

Addis Ababa University
School of Graduate Studies
College of Social Sciences
Department of Philosophy

**Examination of Ethiopia's Ethnic Federalism from Intercultural and
Multicultural Perspectives**

By: Abel Yitbarek

February, 2020

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Multicultural Perspectives**

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**A Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies of Addis Ababa
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Abstract

Ethiopia adopted ethnic-based federalism since 1991 when the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) took power from the military junta. This party (EPRDF) has been established through the coalition of different parties, but it was highly dominated by one party the Tigrayan Peoples Liberation Front (TPLF). EPRDF tried to adopt a federal system by dividing regional units along ethnic lines. Currently, Ethiopia's ethnic-based federalism can't solve the questions of different ethnic groups. Conceptually, ethnic federalism by itself does not affect the interethnic relations of groups. It is possible to establish a democratic multiethnic state through the ethnic-based federal system. Recognizing of ethnic identity to form a federal system cannot affect the interethnic relations of different groups; but this requires adequate democratic and multicultural institutions to protect the identities of individuals and groups. Currently, the issue of national or group identity is a universal phenomenon that most states are facing. Thus, all states must manage this issue in a democratic way. The Ethiopian ethnic federalism is simply adopted by the will of EPRDF without the participation of others. It is adopted without constructing democratic institutions to solve issues of inequalities, injustices that different ethnic groups raised. Furthermore, it is established without considering the 'ethnic-consciousness' of the citizens. Thus, it is important to build democratic and multicultural institutions to resolve these issues, and to build the feeling of commonality among different ethnic groups. Intercultural and multicultural perspectives are important to build these institutions and to accommodate and integrate the interest of different groups.

This thesis examines Ethiopia's ethnic federalism from the perspectives of interculturalism and multiculturalism. Intercultural and multicultural perspectives use to create a society that accepts and respects the cultures, values, and ideas of other groups. It also uses to balance individual and group rights in multiethnic states. For Ethiopia, it is important to adopt these perspectives in order to solve the current ethnic group conflicts and to accommodate the ethnic federal system. Additionally, it is important to create multicultural citizenship and a multicultural Ethiopian state. Methodologically, this thesis uses information gathered from books, articles, and other materials.

Key Words: *Federalism, Ethiopia, ethnic federalism, democracy, interculturalism, multiculturalism, multicultural citizenship.*

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Introduction

Federalism is a political concept that refers to a system of administration which is established on the consent of individuals and groups for the promotion of their interests. Currently, most countries adopted this system of administration in order to accommodate ethnic, religious, and linguistic diversities. Scholars claimed that federalism is important to accommodate diversity, but it may also be dangerous, especially, in multiethnic states. In multiethnic states, it is important to check how boundaries are drawn, and how powers are shared; unless there is clarity in the federation, it may cause conflicts and wars among ethnic groups.

In pluralistic or multiethnic societies, a genuine and democratic federalism is important to accommodate diversities. Some scholars think that there is a problem of interethnic relation in multiethnic states. These problems are caused not because there is antagonism between ethnic groups; rather it is caused by political and economic factors. Mostly ethnic groups in multiethnic states enter into conflicts for acquiring adequate resources, political representation, and for recognition of their identity. Some also argued that conflicts in multiethnic states are caused by traditional social structures and ethnic stereotypes. In many multiethnic states, as Roza Ismagilova(2004) notes, ‘there was a social structure which put ethnic groups in the hierarchy and this made ethnic stereotypes among ethnic communities’(P.179). Thus, this traditional social structure may affect the interethnic relations of ethnic groups in a given state.

In order to solve these problems of multiethnic states, it is important to adopt and apply intercultural and multicultural perspectives. Intercultural perspectives highly focus on creating intercultural communications between individuals or groups. Intercultural philosophers argued that it is important to understand and know the existence of multi-cultures, and so it is important to give an equal respect for all cultures, philosophies, as well as religions.

Moreover Scholars also argue about the significance of the existence of different cultures for our individual choice or freedom. Jeremy Waldron, for example, asserts that people have the right to choose ‘cultural fragments’ that come from a variety of ethnocultural sources. Waldron questioning about the existence of ‘distinct culture’, rejects the idea that our choices and self-identity are defined by our ethnic descent. But other scholars like Will Kymlicka, Avishai Margalit and Joseph Raz argue in support of our membership in a particular culture. They hold

the opinion that our cultural membership is important to our choices and for the respect of our dignity as well. This argument is important to respect what we today call cultural diversity or multiculturalism. It is also important to understand that there is a distinct culture that is different from ours. In other words, it is important to recognize the existence of various ethnic groups who have different cultural values, traditions, languages and religions.

Many scholars argue that, in multiethnic states, federalism is the best mechanism to accommodate diversity. I also agree with this idea. But, the main question is how the federal system is established? When we see a federal system of most western countries, the federal system is constructed based on territory. They try to reconcile their federal system on the basis of the liberal principles and their federal systems attempt to recognize and tolerate individual freedom and group rights.

When we come to Ethiopia's ethnic federal system, it is possible to claim that it is adopted from the former social federations, and draws the federal boundaries on the basis of ethnic lines. In former socialist federations, there is no proper division of power between the legislative, executive and judicial organ of the state. In former socialist federations, considerable power was under the control of the vanguard party based on the principle of democratic centralism. Lack of genuine democracy is also a feature of socialist federations. Terminologies like democracy and individual rights are available in the vocabulary of the socialist federations, but they are controlled and restricted by the vanguard party of the state. The former socialist federations did not allow multi-party system, and also prohibited independent civil society organizations and other democratic institutions. Former socialist federations also grant a right of self-determination and sovereignty for the constituent units.

In fact, Ethiopia's ethnic federal system is different from the former socialist federation because it incorporated many rights and freedom of individuals in the constitution. However, as the ideology of the party (EPRDF) is mainly borrowed from the socialist federation, it did not construct democratic institutions to protect the rights and choices of individuals and groups. Some criticize the Ethiopian federal system because it was established based on ethnicity. They argued that regions of Ethiopia are demarcated based on ethnic lines, and this is the main reason for the current ethnic conflicts in the country. But, I think, as some scholars also claimed, it is not the ethnic federalism that created conflicts between groups in Ethiopia. Rather, the lack of

democratic and multicultural institutions is the main cause for conflicts that we face today. Democratic institutions are important to serve the entire ethnic groups of the country with the idea of equality under the law. Multicultural institutions, institutions that include people from diverse groups, are also important to communicate different groups and it uses as a bridge for different groups to understand each other. Multicultural institutions also possess an absence of prejudice or discrimination toward people based on their ethnicity or religion.

This thesis contains three chapters. In the first chapter, I will discuss the concept of federalism and of how it related with ethnicity. And then, I will briefly present the main features and ideologies of Ethiopia's ethnic-based federal system.

The second chapter of my thesis briefly deals with interculturalism and multiculturalism. Interculturalists like Wimmer and Mall attempted to communicate different cultures by eliminating any kind of centrism. As Wimmer notes, "culture is a typical way of life of human beings which distinguish them from other groups of human beings. Culture determines groups' way of speaking, dressing, trade system, and their ideas of nature and reality" (Wimmer, 2002:76). Idang also notes that culture refers to a peculiar and distinct traits and characters of a given people from other peoples. These peculiarities include people's language, dancing, dressing, music, work, arts and also it refers to people's social norms, values, and taboos (Idang, 2015:98). Another scholar Edward B. Taylor defined culture as "a complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs or any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (Idang, 2015:98).

These concepts of intercultural thinkers are important to understand what multiculturalism means and how we can be able to accommodate these multi-cultures. As the interculturalists claimed, the art of polylogue and dialogue is important for cultures to communicate with one another. The culture of "communication" in multiethnic states like Ethiopia, it is less and weak. The relationships between different ethnic groups as well as parties in the country, they often lack the habit of dialogue or polylogue. All of them want to express their culture or ethnic group or party ideology as superior and as the only alternative for the existence of the country as one state. In my opinion, these are the root causes for the current conflicts that we observe in the country. So, we should have to adopt the principle and culture of dialogue or polylogue to live together.

Additionally, it is important to build institutions to develop the culture and habit of dialogue among different groups or parties.

Another important point what I will raise in the second chapter is about the concept of multiculturalism, and how it is important for our understanding of ‘nationalism’ and ‘federalism’. Contemporary liberal thinkers like Will Kymlicka attempted to discuss briefly how the concept of multiculturalism is important to accommodate diversity in multiethnic states. For Kymlicka, in multiethnic states, individual freedom should be respected. But this individual freedom or choice is not totally out of the culture of the individual. Cultural membership is important for shaping the choice of the individual. Additionally, incorporating of minority rights is important to accommodate diversity in multiethnic states.

In the last chapter, chapter three, I will try to examine and rethink Ethiopia’s ethnic federalism from the perspectives of interculturalism and multiculturalism.

CHAPTER ONE

The Concept of Federalism and Ethiopia's Ethnic-based Federalism

One of the important features of federalism is to compromise different ethnic, linguistic and religious groups in a given state. Federalism in countries like Spain and India has become a pragmatic remedy for diverse linguistic and religious groups. When we come to Ethiopia's ethnic federal system, since it was adopted, it could not solve ethnic groups' conflicts and tensions. In this chapter, I will try to discuss briefly what the concept of federalism means theoretically. Then, I will try to discuss Ethiopia's ethnic-based federal system and its main ideologies. The Ethiopian ethnic federal system is established on the Marxist-Leninist notion of 'the rights of self-determination of nationalities up to secession'. In both rhetoric and practice, the Ethiopian ethnic federal system resembles the former socialist federations. Like the former socialist federations, the Ethiopian ethnic federal system is controlled by the 'vanguard' party that is Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), and has affected and hampered the democratization and multiethnic federation process in the country. It is undeniable that Ethiopia's ethnic federal system introduced group rights to foster the language, cultures, and traditions of different ethnic groups; but it has missed basic features of democracy, and also it has missed to participate all groups in the process of forming the federal system of the state- because federalism is a system of consensus or pact (this is what the Ethiopia federal system missed). Additionally, it has also lacked democratic institutions that are important to maintain the interests of individuals as well as groups. Thus, these and other factors hampered the democratic federalism process of the country.

