group and respect of the right of that ethnic group.

Different scholars and researcher have devoted their time and resource to study the concept, nature, manifestation; goals have not yet reached an agreement on the concepts of ethnic nationalism. On his part Brass (1991:20), defined ethnic/ethno nationalism as the claims of an independent political recognition and official expression by a specific ethnic group and this could be either within an existing state or in a state of its own to achieve economic and political motives. The writer elucidated that, ethnic nationalism is primarily articulated based on given factors such as common descent, or kin connection, or blood ties, or race and considered as having exclusive nature. This indicates that the so-called biological or organic nationalism. Heredia (1997:1014) reinforced the above view of Brass's explanation by making the growing pecking order of ethno nationalism. Heredia noting that, when "*an ethnic category becomes conscious of its ethnicity, it evolves into a community for the sole purpose of socio-economic and political power*" and when such a progressive community in the contemporary world it would be politically articulated it will modification to ethno nationalism (ibid).

According to Morriss (2008), the clue of self-rule and Self-determination is the essential concept that most scholars used as a crucial point to conceptualize ethno nationalism in contemporary

multi-ethnic societies. Due to these circumstances, Allahar (2010:24) defined ethno nationalism as an *“ideological claim, or a social movement seeking to make such a claim, of self-determination and sovereignty”*. On the contrary, however, defining ethno nationalism from the standpoint of self-determination becomes a strong critic from Morriss (2008:11). In this regard, Morriss (2008:11) summary is also worth to mention here disgraced for being *“traditional”* and powerless to elucidate modern-day ethno nationalism effectively. To use the direct quote from the above source

“The number of ethno nationalist movements continuing to seek autonomy or independent statehood is in decline. Recognizing these substantial change a unified group preference and stable group boundaries no longer provide us with an adequate examination of the link between nationalism and ethnic identity”
Morriss (2008;12)

So, one can learn from the above-indented paragraph underlines that ethno nationalism is included different claims that transcend beyond the clue of self-determination and autonomy (ibid). Moreover, ethnic nationalism refers to nationalism as determined by primordial ties and common ancestry. The central statement is that primordial /blood consciousness rather than the civic/individual consciousness governs the common socio-economic and political system. The ethnic concept of nationalism incorporates more collectivistic emotional sentiment than an individual identity. The core assumption this identity is not socially constructed and reconstructed but by birth and native culture, well-thought-out an inherent characteristic defined by common ancestry as opposed to choosing. Attachments are inherited and not preferred, representing some exclusivist sentiments of nationalism. Therefore, from the above case, one can understand that there is an absence of the prerequisite foundations and institutions required for nationalism in place in society, ethnic groups are obliged to create one from what they have (Gagnon, 1994; Winter, 1995).

Lefebvre (2003: 2) on his side defined ethnic nationalism as a replacement *“instead of cultural and civic nationalism”* and *“refers to similar blood lineage and/or myths”*. He underlines, *“it is worth noting that ethnic nationalism, like all nationalisms, is cultural, but not all cultural nationalisms are ethnic”* (Ibid). To expand his point ethnic nationalism is the part of the broader cultural nationalism that incorporates different types of nationalism based on the cultural aspect.

In other words, as defined by (Guelke, 2010:1) “*Ethno-nationalism tended to be associated with minorities oppressed and dissatisfied with their place in an existing polity, but the phenomenon was much broader than simply providing recourse for rebellious minorities*”. Ethno nationalism is tantamount to racism but Eriksen (2010:7) who is one of the prominent scholars in the area of nationalism rejected the above argument.

For this study, ethno nationalism is operationalized as the political mobilization based on common cultural, emotional sentiment, similar myths and/or blood lineage and trust those of your blood towards once ethnic identity which requires) their uniqueness and distinctive ethnic characteristics and description. Some of the nationalisms such as Tigray, Oromo, and Amhara nationalisms have the manifestation and combined characteristics of ethnic nationalism and civic nationalism because they are not accepted by anyone who integrates himself or herself as part of that group. They are both socially constructed and biological or organic nationalisms. As we have introduced and understood the meaning of ethnic and ethnic nationalism in brief then let us back to the defining civic nationalism.

2.1.6. Civic Nationalism

According to Gagnon and Winter (1994/1995), Civic nationalism given the sovereignty of the people is resides in the individual (the citizen) whose national identity is a sense of common political community inside a defined territory. It involves that individuals and territory must have their place together and that the individual has a sole political determination. An individual has the decision of selecting which national identity he/she demands to belong to an increase in value legal equality and justice along with the other groups of the country. Furthermore, national dignity comes from the individual or citizen who in turn defines themselves with a particular national community. There are a government and institutions that respect the law, rather than prevailing above the law, which designates that civic nationalism is highly complementary to a liberal form of democracy.

This argument is further supported by Eriksen the primordial characteristics like a common language, common ancestry, and ethnicity as well as other aspects are not the standards to being a citizen of a multinational state but the common psychology, personal ascription and territory is the dominant point (Eriksen, 1991:263). However, in this regard, Merera (2003:30-28) summary

is also worth to mention here there may be one citizenship nationalism in a pluralistic and multi-ethnic state which encompasses all the ethnic identity of the nation but there could be two or more ethnic nationalisms contending and challenging with each other and/or competing with the civic nationalist groups in the same country.

According to Steven Hagen (1996:3), this type of nationalism is targeting the safeguarding of the status quo or making a nation in which multiple ethnic identities are existing together and those ethnic groups are legal memberships of the state. He explained that the concept of individual (civic) nationalism is about constructing citizenship in matters that bond citizens as a nation. And, the structural version is also designed to be independent of individuals. As Esayas (2018) the principle of civic nationalism is that citizens build their nationality on issues that unite them as a nation. For instance, Americans promote American nationalism as a nation with a common vision of the American Dream and the structural, social and economic versions and systems needed to achieve this dream. The structural version is also built on the core of individual freedom. When we came to our country, Ethiopia, in the past, there have been great efforts to build Ethiopian nationalism around the royal system, our ancient civilization and history, our flag, our national victories and our heroes, and our centuries-old sovereignty

2.2. Theoretical Perspectives of Ethnic nationalism

In the modern-day world, due to the multi-faceted and complex nature of the concepts of nationalism and ethno nationalism many scholars, intellectuals, and politicians have been impotent to reach consensus on the concepts themselves (Ozkirimli, 2000). However, many theoretical perspectives and approaches account for their origins, nature, manifestation and development of ethnic nationalism in recent social science. Several competing theoretical perspectives study the concept of nationalism and ethnic nationalism. Some scholars, for instance, Croucher, 2004 and Ozkirimli, 2000 suggest that the most common theoretical perspectives to study ethnic nationalism can be grouped into three as primordialist theories, instrumentalist and constructivist theories because no single theoretical framework can be expected to encompass all sensitive issues of ethno nationalism. These theories have been scrutinized for their potential strengths and gaps in understanding the issue of Amhara ethnic identity and nationalism in the current political scenario of Ethiopia. This section of the paper

identifies its preferred theoretical framework which could help to understand Amhara's ethnic identity and nationalism in Ethiopia. Thus, these theories could be helpful to analyze issues in this area.

2.2.1. The Primordialist Approach

Among the few Universalist theories of nationalism one should mention the primordialist perspectives. Primordialism assumes that group identity is a given. That there exist in all societies certain primordial, irrational attachments based on blood, race, language, religion, region, etc. They are, in the words of Geertz (1973), ineffable and yet coercive ties, which are the result of a long process of crystallization. Modern states, particularly, but not exclusively, in the Third World, are superimposed on the primordial realities which are the ethnic groups or communities. Primordialists believe that ethnic identity is deeply rooted in the historical experience of human beings to the point of being practically a given.

On the other hand, one of the leading scholars on nationalism Smith (2013) asserts that the epicenter of primordialism sees ethnic identity as assumes that a person is acquired by nature and by birth. For him, identity is inherited from an ancestor and is eternal and unchangeable. For instance, one is Amhara because he/she was born to the grandfather of Amhara. Therefore, once born, this person cannot change his or her options. Primordialists assert that one's ethnic identity is ascribed at birth. Hence, more or less, remained largely permanent and immutable (Birhanu, 2008). They simply see the human being as a collection of discrete social groups where membership to it has been determined at birth and natural (Vaughan, 2003).

Furthermore, Berghe, 1995, Geertz, 1963, Taras and Ganguly, 2010 the primordialism identity has two aspects to be inherited from its parents and ancestors. A biological/blood identity and cultural heritage. Simply, they are the ones that get them from previous generations. This means that Amhara will inherit the heritage of the Amhara people and the cultural resources that the Amhara people live in. This is a concept that continues to expand from one family to another. And it can't be lost. So, nationalism exists because it is an extension of the family or an identity that originates from the family. In this sense, the boundaries of nationalism are indistinct, consistent, and familiar. It does not change. For instance, if a person is born in Amhara, he/she

cannot change his/her nationality and become a different nation. This argument is further supported by Chandra (2012:3) elaborately as:

“Each of us belongs to one and only one identity group that group membership remains fixed over a lifetime and it is passed down intact across generations. Wars begin and end, states grow and die, economies boom and crash, but through it all, ethnic groups stay the same.” (Chandra, 2012:3).

According to this perspective, Yang (2000:p.41) in his book titled “Ethnic Studies: issues and approaches” identified the three significant aspects that are at the epicenter of primordialism theory. First, considering ethnicity as an “ascribed identity or assigned status”. For instance, if your descendants are Oromo then you are also an Oromo because you will inherit biological, genetic and physical appearances from your forbears. It regards ethnicity identity as “something given, ascribed at birth and originating from the kin-and-clan-structure of the members. Second, ethnicity is static; for instance, if you were born an Amhara then you would be an Amhara forever and you could not change your membership to another ethnic group, because identity is *“more or less permanent and fixed characteristic of individuals and/ groups of communities which cannot be even changed by the individual will for the search of belongingness to another ethnic group”*. Yang has further noted that the third point is *“common ancestry”*; which will determine ethnicity. As it is indicated in the above issues, any individuals who belong to a specific ethnic group will have identical biological and genetic backgrounds.

However, primordialism could not escape it has encountered criticism. Firstly, the primordialist approach erodes the people's“ passion and strong judgment to their logical and rational thinking ability of individuals and community. Secondly, they fail to account for the role of the social and natural changing circumstances in the community that could result in its dissolution, adaptation, belief system, ideological commitments, migration, and intermarriage relations for new conditions in the life of human beings (Tigist, 2014). Because in present-day there are various pluralistic societies, multicultural individuals or citizens hold multiple (diffused) identities due to social and natural factors. Last but not least, the primordial approach has been criticized by overlook the economic, political, and social relationships between members of the community. Therefore, the core value and emphasis of primordialism is as inconsistent and incomplete as the theoretical analyses on which it hinges.

2.2.2. The Constructivist Approach

Constructivism is one of the second dominant theories concerning ethnicity and ethnic nationalism that is often traced back to the surface within the field of anthropology, psychology, sociology, and political science in the early periods of the 1960s (Barth, 1996). According to constructivists nationalism is a created ideology. This approach can be defined as one that considers national identity as an institutional or ideological framework. This framework is created to provide simple answers in terms of identity and as solutions for modern problems, to individuals who are both confused and insecure (Brown2000).

Accordingly, they argue that the contemporary centralized state arose through the need to provide for a segmented territorial system that would assist the socio-economic integration of specific regions into the greater society. The ongoing process of economic integration and social reconstruction that states assisted led to the creation of a set of common cultural values. This high culture became the focus of a new national community within each state.

For constructivists like Bacal (1991) Ethnicity is the result of inter-ethnic relations, in spatial, political, economic, cultural and social relations. In the same way Fredrik Barth (1969) put forward that, what defines ethnic group is the boundary not the cultural stuff that encloses or the idea of who is a member and who is not. The most illustrative example which signifies ethnicity as a result of complex webs of social interactions is described by Agbu (2011; 16) is the Yugoslav case. Till the late 1980s, a Yugoslav identity had evolved from the cosmopolitanism of the urban areas and the incentives given by the federal government, but as the state disintegrated, this identity was broken as individuals quickly returned to their more particularistic roots as being Serb, Croatian or Bosnian.

The central tenet of these theory lies on the fact that, ethnicities are socially constructed and the existing ethnic boundaries are flexible and changeable, being historical and structural factors as the primary determinants of ethnicity (Yang, 2000).

This theory is subject to criticism for ignoring the ancestral basis of ethnicity and the political and economic interests shaping ethnic membership of individuals (Yang, 2000).

2.2.3. The Instrumentalist Approach

The best known and most influential instrumentalist approach is that of Fredrik Barth (1969). He argued that ethnic identity is flexible and variable; that both the content and boundaries of an ethnic group change according to circumstances. For this reason, under the label of instrumentalism one can range a variety of approaches which are based on the idea that ethnicity is the result of economic, social or political processes, and hence that it is by definition a flexible and highly adaptable tool. Ethnic groups have no fixed boundaries; they are rather collective entities which change in size according to changing conditions. As to individuals, not only they are not assigned permanently to an ethnic group, but they can be members of more than one at the same time. Ethnicity is then seen as dynamic.