1.1 The Concept of Federalism

The term federalism refers to the promotion of both individual and common interests, and the term was coined from the Latin word *foedus*, which means an agreement among individuals or collectives (Burgess 2006 cited in Semahagn 2014:7). In the first place, as Karmis and Norman (2005) note, the term federation and confederation are used as synonymous to agree with independent states whose main purpose was military, and to achieve the common interests of their members. But the introduction of the 1787 American constitution led to the current conventional distinction between federation and confederation (p.6).

In the sixteenth century, Johannes Althusius, one of the classical federalism theorists, advanced the idea of federalism for his city Emden to acquire local autonomy from the catholic emperor and its Lutheran provincial lord. But, his idea of federalism is distinct from the modern theory of federalism, which distinctly associates federalism with self-rule and shared rule of the central and peripheral units (Semahagn 2014:7). Althusius states that no individual or group is self-sufficient by itself; and so there is a need for association (Althusius, 2005: 27).

Enlightenment thinkers like Montesquieu and Rousseau also had contributed to the current theory of federalism. But they did not clearly define the terminology of federalism, and they used terms federation, confederation, and federal-states interchangeably. Montesquieu defines federalism as an agreement between several small states and it establishes when they intend to create a big state. For him, small states should confederate with the large state, and create a confederate republic, and this will help them to protect themselves from a foreign attack (Montesquieu 2005:55). With his definition, Montesquieu defends confederate republic form of government against the monarchy. A republic form of government is able to support itself and the society in this kind of government and can prevent all kinds of inconveniences; and in the republic, no member can usurp the supreme power (Montesquieu 2005:56).

Another enlightenment thinker Rousseau thought that a federation of states is important to address conflicts and wars among them, and he advocates Europe to be united as a federation; because European countries were characterized by conflicts and wars at the time of Rousseau (Semahagn 2014:8).

There is a difficulty in defining the concept of federalism. Different contemporary scholars of federalism like Elazar, Wheare, Riker, Watts, and King tried to define the concept of federalism in different ways. Elazar defined federalism in the light of power-sharing and permanent contractual linkage between the centre and constituent units. Riker also defined it as a political organization that divides the power of the central and regional governments, and governments incorporating an exclusive power granted to each level of governments that others cannot intervene. Riker understood federalism as an agreement, but he claimed it as a special kind of agreement, a bargain, and trust-based, and not on an enforcement procedure (Riker and Follesdal 2007:612). Furthermore, Riker notes that military rationale is the main reason for the federation,

and independent states enter into federation either to get independence from the conqueror or to defend against the imperial ambition of neighbors (Riker and Follesdal 2007:614).

Another theorist Wheare understands the concept of federalism in the light of co-ordination between the general and regional governments. For Wheare, in a federal arrangement of government, there must be coordination between the general and regional governments (Semahagn 2014:8-9).

According to Paleker, the concept of federalism is based on three theories; these are (1) the classical theory of federalism, (2) the origin theory of federalism, and (3) the functional theory of federalism (Paleker, 2006:303). The classical theory attempted to define federalism from the legal angle that requires independent division of the central and regional governments. One of the exponents of this theory Robert Garan claims that federalism is “a form of government in which sovereignty or political power is divided between the central and local governments so that each of them within its sphere is independent of the other” (quoted in Paleker, 2006:304).

For Paleker, the second theory, origin theory, is better theory than the classical theory in explaining the origin of the federal system. According to this theory, the concept of federalism arose from the sociological theory, or multiple factor theory, or political theory (Paleker, 2006:305). The sociological theory of federalism puts that a federal political system originated from the federal nature of society. One of the exponents of this theory William S. Livingston states that “the essence of federalism lies not in the institutional or constitutional structure but in the society itself” (Livingston, 1952:84). The second category of origin theory is the multiple-factor theory of federalism. According to the multiple-factor theory, the concept of federalism came out from different factors like military insecurity, economic advantages, etc. and so states enter into a federal system for the desire of union and for the desire of establishing independent regional governments (Paleker, 2006:306). The last one is the political theory of federalism; this theory explains the origin of federalism from the views of political problems. According to Paleker (2006), William H. Riker is one of the supporters of this theory and he claimed federalism as a remedy for the political problems that rise in an enlarged political community (p.307.). For Paleker, the political theory is good in explaining the historical origin of the concept of federalism.

The third theory, that Paleker listed, is the functional theory of federalism, and this theory is better in explaining how federalism works. In his conclusion, Paleker insists that all the three theories (classical, origin and functional theories) have their important things and so by taking together these theories we can be able to get a clear definition of federalism. Thus, based on these theories, Paleker defines federalism as follows;

Federalism is a political system which creates in society broadly two levels of government with assigned powers and functions originating from a variety of factors and political bargain, and displaying a tendency to persist through active response to the challenges of changing environment by a process of adaptation through creative modes of institutional as well as functional relationship (Paleker, 2006:309).

These three theories of Palker are important to understand how the concept of federalism arose from different factors like social factors, economic factors and so on, and it is also important to draw an ideal demarcation between different units, and of how they functioned. But, in my opinion, Paleker's conceptual analysis did not show how the concept of federalism is related with the idea of accommodating diversity, and how it works in the multiethnic or multination state. Moreover, his definition of the flexibility of federalism is questionable. Here, I am not saying that federalism must be or should be rigid; rather what I want to say is that it is difficult to form flexibility in federal system-this is also related with the type of the constitution of the state (is it rigid or flexible). In relation to this idea, a contemporary thinker, Will Kymlicka claims about the rigidity of federalism on the distribution of powers. In contrast to others, Kymlicka claims that federalism is less flexible regarding the distribution of powers and on how boundaries can be drawn (Kymlicka, 2005:277). According to Kymlicka, in multinational federalism, it is difficult to resolve the disputes about the division of powers that were raised by the 'regional-based units' and 'nationality-based units'. For Kymlicka, in multinational federalism there are two units; these are 'nationality-based units' and 'regional-based units', and their demand is different. The regional-based units in a federation have the desire to divide powers based on the conception that all constituent units are equal, and so it is not important to grant 'special status' to one unit. By contrast, the nationality-based units seek to acquire a special status in the larger unit. Thus, for Kymlicka, this problem of the multinational federalism can be resolved by reasonable people of goodwill (Kymlicka, 2005:281).

In his general understanding of federalism, Kymlicka claimed that federalism is a political system that power is devolved constitutionally for the central government and regional units, and each level of administration has sovereign authority over certain issues. Federalism is distinguished from both ‘administrative decentralization’ and ‘confederation’. Administrative decentralization refers to the fact that the central government establishes basic policy in all areas and then devolves the power of administering the policy to the regional units. On the other hand, confederation refers to the coordination of sovereign countries for economic or military purposes (Kymlicka, 2005:270).

Kymlicka also added that federalism is one of the methods to accommodate the interest of different groups. But, it is also important to be aware that federalism has pitfalls. The mere fact of federalism is not sufficient to accommodate diversity-it is important to know how the federal boundaries are drawn and how powers are shared. In addition to this, in multinational states, the majority group may use the federal system to reduce the power of the national minorities and to suppress them. So, for Kymlicka, ‘we need...to distinguish genuinely multinational federations which seek to accommodate national minorities from merely territorial federations which do not’ (Kymlicka, 2005:273).

Another theorist Pierre Elliott Trudeau understands federalism as an attempt to find a rational compromise between different groups which history has thrown together, and this search of a compromise must be based on the will of the people (Trudeau, 2005:224). For Trudeau, “federalism is by its very essence a compromise and a pact” (2005:221). It is a compromise because there is no total consensus in all things. Rather, it is only possible to agree on some things. And also, federalism is a pact because the consensus on some things cannot be changed by a particular nation. The consensus is not fixed, but it requires the effort of every federated nation. Thus, Trudeau concludes that federalism is the product of reason in current politics, and that it was born by accepting the fact of heterogeneity of the world’s population (Trudeau, 2005:224).

Regarding the study of federalism, there are also debates among scholars in the relationship between federalism and democracy. Scholars analyze the relationship between democracy and federalism from different perspectives. Some argue about the importance of democracy for federalism. And others argue about the possibility of federations without popular democracy.

Wheare argues about the significance of democracy for the establishment of a federal system. According to Wheare (1973);

It may be possible in theory to conceive a federal government in which general and regional governments are dictatorships and yet each remains strictly within its own sphere, but it is difficult to imagine such a federal government coming into existence in the realm of practical politics or continuing to exist for any length of time. Dictatorship with its one party government and its denial of free elections is incompatible with the working of the federal principles. Federalism demands forms of government which have the characteristics usually associated with democracy or free government. There is a wide variety in the forms which such government may take, but the main essentials are free election and a party system, with its guarantee of a responsible opposition (quoted in Semahagn, 2014:11).

Thus, for Wheare, the basic features of democracy such as free election, multi-party system, etc. are important to form a federal form of government. In other words, democracy is a prerequisite for the establishment of a federation. Elazar also claimed that “federalism is a form of democratic republicanism that accommodates the diversity inherent in a democracy and is an alternative to Jacobin and Westminster democracy models” (Elazar 1996 cited in Semahagn, 2014:11). Similarly, Ostron asserts that if a federal form of government fails to incorporate democratic principles to control the political system, it is indistinguishable from a feudal form of government, and so democracy is a prerequisite for federation (Ostron 1973 cited in Semahagn, 2014:11). In contrast to these scholars, Peterson King presents different justifications regarding the relationship between democracy and federation. For King, there is no intrinsic relationship between democracy and federation. King argues that “...the voting population of the different territorial units in federations are always of equal voice, votes of citizens in some territories will have greater force than those of citizens in other states (King 1982 cited in Semahagn, 2014:11). But this argument of King cannot justify how a federation could exist without major democratic principles like free election, multi-party system.

In general, federalism may be defined as a political concept that refers to system of administration constituted by different units. In a federal system of administration, there is a constitutional and free contract between different units, and of separation of powers between the centre and the peripheries. A federation between different units can only exist when there are mutual commitments and agreements between the centre and the peripheries.

Federation between different units may have two forms. The first form is called ‘holding-together’ federation, and the second one is called ‘coming-together’ federation. In the holding-together federation, the units may have different linguistic, ethnic or cultural groups, and so to live together and to form a large state, they enter into a federation. Federation in countries like Ethiopia, India, and Spain is a good example of a holding-together form of federation. On the other hand, the coming-together federation is established between independent states. The independent states come together to form a large state, for economic or security purposes, they entered into a federation. The federation of the USA is a good example of this kind of federation. Regarding the Ethiopian form of federation, some argue that the Ethiopian federation is holding-together only in paper, but practically it is a coming-together form of federation. I think, as others also claimed, it is not. Because historically the ethnic groups of Ethiopia did not live in separate independent states. Rather, they lived in different cultures under the rule of many small monarchal systems of administrations. It is impossible to claim they formed the current Ethiopian state by a coming-together form of federation. Rather, it is possible to claim that the Ethiopian federation is established through a holding-together form of federation.

Federation has many advantages. One of the advantages of a federation is the accommodation of diversity. Many scholars agree that the ideology of federalism advocates the existence of different groups and it also supports group pluralism. But scholars like Schuck warn that, if the federal system focuses on accommodating differences, it reinforces existing social cleavages (Schuck 2006 cited in Semahagn, 2014:16). According to Schuck, if the federal system of a given state focuses on accommodating the grievances of different groups, it poses a risk of disintegration among different groups. In relation to this, Trudeau also raises the danger or disadvantage of federalism in the building of a single state within a multinational state. He stated that, “...the advantage as well as the peril of federalism is that it permits the development of a regional consensus based on regional values; so federalism is ultimately bound to fail if the nationalism it cultivates is unable to generate a national image which has immensely more appeal than the regional ones” (Trudeau, 2005:222).

Scholars agreed on the point that a successful federation emerges out of political bargaining and consensus; all constituent units should be involved in the political bargaining and then possible to forge a successful federation. As Wheare notes, a single independent federal state can be

established if the political actors agree to entrust independent regional governments with certain exclusive matters (Wheare 1973 cited in Semahagn, 2014:17). In the same way, Elazar notes that for forging a successful federation, constituent units in a federation must be fairly equal in terms of population and wealth (Elazar 1982 cited in Semahagn, 2014:18).

1.2 Ethnicity and Federalism

Nowadays words like ‘ethnicity’, ‘ethnic groups’, ‘nation’, and ‘nationalism’ are common terms that have been used in the press, in TV news to explain the current politics of the world, and to explain the current societal structures. The term ‘ethnicity’ is derived from the Greek word *ethnos* which refers to a people having ‘common descent or origin’ (some claimed as ‘the same race’) that share a distinctive culture (Semahagn, 2014:18). Scholars have used the terms ethnicity and ethnic group interchangeably, but there is a disagreement on the exact meaning and scope of the terms. Some scholars define ethnicity as a group of people who have a common descent or origin. Scholars like Yinger and Pogge claim that the term ethnicity refers to a group of people who have a common descent and a common continuous culture (cited in Semahagn, 2014:18-19). Other scholars like Ghai define ethnicity from its political dimension. According to Ghai, “when markers such as language, race, religion, and color cease to be mere means of social distinctions and become the basis of political identity and claim to a specific role in the political process of power, ethnic distinctions are transformed into ethnicity” (Ghai 2000 quoted in Semahagn, 2014:19). Some also tried show how the concept of ethnicity is growing into the political dimension of a ‘nation’. They argue that the concept of a nation is overtly political than an ethnic group, and so they defined a nation as a ‘fully mobilized or institutionalized ethnic group’. When ethnic group is institutionalized on the basis of shared beliefs, history, traditions, customs, etc., it may become a nation. As some claimed, particularly in cases of ‘ethnic nationalism’, ethnicity is often used as synonymous with the term nation.

Social scientists have used different approaches to understand the meaning and nature of ethnicity. They have also attempted to show its factor in human life and society. There are two major approaches of ethnicity; namely ‘primordialism’ and ‘instrumentalism’. According to the primordialism approach, ‘ethnicity is something given at birth and is fixed or permanent’. “Proponents of this approach [primordialism] argue that peoples’ ethnic identities have genetic foundations and that the motivation for ethnic and kinship affiliations comes from these socio-

psychological forces internal to the individual and related to primordial human needs for security” (Geertz 1973, Smith 1981, cited in Semahagn, 2014:19). Eva Poluha claims that the primordial aspect of ethnicity puts ethnic groups as homogeneous and bounded entities, but this conception forgets that a single ethnic group can never exist in isolation-‘it always exists in interaction with and in relation to other groups’ (Poluha, 1998:33).

The other approach instrumentalism, understands ethnicity as ‘a type of political resource for competing interest groups’. The Instrumentalist approach refers to ethnicity as ‘a social construct that emphasizes the sharing of cultural and linguistic characteristics and kinship roots for the purpose of group mobilization’ (Semahagn, 2014:19). As to Lovise Aalen, instrumentalism is considered as a ‘constructivist’ approach that conceived ethnicity as “a constructed phenomenon, based on the selection of cultural markers and mobilized as a political force in the struggle for political power and resources” (Aalen, 2006:246). Thus, according to this approach, ethnicity is dynamic and constructed, and it is organized for political and economic goals. For Semahagn (2014), nowadays the instrumentalist approach is widely accepted than the primordialist approach; because the primordialist approach does not contain the true nature of ethnicity, and it did not understand the current ethnic conflicts and genocides that would rise by the political goal of ethnicity (p.20). By agreeing with this idea, Poluha claims that ethnicity is a ‘socially constructed’ entity that it may emerge in areas or countries which may not exist before, and it is also dependent on situation and context. Like culture, ethnicity is also formed in the process, and its content is dynamic. And this dynamic nature of ethnicity is important to create communication between members of ethnic groups (Poluha, 1998:33).

In an ethnification process, each ethnic group seeks to explain who the members of the group are from where they come, and these are important for the group to demarcate a line in relation to others. For Poluha, individuals or politicians may use some form of stereotype to promote ethnicity. They used a stereotype to establish borders that included their people (ethnic group), and that excluded others (Poluha, 1998:34).

Scholars who deal with ethnicity and federalism attempted to answer the questions like, ‘How important is ethnicity to personal identity and self-respect, and does accommodating ethnic groups interests require more than standard citizenship rights?’, ‘How salient is ethnicity to political conflict, and does this require taking measures to ensure the adequate representation of

ethnic groups?’, ‘is federalism an important system of administration to sustain ethnic diversity in multiethnic societies?’. These scholars attempted to answer these questions by raising ‘multination federalism’ or ‘multiethnic federalism’ as a remedy to solve conflicts among groups in multiethnic societies.

According to Roza Ismagilova, in polyethnic states, there is always a problem of interethnic relations. This problem is caused not because of antagonism among ethnic communities; rather it is caused by economic and political factors. ‘Competition for resources, inadequate state set-up, inappropriate governance, and deliberate mobilization of ethnicity to political ends’ are some of the economic and political factors that affect interethnic relations in polyethnic states (Ismagilova, 2004:179).

In polyethnic states, interethnic relations are also affected by ethnic stereotypes and traditional social structures. In many of such states, there was a social structure which put ethnic groups in the hierarchy and this made ethnic stereotypes among ethnic communities (Ismagilova, 2004:181).

In most multination states, the constituent nations have the demand to form political autonomy for the development of their cultures and to achieve the interest of their people. At the extreme, component nations may wish to secede, if they think that it is impossible to achieve their self-government within the larger state. Thus, federalism is one of the possible mechanisms for recognizing the self-government of component nations (Kymlicka, 2005:271). David Turton also claimed that “...western states have been able to use multination federalism to contain the potentially destructive power of nationalism within the bounds of democratic politics while promoting individual rights, economic prosperity and equality between groups” (Turton, 2006:4).

Kidane Mengistab claims that “In a multiethnic country, especially a country in which relations between the state and some ethnic groups are antagonistic, a successful strategy of state-building requires genuine decentralization and ethnic neutrality of the state at the center, both in essence and in appearance” (Kidane, 2001:24).