Accordingly, some instrumentalists insist that ethnic affiliation is simply a ploy to promote economic interests, and that individuals are ready to change group membership if that suits their sense of security or their economic interests. Marxists have tended to see ethnicity as false consciousness, as a ruse of the dominant groups to hide class interests of a material kind. Furthermore, the persistence of ethnic ties in modern societies does not quite tally with the expectations of Marxist theorists, who predict that these ties will eventually fade away and be substituted by working class solidarity.

On the other hand, proponents of instrumentalist theories view ethnicity as an instrument of gaining resources. Which means the existence and persistence of ethnicity is due to its usefulness. Ethnicity is not simply a mix of affective sentiment but like class and nationality it is also a means of political mobilization for advancing group interest (Glazer and Moynihan, 1975 quoted in Yang, 2000). Ethnicity for instrumentalists is something that can be changed, constructed or even manipulated to gain specific political and/or economic ends. Through the process of fission and fusion, and other considerations like sense of security or material interests, people change their ethnic affiliation or to gain political or economic advantages people may be forced to change their belongingness (Balcha, 2008; Nagel, 1994).

Several criticisms have been made of the instrumental approach. As Brown (2000) points out that while an individual can choose certain attributes such as race, language, and religion, the importance of these attributes changes from situation to situation. Furthermore, differences in dissimilar groups only become important when those groups engage in confrontation and employ

markers as mobilization techniques. Yet individuals cannot change their racial characteristics; and language and birth are often key requirements for specific group membership. It is true that the salience of one's particular identity changes from situation to situation but the fact is that individual action in many circumstances is severely limited by the possession of specific attributes. Being Jewish in some conditions is a barrier even if one is also African or Italian or speaks Arabic or German. The action and options of that individual are severely curtailed irrespective of what situation they face. Once again instrumentalism ignores the fact that the most rational choice may be closed to either the individual or the group in question.

2.2.4. The Integrated Approach

The integrated approach of ethnic nationalism is mainly a synthesis of the central point of primordialism, constructivism and instrumentalist theories. In this regard, Yang (2000) formulated based on four major central arguments that are structurally connected to the contribution of each theory. Yang's summary is also worth mentioning here: According to Yang (2000) noted that the first fundamental assumption of the integrated approach is the assumption that ethnicity and ethnic nationalism is moderately socially given and natural. Yang has further noted that since there are some primordial attachments that we cannot deny, for example, genetic, religion, ancestors, language, physical appearance, material, culture and history but it is catalyzed by the primordial ties. Secondly, ethnic nationalism is socially constructed and deconstruct. According to this approach, the construction of ethnicity and ethnic nationalism takes place in many ways through ethnic categorization rules, institutional conditions and structural issues. Thus, ethnic identity is the work of society where societal standards and categorization rules such as ancestry or social class, that might be written or unwritten, governs one's ethnic affiliation.

Furthermore, Yang (2000:p.45), has also stated they also preserve ethnic nationalism would create by the social and structural change in the prevailing system particularly after the commencement of the industrial revolution in western Europe; not only that it can socially constructed and reconstructed by both external and internal forces (the communal action booked by ethnic groups themselves such as redefinition, and reconstruction of ethnic boundaries) but also external forces such as social, political-economic ideologies and outsiders environments (Yang, 2000:p.45). For example, we can take the following societies as the sample that revealed

the oscillation of identity because of the reconstruction and redefinitions of identity. Many evidences show that, in previously Puerto Rico, the majority of the residents transformed from “negro” or “mulatto” to “white” over fifty years but in cases of Brazil, the opposite arisen -- many of those who recognized themselves as “white” or “black” transferred to calling themselves “brown”. So, the result was the transformation of Brazil from a white to a non-white majority state in the past three decades (Green, 2006).

For him, ethnic categorization rules also are not even across societies and time; they varied from society to society and time to time. Therefore, the same person could be categorized into different ethnic groups by different societies. Besides, social and political environments such as social engineering and migration can construct new ethnic membership or identity of individuals, groups and communities. For example, in the case of Sri Lanka in which some of those who had previously ascribed themselves “Kandyan” and “Low Country” abandoned these regional identities to unite in an interconnected “Sinhala” identity. Because of the above reason, the result was the transformation of Sri Lanka’s multi-polar ethnic demography into a bipolar one (Ibid: 5).

Thirdly, ethnicity and ethnic nationalism are to some degree that is the pronouncement of individuals themselves who would choose their ethnicity based on some calculation like political and material gain. Therefore, instrumentalism is that when nationalism is based on the benefits of rationality, morality and the like. This means that if people think that national identity is important, people will join and strengthen that national identity. For integrated view ethnic nationalism is inherited from an ancestor and is permanent and unchanging. And ethnic nationalism is the product of cultural development; it depends on that community. Being born as a member of one ethnic group is not enough to become a real member of a community. Being a member of a given ethnic group just be aware of the possibilities, understanding the possibilities, and being the reality of being real as a member. To become a member of a given ethnic group, it also wants to wear the Social Psychology of the community. Therefore, this view shows that ethnic nationalism is intertwined.

2.2.5. Examining Theories relevance of Ethnic Nationalism in the context of Ethiopia

Scholars in the study of ethnicity and ethnic nationalism have advised the researcher to apply the combination of the three of them (Yang, 2000: 48). For instance, Yang (2000: 48) recommended

not relying on a single school of thought rather combine them in the study of ethnic nationalism. This is because ethnic nationalism is not initiated for some essentialist reasons but from having intermingled over time in Ethiopia in the last half-century. Therefore, the three of them have very crucial in analyzing this issue. The intention is not only to cope with the errors of analysis during the time of research as a result of the reliance on a single theory and the presence of one will be used to cover the gap of the other. However, the origin, nature and manifestation of ethnic nationalism in Ethiopia in the last half-century practically comprised interrelated issues. For this reason, this study applied theoretically prefers an integrated perspective. This is because nature and manifestation of the existing ethno nationalism and ethno nationalist sentiments are hardly clarified by primordial, instrumental or constructive assumptions in Ethiopia. Hence, an integrated approach is practical in my study because of the one theory from the three that used to explain best rather than mixing up theoretical lenses. Due to the stated following reasons, the integrated approach was applied for this paper.

According to Jalata (1998), the Oromo people identified with their primordial ties ethnic community and with the constructivist political community is possible and essential as well as the interlink and interference are conditional. Regarding with this, according to him, being born from Oromo is not sufficient to become an Oromo. Being an Oromo involves being aware of the possibilities, understanding the Oromo social, cultural and psychological makeup. To become an Oromo he/she must also need to accept “Oromummaa”. So, Oromo nationalism has socially constructed with their primordial attachment and symbols.

As stated by Dagnachew (2018), ethnic nationalism in Ethiopia is constituted for some primordial ties and sentiment but from having intermingled over time. Individuals are familiarizing their identities to conversion in situations; some of them even transcend prevailing boundaries and change their identities. For instance, this is true in the case of the Amhara and Oromo community, because there are individuals, from Amhara's father and Oromo mothers, and vice versa. In this case, how, those individuals can follow an ethnic identity to find they are intermingled than pure primordial. There has been largely by intermarriage, assimilation, adoption and the identity is built and developed through long-term coexistence and shared life experiences across ethnic groups. He also argues that the idea of blood transfusions and

adoptions is very high, especially in present-day Ethiopia. Moreover, in Ethiopia cleavages between ethnic groups are not clear-cutting and distinct.

Having this scenario, as the above stated cases and some reviewed documents reveal that primordial, instrumentalism and constructivist approach to ethnic identity are two sides of the same coin in the context of ethno nationalism in Ethiopia, identification with some of them believe that primordial's community is also similar to identification with constructivist and instrumentalist theory. Therefore, it is difficult to separate these three cases from the existing Ethiopian condition. These three are co-existing and cannot separate between them. So, for this study, the researcher applied theoretically to prefers the integrated perspective view of ethno nationalism.

2.3. Review of Empirical Related Literature

Regarding with literature reviews the researcher reviewed various documents on ethnic nationalism from around the world. Based on this, The Kurdish nationalism in the Middle East, the Serbian nationalism from South-Eastern Europe and Igbo nationalism in Africa discussed below.

2.3.1. The Kurdish Nationalism

According to Quil (2008), the Kurdistan are people who are big in number, over 35 million, but otherwise stateless. They are called the biggest stateless people in the present-day world. They are found scattered in several countries in the Middle East as well as southeastern Turkey, northwest Iran, northern Iraq and eastern Syria. They have been raped and abused in their homeland and have become homeless people. Accordingly, in Turkey, there are eight to twelve million Kurds, in Iran four million, while in Iraq two to three million or fewer Kurds in Syria. In currently a large number of Kurds can see in the United States and Europe, where they have solid lobbying groups for the Kurdish nationalist movements. Besides, a small part of Kurdish people is noticeable also in Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan and Armenia.

Kurdish nationalism is one of the earliest ethno nationalist movements in the Middle East which remains unreciprocated due to several internal and external political-economic reasons. Most of all, scholars and authors who researched Kurdish people like Quil, 2008, Ruth, 2008 and Anush, 2013as the main reason for the cause of Kurdish nationalism is socioeconomic and political

discrimination as well as denial of identity. Besides, Kurdish nationalism in Turkey's problem has been legitimately totaling denied of existence for a long period and anti-Kurdish rhetoric is behind the cause of the causes of Kurdish nationalism. Moreover, in the same way in the other four countries, there has continuously been an inclination to overlook the Kurdish matter. For example, by putting their number as low as possible. Additionally, in Syria and Iraq, the population and housing census reports do not contain Kurd people as a distinct identity in order not to publicize their tangible numbers and numerical genocide (Ruth, 2008).

As Izzettin (2012) reinforced the above view the emerging of the Kurdish nationalist movement and struggle is not only movement pretentious by the internal regional socio-economic and political dynamics, but also many substantial status quo external of the Middle East. So, the effect of globalization and the rise of digital media have carried new risks, opportunities and progresses to the Kurdish nationalist sentiment and movement in the universal arena. Moreover, he claims that the Kurdish Diaspora in Northern America and Europe using widespread opportunities for the inception of Kurdish nationalism in “democratic-legal and economic leveled to the trans-boundary character of the Kurdish national demands”. For him, these widespread opportunities tremendously support that Kurds have gained assistance to the “institutionalization and a structural base of the Kurdish nationalism in the region and international arena”.

All these authors, Gerard Chaliand, Mghoi, Lazarev Kevin McKiernan, Jawad Mella, Mhoyan, Nicole and Hugh Pope, in the same way, argues that Kurdish nationalism has a different implication for the current and the future overall political activities in the Middle East in general and to the Kurdish people in particular. The above scholars noted that the Kurd ethno nationalist movement is today has an impact on both stabilizing and destabilizing the Middle East socioeconomic and political circumstances. This entire picture shows that the Kurd's ethno nationalist movement is one of the most crucial players in the region, whose actions can reshape some socioeconomic and political activities in the Middle Eastern (Jacques, 2012). Especially, as a reference to the long-lasting regional rivalry, the Kurdish people are becoming the victims of abuse and distortion.

For instance, (Soner,2012) argued that Turkey’s government systematically funding and trained Kurdish immigrants of Syria who would then come back to Syria and fight against the Assad

regime. For him, the foremost objective of Turkey's government to support the Kurdish ethno nationalist armed groups and uniting migrants to destabilizing the Syrian government. Nevertheless, the Syrian government is accused of Turkey's government. On the other hand, the Assad government also facilitated and organized Kurdish nationalist militant groups to a substitute as gendarmes of the government by repressing the opposition protests and even the Kurdish activists in Turkey. Moreover, Damascus allowed the systematical and protracted operation of Iraq in a long time. Many historical evidences show that Damascus, based on geopolitical reasons frequently assists Kurdish nationalist movements in bordering countries. Likewise, Kurdish groups, KDP and PUK in Syria, which opened their head office in the country, the like as it did with the PKK and its leader (Maria, 2012).

In the present-day political environment in the Middle East, the Kurdish nationalist resistance has created political chaos and instability nearly similar to the situation of the 1990s. On the contrary Marianna and Riccardo, 2011 reinforced the current Kurds nationalist claims and struggle has a significant role in stabilizing roles in the Middle East. The writer further elucidated that, peaceful democratic transformations and the revival of civic culture in the Middle East are closely linked and inter-related to the result of Kurdish nationalist struggle in the Middle East and the recognition of their question cannot be underestimated in attaining democratization of the region in the last centuries (Marianna, 2011).

Furthermore, the Kurdish nationalist movement and their questions have a huge significance as a balancing factor in the democratic transformation of the Kurdish in general and the Middle East in particular (Marianna, 2011). The largest Kurdish inhabitant in Siria, Iran, Iraq and Turkey change the political dynamics of the Middle Eastern in the present-day. Especially the contemporary circumstances in Iraq, Turkey, Iran and Syria, as references, it is both positive and negative effects. Even though Syria legitimately has recognized 300.000 Kurds as citizens of its state, which climaxes the significance of the Kurdish nationalist struggle in the Middle Eastern socio-economic and political aspects. In Iraq, the Kurds have shown that the self-government and autonomy of diverse nations in a bi-national state are not only conceivable but also support Iraq to recuperate the country then post-Saddam era. Moreover, in the present-day Turkish situation, Recep Tayyip Erdogan's assurance of democratization is carefully interwoven with the Kurdish matter in the country. Then, the democratization process, mainly the Europeanization

model in Erdogan's programs has designated the "Kurdish initiative" as a central issue to be resolved and answer the bold claims of Kurdish people in Turkey (Marianna, 2011).

Over all, the main reason why Kurdish nationalism has fruitless their central claims because the demands have been different among Kurdish nationalist political parties and organizations in each of these states (Anush, 2013). The Kurd nationalist movements have mixed implications and trajectories. Some Kurdish ethno nationalists are in it for personal benefit; some use it as a bargaining and state quo purpose; for instance, in Turkey where the largest part of Kurdish nationals is settled, the main claims to have the constitutional identity recognition and cultural and linguistic freedom. On the contrary, another demands the independent state of greater Kurdistan, which would take in Kurdish occupied areas of Syria, Iran, Iraq and Turkey in a single state (Gareth, 2012). Similarly, Ruth (2008), has also stated at present-day Kurdish nationalist organizations is demanding "Kurdish nationhood in these states through recognition their identity in Turkey and Iran and formation of political autonomy in Syria". Whereas, in Iraq, gaining political autonomy, Kurds are moving to the stage of statehood formation". At the same time, there are many internal inconsistencies in the interior of each separatist area that it is not at all clear that if honest conversations and referendums are allowed that the forces of separatism will carry the day. Largely because of these contradictions within the Kurdish nationalist forces themselves many surmises that the various separatist agitations, if not unnecessarily inflamed, are likely to wither on their own as the country's democracy matures, the economy improves, and citizens move on to other challenges (Anush, 2013).

2.3.2. The Serbian Nationalism

According to (Savrun, 2014) among the dominant causes that gave rise to the emergence of the Serbs nationalism are: Several reasons help elucidate why strong ethno nationalistic and nationalistic sentiments remain to adore such manifestation in the Serbian central politics. One is the remaining strength of such ethno nationalist sentiments in Serbian political culture, in united national aspirations that are rooted in myth and feelings of collective victimization and trauma by other ethnic groups. Second, the fundamental cause of Serbian nationalism is the current socio-economic and political situation. And it has revived from the outside world's "Satanization" of Serbia, the socio-economic and political sanctions against Yugoslavia, the economic impoverishment, and the relative isolation of Serbia over the last half-century. This socio-

economic and political culture and situational have galvanized perpetuate or exacerbate Serbian nationalism and ultra-nationalism in the late 1990s. Third, the international and regional situations are behind the cause of the Serbs nationalism. The post-1990s political structure in global politics in general and Eastern Europe politics, in particular, are behind the cause of the Serbs nationalism

The main claims of Serbs nationalism are identity and territorial claims, protecting Serbs against genocide and ethnic cleansing (survival) and autonomy and self-rule (Özkan, 2014). According to Yapıcı (2007), bolstered the above view to prevent this ongoing existential threat to Serbs and to save the existence of the community, it is not the current choice but the duty of the Serbs to organize and defend itself as Serbs nationalist. There is only one response to those who truly care about Serbs. The main purpose of the Serbs Ethno nationalist movements is to withstand the onslaught of the community and to prevent the threat of genocide in the future, to protect Serbs as a people. Therefore, the main claims of people of Serbs nationalism are now reclaiming Serbs historical sites and to restore the historical land and sustain its existence by working with any sovereign Serbian (Bogdan, 1994).

Serbs nationalist brought mixed implications to the communist state of Yugoslavia in general and the Serbs people in particular. The 1990s Serbs nationalist movement shape and influence that was previously seen in Southern Slavs along with Slovenes, Bosnians and Croats politics. After the death of Tito in 1980 and the central politics of Yugoslavia was shifted to internal ethno nationalist struggle among polity and the communist collective presidency system came into effect after his death. Tito communist regime kept a close watch on every nationalist question and aspects of federal states through peaceful and forceful ways. However, after his death, one of the late nationalist movements Serbian nationalist movement started to one of the fanatic ethno nationalist movement in the communist state of Yugoslavia. The extreme Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic canceled 1974 constitutions' provisions about Kosova and Vojvodina and annexed them. All other federates reacted against the fanatic Serbian nationalist movement led by Slobodan Milosevic. Nationalism was used as a camouflage for the economic crises of the mid-1980s.

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Moreover, Özkan (2014), on his part stated that the salient point in the course and the destination of Serbian Nationalism is recognition and ultimate attainment of the popular claims of the people of Serbs. The mean claims of people of Serbs are now discriminated and oppressed from the social, economic and political situation in Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo. The benefits are not being realized, So, the first claims are to achieve these benefits. Second, the Serbs who are questioning their identities are not being respected. Protecting and maintaining the identity of the Serbs in Slovenia and Croatia on Bosnia and Kosovo another claim of Serbs nationalist. Besides, struggle to prevent and stop these people, both in and out of Serbian, who is suffering from killings, displacement, and destruction of their resources. The Serbian Nationalism is a cogitated for thought movement towards mobilization and consolidation of the vast population of Serbs with common Pledge because of Serb's orientation for the restoration and preservation of the known legitimate solid claims of the people of Serbian. So, the final destination of the Serbian Nationalism dwells on the favorable track to which the aspired claims can be answered.

2.3.3. Ethnic Nationalism in Nigeria

Even though it is now a half-century since the majority of African countries gained their independence, the issue of ethnicity, ethnocentrism, nationalism, regionalism and their irresistible outcomes which has been manifested by civil war, genocide and ethnic cleansing,

migration, protracted war, state crisis and separatist struggles continued as the major challenges of state-building in Africa. Despite the fact, various worldwide parts advocate the issue of globalization, international and regional integration; still in various parts of Sub-Saharan Africa fighting along ethnic and identity lines is an obvious fact (Ajayi, 2008).

In Africa, Many people become nationalists by the politicization of ethnicity and ethnic mobilization. Most of the time in the Africa context the story begins with the question, "Where and from whom were you born?" People can develop nationalism through not reading and discussion, but they start with inheritance. From this one can understand that reasoning and rationality based on reading and discussion is nothing to do rather membership in a certain ethnic group. However, in many African countries, nationalism does not exist based on ideology until there are people who call themselves members of one nation (Ajayi and Duruji, 2008). It can be said that nationalism began when some people who lived in the same area and had a common social agenda began to identify themselves with one identity or with others. However, nationalism emerges when those people think they are better than others, and/or because they think they are being harmed by others (Abbink, 2006).

Ethnic nationalism in Nigeria in the case of Igbo ethnic nationalism is discussed in this paper under ethnic nationalism in Africa. Thus, from 1960 to 2008 Nigeria has been characterized by social-economic inequities in the distribution of power and resources among different ethnic groups. These socio-economic inequities, which are rooted in the foundation of the Igbo nationalism and Nigerian state led to a civil war, violence, cleansing, and migration continued as in 1967 in which the Igbo and continued, one of the main ethnic groups claimed to secede from Nigeria. But the attempt was not successful. The war was followed by several systematic and calculated policies, which the victors used to keep the Igbo people down and to hegemonies' their grip on the socio-economic and political domination of Nigeria for a long time in both the Nigerian military and civilian rules. Igbo younger and educate the new generation who do not accept the state-orchestrated marginalization of the people of Igbo in Nigeria. The manifestation is seen in the many Igbo nationalist groups and movements that have arisen to claims for the revival of the de facto independent state of Biafran as a panacea to the separation of the people of Igbo in the Nigerian federation. This new Igbo nationalism like any other nationalism is a politicization of ethnicity and ethnic mobilization, which often changes when an ethnic group manifests a political and economic agenda (Joireman, 2003).

The main claim of Igbo nationalism started with the quest for an independent state of Biafra which extends back to four decades ago, survival against the regime of mass murders, proper representation per number of populations, the Igbo politician and elites suggested that or pursues a peaceful dissolution of Nigeria and has exhausted its members both peaceful and violent ways of new Biafra (Adeyemo, 2004). So, the security imperative was very paramount and the main determining factor for the declaration of the independent state of Biafra at that time. But the rebirth of Igbo nationalism of the 20-first century predominantly turned about the issue of non-full insertion of the Igbo ethnic group into the federation of Nigerian, a perception widely held by many Igbo nationalists. The issue of marginalization is what the people of Igbo had hoped would be mitigated by an inclusive democratic government, knowing the nature and character of such a government as differentiated from the military government. The economic and political marginalization in this background implies that the Igbo ethnic group, compared with other main ethnic groups that makeup Nigeria, are not getting a fair equitable and socio-economic share governance deal especially since the end of the Nigerian-Biafran war (Adeniyi 2006).

The political conspiracy of the Nigerian government against Igbo people, attack against the Igbo people, regional and international situation, genocide and ethnic cleansing, long years rule of corrupt civilian and military, exclusionary rule, colonial legacy are behind the cause of the Igbo nationalism. Besides, the main causes why Igbo nationalism has been the rise of media prolonged effectively by Igbo intellectuals, elites, politicians and Diasporas. Igbo is more gifted in economic skill and economic success. Due to their successes, they have attracted too much jealousy. Thus, the “igbophobia” of non-Igbo is deep-rooted in an inferiority complex; it is born out of the fear of the higher ingenuity, advanced industry, higher intellectual power and higher wisdom. These policies of marginalization were efficiently and effectively carried out through the oppressive military government that dominated Nigerian politics for the greater proportion of its post-war history that spanned between 1970 till 1999 (Uwazu, 2004).

It was this scenario that formed a new circumstance for the calls of state-orchestrated marginalization by the military government against the people of Igbos, in their struggle for full supplement into the post-war Nigerian society. Similarly, Onu (2003), stated that the rebirth of Igbo nationalism which is led by MASSOB, a young and revolutionary ethno nationalist organizations of succeeding new generations of Igbo who fought the civil war, is a result of their

pessimist and frustration in the fate of Nigerian federation and perception that the prevailing political-economic structure that apparent hand over the Igbos to a lower status than it deserves comparing with other groups is illegitimate. Several documented facts support this view, no wonder the cries of marginalization have been loudest from them. Ikpeze (2000) in an attempt to establish that the Igbo's in post-war Nigeria were marginalized, articulated four clear dimensions this marginalization has manifested; economic discrimination, politico-bureaucratic corruption, lack of military neutralization and exclusion are bold for the rebirth of Igbo nationalism.

2.3.4. Ethnic Nationalism in Ethiopia in the context of Oromo nationalism

The well planned Oromo national movement was started in 1960's. Both the primary and ultimate goal of Oromo nationalism is to help the Oromo people to decide its fate by its own. The leading organization in fostering the Oromo national movement is the OLF. The OLF activated every Oromo national to think deeply about liberation.

One of the great weaknesses of the Oromo national movement is the uneven development of Oromo nationalism. At this time, the Oromo people can be roughly categorized in to three. On one extreme, there are Oromo nationalists who have been sacrificing their lives and resources as they struggle to liberate their people. Those Oromo's who have taken actions to defend the rights and interests of the Oromo nation belong to this category. The Ethiopians have targeted such Oromos for destruction. At the other extreme there are Oromos who consciously or unconsciously betrayed their people for personal gains by joining the enemy camp and end up fighting against the Oromo national interest and national struggle. One of the weaknesses of the Oromo struggle is its inability to minimize the power and impact of these collaborators. The majority of the Oromo's are between these two extreme ends. This is the third category. Oromo nationalism matures as it mobilizes this large section of the Oromo society (Asafa, 2016:41-42)

Scholars who invested their knowledge and time on studying the Oromo nationalism classified the struggle of the Oromo people in to three periods (Vaughan, 2016). The first phase is associated with the unorganized but fierce resistance of the Oromo leaders against the Abyssinian conquerors. The five year Italian occupation supported the Oromo local rulers to consolidate their claim for autonomy. The second phase is linked with the Bale farmers uprising against the imperial administration. It also coincides with the formation of welfare associations

that raised the issue of land implicitly. The third period of Oromo nationalism starts with the imprisonment of members of Mecha Tulema welfare association and the execution of General Tadesse Biru. The high motivation and unity to defend their common enemy is corner stone for Oromo nationalism (Gnamo, 2002).

The main target of Oromo nationalism was to defend the political, economic, social and cultural legacies of the Oromo people from absolute extinction (Mohammed as cited by Vaughan, 2003). Today, the Oromo nationalists employ a new strategy of changing the demography of urban areas by settling Oromo individuals (Teshome, 2018). This helps them to balance their population number with other ethnic groups. It is a clear fact that, since 1990's, the Oromo nationalism is widening its scope among the Oromo students (Asafa, 2016).

CAPTER THREE

3.1. Background of Ethnic Nationalism in Ethiopia

The significance of ethnicity and nationalism in the Ethiopia contexts has associated with the historical condition of state formation, the subsequent political struggle for power, resources, domination and marginalization, and succession-mostly by elites but not limited to them, the legacies of Marxism-Leninism, the modernization process of the country, the radicalization of western-educated Ethiopians and to some extent the influence of colonialism.