In multiethnic societies, especially in states having ethnocultural minorities and the federation is based on territorial principle, one of the important methods to solve ethnic conflicts is

exterritorial ethnic and cultural autonomy. Exterritorial ethnic and cultural autonomy helps the minorities to preserve their ethnic identity and to develop their traditions, culture, and language, and also to resolve ethnic problems at the local level. Additionally, exterritorial ethnic and cultural autonomy helps the minorities to acquire an adequate representation of their ethnoses in government bodies and administration (Ismagilova, 2004:184). To improve ethnic minorities in multiethnic states, it is important to draft programs that give special grants and privileges for minorities in civil service and in owning land in a given area (Ismagilova, 2004:184).

For Kymlicka, in a federation, some units may have the desire to remain as culturally distinct and politically self-governing societies, and he called this 'nationality-based units'. On the other hand, other units may have the desire to reflect the decision of a single national community by dividing powers on a regional basis, and he termed this as 'regional-based units' (Kymlicka, 2005:277).

For Kymlicka, political institutions outside the federal system, such as 'commonwealth', 'federacies', 'protectorates', or 'associated states', are important to achieve the aspirations of national minorities, and to respond to the distinctive interests and desires of nationality-based units. The complex standard models of federalism may not be capable to achieve the desires of national minorities (Kymlicka, 2005:285).

Regarding the discussions of federalism and ethnicity, Lovise Aalen also claims that "[if] ethnicity is the only acknowledged identity, other identities are subsequently downgraded" (Aalen, 2006:247). Giving recognition only for ethnicity may limit an individual choice and their flexibility. For a successful federal system which is based on ethnicity, it is important to protect the basic human rights of citizens and of respect their commitment to ethnicity (Aalen, 2006:247). Aalen advises that to prevent an ethnic-based federal system from leading to disintegration, it is important to develop an 'overarching identity' among ethnic groups. An overarching identity, that is the citizens' loyalty for overall citizenship, is important in the time of disagreements between ethnic groups. The idea of overall citizenship may prevent the disagreements not to increase into open ethnic fighting (Aalen, 2006:244-245).

Another scholar Ulrich K. Preuss also tried to show the significance of federalism in pluralistic or multiethnic societies. For Preuss, federalism is an ideal institution that is important to sustain

diversity without threatening the unity of a polity (Preuss, 1997:22). In addition to this, Preuss also tried to show the inherent link between federalism and constitutionalism. For him, the constitution must be the supreme law for the genuine cooperation between the central government and constituent units. Preuss claimed that, “in order to make federalism a constitutional design which helps to prevent identity-based political conflicts the territorial boundaries should not be drawn along ethnic, cultural, religious and similar ‘ascriptive’ lines because this could create the misconception that a (territorially based) polity is an instrument of cultural, ethnic, or religious self-determination” (Preuss, 1997).

This idea of Preuss tried to show the distinction between federalism and ethnicity. He argues that because of the ethnic-based form of federalism, minorities may have tried to exercise their full local autonomy until secession, and this may create small nations within a given area or country. In this scholar’s belief, in ethnic conflicts, federalism becomes a solution if only ethnic groups at first renounce unconditionally the question of secession, and this implies ‘the renunciation of secession precedes federalism, not vice versa’ (Preuss, 1997:25).

Moreover, some other scholars stress that structuring federal governance along ethnic lines promotes ‘primordial nationalism’, and it increases inter-ethnic violence and even civil war. Graham Smith points out that a democratized federation is the most effective way to prevent both minority and majority primordial nationalism (Smith, 2000:348). For Smith, a democratic federation is achieved by respecting the needs of the minorities, and by eliminating primordial forms of nationalism which are ethnically exclusive and territorially monopolist. In order to avoid the danger of primordial nationalism in a federation and for sustainable federalism, Smith suggests that;

...it is important to ensure, first, that federal subunits are defined not as the possession of one ethnic group, but rather as belonging to all residents; secondly, that a civic identity is developed which can be a source of allegiance and identity for non-dominant groups; thirdly, that in addition to recognizing any rights of groups, there is firm protection for individual rights; fourthly, that non-territorial forms of cultural diversity are recognized, and that non-territorial forms of cultural autonomy are promoted; and finally, that norms of distributive justice are enforced across federal units (Smith, 2000:365).

1.3 Ethiopia's Ethnic Federalism

After the collapse of the Derg regime, the initial Transitional Government of Ethiopia was established in 1991, and later in 1994, it became the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. This new regime attempted to reconstruct a post-imperial state by an ethnic federal system. The Transitional Government aimed to decentralize power and shared to regions and local level units. In 1992, it divided the state into 12 regions, and later decreased into 10 regions based on ethnic identities, and of two urban federal units that were too diverse and could not be subdivided by ethnic identity. After Eritrea separated from Ethiopia as an independent state, Ethiopia has 9 local regions and 2 urban federal units until now.

Because of the global political change after the cold war, Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) was forced to revise its ideology that was borrowed from the former socialist federations and to adopt liberal values. But EPRDF was not totally liberated from its old Marxist ideology; rather it claimed socialism as democratic. Thus, EPRDF attempted to modify its old Marxist ideology, and it reinvented ideologies like 'revolutionary democracy', 'self-determination rights of nations and nationalities' and later the ideology of 'developmental-state' as its principle of a democratic system.

The Ethiopian federal system developed new constitutional and ideological principles to govern the state on the ethnic-based system. The Ethiopian federal system mainly borrows its ideology from the former socialist federations that derived by the Marxist-Leninist state organizational principles, and the Stalinist notion of the right to self-determination of nationalities.

In former socialist federations, there was no proper division of power among the legislative, executive and judicial organ of the state. In these federations, the high power of the state was under the control of the vanguard party based on the principle of democratic centralism. Lack of genuine democracy is also a feature of socialist federations. Terminologies like democracy and individual rights are available in the vocabulary of the socialist federations, but they are controlled and restricted by the vanguard party of the state. The former socialist federations not allowed the multi-party system, and also prohibited independent civil society organizations and other democratic institutions. These federations also grant a right of self-determination and sovereignty for the constituent units.

By adopting these features of socialist federations, Ethiopia's federal system constitutionally granted the sovereignty of the state to 'nations, nationalities, and peoples of Ethiopia'. It also grants the states (regions) the right to self-determination including secession. Article 39(1) of the FDRE constitution claims that "Every Nation, Nationality, and People in Ethiopia has an unconditional right to self-determination, including the right to secession". In principle, the Ethiopia federal system grants regional units the right to self-determination including secession, and these rights are constitutionally guaranteed. But, in practice, like former socialist federation, the Ethiopia federal system is derived by a single vanguard party and this party controls the regional units through the principle of democratic centralism. It uses regional units as an extension of its policy and strategy.

Regarding the notion of secession right, scholars have different views. Some argue about the significance of secession right in a federal system, and others argue against secession right. One of the advocates of secession rights John C. Calhoun claims that in federal states if the constitutional principles are not respected and there is a threat, then the federation has the right to secede. Calhoun argues that, "... a state, as a party to the constitutional compact, has the right to secede,- acting in the same capacity in which it ratified the constitution,- cannot, with any show of reason, be denied by anyone who regards the constitution as a compact" (quoted in Harbo, 2008:133).

Another scholar Harry Beran also develops a liberal theory of secession. According to Beran, if it is morally and practically possible, and of desired by the territorially concentrated groups, secession right should be permitted (cited in Harbo, 2008:133). Michel Seymour also argues that, by considering the moral importance of individuals and peoples, if they suffer important injustice, it is important to give the right of secession for states (cited in Harbo, 2008:133).

Some argue that "easy secession would undermine international peace as well as the internal stability of democratic regimes. Moreover, it is impossible to find a rule for democratic decisions about boundaries that would be procedurally neutral between the preferences of secessionists and unionists" (Baubock, 2000:367). They suggest that a legitimate secession requires a just cause; rather than a mere individual choice, serious grievance can legitimize and justify secession. "Grievance theories of secession sometimes recommend federal arrangements for prudential

reasons in order to accommodate nationalist aspirations without threatening the unity of the state” (Buchanan cited in Baubock, 2000:368).

Other scholars like Allen Buchanan also attempted to show how the question of secession right is related to nationalism or ethnicity, and of its moral justifications. In his article *Secession and Nationalism*, Buchanan claims that the current (the 1970s and 1980s) secession movements are the resurgence of nationalism, and of appeals to ‘the right of self-determination for peoples’ (Buchanan, 2007:756). For Buchanan, this appeal to self-determination is equivalent with what is called ‘normative nationalist principle’. The normative nationalist principle aimed that every ‘people’, people those who have a distinct culture or ethnic group, must acquire complete political independence. But, for Buchanan, there is a difficulty to achieve the aim of this principle; because the histories of many groups (ethnic groups) refers that they borrowed some cultural elements from others, and so it is difficult and impossible to give complete political independence for all groups in the world (Buchanan, 2007:757).

Buchanan (2007) argues that “...a state that recognizes rights of self-determination for minorities within its borders thereby transforms itself into something less than a full sovereign state” (p.756). But this argument of Buchanan is not aimed at denying the significance of secession right; rather it aimed to show the impossibility of the normative nationalist principle. In his conclusion, he claimed that the right to secession has a moral ground and justification, but it is not a right that granted to all groups. Secession right is ‘a special or selective right that obtains only under certain conditions’ (Buchanan, 2007:758). He notes that one of the justifications for secession right is that if a region was unjustly incorporated into the larger unit, it is just to claim that the region has the right to secede. But, the people those who are attempting to secede must be the same and has ‘a legitimate title to the territory at the time of the unjust annexation’ (Buchanan, 2007:759).

In addition to this, Buchanan claimed that a group may secede to escape ‘discriminatory redistribution’ and unequal treatment. When the state drafts discriminatory economic policies that systematically exploit some groups, these groups may think and wish secession as the only option to escape discrimination. But, by raising different practices which happened in different countries, Buchanan claimed that it is controversial to claim that ‘escaping discriminatory

redistribution' is a moral justification for a group to secede from the larger state (Buchanan, 2007:760).