In accordance with the ‘national question’, Marxism ideology had greatly influenced the political dynamics of Ethiopia in the second half of the twentieth century (Keller, 2014). As the Marxist literature on the ‘national question is “‘situated at the point of intersection of politics, technology, and social transformation”’ (Hobsbawm, 1990, p. 10), it was also so influential in Ethiopia and within the ruling circle, suggestive of the value of using ethnicity to get within the ‘mindset’ of a population, the better to mobilize it to ends defined by the class struggle (Messay, 2003).

The idea of ethnic issues as the major problem of Ethiopia also influenced by colonial heritages. For example, the view of Ethiopia as an Amhara colony, before being constructed by Eritreans and some Oromo intellectuals, was an idea that Italians had originated to undermine the Ethiopian resistance (Messay, 2003). Furthermore, Italians promoted the notion of “Greater Tigre” as well as that of “Greater Somalia,” and during the five years of occupation divided Ethiopia along ethnic lines to activate “the revolt of the non-Amhara populations such as the Oromo and the Muslims” (Bahru, 1991; Hobsbawm, 1990; Messay,2003). Later, the ethnicization of the Eritrean questions during the struggle periods popularizes ethnic nationalism.

Another historical development which apparently confirms the significance of the concept is the existence of some of historical parallelism between Ethiopia and the former USSR where both empires were challenged by a nationalist question which later leads to the creation of many independent states in ex- USSR and the dismemberment of Eretria from Ethiopia of in 1993 (Keller, 2014). Besides to this, the constitutional engendering of self-determination in Ethiopia as an alternative to ‘authoritarian high modernism’ (Scott, 1998) further increase the relevance of the idea of nation, nationalism, and ethnicity to contemporary Ethiopia.

Hence, ethnic nationalism in the Ethiopia context – which understood as nationalism based on the ethnic group with a perception of shared culture and history dominates the politics of Ethiopia in the last few years. As such, this paper has informed by a holistic approach to ethnicity, but highly skewed to the instrumentalization and social constructive role of ethnicity. To capture the basic political issues ranging from the nation-building project to ethnic nationalism and the struggle for power; ethnicity and nationalism in Ethiopia are seen as an ideology and instrument of political mobilization.

Whatever the different perspectives, the collapse of the Marxist-Leninist regime of Mengistu Haile Mariam in May 1991 opens the door to the constitutional engineering of self-determination rights to each ethnic group (Young, 1993). Besides this, the conquest of the centre by insurgent armies of the periphery destroys the existing cultural basis of the Ethiopian state. The country officially becomes a multi-ethnic state following the rise of ethnic consciousness in the country (Young, 1993). Put differently, Ethiopia, which claims a three-thousand years lineage, witnessed like the Soviet Union sudden change since 1991 (Young, 1993). Whether it is called the ‘museum of culture’ by Ethiopian nationalist or a prison “house of the nation” by critical observers like Gellner, the contemporary Ethiopia state subjected to relentless interrogation.

3.2. Who are the Amhara

The term Amhara has various definitions and descriptions. According to Aleqa Taye (1914 E.C) *Amhara* means simply *cultivator*. For Aleqa Teklewold, the word Amhara is the combination of two Amharic words: ለ (Am)-people, and ሀ (Hara)-free, together ለሀ (Amhara) means free people (cited in Yihune, 2010 E.C). Amharas are Semitic people (Fellman, 1976) descendants of Israel (Taye, 1914 E.C) who lives in the central Ethiopian plateau mainly in present Gonder, Gojam, Wollo and Shewa (Michael, 2008; Reminick, 1976; Shoup, 2011).

However, as Levine (1974) the people of Amhara live in most parts of Ethiopia. Amharas are the mixture of people who speak Amharic, Semitic language family developed from *Geez* (Daniel, 2003; Scano, Stefano and Tartaglia, 1996; Stokes, 2009). The people of Amhara have multi-ethnic character and identify themselves as *Habesha* (Levine, 1974) or synonymous with Ethiopia (Tegegne, 1998). At the outset, Amharas are Christians (Tartaglia, *et al.*, 1996; Taye, 1914 E.C) and considered as the bearer of Ethiopian Orthodox Church (Fellman, 1976; Levine,

1974). On the other hand Fellman (1976) depicts the Amhara as the leading people of Semitic Ethiopia. Politically, culturally and historically they are the Abyssinian par excellence.

3.3. Amhara in the Ethiopian Politics

For centuries, Ethiopia was ruled by Amhara emperors claimed to be the descendants of King Solomon of Jerusalem (Shoup, 2011; Stokes, 2009). This tradition of Solomonic dynasty has continued till 1974 revolution despite some interruptions in the middle. Fellman (1976) stated that Amhara is the leading people in Ethiopian politics and history. From Axumite to the modern empire, Amhara had played an undeniable role in nation building and state formation. Tewdros II (1855-1868), Yohannes IV (1872-1888) and Menelik II (1889-1913) (the first and the last were Amhara) laid the foundation of modern Ethiopia Empire (Bahru, 2001; Daniel, 2003; Sorenson, 1992). Amhara has been the center of Ethiopian unity and integration (Tegegne, 1998), its language, culture and religion used as court language, culture and religion (Michael, 2008). Shoup (2011) stated that Amhara has been the ruling class for years and have provided many imperial rulers. This is the reason why Pennec and Toubkis (2004) described Amhara as “the heart of the empire and the cradle of the monarchy” (p. 7). Thus, as Fellman (1976) Amharas were politically leading and the par excellence of the Abyssinian Empire.

However, other ethnic groups (Tigray, Oromo, for example) had also played greater role in Ethiopian politics. Since Amhara rulers considered themselves as Ethiopia with no ethnic inclination (Tegegne, 1998), the imperial court attracted ambitious individuals and bright young men from other ethnic groups as far as they adopted courts’ language and culture (Michael, 2008). Yates (2011) maintained that during Zemene Mesafint Oromos in Wollo, Gojam and Begemdir had increased access to land and political power. To this end, the *Yeju* dynasty of Oromo had been established in Debre Tabor under the leadership of Ali Guangul (Bahru, 2001; Merera, 2003). Remarkably, *Mohamodoch* of Wollo (Bahru, 2001) was also prominent that could justify the role of Oromo in Ethiopian politics. In fact, Ethiopian rulers like Iyoas, Tinshu Ras Ali, Lij Eyasu and Haile Selassie I had lineage to Oromo (Daniel, 2003). In addition to this, during the period of Emperor Menelik II, Oromo had played prominent role being military commanders (Merera, 2003), advisors and provincial governors.

3.4. Ethnicity and Politics in Ethiopia

Though ethnicity played an instrumental role in creating a widespread hatred among groups in many African states, neither of them provided an explicit declaration about the role of ethnicity. Ethiopia is unique in advocating ethnicity to run political affairs (Abbink, 2010). Although the system was not officially declared, the reign of emperor Menelik II was federal in defacto (Bekalu, 2018). The different regional lords administered their own province by paying a tribute for the central government. What makes the past experience very unique from the current federal system was in that the former was territorial based. The heart of the Ethiopian federal system is ethnicity. Regional states are drafted and demarcated based on ethnic lines.

Ethnicity is becoming key determinant in the politics of Ethiopia. People are always considering the privileges of their own ethnic group in every government decisions. Members of many ethnic groups depict themselves in the sphere of their ethnic group. They give a second place for the more inclusive Ethiopian citizenship (Ismagilova, 2004). Thus; in Ethiopia ethnicity is a parameter to arrange federal constituencies. According to the 1995 FDRE constitution, ultimate power relies in the hands of ethnic groups.

3.5. The Amhara Ethnic Group

People of the Amhara ethnic group are available everywhere in the regions of Ethiopia. Since the introduction of ethnic based arrangement, the Amhara ethnic group faced a threat in many parts of the state. Members of this ethnic group were persecuted in Arbagugu, Wollega and Metekell (Dagnachew, 2018). The evilness of ethnic federalism in Ethiopia resulted for the death of 10,000-15,000 Amhara nationals in West Hararghe (Dereje, 2018). Their property was looted and plundered. The massacre was very brutal. Harbeson, as quoted in Wondwosen, explained the precluding of an Amhara based party during the transitional conference held at Addis Ababa. This discrimination left the Amhara ethnic group without a genuine representative that defends its interest.

Aregawi, as quoted in Dereje, stated the non representation of Amhara nationals during the transitional charter. On the one hand, the ethnic federalism recognized the need to call all representatives to discuss the affairs of the state. On the other extreme, it denied a chance for the Amhara ethnic group to forward its idea via its agent. Even after the launching of ethnic based

politics by the EPRDF government, the Amhara people blamed the ethnic structure as the beginning of state disintegration (Keller, 2002).

Although the constitution legally proclaimed the right of every individuals to accumulate property by moving in every corner of the state, members of the Amhara ethnic group are displaced and killed in Southern Ethiopia and Benishangul Gumuz (Anwar,2018).In the early years of EPRDF , TPLF forcefully settled the land of Wolkayit by Tigrean nationals. However, the local residents of the Wolkayit people are not ready to accept the new identity imposed up on them. Peoples of Wolkayit associate themselves with Amhara culture and psychological makeup (Anwar, 2018).

Its historical lands have been distributed for other regional states under the conspiracy of TPLF. Although the people of Raya and Wolkayit claimed an Amhara identity, the federal government is still reluctant to decide on the issue (Dereje,2018).The native residents of Wolkayit have been out of market due to the monopoly of Tigrean migrants (Sisay,2018).

The mechanism used by the TPLF dominated EPRDF regime was to divide ethnic groups as dominant and dominated. To weaken the power of the Amhara ethnic group, TPLF portrayed it as the enemy of all ethnic groups and seeker of unitary. This narrative was effective because members of this ethnic group were slaughtered, killed, and tortured through institutional way.

The Amhara, including the urban intellectuals who assimilate themselves with the Amhara culture, are the great power contenders of the TPLF domination (Pausawang,2009).They claim the restoration of access to the port. They are working to address the demands of the rural population. The EPRDF program strongly criticized the approach of the Amhara as Chauvinist.

The front defined the Amhara ethnic group as strictly pan Ethiopianist and the oppressor of the rest ethnic groups. According to the explanation, the chauvinists do not permit the participation and equality of other ethnic groups.

Since the launching of ethnic federalism in Ethiopia, members of the Amhara ethnic group were forcefully displaced by officials of the Oromo, SNNP,Afar and Benishangul regional state(Bekalu, 2018).Although the constitution stipulated the right to accumulate property by moving here and there, the *woreda* and *kebele* officials often intimidate and displace the Amhara nationals (Sisay,2016).The Amhara nationals does not feel free everywhere. Minority groups in

Amhara region enjoyed more decentralized administration than any of the federal states in Ethiopia. For instance, In Oromo special zone people are administered by their own personnel and working language (Mastewal, 2016).

3.6. The Amhara Nationalism

There is no ample literature written on Amhara nationalism because it is infant in the political dynamism of Ethiopia. Large numbers of people who speak Amharic language incline to depict themselves with the broad Ethiopian identity. They does not emphasize on their ethnic affiliation. The prevailing widespread repression and marginalization of the Amhara people and the replacement of TPLF by ODP inspired the Amhara nationalism to run their affairwith moderate freedom. As a result, different civic and political organizations were established to strengthen the Amhara nationalism (Mastewal, 2016).

Some scholars describe the Amhara nationalism as the effect of external force. Though many of the Amhara nationals attach their identity with Ethiopian citizenship, the government ordered them to accept the Amhara identity forcefully. The vision of Amhara nationalism is to restore the historical lands of Amhara and to facilitate conditions of local representation for Amhara nationals outside of their region (Mastewal, 2016). The identity quest of, Metekel, Wolkayit, Raya, Dera/the entire Shoa Amhara are illustrations for the rise of Amhara nationalism even outside of the region. In many urban areas outside of the region, majority of the population is Amhara. The primary agenda of Amhara nationalists is to declare the representation of Amhara nationals reside outside of the region.

The government's strong Anti Amhara policy and the widespread acceptance of ethnic identity in many regions provided a concrete base for Amhara nationalism. It was first preached by Professor Asrat Woldeyes and his comrade's .They formed the All Amhara People Organization in the early years of EPRDF. The Amhara kings take a lion share in expanding the territory of Ethiopia. However, no one can deny the fact that there were Oromo, Gurage and other Generals along with Amhara rulers (Mastewal, 2016).

In the current politics of Ethiopia Amhara is seen in a negative way for two reasons. First, historically, the current shape of Ethiopia was drafted and completed by Amhararulers. As a result, other ethnic groups considered the expansion process as conquest. This inspired other

ethnic groups to consider the Amhara ethnic group as the most privileged and historically dominant. Second, the strong psychological attachment of the Amhara people with the territorial integrity and unity of the state created an obstacle for secessionist liberation fronts (Mastewal, 2016).

Today there is a good beginning of Amhara nationalism. Immediately following its power control, the TPLF dominated regime practiced the anti Amhara manifesto. Around 3 million Amharas were lost during the 2007 census (Mastewal, 2016). The historical Amhara lands like Metekel, Raya, Dera/entire shoa and Wolkayit Tegede are given for other regions through the decision of TPLF. The Amharas outside of their region cannot participate in local politics since they have no their own council (Mastewal, 2016).