In contrast to the advocates of secession rights, scholars like Florentia Harbo claim about the insignificance of secession rights in federalism. According to Harbo, 'secession right is incompatible with federalism'. If the federal system constitutionally grants the right of secession for the constituent units, they may threaten the system if they do not agree on any policy of the system. Additionally, if the constitution permits the right of secession, each federal unit is vulnerable to threats of secession coming from other units (Harbo, 2008:134). For Harbo, a federal constitution can prevent secession by a clear division of powers for the federal government and federal units. If it clearly divided powers for both levels of government, the federal units do not feel suppressed by the federal level and vice versa (Harbo, 2008:134).

The Ethiopian government EPRDF also declared the ideology of 'revolutionary democracy' as the basic thing to run the ethnic-based federal system in the country. As many scholars claimed, it is hard to study the origin, meaning, and scope of the doctrine of 'revolutionary democracy'. Some state that, the doctrine is introduced during the October revolution of 1917 (Semahagn, 2014:133). Jean-Nicolas Bach notes that the ideology of 'revolutionary democracy' partly emerged from Lenin's strategy that emphasizes the necessity of 'enlightened' elites to lead the unconscious masses, and to lead the social revolution through a vanguard party that would not allow any internal factionalism. Most socialist regimes and liberation movements in Africa have adopted the ideology of revolutionary democracy during the cold war. But after the fall of the Eastern bloc, most of them abandoned the ideology (Bach, 2011:641-642). In the case of Ethiopia, the ideology of revolutionary democracy emerged in the 1980s when TPLF was in armed struggle. At first, TPLF leaders have followed the Maoist socialist ideology, but later they shifted their ideology to the Albanian model of socialism. This ideological turn has occurred when the Marxist Leninist League of Tigray (MLLT) established on 25 July 1985, and this league was highly influenced by the two main TPLF leaders Abbay Tsehaye and Meles Zenawi (Bach, 2011:642).

The doctrine of 'revolutionary democracy' has been considered as the new invention of EPRDF to seek its legitimacy under the eyes of western donors, and to maintain its hegemonic power in the country. Until 1991, TPLF used the doctrine for achieving socialism. But after 1991, because

of the global political change and fall of the ideology of socialism, TPLF claimed the doctrine of revolutionary democracy for creating a democratic system and liberal economy. According to various documents of EPRDF, revolutionary democracy is a mixture of socialist and capitalist values that have various economic, political and social objectives, and so the realization of revolutionary democracy has no alternative for the survival of Ethiopia as one country (Semahagn, 2014:135).

Some criticize revolutionary democracy as a system of administration that does not allow the existence of independent institutions in the country and this makes the violations of human rights in general and violations of rights of citizens in particular. Revolutionary democracy aimed to centralize power within a single regime or party, and it also hinders democratic institutions like the electoral board and the media. The freedom of the electoral board and the media is important to form a democratic multicultural federation, but this is hindered by revolutionary democracy. Additionally, in contrast to the principles of the Ethiopian constitution, revolutionary democracy classified citizens as friends and enemies. Those who advocate the ‘doctrine’ are considered as friends and those who do not are enemies. But, in contrast, the constitution declared the equality of all citizens. This implies that there is a paradox between the EPRDF ideology of revolutionary democracy and the constitutional principles of the country. For Bach, the Ethiopian political system since 1991 when EPRDF took power, the political ideology of the country runs by two contradictory ideologies. These ideologies are ‘revolutionary democracy’ and ‘liberal democracy’. The hybridization of these ideologies clearly shows the current politics of Ethiopia (Bach, 2011: 644). Bach argues that Abyotawi democracy has lost its original substance in the current political strategy of EPRDF. The party (EPRDF) used or raised the ideology only for fighting internal and external opponents or critics (Bach, 2011:644).

Another doctrine, ‘developmental state’, is also an important principle that EPRDF used to regulate and control the political arena of the country. After the fiasco of the 2005 general election, EPRDF planned again to legitimize its power by claiming the country as a developmental state. Through this plan, EPRDF promises to build roads, schools for the citizens, and it also promises to increase the economic growth of the country with two double digits. But in practice, EPRDF can’t do. As scholars suggest, EPRDF attempted to apply the doctrine of developmental state aggressively. The doctrine of developmental state has been able to make

changes in Asian countries, but in Ethiopia, it hasn't been able to make changes that expected and the main reason for this is that EPRDF can't to apply and work the doctrine genuinely.

The aggressive application of the model of the developmental state affected the federalization and democratization process of Ethiopia. EPRDF releases documents and news that exaggeratedly imply the economic growth of the country. But practically, these documents and news did not show the reality in the ground.

Different scholars strongly criticized Ethiopia's ethnic federal system. One of these scholars Theodore Vestal claimed the following about Ethiopia's ethnic federal system;

The fundamental principles begin with the credo of the EPRDF: sovereign power emanates from ethnic groups...In light of events in Rwanda and Bosnia-Herzegovina...this is a daring principles from which to operate...Article 39 attempts to contain the country's diversity through ethnic confederation rather than through integration of all people into a Great Ethiopia. Ethnic differences are highlighted while principles and goals shared in common by the various groups are played down (quoted in Ismagilova, 2004:191).

Theodore Vestal also claimed that, "The ideas of ethnic federalism did not originate from a people nor did they approve of it in free and fair elections...In Ethiopia, the people have not been given the opportunity as to choose at the grass roots level, and until they do, ethnic federalism must be viewed as an artificial system imposed from above" (quoted in Ismagilova, 2004:191).

Another scholar, Jon Abbink also criticized Ethiopia's ethnic federal system based on his field research of the southern region of Ethiopia. Abbink(2002) claimed that the southern and south-western people 'tolerated ethnic difference', but after the state adopted the ethnic-based federal system, it was replaced by 'ethnic identity' scenario. The ethnic-based federal system de-emphasized customary laws, traditional authorities, etc. (cited in Ismagilova, 2004:191).

Another scholar Roza Ismagilova criticizes the Ethiopian ethnic federal system because the criteria for forming the states (regions) are not invariably clear. In Ethiopia, regions were supposed to be organized on the basis of ethnolinguistic principle, but only a few major ethnic groups fulfill the criteria and form regions. Ismagilova raises the Southern Nations' and Nationalities', and Peoples' regional state as an example that shows the abnormality of Ethiopian ethnic federal system. This regional state consists of more than forty ethnic groups who are totally different in culture and language (Ismagilova, 2004:188). In addition to this, Ismagilova

(2004) claims that “the study of the ethnic composition of the Ethiopian states showed that none of them is homogenous” (p.185).

Ismagilova also criticized Ethiopia’s ethnic federal system on the point that, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia constitution defines minorities as the groups whose number is less than 100 thousand, but apart from this, it did not clearly set which groups are considered as minorities, and how their ethnoses are treated as minority (Ismagilova, 2004:189).

Kidane Mengisteab states that in African countries bad governance is one of the main factors for ethnic tension and conflicts. Self-centered dictators fostered ethnic conflicts to reduce oppositions to their regime. EPRDF is one of these kinds of regimes. Because of the regime violations of human rights and of undermining of cultural freedoms of different ethnic groups, the country remains in intense ethnic tension and conflicts (Kidane, 2001:21).

Aalen also claims that the 1994 Ethiopian constitution defined ethnicity (or ethnic group) based on the primordial idea of ethnicity that clearly puts ethnic groups as distinguishable cultural groups. Article 39 of the Ethiopian constitution defines every citizen based on their ethnic groups and their ethnic lines. This definition of the constitution is the same as the primordialism approach that puts ethnicity as fixed and inborn (Aalen, 2006:247). In addition to this, Aalen also criticized the educated elites of Ethiopians. As she claimed, the Ethiopian local educated elites are ‘ethnic entrepreneurs’ those who used the constitutions to pursue their goals. The Ethiopian ‘ethnic entrepreneurs’ advocates ethnic politics at the lower level and they aimed to mobilize the peoples’ to fight primarily for their ‘nationality’ or ‘ethnic group’ (Aalen, 2006:257).

On the positive side, for Aalen, the Ethiopia ethnic federal system introduced the ideas of the rights of minorities to speak and write by their own language, and also gave different rights for previously neglected or oppressed minorities. On its negative side, the Ethiopia ethnic federal system undermined the two main preconditions for solving ethnic conflicts in federal states (that are, democracy and the idea of inclusive and overall citizenship) (Aalen, 2006:256).

Some people fear that, like the former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia federations, the Ethiopia ethnic federal system may lead the country to disintegration, and to become separate states. In contrast to this, Aalen writes “...the Ethiopians, unlike the peoples of the soviet union and

Yugoslavia, have a strong common identity, an idea of overarching citizenship that transcends ethnic identities, which can be called upon to prevent disintegration” (Aalen, 2006:255).

For some like Rainer Baubock, the twentieth century socialist federation states had broken down not because of the unsustainability of federalist solutions, rather they broke down out of the lack of democratic institutions that integrate diverse societies. “...democratic federalism is not just about granting national minorities special rights, it is also about maintaining and defending democratic institutions at the level of the federation” (Baubock, 2000:374).