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1. The Causes of Amhara nationalism

4.1.1. Anti-Amhara Narratives

According to Esayas(2018), it is most controversial and contradictory on how, when, and where anti-Amhara narratives started to dismantle Ethiopia in general and the Amharas in particular. Still, there is an ongoing academic and nonacademic debate among different groups but most of them agreed on the coming of colonial power in the horn and the red sea coast with their divide and rule policy that bring this anti-Amhara and anti-Ethiopian propaganda (Bahru,1991).The colonial and imperialist powers instigating anti-Amhara propaganda after the Berlin Conference. Especially the Tigrean and the Shewa policy of Italy justify the above statement. The Italian colonial power was publicizing systematic and designed anti-Amhara (Shewa) propaganda by printing hate books in the Tigrigna language (Mesganw, 2018) to the Tigrigna speaker peoples. In favor of this argument (FGD B April 11, 2021 and INT 1 and 2May 3, 2021) justified the following:

During European Colonialism in the horn of Africa in general and Ethiopia in particular, the Anti-Amhara rhetoric or narratives has been started. According to Berlin conference points/term of agreements by the super powers Ethiopia never be colonized due to the colonizer Italians failed to maintain peacefully administrations. The reason behind for this is the bravery struggling of the Amhara people against colonizer Italians. While searching the reasons for that particularly after the battle of Adwa, it was found out that the patriotism and courage of the Amhara people was a deep impediment. The colonial writer has been done anti-Amhara narratives in a systematic and designed manner, the chief designer of this rhetoric or propaganda were some travelers and Italian colonialist writers. Especially Italian colonial policymakers tried to impose on anti-Amhara rhetoric or propaganda during the five years of occupation.

As Adinet (2019) reinforced the above view of respondents during the re-occupation of Ethiopia by Fascist Italy, one of the most popular propaganda methods used to win the hearts and minds of our people was the anti-Amhara narrative. "The Italian government has no dream of colonizing Ethiopia," Fascist Italy said. The Italian government's main focus is to save the people

who are suffering under the Shoa Amhara regime.” this was Fascist Italian propaganda during five years of occupation and the post-fascist political parties of the mid-1960s were immersed in this destructive propaganda. OLF and TPLF are mentioned in this regard. Their manifesto clearly states that the historical enemy of these ethnic political parties is the Amhara. The oppressive narrative, which is based on a distorted analysis of the oppression of the Amhara people and the people of our country, has been the heart of their political program for the past fifty years onwards.

Though this anti-Amhara narrative and discourse step by step reached it is final and climax preliminary from the day before to the end of the second Italian-Ethiopia war (Esayas, 2018). Among those prewar propaganda works; we can mention Baron Roman Prochazka, who worked as a diplomat and a Western intelligence agent in Addis Ababa in the 1930s, wrote his book entitled "The African Menace" in East Africa, on page 3 of his book "*Abyssinia the Powder Barrel*" there is an ethnic group in Ethiopia. This ethnic group is a major obstacle to our Western policy of expansion in Africa (Prochazka, 1934). Moreover, he claims that, if Amhara is organized, it is a threat to Africa and for us, and the policy of every western nation against these people must be viewed from here.” He further elucidated that, "there is no such thing as a single Abyssinian people. Most non-Christian Abyssinian tribes want nothing more than freedom from oppression in Amhara. If these different peoples and ethnic groups in the Ethiopian territory, which are linguistically, culturally, and religiously separated from the oppressive minority of Amhara, had been given the right to self-determination, the yoke of Amhara oppression would have been broken. Instead, they were forcibly separated from the European influence and the benefits that progressive European colonialism would bring to the country” (Prochazka, 1934).

Though, after the expulsion of fascist Italy, the anti-Amhara misleading rhetoric and narratives using a false premise, continued following the coming of the pro-fascist writer and Somalia irredentism. In the republic of Somalia, TV documentaries and radio stations were mobilized the whole media and state apparatus at its disposal to propagate Anti-Amhara propaganda targeting the Somali and the Oromo peoples in the former Bale province (Gebbru, 1996: 130). As a result, the Somali and the Oromo in Bale hated the Amhara, to weaken Amhara in a holistic way shaped the national image. Following the coming of the student movement, the adoption of the leftist political organizations, and the consolidating of the fanatic ethno nationalist movement, this

fascist ideology was first shown in Ethiopia after the end of the Fascist occupation by Eritrean students during the 1960s student uprising. To soften and embrace the Eritrean cause, the 60's Ethiopian politics is the main problem in Ethiopia, and the fascist concept of self-determination raised by the Eritrean separatists is a solution to the "ethnic question". Besides different anti-Amhara groups negatively loaded epithets such as "Neftegna, national oppressor, blood-sucker, parasite, chauvinist", etc. were interchangeably used in the Ethiopian political terminology (Mastewal, October 10, 2016).

Essays (2018), bolstered the above view of the stories as the dehumanization of the Amhara people's cause by labeling the Amhara magnificence history and their leadership as "chauvinists." In the same vein already stated, in the student narrative in Ethiopia, Amharas are chauvinists who seek to preserve the old feudal order. These overriding Anti-Amhara dogmatic ideologies and propaganda were being depicted on widely circulated propaganda through all media outlets, awareness creation, and indoctrination paper during 1960. Furthermore, the radical student also coined the Amhara as the persecutor and the others as the convict of the Amhara. This was presented by Wallelign Mekonnen Kassa article entitled "*On the Question of Nationality in Ethiopia*" (Wallelign, 1969). As it is stated earlier in the above paragraphs the article has also stated "*Ethiopia is the prison of the nation*" and the Amhara is the oppressor and others were oppressed except Tigray which is criticized for being the collaborator to the Amharas (Ibid).

Historical evidences show that, in the last half-century of the so-called "liberation" groups in the wake of the student movement in Ethiopia, all the native words are national oppressors, blood-suckers, and Neftegnas (Esayas, 2018). Similarly, Andinet (2018), has also stated they blame the Amhara people for all the developmental changes they have not been able to bring to their community. At that time when ethno nationalists blamed the Amhara people for all the problems in the country. On the other hand, they have blamed the previous monarchy and all military government officials for the mistreatment and misery inflicted on them by the so-called Amhara people. For example, the TPLF, which has been openly hostile to the people of Amhara since its manifesto, has identified Amhara as its enemy. The Derg is a massacre; whenever the Derg incites the people of Tigray to say that it is oppressive, the conclusion is "Derg means Amhara." As a result, most of the Tigrayan community is convinced that there is no difference between the

Derg and Amhara. The mountains of Tigray will be the grave of Amhara; Tigray sang Amhara as a killer. There is still a misconception in the Tigray community that the Derg means Amhara (Mesganw, 2018).

According to Assefa (2005), there is also framing and blaming of the Amhara as a “Black Settler Colonizer”; consequently, many ethno nationalist organizations have framed their struggle against and to be free from the Amhara. In this regard (FGD A May 3, 2021)said as:

At the very beginning the ideology of the TPLF was rebuilding great Tigrean republic by Amhara grave. After decades of rebelling struggle against the Derg regime the TPLF dominated EPRDF government assumed power in 1991. Following the coming power of TPLF/EPRDF government introduced and launched a political program to eliminate the Amhara people as it was officially designated during the struggle time at Dedebeit desert. The ideology of dismantling Amhara is known as a revolutionary democracy and it is the guiding ideology of the state.

According to Desalegn (2018), since the EPRDF took power, May 20, 1991, TPLF dominated the EPRDF government, which has been declared “Amhara's foremost enemy, must be destroyed.” the anti-Amhara misleading rhetoric and propaganda that wrongly portrayed the Amhara as “national oppressors” has been done through a systematic and designed manner, over the past 50 years. The chief architect of this unconvincing claim is the Eritrean people liberation front (EPLF), Tigrean People’s Liberation Front (TPLF), and Oromo liberation front (OLF). This misleading narrative was latterly institutionalized with the ratification of the constitution of the FDRE. In this regard, Assefa (2012:3) put as follows:

“The incessant propaganda the TPLF and its cohorts mounted has targeted the Amharas(sic)... has succeeded in reducing the Amara people into a population that is fit for any act of dehumanization by groups such as TPLF who continue to perpetrate atrocities with impunity against the Amharas they identified as their mortal enemies”.

In the same token, interviewed key informants and the document accessed from the different sources revealed that TPLF dominated EPRDF government also built statues that accuse Amhara as breast slayer and murderer. From FGDs and in-depth interviews, informants contended that statues like Anole in Oromia regional state are built through a systematic and intended manner to invoke negative feelings and anti-Amhara hate to the Oromo people.

4.1.2. Structural Oppression

The lack of proper representation and political marginalization of the Amhara people in the last three decades in the Ethiopian overall political arena is a cause of the rebirth of Amhara nationalism (Essayas, 2018). Many evidences show that Amhara does not have political representation in the government structure in the federal or regional government -for example, it has been formally discriminated against to the political representation by deliberately orchestrated depopulation of the Amhara population (Amanuel, May 04, 2018). Especially After the downfall of the military government by different forces in 1991 government is characterized as the domination of one ethnic group, Tigray identity, while it denounces the opportunity for other groups (Haile, 2015). Many Amhara nationals are subject to persecution by the ruling TPLF its affiliated groups. The government use politicization of ethnicity to retaliate against other ethnic groups like the clandestine reduction of around 2.5 million Amhara from the earth crust (Halie, 2015).

In the last three decades, the total marginalization of the people of Amhara from the domain of the federal set up (Mastewal, November 10, 2016). Total denial of existence and absence of meaningful representation at any level of the political leadership, administration, and implementation of de-jure and de facto voicelessness standard (Andinet, 2019). In Ethiopian political history, it is rare to get an ethnic group more excluded and discriminated against than the Amhara ethnic group. Many historical evidences show that through the nation-building process more than 20 million Amhara people reside outside of the region but these people are not sufficiently represented at local, regional, and federal levels in executive government structures equivalent to its population (Bekele, 2019).

As indicated in the literature review, in Syria and Iraq the population and housing census reports left the Kurd people as a distinct identity in order not to publicize their tangible numbers, this is one of the cause for Kurd nationalism. The same case, according to the 2007 population and housing census of Ethiopia, in many urban cities outside of the region, the population of the Amhara ethnic group was an absolute majority yet reports obscured. This results misrepresentation of ethnic Amhara in many urban areas outside of the region though it outnumbered the total population of the areas. The decisions made at the center affect their political and social life abundantly even at the regional level the Amhara people were also

controlled by pseudo parties that are incompatible with the interest and aspiration of the community they perceive to represent. Therefore, this marginalization and discrimination of Amhara from the regional and center politics as well as the accumulated massive oppression of TPLF dominate EPRDF government led to the inception of the Amhara nationalism (Mastewal, November 10, 2016).

Based on the above idea, regional governments, in their respective regions, give rights and recognition to those who own the authority. Accordingly, in the region of Tigray, the owner is the people of Tigray, Oromo - Oromo, Somali - Somali, Benishangul-Gumuz, Bertha, Gumuz, Shenasha, Maona Como; In Harari – Harari, Afar-Afar, and so on. It is said that in contrast to the constitution of the Amhara and Gambella regions, it gives the people of its region. For example, in the Harari region, the population of Oromo and Amhara is higher than the Harari. Nevertheless, the recognition and authority of the Harari Constitution are given to the Harari and the Oromo, who throw the Amhara out of the gate (Harari Revised Constitution, 2001). Furthermore (INT 1 May 3, 2021) informants explained the situations as:

Anti Amhara document the so called Federal Constitution descended into all states, each ethnic group and tribe was set to exterminate and exclusive the Amhara's, and the Amhara's were deprived of any territorial rights and privileges. The Amhara who live in the states are not members of the region and who have no authority over the region can reside in that territory, only with the consent of the region. The Amhara have no political right and authority. If they do not, they can evict them and give them another name at any time. The Amhara was expelled from Benishangul-Gumuz, Banch Maj Zone, Welega, Jimma, Harar, and the like.

Thus from the idea of the informants in the indented paragraph one can conclude that the Federal constitution almost denied the rights of ethnic Amhara to live as a member of a country. Almost all key informants including ethnic and civic political party leaders and members, political science scholars, activists and bloggers shared these points as the major causes for the Amhara nationalism. Unlike Amhara, when the Oromo and the Somali have a favored number, the constitution recognizes the Oromo and the Somali and similarly throws the Amhara out of the door (Mulkamu, 2018). Similarly, in Benishangul-Gumuz there is the greatest number of

Amhara nationals but it's not recognized legally. The same is true in the Oromia region. Even in the territory that they called the Amhara region, they were deprived of the same ownership they had given to the Oromo. This situation is contributed to the rebirth of Amhara nationalism (Esayas, 2018).