Sometimes in a federal state, it is difficult to make ‘federalism solution’ to nationality conflicts. Wayne Norman tried to point two possible shortcomings and also solution for them. “First, devolving political power to minorities who form provincial majorities also turns state-wide majorities into minorities in these provinces. These latter groups will claim the same rights as their co-nationals living elsewhere in the state. Secondly, small or dispersed nationalities who are not able to form regional majorities may feel that their position worsens if they are subjected to provincial laws rather than to federal ones” (Norman 1994 cited in Baubock, 2000:370). For these shortcomings, Norman suggest that, it is not necessary to abandon federalist solutions, rather it is important to refine them and this can be possible ‘by adding provisions of non-territorial cultural rights, federal protection, and special exemptions or powers for groups that cannot form a federal unit’.

It is true that ethnic federalism institutionalizes identities and boundaries on the basis of ethnic identity, and this is not bad in itself. The important thing is that, the ethnic federalism should institutionalize boundaries and identities in a peaceful and democratic ways, as well as it should respect the rights and freedom of individuals. If it is possible to form a consensus on liberal democratic values, then it is possible to establish a genuine ethnic-based federal system. This consensus avoid the fear and tension between ethnic groups that one may use its power of self-autonomy to persecute or expel the members of other ethnic groups who lives in its territory, and this also eliminate the conflicts which were raised between different ethnic groups. I think, one of the problems for Ethiopia’s ethnic federalism is that it did not institutionalize ethnic identities in a peaceful and democratic ways; first it is not established through democratic discussions and debates of all citizens and/or regions; secondly, it is just simply incorporated many articles about individual rights in the constitution, but it did not practically done its job to protect individual

rights and freedom; rather it becomes a machine that the ‘rulers’ used to suppress the rights and freedom of the citizens. It is not sufficient to grant rights for individuals or groups, rather strong democratic institutions are necessary to maintain and defend those rights. Additionally, as David Turton(2006) claimed “...the challenges facing the Ethiopian federal system is restricted by a lack of direct comparison with other cases and, secondly, that the Ethiopian experience has had little chance to influence general thinking about federalism as a political concept and as a means of accommodating ethnic diversity” (p.1).

From the very beginning, the ethnic federalism system adopted by EPRDF, to make difference between different ethnic groups, and to easily control the power of the state. In Ethiopia, as Vestal and others claimed, the concept of ethnic federalism did not originate from the will of the people. Rather, it is the idea of the vanguard party EPRDF, and so it is logical to claim that the adopted ethnic federalism did not achieve the interests of all groups and citizens, and this is because of the absence of democratic institutions those who protect the interests of all groups and citizens. As some commentators often said “...ethnic federalism in Ethiopia has served to essentialize ethnic identities, to privilege and reinforce these identities over other non-ethnic identities, to sharpen feelings of difference between groups, and thereby to increase tension about cultural and geographical boundaries between groups” (Kymlicka, 2006:57).

In addition to these, the secession right clause of the Ethiopian constitution is also debatable because multiple voices have not participated and included when it was drafted. In many countries, especially in western multination federal states, the right of secession set implicitly to democratically and peacefully govern all. But, the Ethiopia constitution explicitly set this right to all groups, and now it becomes a problem to manage the question of different ethnic groups for their right of self-autonomy until secession. As Kymlicka notes, Democratic referendum on secession is a legitimate right and has been accepted by different countries, but in Ethiopia it “is not the idea that a democratic secession might be accepted, but rather the way this idea is explicitly deduced from first principles, rather than implicitly evolving out of piecemeal democratic negotiations” (Kymlicka, 2006:55).

And also, as multiculturalists insisted, the qualities of citizens are important to form a democratic and multicultural federalism. EPRDF simply adopted the ethnic federalism without considering the consciousness of the citizens, and I think that is why ethnic federalism becomes the source of

conflicts among different ethnic groups. Currently, it is true that ‘ethnic-consciousness’ become strong in all ethnic groups, and so we should accept this fact and try to form a democratic multicultural Ethiopian state. It is important to give attention for the ethnic-consciousness of all groups, and also important to find a free and just answer for the demands of all. As Claude Ake(1993) suggested “...the usual easy judgment against ethnic consciousness were a dangerous luxury at a time when long-established states were decomposing under pressure from ethnic and nationalist assertiveness, and when the community of independent countries was shrugging off their demise” (cited in Oduor, 2019:110).

CHAPTER TWO

The General Concept of Interculturalism and Multiculturalism

In this chapter, I will try to clarify some basic concepts and perspectives of interculturalism and multiculturalism which are important to examine Ethiopia's ethnic-based federalism. Intercultural philosophy aimed to communicate different cultures, philosophies, ideas by creating an equal opportunity for all. In my opinion, one of the defects of Ethiopian politics is that it did not establish a genuine ethnic federal system that include and participate all ethnic groups in their representation of cultural or political arena, and also it did not able to maintain individual freedom in the federal system. Even if the Ethiopian constitution included more articles about individual rights, the actualities of these articles are impeded by a lack of actual institutions which are important to maintain and protect individual as well as group rights and freedom in the ethnic federal system. Thus, I prepared this chapter to give a critical examination and analysis on Ethiopia's ethnic federal system-its defect when we compare it from the liberal understanding of interculturality, multiculturalism, nationalism, individual freedom and group identity or rights.

2.1 Intercultural Philosophy and its Perspectives

In dealing with intercultural philosophy, the first task should be identifying whether intercultural philosophy is a new branch or a new orientation in philosophy. One of the prominent scholars of intercultural philosophy Franz Martin Wimmer claimed intercultural philosophy as a new orientation in philosophy. For Wimmer, intercultural philosophy is a new orientation in philosophy to answer questions like whether philosophy has different origins, or not and how it is possible to create understanding and communication among different philosophies and cultures. Yosefi also asserted that intercultural philosophy is not a new branch in philosophy; rather it is a new orientation which aimed to correct the historiography of traditional philosophy (Yosefi, 2007:105). According to Yosefi (2007), "Intercultural philosophy is not a branch of traditional philosophy, but rather a correction and extension of the same" (p.119).

Intercultural philosophy deals with communication among different cultures. Culture is a typical way of life of human beings which distinguish them from other groups of human beings. Culture determines groups' way of speaking, dressing, trade system, and their ideas of nature and reality (Wimmer, 2002:76). Idang also notes that culture refers to peculiar and distinct traits and

characters of a given people from other peoples. These peculiarities include people's language, dancing, dressing, music, work, arts and also it refers to people's social norms, values, and taboos (Idang, 2015:98). Another scholar, who first coined and defined culture in his work *Primitive culture* (1871), Edward B. Taylor defines culture as "a complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs or any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (Taylor 1871, cited in Idang, 2015:98).

Similarly, Wimmer (2002) stated physical and mental actions of a certain cultural group refer to the existence of 'internal universality' among the members of the cultural group (p.77). Regarding the feelings and thoughts of the members of a different cultural group, it is difficult or impossible to get the real information (p.78). This implies that it is impossible to get a pure culture of a certain group which is totally free or pure from others. Additionally, it is important to know the dynamic nature of culture; culture is not a stable entity, rather it is dynamic and subject to change. Through historical and self-consciousness of a group, one culture may develop or a new culture may evolve in a certain group (p.79). Based on the idea of equality of cultures, Heinz Kimmerle (1996) defines culture as "the organization of a human community that enables it to maintain and sustain itself in the midst of other cultures and of nature" (cited in Hofmeyr, 2004:54).

In order to describe the similarity and difference (singularity) of different cultures, scientific and academic disciplines have been designed. As an academic discipline, philosophy should provide methodological rules to understand the status quo of humanity in particular and to prove our knowledge about cultures in general (Wimmer, 2002:75).

Based on his intercultural view, Wimmer attempted to use philosophy for creating a 'global culture'. As he (2002) explains, the traditional streams and histories of philosophy represent the tradition of the West, and it ignores the non-western. Thus, it is necessary to balance the past through philosophy, and this is important to understand reality and to create a global culture (p.87). "...a global culture of humankind is coming into being which is more than a mere evolution of one – the Western- of the regionally limited traditional cultures in the past" (Wimmer, 2002:80).

According to Wimmer, in order to create a global culture or philosophy, it is important to examine the following tasks: first, we should examine the story of philosophy which is told by philosophers and historians of philosophy in Europe; second, we should look at the words of certain languages to know what they said or express; thirdly, it is important to find a solution for the dilemma of universalism and particularism; lastly, it is important to see the consequences of the historiography of philosophy and the systematic argumentations in this field (Wimmer, 2002:9-10).

For Wimmer, for answering the questions of humanity, philosophy should go beyond its traditional and historical contexts constructed by the West. Traditional representation and characterization of philosophy only focused on the cultures of the west, and this ignored the voices of others. Non-westerners were excluded from the history of philosophy. Thus, philosophy should reconstruct its own ideology to form a genuine intercultural communication among different cultures, philosophies and religions, and also for answering the questions of humanity. Wimmer selected the method of ‘polylogue’ as a basis for genuine intercultural communication. Polylogue is different from dialogue because it refers to the multiplicity of participants and multiple voices. It also refers to the willingness and open-mindedness for anyone who wants to participate in the conversation or communication. But, for Wimmer, doing a polylogue is much more complex than stating or saying it (Wimmer, 2002: 12).

Wimmer states that the history of philosophy reflects only the culture and way of thinking of the west, and so the discipline should reconstruct its own ideology and create an egalitarian basis of communication, and this will be achieved through a ‘polylogue’ communication. Through a polylogue communication, it is possible to search universally valid arguments and concepts, and reflect the cultural and regional particularities of different kinds of thinking on every possible level (Wimmer, 2002:15). Regarding the fact of diversity of cultures or philosophies, and of accommodating these diversities through intercultural communication, Wimmer states that “to philosophize in an intercultural orientation means to be aware of the multitude and the diversity of the many cultures of humankind. At the same time, one does not have to recede in relativism. Such ways probably will turn out not to be shown only by occidental thinkers of the past: they will be found in co-operation rather than in separation” (Wimmer, 2002:24).

Intercultural philosophy understood the existence of texts, ideas, philosophies and the like that have moved from one culture into another. The project of intercultural philosophy begins through the 'migration' of ideas, texts, and the like from one culture into another (Sweet, 2014:6). For doing intercultural philosophy, it is important to examine and understand different languages, cultures, and philosophies. Wimmer claims that,

...we will have to continue using different languages to find and to express our ideas. All of these languages will have particularities; none will be completely adequate to what we are trying to think and to express. The game of differentiation and of definition will go on. We will never have the certainty that any of our expressions really hit the point, because as philosophers we will never have other means than our words to show what we mean, and all of these words will be rooted in certain, very particular cultural settings and experiences (Wimmer, 2002: 24).

Intercultural philosophy attempts to facilitate a common level of respect between different kinds of cultures, religions, and philosophies, and it also strives to create a mutually beneficial dialogue between different groups-without the violence of a particular group (Yosefi, 2007:105). As to Yosefi (2007), "Interculturality is an orientation of thought and action that stems from the idea of unity in diversity-with this meant the protection of one's own cultural differences and the acceptance of those of other cultures" (p.118). Kimmerle also thought that intercultural philosophy aims to create dialogues between all cultures, and it includes the specific type or style of the philosophy of all cultures. Additionally, this specific type or style of the philosophy of different cultures includes the oral communication or traditions of the societies; not only the written one (cited in Hofmeyr, 2004:59).

Another intercultural philosophy theorist Ram Adhar Mall claims that "intercultural philosophy stands for a process of emancipation from all types of centrisms, whether European or non-European...it seeks a philosophical attitude, a philosophical conviction that no one philosophy is the philosophy for the whole of humankind...it is the task of intercultural philosophy to mediate between...two ends, i.e., the specific philosophies as they are found in different cultures and the universal philosophy which is not culturally bound itself" (quoted in Sweet, 2014:4).

Mall identifies 'analogous hermeneutics' as a method of intercultural philosophizing. He argues that because all cultures have a philosophical tradition, they all have a hermeneutic tradition. For Mall, analogous hermeneutics method is very important to understand the culture of the other.

Through this method, first we understand that not all are identical, and secondly, we understand there is a difference. And then we also understand that there is no totally different and no totally the same thing between different kinds of cultures. Mall states that;

The concept of ‘analogous hermeneutics’, which does justice to the present de facto hermeneutic situation, is neither the hermeneutics of total identity, which reduces the other to an echo of itself and repeats self-understanding in the name of understanding the other, nor that of radical difference, which makes understanding the other impossible (Mall, 2000:16).

On the other hand, Kimmerle identifies the methodology of listening as guidance for ‘intercultural dialogues’. And, the result of the intercultural dialogues is not determined by a particular participant; rather it is determined by the contributions of all participants in the dialogue. The participants in dialogue must be open to understand that their philosophy may be false or in need of modification, as well as, they must understand that no philosophy is completely true and also all philosophies are subject to improvement or modification (Hofmeyr, 2004:60-61). For Kimmerle, intercultural dialogues are not aimed to do away with differences between the participants; rather they aimed to create a new position which is different from both starting positions (Kimmerle 1996 cited in Hofmeyr, 2004:64).

According to Kimmerle, the method of intercultural philosophical dialogue must respect the following four basic rules. The first one is ‘a recognition of equality and difference’-this rule refers that every participant in the dialogue must understand there is difference between participants, and it is important to know that a true dialogue occurs only when the participants are equal. The second rule is ‘openness to the possibilities of dialogue’-this rule claimed that in the topic of their discourse the participants must be open to a new searching in their understanding and also to understand the ideas of the other. Thirdly, Kimmerle states, it is important to recognize the presence of the other, and this is important to create a dialogue that referred to equal presence of all participants-what Kimmerle called this ‘an awareness of extra-linguistic and extra-rational means of communication in dialogue’. The fourth rule, for Kimmerle, is ‘preparedness for new information’-this is important to appreciate the strength of the other, and also it is important to learn something which is radically new for us.

Some claimed intercultural philosophy is the same as comparative philosophy, but Mall disagrees with this idea, and he insists that intercultural philosophy is not the same with comparative philosophy. For him, “methodically intercultural philosophy...is based on comparative studies, and in particular on the comparison of cultures and their philosophical traditions” (quoted in Sweet, 2014:4).

A claim about philosophy and its relation to culture is one of the challenges to the project of intercultural philosophy. Some scholars argue that our languages and values are the results of cultures; we learned our philosophies from our cultures. This claim forces us to bind ourselves only on our cultures, and this is the challenge to do an intercultural philosophy. Another challenge comes from the nature of philosophy. As some claimed, philosophy should involve the method of ‘question and answer’; if this is true, ‘how to engage philosophies and philosophers from different cultures those who speak and understand different languages’. In relation to this, MacIntyre argues that moral beliefs and practices have different standpoints; because they are formed by their specific traditions which are found. If they have different standpoints, they have different rationality and justification for things. Thus, their claims are inevitably inconclusive, and dialogues cannot solve these problems (cited in Sweet, 2014:7-9). In response to these challenges, John Ozolins argues that intercultural philosophy is possible when cultures can come into contact with some language and be understandable to one another, if a shared conceptual space is established (Ozolins, 2014:19). For Ozolins, the existence of shared philosophical interests across cultures is the major thing for intercultural philosophy to occur. Thus, for Ozolins, intercultural philosophy is possible when it recognizes the domination of different cultures. Another theorist Edwin George claimed that intercultural philosophy aimed to deconstruct universalism and liberate philosophy from ‘centrisms’ (George, 2014:51). Like Wimmer, George claimed that intercultural philosophy should find a new method to emancipate itself from centrisms, especially from Eurocentrism and the dominance of Western philosophical tradition. Thus, for George, intercultural philosophy can occur when one liberates itself from a particular or one culture or tradition. In relation to this, Hsueh-I Chen argues that a new method is important for the occurrence of intercultural philosophy. According to Chen, hybridization and deterritorializations of cultures are important for doing a genuine intercultural philosophy (Chen, 2014:75). Chen insists that intercultural philosophy occurs in a context of equality and alterity, and he called this a philosophy of ‘equalterity’.

In general, intercultural philosophy requires recognition and understanding of the potential limitation of one's own culture or philosophy, and it also needs openness to know about others' culture or philosophy. Intercultural philosophy does not require a relativism to set truth as particular to different cultures. Rather it aimed to create a universal truth which is grasped from the engagement and participation of different cultures or philosophies.

2.2 Interculturalism and Multiculturalism

As I explained in the previous section, Intercultural philosophy aimed to create communication among various groups or cultures. It aimed to create a dialogue or polylogue among different participants which came from different ethnic, linguistic, religious or cultural groups. Intercultural dialogue does not require the same ethnic or racial descent, or religion, or culture. It finds only a genuine communication and understanding among the participants and goes to cut across the ethnic, racial, religious or ideological disagreement. The central theme of intercultural philosophy is interculturality that explicitly aims to address the globalization of difference. Intercultural philosophy is aim to develop a discussion about philosophical and social problems. It develops such kind of discussions by raising different kinds of reflections from different groups on concepts like culture, multiculturalism, diversity, dialogue and so on.

As Flavia Monceri notes, it is important to be aware that our knowledge is stereotypical in character and not shows the complete picture of reality. Even if we cannot live without stereotypes and stereotypical knowledge, we have the chance to widen and replace them through interculturality. Interculturality suggests to modify our stereotypes and to enter into others' culture in order to re-construct a new model of reality (Monceri, 2014: 84). Interculturality is important to accommodate diversity, and it also indicates the uniqueness of each individual and the possibility of communication with one another, but accepting diversity is the starting point for communication with one another. "Perceiving the 'other' as different implies recognizing incoming information as new to a certain degree, since we cannot grasp diversity in itself but only in a communicative process-that is, in the process of a concrete interaction" (Monceri, 2014:87).

In the political arena, mutual understanding and trust of the participants (parties) are important to form shared political ideology or administration. All the participants must share their idea and

the habit of a 'polylogue' is important for all to communicate with one another and to exchange their ideas. Some sense of commonality among the participants is important to form intercultural dialogue or polylogue and to form participatory democracy. In multilingual democratic states, democratic debates are operating, and language is important to define the boundaries of the political communities and political actors.

The above interculturalism concepts of understanding the presence of the other, recognition of equality and difference, and openness to dialogue are important to the current diverse societies and to form a multicultural world. Most countries today are culturally diverse, and this diversity creates divisive questions between minorities and majorities. Minorities and majorities clash over such issues as regional autonomy, language rights, education curriculum, political representation, national symbols like the choice of the national anthem or on the choice of the national flag. In diverse societies, minority groups demanding recognition of their identity and accommodation of their cultural differences, and this is often raised as the challenge of 'multiculturalism' today.

The concept of 'Multiculturalism' refers to cultures in the plural, not a single culture. Multiculturalism appeared as 'questioning' the key principles of liberal societies and states. It may be seen as a critique of western universalism and liberalism and it is closely related to post-structuralism and communitarianism. Multiculturalism defined social groups which have cultural forms and practices. Multicultural claims are aim to recognize the existence of different cultures, and they aim to give rights to individuals because of their membership to a particular cultural group. Multiculturalism concerned on the significance of diversity for contemporary societies.