On the other hand regarding the above stated issues, many of (FGD A May 3, 2021) Asserted as:

Historical evidences revealed that Amhara people are highly involved in the process of nation-building. Due to this reason there are large numbers of Amhara people live in different part of Ethiopia. For instance, there are a large number of Amhara people in Oromia, Benishangul, Afar, Somalia regions and Addis Ababa, and Dire DawCity administrations. Despite this large population of Amhara's living in different regions of Ethiopia, it is denied political representation and the right to self-government. These people are deprived of their basic rights. Millions of Amhara people are denied their right to be taught and used in their mother tongue. In the same way, when this Amhara people live in the different regional states of Ethiopia, they are deprived of the right to elect and to be elected. As a result, this systematic and deliberative political discrimination against the Amhara give rise for the emergence of Amhara nationalism.

Accordingly, based on the data stated above, one can conclude that especially after the establishment of the TPLF dominated FDRE government, the Amhara people were not represented properly. The interests and aspirations of the Amharas were missed, which resulted the estrangement and sense of exclusion from the new federation. Furthermore, the degeneration of multi-ethnic political parties because of the stick by the government exacerbated the problem and frustrated the Amhara politicians. As a result, they changed their political paradigm into their own identity. Thus, the political discrimination of the Amhara elite contributed to the formation of Amhara nationalism.

Surprisingly, the structural oppression of the Amhara people are not only in the state apparatus and government structures, it is highly observed even in the opposition camp. According to (INT1 Feb.14, 2021; FGD A March 10,2021) key informants in general and key informants from Civic political Parties in particular stated, leaders and members of the Amhara political elites in the opposition camp were insulted as chauvinist and neftegna by their colleagues who came from other ethnic groups. This shows that ethnic Amhara had been victim due to structural

oppression not only by the government but also the opposition block. Over all, the finding of this study revealed that the basic causes of the rise of Amhara nationalism are structural oppression against the Amhara. As the result of this the people of Amhara dragged from the center politics and the accumulated massive oppression of TPLF dominated EPRDF government.

The other thing that structural oppression against Amhara people are the introduction of ethnic based federal system. According to Getenet (2016), the commencement of Amhara nationalist sentiment and Amhara struggle is the result of EPRDF's policy of ethnic-based federalism. Because most of the problems of the people of Amhara emanated from the fragile of EPRDF's policy of ethnic-based federalism. The problems of the people of Amhara cannot be solved without nationalism. He has further noted that one of the main reasons why the nationality of Amhara is chosen to be the formula of salvation for the people of Amhara is that the problem is never thought to be solved within the framework of the EPRDF's policy of ethnic-based federalism. While the TPLF dominated EPRDF government officials declared the Amhara people is a historical enemy in the preamble of the constitution, and despite the other parties occupying power, the Amhara people can never think of it as a tyrannical state-sanctioned solution to the problem of Amhara people. The only way out for the people of Amhara engaging in ethno nationalism through standing on its own and can make the impossibility possible. Regarding this point one of the (FGD B April 11, 2021) expressed the condition as:

The coming power of TPLF / EPRDF dominated government, the country has divided into many ethnic groups based on ethnic-line, and it divided the Amhara too by saying "You are Amhara, this is your boundary, this is your flag, this is your distinction from other peoples, this is your history, and you have your own identity and not an Ethiopian". Not only dividing Amhara through ethnic lines but also caused public catastrophes. As a result, recently, the people of Amhara have been able to stand together to an ethnic-based movement that opposes Ethiopianism sentiment.

According to the above-indented paragraph, we can conclude that ethnic-based federal arrangement, politicization of ethnicity and partisan state apparatus are fertile ground for the emergence of Amhara nationalism. In this regard consistently agreed that the fragile ethnic-based federal arrangement is a major cause for the Amhara nationalist sentiment. According to Human Rights Watch (2000), in support of this argument, posits that the causes of ethnic nationalism in

Ethiopia are associated with the new ideology of ethnic-based federal arrangement which has encouraged an upsurge of ethnic nationalist's sentiment.

In the same vein, many scholars continue to believe that there is no vibrant and loyal civic based opposition and organization in the existing Ethiopian condition. Present Ethiopia is very flawed because as we have seen in the last three decades, today's civic based political party could be "ethnic or in multi-ethnic bases" or "rebel or secessionist" in other time. At present, civic based opposition political parties are accused of collaborating with the outlawed ruling party and fanatic ethnic nationalist groups.

The aforementioned civic nationalist groups did not save the Amhara people from ethnic cleansing and genocide. Therefore the basic causes of Amhara nationalism are lack of vibrant and loyal civic based opposition and organization in the last couple of decades (Essayas., 2018). As outlined in the literature review, while instrumentalists emphasize, the end of multi-ethnic political movements together with the regime's and civic nationalist groups' failure to address the Amhara national question left ethnic nationalism as the only viable form of resistance. Thus, as a result of this Amhara nationalism emerged.

Furthermore, for two main reasons, Ethiopian (civic) nationalism has not yet been established. In the future, the chances of not building for these two reasons are slim. One of these reasons is the lack of agreement on our chosen monarchy, history and civilization, flag, victories, and heroes to build nationalism. This is due to the neglect of the nation-building process and the events that may occur in the process. It seems that there is a country in the world that has been built on sugarcane and popcorn, and the nation-building process has been marred by invasion and enslavement due to differences of opinion that have arisen in the process of nation-building. As a result, not only yesterday, but also national flags, national victories, and heroes could not be agreed upon. These issues play an important role in the process of building nationalism (NAMA manifesto, 20180).

The second reason for the failure of the construction of nationalism in our country is the stagnation of fake Ethiopian unity activists. It is as if these hypocrites have rejected the recognition of each nation by contributing to the building of the nation by pretending that Ethiopia stands as a separate country. In these regard most key informants confirmed that isolate

individuals and groups who have played a significant role in the nation-building process and other issues are the pushing factors the cause for the ongoing Amhara nationalism. Thus, Amhara set up the ethnic nationalists' sentiments and organization to fill the gap (Melkamu, 2018; Esayas, 2018).

4.1.3. Socio-Economic marginalization

It is obvious that the Amhara exposed for social exclusion and economic deprivation for the last three decades. Especially Amhara marginalized in the distribution of resources, utilization of land, having the private property, and employment opportunities and the like. Concerning the economic indicators of exclusion, the Amhara ethnic group is one of the most marginalized in Ethiopia (Abinet, 2017). He added that they are marginalized and sidelined from the benefit of economic advantage. They do not have equal benefits over national resources and utilizing the local resources with others. From these points of view one can conclude that, the economic status of one community will determine political, psychological, socio-cultural, and another status and it resulted immediate catastrophes of a given society.

As stated in the review literature, in Nigeria in the case of Igbo nationalism and Amhara nationalism in Ethiopia has many similarities and differences. But there are a couple of similarities in the area of economic deprivations in the respective ethnic national groups. The main cause of Igbo nationalism in Nigeria is the economic exclusion of the Igbo people, especially by focusing on the national distribution of resources, utilization of land, having the private property, etc. the major causes of Amhara nationalism in Ethiopia are also economic discrimination, the Igbo are highly discriminated in Nigeria than any other ethnic groups. There are many Amhara's in each region of the country that has also discriminated against. Economic discrimination is one of the root causes of Amhara nationalism and in the case of Igbo nationalism too.

According to (Esayas, 2018; Bekele, 2019), argued that Equality and equitable resource use of the country with other peoples of Ethiopia is one of the most important questions of Amhara nationalism. Moreover, Esayas (2018),has noted that the political, economic as well as societal devastating conditions in the Amhara national regional state because of the unequal allocation of national resource and budget in the last three decades and has been done through a systematic

and designed conspiracy against the Amhara people. Accordingly, the other cause for rising of Amhara nationalism has been the allocation of goods and services as well as the fair sharing of national resources with other peoples of the country. As a people Amhara deserves to have fair participation from the national cake with that of fellow people in Ethiopia.

In favor of the above argument most of key informants said that, the people of Amhara are economically, socially as well as politically disfavored in the last three decades. There has been economic marginalization against the people of Amhara by the government. The finding of this study unveiled that, the Amhara people in general and the Amhara nationalist groups, in particular, are demanding for fair distribution of resources and protecting Amhara from rampant poverty. The results of these studies revealed that socio-economic marginalization are among the main causes of Amhara nationalism. Amhara has been systematically excluded from the Ethiopian trade. For instance, the TPLF dominated EPRDF government has been given fertile land of Amhara to various non-Amhara groups without the consent of the Amhara people. Bekele (2019).He also added that, the Amhara people have been structurally exploited from their fertile land, which is a major source of wealth. Thus, the Amhara in various regions of the country take over their land, property lotted and evicted, protected from economic activities and so on. In associated with this (FGD C April 11, 2021) outlined the following:

The government took land from many land owners of the Amhara people in the pretext of investment with no possible replacement for the last three decades. As a result of this the Amhara people in general the Amhara farmer in particular left for economic hard ship and absolute poverty. On the other hand Amhara's investors protected from investment opportunities and even they have been accused of unjust tax evasion. Above all, Amhara investors were deprived of Bank loan and credit. Honestly speaking, there is no suit ground for investment, trade and any other socio-economic activities for the people of Amhara for the last three decades.

Thus, what we understand from the informant's idea and indented paragraph that there are targeted and pre-planned dispossession of properties, exposure for impoverishment and destitution, and scramble of the resources of the people of Amhara by TPLF culprits and their parallel wings. Therefore, socio-economic discrimination and marginalization have been a major factor the revival of the Amhara nationalism.

Furthermore, despite many of the key informants and FGD participants asserted that the Amhara ethnic group are hard-working people, they lack credit access for business establishment, imposing of heavy taxation, land grabbing, unequal chance to work, education of average costs for small business holders who are among the ethnic group and providing market information to reduce uncertainty. In addition, the business structure is not competitive and participatory due to various “policy-based” partialities like market access, finance supply, and policymakers' close contact with state-owned business companies. Therefore, from the above case, one can conclude that Amhara businessmen are intentionally marginalized though they can perform some activities simply because of they are Amhara.

4.1.4. Existential Threat

The fact that the people of Amhara have faced a multifaceted existential threat. Many scholars believed that one of the main causes of Amhara nationalism is the ongoing ethnic cleansing and genocide of the Amhara people following the government's structure and the TPLF-sanctioned constitution (Abinet, 2017). This existential threat that the Amhara has faced are a cause of Amhara nationalism (Meseganaw, 2018; Andinet, 2019). Similarly, Esayas (2018), has also stated the Amhara posed an existential threat to life in this country as the people. Most of the participants believe that the major cause of Amhara nationalism is to unfold this existential threat.

In support of the above argument, (Int.5 and 6 June 21, 2021) also rationalizes the threats by mentioning the persistent widespread mass evictions, targeted and pre-planned dispossession of properties, the scramble of the resources of the people of Amhara, the psychological war against the very fabric of the people, defamation on history and negative narration and orchestrated depopulation of Amhara by the ruling party. Moreover, state-sponsored multiple structural violence and systematic extermination endangering the future continuation of the people of Amhara. According to Esayas (2018), he bolstered the above view of the respondent by consolidated his assertions and believes that “*Amhara is both de jure and de facto stateless people in Ethiopia which is in existence in the world except in some cases as Kurd*”. This indicates that Amhara nationalism is the reaction to sustain its existence. Thus, it is very possible to conclude existential threat is one of the grand and the fundamental reason for the rising of the Amhara nationalism.

As it is indicated in the literature review, the main purpose of the Serbs Ethno nationalist movements is to withstand the onslaught of the community and to prevent the threat of genocide in the future, to protect Serbs as a people. Similarly, as Melkamu(2018) point out the basic question of the people of Amhara is the question of survival as a people. This is the fundamental causes of Amhara people to exist as a people.

Most key informants and focus group discussants also further stated that the Amhara nationalism is a legitimate move to forge ahead survival. It is a historic glance to pave a way for self-preservation and assurance of sojourn for the people of Amhara as a whole against the steadily interacting multi-dimensional ranging atrocities prevailing over in the last three decades. It is common knowledge that a diversity of state-orchestrated demonic acts had been and is yet in their full range of infliction upon the people of Amhara through the inception of ill-motivated aversions by the TPLF led minority tyranny. Andinet (2019) on his part stated that Amhara nationalism is a child of Amhara's survival peril born out of a multi-dimensional and immense dark chapter of the existing situation and an emerging momentous look devised to respond to the cries of the Amhara people and to cope up with the changing circumstances of this world of today. Similarly, Abinet (2017) has also stated the organizational sponsored various structural violence and systematic extermination endangering the future continuation of the people of Amhara. Accordingly, the ultimate destination of the Amhara nationalism dwells on the favorable track to which the aspired survival threat can be answered.

Over all, Amhara nationalism is the construction of other repulsive factors and the current socio-economic condition. As outlined in the literature review, Amhara nationalism primordialism emphasize then of predominantly both constructivist and instrumentalists. Amhara nationalism has a reactionary character by itself tells us that it is constructed and elites based because of the influence of internal and external Existential threat. Similar to the above idea (Andinet, 2019), summarizes the Up-and-coming Amhara ethnic sentiment and Amhara nationalism are reactions to Anti Amhara ethno-nationalist politics and self-preservation and assurance of sojourn for the people of Amhara as a whole against the existential threat.

4.2. Challenges of Amhara Nationalism

4.2.1. Challenges from within

Members of the Amhara ethnic group are well known in strongly sticking of themselves with Ethiopian nationalism. They had a very little space for ethnic nationalism. The Amhara people, both the peasant and the educated, considered organization along ethnicity as being primitive and backward (Wondwosen, 2009). For instance, the AAPO was changed into All Ethiopian Unity Party (AEUP) as a response for globalization and its assessment about the evil effect of ethnicity for national unity. Many Amhara elites were not ready to participate and help the All Amhara People Organization (APPO). Accordingly conflicts have been erupted between the 1960s generations and new identities of the Amhara people. In line with the above idea (FGD B April 11, 2021) asserted the following:

There is now a generation of adolescents born and raised as Amhara nationals, participating in the symbolic space and unreflexive patterns of Amhara social life. This section of societies also manifests themselves as Amhara national identity officially, symbolically, and provoking Amharanness in everyday walks of life. On the other hand the 1960s generations are standing against Amhara nationalism. A group of individuals among these generations citing the negative effects of ethnic-based politics in general Amhara nationalism in particular.

From the indented paragraph we can understand that, conflict among Amhara people on Amhara nationalism. These conflicting sentiments among the Amhara, Pan-Ethiopians versus emerging Amhara ethnic/national consciousness -- threaten to weaken Amhara nationalism. Thus, the challenges of Amhara nationalism start from within.

Although the Amhara people participate in ethnic politics, its destination will never be apart from Ethiopia. The Amhara and Amharized political elites give priority for their Ethiopian Identity (Medhane and Alagaw, 2014). They are reluctant to advocate their ethno national identity as other ethnic groups did in the last fifty years. Accordingly in support of this argument one thing that makes almost all the respondents to reach on consensus was *the impossibility of detaching the Amhara identity from Ethiopian culture and value.*

4.2.2. Challenges from without

The way Amhara defined by other ethnic based parties, including the TPLF and OLF, as oppressor and colonizer respectively, the strong psychological attachment of the Amhara with the unity of Ethiopia and its consequent label by other secessionist political organizations as chauvinist and the formulation of the TPLF manifesto that draw the Amhara people as enemy as imperialism and other factors instigated the need to form an Amhara based party (Mastewal,2016).The Amhara elite for a century had neither exerted significant influence on pan Ethiopianist parties nor formed ethnic based parties for their ethnic group. Thus, due to unreasonable fear of domination, other ethnic nationalist groups saw Amhara nationalism negatively. In favor of the above argument most of key informants (INT. May 3, 2021) confirmed that:

The Amhara nationalism in its enfant stage hate by other ethnic national groups in Ethiopia. They disseminate distortion and inceptions against it. They also fabricated propaganda on Amhara nationalism as it is a unitary and assimilation tendency. For instance, The All Amhara People Organization (AAPO) which was established in 1992 targeted by TPLF/EPRDF led government. Following its very existence the leaders and members of APPO were arrested and suppressed. The founder and chairperson of APPO a re-known surgeon Professor Asrat Woldyes was imprisoned and died while in prison. Later on, due to massive alienation of leaders, members, supporters and even the inconvenience of the Amhara elites to cooperate with this ethnic based party paved the way for its transition to All Ethiopian Unity Party in 2002.

From this, one can conclude that, Amhara nationalism has been highly hatred by other ethno-national groups in the Ethiopia political landscape. For example, Tigre based national Party TPLF targeted Amhara nationalism as chauvinist, unitary, remnants of feudal system and so on. On the other hand, Oromo based ethnic party the so called OLF, accused Amhara nationalism as colonizer, oppressor and the like. But both TPLF and OLF claim secession which endangered the territorial integrity of a country. The centrist Amhara nationalism has been supposed for evil campaign and false propaganda. Because of the aforementioned reasons the Amhara nationalism yet to outshine.

CHAPTER FIVE

AMHARA NATIONALISM AND ITS IMPLICATIONS, FOR NATIONAL UNITY OF ETHIOPIA

5.1. The Amhara Nationalism as a Panacea for National Unity of Ethiopia

The Amhara nationalism has a various implication for the current and the future overall political trajectories of Ethiopia in general and to the Amhara people in particular. Many scholars believed that the existing Amhara ethno nationalist movement has both implications as *“a maker or breaker of states, as a positive or negative connotations , as centrifugal and centripetal forces an agent of peaceful coexistence as well as a cause of relentless violence, weakening, and destruction”*(Melkamu, 2018; Esayas, 2018). In the same vein, Andinet (2019) highlighted that the Amhara nationalist movement has a pervasive influence in Ethiopia and its impact on both “stabilizing and destabilizing” the region.

In the last fifty years, Ethiopia is characterized by the following two contradictory political forces. The first group advocated ethnicity and ethno nationalism as a primary means to mobilize their political and economic interest. The second group, on the other hand, strongly advocated Ethiopian nationalism for the sake of the unity of Ethiopia by giving a second place for the question of ethnicity and ethno nationalism (Merera, 2002; Meseganaw, 2018). Many scholars argued that after the downfall of the military government ethnic-based political parties and groups have proliferated at a very alarming rate. For example, in the 2000 Ethiopian national election out of the total 79 political parties that were registered by the Ethiopian National Board of Election, there were less than ten civic political parties (citizenship) based. The record in the 2005 Ethiopian national election also shows the registration of a very high number of political parties based on ethnicity (Arriola, 2005).

Moreover, the TPLF dominated EPRDF government extremely supports the mobilization of ethnic-based organizations in the last three decades. These two ideologies have influenced each other and have been the political manifestations of Ethiopia politics. These two opposing ideologies are both complimentary and contradictory to the political, economic, and social processes of the country. However, ethnic-based politics has been the dominant political manifestation of the politics of Ethiopia in the last half-century (Merera, 2002). For instance,

Tigray and Oromo nationalism can be mentioned. Though these national groups have sometimes worked with co-operated and conflictive with the so-called civic political organizations to create a better national consensus, this consensus has not been sustained. Regarding this point, many scholars noted that the Amhara people have become an advocate of civic nationalism and national politics. As outlined in the literature review, Serb people have a strong standing of civic/state nationalism but except for the Serbs, the rest of other ethnic groups began to secede from the country. Because of the Serbs advocacy of civic/state nationalism, they have been paid huge scarifies. In the same way, the Amhara people suffered from various Anti-Amhara forces. As Key informants and FGD discussants argued that, *Amhara has been known as pro-state nationalism in Ethiopia. They added that, organizing based on ethnicity was consider as a primitive section of society and a backward political ordinations by the Amhara political elites. Thus, ethnic Amhara as a people was loosely organized. It is not a threat of the Ethiopian national unity rather it is a panacea for Unity of Ethiopia.*

In the same way, Esayas (2018) highlighted that the rise of Amhara nationalism could have unexpected outcomes for the forthcoming Ethiopian politics. He argued the implications might be social, economic, cultural, and psychological ones. Melkamu (2018) on his part stated that this implication is not just only to Amhara but also to Ethiopia in particular and the Horn African in general. The rise of Amhara nationalism into Ethiopian politics brought mixed implications to the Amhara people. And, would have reciprocal benefits for the people of Amhara and the rest of Ethiopian people. No matter how the intentions of the Amhara nationalist are movement will become influential independent actors in contemporary Ethiopian politics (Andinet, 2019). Similarly, Dawit, (2019), has also stated that it will have both negative and positive implications for the Amhara and the entire people at large. It is a good implication indeed and a negative one which instigates suspicion, and distrust about the past and the future. Moreover, Melkamu (2018), has also stated in the last three decades of Ethiopian politics that has been told in the people and the actual one does not fit each other. Accordingly, since Amhara nationalism is already compatible with civic/state nationalism and managed peacefully, it is a centripetal force to rebuild the country. On the other hand, the Amhara nationalism may claim a republic as the people of Amhara entertained equally with fellow ethnic groups in Ethiopia. It is important to see the centripetal and centrifugal forces of Amhara nationalism in detail.

5.1.2. Amhara Nationalism as a Centripetal force for National Unity

At its very existence, the Amhara nationalism has been fighting dictators and repressive governments from and has paid immense prices, in the fight for genuine political reform and a democratic transition in Ethiopia (Meseganaw, 2018). In the past half-century, in general, Amhara people have been struggling with the military regime and TPLF's dominated EPRDF government. Thus, Amhara nationalism has relevance for democratic transition, and sustainable development to the country. And openly confronting the repressive TPLF/EPRDF regime for the inevitable change. According to Bekele (2019) believed that the rise of Amhara nationalism is a viable strategy to bargain on the agenda of extreme ethno-nationalist groups positively and it helps to continue the power equilibrium between the fanatic secessionist groups and unionist forces. Similarly, Andinet (2019), argued that Amhara nationalism is reactionary to different secessionist forces like OLF, TPLF, and ONLF, etc. He also added that, Amhara nationalists have a strong counter-balance for those secessionists' forces in the present Ethiopian political arena.

Moreover, as key informants (INT. 4 March 16, 2021) asserted that:

In order to balance and maintaining a disciplined bargaining process to be held between the pan Ethiopian nationalist and secessionist forces the Amhara nationalism played a pivotal role. It serves as a controlling mechanism to impose a limit on secessionist forces. Hence, the historical experiences on the Amhara ethnic-based political parties and Amhara civic society organizations also reveal a similar output. Concerning this, the All Amhara People Organization (AAPPO) was an ethnic-based party, it served as a civic party in protecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ethiopia. It is the first ethnic-based party that stands against the secession agenda of Eritrea and others. Finally All Amhara People Organization (APPO) transformed itself in to civic party which is called All Ethiopian Unity Party (AEUP).

As it stated in the literature review, in the case of Syria, Kurdish pressure is seen as a balance in inter- Arab tribal and religious tensions. Kurdish nationalist resistance and influence are seen as balancing the activity of separatist and fundamentalist groups in Syria, Iraq and Iran. Similarly, the existing Amhara ethno-nationalist political parties help to maintain the balance of power among the above-competing groups. Moreover, most Amhara nationalist organizations in

Ethiopia and throughout the world have a high value given for the defenders of Ethiopian sovereignty and territorial integrity as an expression for its value to the continuity of Ethiopian statehood (Abinet, 2017; Bekele, 2019).

On the other hand, the nature of Amhara nationalism is endorsing and giving value to the historical deeds of previous kings. It praises the unreserved effort of forefathers that defend the state from both internal and external enemies (Bekele, 2019). More engaged and proactive work on values that matter to the society, values that can unite communities, and work on nation-building. For instance, some Amhara ethno nationalists' organizations have a warm celebration of the Adwa victory and national ceremonies through the instigation of Amhara ethnic-based political parties and organizations in Ethiopia and throughout the world. Moreover, he further explained that, the Amhara nationalist graced national hero who struggling for the territorial integrity of Ethiopia irrespective of their ethnic background. As it is indicated in the above issues, the Amhara nationalists depicted that our forefathers sacrificed their lives for the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ethiopia; we should maintain the state for the next generations. In this regard (FGD B, May 12, 2021) expressed:

In the territorial integrity of Ethiopia, Amhara Nationalism has no claim and strong attachments and affiliation to the overall history of the country, such as the nation-building, nature of state formation, public relations, and the history of the common goods, national heroes and the like. In general, it exists to answer the basic questions of the people of Amhara, it stands in Ethiopia's unity, sovereignty, and territorial integrity. Moreover, protecting the country Ethiopia from internal external dangers is not only the ethnic Amhara political elites but also the entire people of Amhara.

Therefore, based on the points in the above, it is possible to conclude that the Amhara nationalism has a high level of national sentiment towards “Ethiopian Unity” and it has deep-rooted Ethiopian psychology. It has also become a central force in the current Ethiopian political sphere. And the Amhara nationalist forces have not separatist sentiments. The history, culture, and way of life of the people of Amhara are strictly confined to retain with core Ethiopian physiological makeup and historical values.

The All Amhara People Organization which was formed in 1992 following the TPLF's anti Amhara propaganda throughout the country. The party was well known by its slogan “one

nation, one country” (Bach, 2014). It had a very rigid stand on the oneness and unity of Ethiopia. The party condemned the decision of Eritrean independence as it instigates other ethnic groups to claim a similar agenda. Besides, the independence of Eritrea was considered by the party as an isolation of very intimate family members via wrong decision. Ethiopia became port less in the aftermath of the secession. Thus, Amhara nationalism and people of Amhara in general and Amhara based nationalist party in general have been strong position on the unity and integrity of Ethiopia.

To sum up, Amhara nationalism and its struggle have an endeavor to reverse the past injustices and try to bring the genuine questions and interests of Amhara people in the bargaining way with other fellow Ethiopians and other ethnic political groups. Hence the Amhara ethnic national political elites and the people of Amhara engaged in lawful and disciplined bargaining with other ethnic groups to protect the interests of Amhara as well as the country to transform into a vibrant, secure, and peaceful country through maintaining national unity and harmony.

5.1.3. Amhara Nationalism as a Centrifugal force for National Unity

According to Aalen (2006), Abbink (2006) Asnake (2010) Tsegay (2010), and Temesgen (2011), stated that for the last half a century, many national struggles and ethno-nationalist movements undermine the unity and interdependence of horn of Africa in general and Ethiopians in particular, still sustained as the impediment of nation-building in the continent. Any ethno-nationalist movement creates an enemy and it terminates the relationship with other communities. Similarly, Bekele (2019), has also stated the ethno-nationalist movements are engaging in Ethiopian politics by holding two extreme and incompatible agendas in its political manifesto. These are peaceful coexistence and independence. Some have explicitly stated in their political program *“If the political atmosphere is suit, it opts peaceful coexistence with other ethnic groups under the umbrella of Ethiopia. While it is not favorable situations, it decides immediate secession.”* For instance, the ongoing secessionist war by the OLF is ample example for this scenario. Therefore, all ethno nationalism is a threat to national unity. From these points of view, the Amhara nationalism is as solid as other nationalism up on the interest of the Amhara people. In this regard, similar to other nationalism Amhara nationalism has taken as a centrifugal force for national unity of Ethiopia. Because it has a strong stand not to appease in the interest of the Amhara people.

In support of the above issues (INT. 6, June 9, 2021) explained her reason in the following way:

She firmly believes that ethno-nationalist political orientations are not a solution to Ethiopia's multi-faceted political problems. Now onwards, Amhara nationalists are moving away from Ethiopianism and Ethiopian values. Like in any other ethno nationalist, Amhara nationalism is a threat to national unity and a source of instability. Any ethno-nationalism does not end with temporary victories or stakes as well as there is no ethno-nationalist movement which does not have a 'we and them' dichotomy. For her, Amhara nationalism has no extra benefit other than dividing and weakening the state into various pieces. That is why currently some activities of Amhara nationalism amplifying the political problem of Ethiopia. Due to these pushing factors as other nationalists Amhara nationalism will tend to a claim for republic.

From the above view of respondents one can learn about ethnos nationalist and ethnic political parties from its very principle has insisted that the national dialogue and reconciliation process is the only alternative for bringing solidarity for the current Ethiopian politics. Moreover this option offers some advantages but it is not suitable for national unity. And, not only in principle but also in the actual practice those groups have hidden interests.

In order to consolidating the above argument, the researcher noted out the view of another informants as follows:

In Ethiopia and other country around the world ethno-nationalist groups are established based on their ethnic background or ethnic line. Because it helps to attain their claims and interest to be achieved through the politicization of ethnicity and ethnic mobilization. The ethnic-based political parties and ethno nationalist group uses manipulation of ethnic identity as the prime instrument to defend their national identity. In this way, peaceful co-existence, cooperation based on guiding principles, bargaining power, socio-economic and political integration for common goals and solidarity seem to have no room among the nature and experience of ethno-nationalist political groups. As any other ethno-nationalist, Amhara nationalism has its own defects which may cause for the deterioration of national Unity of Ethiopia, though the Amhara nationalism is centrist in many dimensions.

Accordingly, one cannot deny the fact that some Amhara national political groups or influential Amhara national leaders may extreme ahead. The massive social, economic and political crisis of the people of Amhara will trigger to claim an independent state of Amhara republic.

Over all, the TPLF dominated EPRDF government extremely supports the mobilization of ethnic-based organizations in the last three decades. These two ideologies have influenced each other and have been the political manifestations of Ethiopia politics. These two opposing ideologies are both complimentary and contradictory to the political, economic, and social processes of the country. However, ethnic-based politics has been the dominant political manifestation of the politics of Ethiopia in the last half-century (Merera, 2003). For instance, Tigray and Oromo nationalism can be mentioned. Though these national groups have sometimes worked with co-operated and conflictive with the so-called civic political organizations to create a better national consensus, this consensus has not been sustained. Regarding this point, many scholars noted that the Amhara people have become an advocate of civic nationalism and national politics. Thus, the people of Amhara in general and Amhara ethnic nationalism in particular have unreserved effort for the territorial integrity and Unity of Ethiopia. But too extreme and Anti-Amhara political groups targeted social unrest of the Amhara people. This will lead the Amhara nationalism to outshine as the centrifugal forces in the national politics.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

6.1. Conclusion

The previous chapters explained the main objectives that the study sought to address. Based on the data collected from both primary and secondary sources, basic questions of the research elaborated accordingly. This chapter presents summary of findings and conclusion depending on the presiding chapters. In fact the objective of the study is briefly explained and conclusions are drawn in accordance with the pervious sections. Yet this chapter makes concise summary of findings accompanied by conclusions.

This study has sought to explore the nature of Amhara nationalism challenges, causes and its implication for national unity of Ethiopia. Consequently, the study attempt to address the challenges causes of Amhara nationalism and its implications for national unity of Ethiopia by employing exploratory and descriptive case study research design of qualitative research approach.

The Amhara nationalism is a political ideology which established in response to holistic attacks of people of Amhara in the Ethiopia political discourse. Currently, an emerging Amhara nationalism is a phenomenon in the national politics of the country. The already discussed issues in this study were assessed various causes of Amhara nationalism. Under this, structural oppression, Anti-Amhara narratives, existential thereat and socio-economic marginalization was briefly discussed. On the other hand the challenges of Amhara nationalism sought, in this regard challenges from within and without was briefed. With regard to implication for national unity, it is implications as a centripetal and centrifugal force for the integrity of Ethiopia was properly analyzed. Accordingly, the causes, challenges and implications further summarized as follows.

Regarding with causes, structural oppression, the lack of proper representation and political marginalization of the Amhara people in the last three decades in the Ethiopian overall political arena is a cause of the rebirth of Amhara nationalism. Many evidences show that Amhara does not have a real political representation in the government structure in the federal or regional government. Thus, Amhara was not represented even in the ratifications of the constitution and

no party represents Amhara during the 1991 transition period. After the downfall of the military government by different forces in 1991 government is characterized as the domination of one ethnic group, Tigray identity, while it denounces the opportunity for other groups. Many Amhara nationals are subject to persecution by the ruling TPLF its affiliated groups. Furthermore, dehumanization of the Amhara people's because by labeling the Amhara magnificence history and their leadership as "chauvinists." This is the result of Anti-Amhara narratives. In the same vein already stated, in the student narrative in Ethiopia, Amharas are chauvinists who seek to preserve the old feudal order. These overriding anti-Amhara dogmatic ideologies and propaganda were being depicted on widely circulated propaganda through all media outlets, awareness creation, and indoctrination paper during 1960. Hence, the radical student also coined the Amhara as the persecutor and the others as the convict of the Amhara.

On the hand, the fact that the people of Amhara have faced for a multiple existential threat. Many scholars believed that one of the main causes of Amhara nationalism is the ongoing ethnic cleansing and genocide of the Amhara people following the government's structure and the TPLF-sanctioned constitution. This existential threat that the Amhara has faced are a cause of Amhara nationalism. Similarly, the Amhara posed an existential threat to life in this country as the people. Therefore, the major cause of Amhara nationalism is to unfold this existential threat. Amhara ethnic sentiment and Amhara nationalism are reactions to Anti Amhara ethno-nationalist politics and self-preservation and assurance of sojourn for the people of Amhara as a whole against the existential threat. Moreover, the Amhara exposed for social exclusion and economic deprivation for the last three decades. Especially Amhara marginalized in the distribution of resources, utilization of land, having the private property, and employment opportunities and the like. Concerning the economic indicators of exclusion, the Amhara ethnic group is one of the most marginalized in Ethiopia. They are marginalized and sidelined from the benefit of economic advantage. They also do not have equal benefits over national resources and utilizing the local resources with others. The economic status of one community will determine political, psychological, socio-cultural, and another status and it resulted immediate catastrophes of a given society.

There are challenges in the Amhara nationalism, in the finding of this studies the identified challenges are emanated from two sources. These challenges are a challenge from within and

without. Accordingly, members of the Amhara ethnic group are well known in strongly sticking of themselves with Ethiopian nationalism. They had a very little space for ethnic nationalism. The Amhara people, both the peasant and the educated, considered organization along ethnicity as being primitive and backward. It is difficult detaching the Amhara identity from Ethiopian culture and value. So, the challenge of Amhara nationalism mainly resides from within. Another challenge for Amhara nationalism, the way Amhara defined by other ethnic based parties, including the TPLF and OLF, as oppressor and colonizer respectively, the strong psychological attachment of the Amhara with the unity of Ethiopia and its consequent label by other secessionist political organizations as chauvinist and the formulation of the TPLF manifesto that draw the Amhara people as enemy as imperialism and other factors instigated the need to form an Amhara based party. The Amhara elite for a century had neither exerted significant influence on Pan-Ethiopianist parties nor formed ethnic based parties for their ethnic group. Thus, due to unreasonable fear of domination, other ethnic nationalist groups saw Amhara nationalism negatively. The centrist Amhara nationalism has been supposed for evil campaign and false propaganda. Because of the aforementioned reasons the Amhara nationalism yet to outshine.

Finally, the finding of this research explored about the implication of Amhara nationalism for national unity of Ethiopia. Thus, The Amhara nationalism has a various implication for the current and the future overall political discourse of Ethiopia in general and to the Amhara people in particular. Many scholars believed that the existing Amhara ethno nationalist movement has both implications as “a maker or breaker of states, as positive or negative connotations, as centrifugal and centripetal forces an agent of peaceful coexistence as well as a cause of relentless violence, weakening, and destruction. Thus, the nature of Amhara nationalism since its formation has been centrist or a centripetal force for the unity of the state. But political alienation, massive attack, genocide and ethnic cleansing might tend it from a maker to a breaker of a country. In the same vein, the Amhara nationalist movement has a pervasive influence in Ethiopia and its impact on both “stabilizing and destabilizing” the region. The ultimate goal of Amhara nationalism is to cogitate for thought movement towards mobilization and consolidation of the vast population of Amhara with a common view of Amharanism and for equal treatment as fellow groups in Ethiopia.

6.2. Recommendation

Based on the finding the researcher would like to put the following recommendations. First, the existing government should be managed the Amhara nationalism properly. Though Amhara nationalism is a centrist in its very existence century long accumulated grievances might led to total crack down of the country. Because of its implications as a maker or breaker of states, as positive or negative connotations, as centrifugal and centripetal forces an agent of peaceful coexistence as well as a cause of relentless violence, weakening, and destruction. Nearly 60million of Amhara from the total population could have a power to consolidate or deconstruct the state.

Second, due to structural cumbersome Amhara has been victim for the last three decades. Thus, Amhara should be fairly represented in the national politics. The existing constitution must be revised and any rules and regulations purposely formulated against the interest of Amhara people must crumble down. Third, Amhara people in general Amhara nationalism in particular deserve dignity. The government, fellow ethnic based political groups and peace loving individual should refrain from Ant-Amhara narratives. Amhara should not be alienated as a chauvinist, oppressor, a unitary and the like. Forth, socio-economic marginalization of Amhara would result instability and disorder in this country. The concerned bodies shall be allowed for fair engagement of Amhara in the economic activities. Finally, proponents of Amhara nationalism and the entire Amhara people should ready to cooperate with other ethno-national groups and fill gaps to create a strong multi-national state of Ethiopia.

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Appendix
Bahir Dar University
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Department of Political Science and International Studies

The purpose of this in-depth interview and FGD guide is to gather relevant data on ‘*The Amhara nationalism: challenges, prospects and its implication for national unity*’. You are kindly requested to give appropriate answer based on the information you have. Your participation is based on your consent with no forcing. I am trying to pledge you that the data you provide will be used for the purpose of this study only and your engagement will be kept confidential.

Thank you in advance!

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I. Interview Questions for Amhara Nationalist party leaders and members

1. What are the causes for the establishment of your party?
2. What are the motives of Amhara nationalism in general and your party in particular?
3. As a party leader/member what is your view on national integrity of Ethiopia?
4. What is the claim of your party for its establishment? Colonial thesis, national operation or class difference?
5. What is the position of your party concerning national integrity? Secessionist or centrist?
6. What are the challenges and opportunities of Amhara nationalism in general and your party in particular?

II. Interview Questions for political science scholars, political activists and bloggers

1. What are the causes incited for the formation of Amhara nationalism?
2. How do you explain the Amhara nationalism in relation to national integration?
3. How do you see the motives of the Amhara nationalism?
4. How do you describe the Amhara nationalism and its implication in consolidating national unity? Is it centrist or secessionist?
5. How do you reflect about the challenges and possible prospects of Amhara nationalism?

III. Interview Questions for Civic nationalist Party leaders and members

1. As a civic nationalist party leader/member how do you explain the Amhara nationalism?
2. Can you elaborate the causes for the emergence of Amhara nationalism?
3. How do you understand about the motives of Amhara nationalism?
4. How do you describe Amhara nationalism in consolidating national integration? Is it centrist or secessionist?
5. What do you think about the possible challenges and opportunities of Amhara nationalism?

IV. Focus Group Discussion Questions

1. What do you understand about the Amhara nationalism?
2. What are the causes for the emergence of Amhara nationalism?
3. How do you elaborate the motives of Amhara nationalism and its implication for national integrity?
4. What is your concern about national unity of Ethiopia?
5. What are the challenges and prospects of Amhara nationalism?