As Joppke and Lukes note, multiculturalism comes in 'mosaic' or 'hodgepodge' model. The 'mosaic' model asserts that individual members of a particular cultural group are the prior thing to connect the individual with its meaningful choices, and this is the different aspect of the model from the classical model of national citizenship (Joppke and Lukes, 1999:8). One of the objections against the mosaic model is that it prefers homogeneous cultures to individual choices. By contrasting this model, Jeremy Waldron holds the position of Rushdian 'hodgepodge' model of multiculturalism. This model accepts the 'cosmopolitan alternative' that refers to the mixture of cultures for meaningful individual choices (cited in Joppke and Lukes, 1999:10). "The cosmopolitan may live all his life in one city and maintain the same citizenship throughout. But he refuses to think of himself as defined by his location or his ancestry or his

citizenship or his language” (Waldron, 1995:95). For Waldron, the hodgepodge model refers to the impure, flux and hybrid nature of cultures. Jeremy Waldron argues that individual meaningful choice does not need homogeneous culture; rather it may come from different cultural sources (cited in Joppke and Lukes, 1999:10).

According to Will Kymlicka, cultural diversity has two broad patterns. The first one is the cultural diversity that arises from the incorporation of self-governing cultures into a large state, and what Kymlicka called the incorporated cultures ‘national minorities’. The second cultural diversity arises from individual and familial immigration, and the immigrants Kymlicka called ‘ethnic groups’ (Kymlicka, 1995:10). In the former pattern, minorities seek to acquire autonomy or self-government to ensure the distinctiveness of their cultures. But, in the case of the latter, minorities only wish to integrate with the larger group and to be accepted as full members of the larger one.

In a state, minorities are often threatened by nation-building and have feared that this may create disadvantages for them. Minority rights, thus, is an important mechanism to solve injustice against minorities. In nation-building policies there are positive and valid purposes, but it is illegitimate when it tried to exclude, disempowered or assimilate the minorities. Nation-building becomes strong when it combined and controlled by minority rights. Minority rights issues are matters of rights and justice that the minorities seek within a given state.

As Kymlicka notes, since the end of the cold-war ethnocultural conflicts are the main causes of political violence in the world. Liberals attempted to solve this tension of ethnocultural conflicts, by guaranteeing civil and political rights of all individuals. Liberals disagreed with the idea that different ethnic groups should acquire a permanent political identity or constitutional status. If individual rights are protected, it is not further necessary to give group right to protect an individual, and so ethnic or group rights can be subsumed under the category of human rights. Thus, for liberals, ethnic identity can be manifested through the freedom of individual-this means that an individual has the right to express one’s own identity or cultural attachment, but the state keep neither concern nor nurture such expression. But, for Kymlicka, these traditional standards of the liberals can’t solve the current controversial questions of the world that are related to the issue of cultural minorities. So, for Kymlicka, to resolve ethnocultural questions fairly, we need

to supplement a theory of minority rights in the traditional human rights principles (Kymlicka, 1995:5).

According to Kymlicka, a multicultural state must incorporate both universal rights of individuals and certain group-differentiated rights to treat minority cultures. In his expression, Kymlicka clearly shows how it is dangerous to recognize minority rights. He raised the act of the Nazi as a good example to show that how one group may use and abuse the language of minority rights to dominate others. Additionally, Kymlicka also claimed that belligerent, intolerant and fundamentalist nationalists may also use and abuse the language of minority rights ‘to justify the domination of people outside their group, and the suppression of dissenters within the group’. And so he advises that the liberal theory of minority rights must explain ‘how minority rights coexist with human rights and how minority rights are limited by principles of individual liberty, democracy, and social justice’ (Kymlicka, 1995:6).

In general, both interculturalism and multiculturalism are demanding the existence of different cultures, the idea of unity in diversity, recognizing of equality and difference, recognizing the presence of others’, and multi-communication. These features of interculturalism and multiculturalism are important to understand and communicate the current diverse societies of the world. And also, they are important to solve conflicts and tensions what we observed in the current multiethnic or multicultural societies.

2.3 Multiculturalism, Nationalism and Federalism

Nowadays, multination states are unable to create a strong sense of solidarity across ethnonational lines. There is a lack of trust and solidarity between groups in the state and this may force the states to disintegration, and it may also create a demand for secession. In most multination states, to ensure the development of their cultures, the component nations demand some form of political autonomy and territorial jurisdiction. Some argue that secession is the most appropriate mechanism to solve the crisis of multination states. They argued that the demand of the national minorities to form a separate state is morally legitimate and it is unjust to undermine this desire of the minorities. In contrast to this view of secessionists, others argue that allowing the right of secession for groups may increase secession movements, and it creates political instability and violence around the world.

To solve the crisis and conflicts of multinational states, scholars proposed federalism, i.e. democratic federalism, as a mechanism. They argued that democratic federalism respects individual rights and freedoms, and it can be able to tame and pacify the demand for secession and the force of nationalism. But, they also agree on the point that federalism is no panacea for all ethnonational (ethnocultural) conflicts. Most argue that federalism is the best mechanism to accommodate the desire and interests of national minorities, but not all federal systems were designed to accommodate national minorities and self-government. The United States and Australian federations are good examples to show that federalism is not only designed to accommodate the interests of different national or ethnic groups. So, it is important to understand that unrelated to ethnocultural diversity there are many reasons why countries adopt federalism. According to Kymlicka, the mere fact of federalism cannot accommodate the interests of national minorities; rather it is important to focus on how the federal boundaries are drawn and how powers are shared. Sometimes federalism may be used by majority groups to undermine national minorities, and so it is important to distinguish genuine multinational federation from merely territorial federation which does not exist. He insists that a federal system is considered as a genuine multinational federation if decisions about powers and boundaries reflect the interests of the minority groups (Kymlicka, 2001:101).

For some, recognizing ‘ethnic-based identity’ is not important for the communication of plural societies. They insist that the idea of ethnic identity may create disintegration or miscommunication between different ethnic or cultural groups. In plural or multiethnic societies, the existence of ethnic nationalism may force all groups to protect only its group culture, tradition, and language, and this may create miscommunication among groups. Thus, it is only important to recognize individual rights and freedom to express their identity.

Regarding the concept of nationalism, some tried to show its relation with the liberal principle of individual freedom. Nationalist movements attempted to make the nation and state identical in two very different and conflicting ways (Kymlicka, 2001:222). On the one hand, “state nationalism” emphasizes that the state adopted ‘nation-building’ policies to give a common language, identity, and culture for citizens. On the other hand, “minority nationalism” emphasizes that within a larger state ethnocultural minorities mobilized and seek to acquire a

state of their own (Kymlicka, 2001:222). For Kymlicka, the conflicts between these two nationalisms are the most pervasive feature of twentieth-century history.

Minority nationalists may aim to preserve or protect the 'authenticity' of their culture. Kymlicka called this as illiberal nationalists, like Eastern Europe nationalists, aim. But, for Kymlicka, liberal nationalists do not aim this. Liberal nationalists want to learn from other peoples and cultures, and they also seek to live in modern democratic societies (Kymlicka, 2001:212). Liberal nationalists thought that liberal democracy involves three main principles that are connected but distinct; these are social justice, deliberative democracy, and individual freedom (Kymlicka, 2001:225).

Will Kymlicka attempted to show how nationalism is related to individual freedom by comparing what he called 'liberal nationalists' and 'traditional enlightenment cosmopolitans'. As he notes, both liberal nationalists and traditional enlightenment cosmopolitans are committed in the conceptions of liberal democratic constitutionalism, cultural interchange, and openness to pluralism. They have common things about the world order founded on international law, universal human rights, and free trade (Kymlicka, 2001:218-219). But, as Kymlicka notes, they have a difference in the role of the state to protect national identities such as language rights and self-government rights. Enlightenment cosmopolitans viewed the state not for protecting national identity; rather it is the protector of individual liberties (Kymlicka, 2001:218-219).

One of the proponents of traditional enlightenment cosmopolitans Marquis de Condorcet, in his conception of progress, claims that individuals should be liberated from ascribed roles and identities, and this would be achieved through modernity. People born into particular ethnic, or religious, or linguistic groups. Some might want to express their identity based on their membership within their group, but liberated individuals would not express themselves like this. Liberated individuals tried to find alternatives outside their group. This exploration of liberated individuals would create the replacement of ethnocultural identities with cosmopolitan identity (cited in Kymlicka, 2001:203). For Condorcet, cosmopolitan identity emerged by assimilating small national groups into larger ones and thus diminishes the question of national identities.

On the other hand, as Kymlicka notes, liberal nationalists tried to show the relationship between individual freedom and cultural membership. They argued that individual freedom of choice

refers to the choice of the individual about the social practices around him, and his belief about the value of these social practices. “Liberal nationalists define cultures as historical communities that possess a societal culture—that is, which possess a set of institutions, operating in a common language, covering both private and public life” (Kymlicka, 2001:211).

Kymlicka argues that both conceptions have many common things, but in support of liberal nationalists Kymlicka argues against traditional enlightenment cosmopolitans. He argues that the traditional enlightenment cosmopolitans’ rejection of the protection of national identity is incorrect. He insists that in today’s world “cosmopolitans are, almost by definition, people who regret the privileging of national identities in political life, and who reject the principle that political arrangements should be ordered in such a way as to reflect and protect national identities” (Kymlicka, 2001:204). Kymlicka argues that in the West, i.e. liberals, the sort of language rights and self-government being raised by national minorities do not aim to see ‘others’ as a threat; rather it believed in cultural exchange and open to learning from others, and also ‘National identity has remained strong in the modern era in part because its emphasis on the importance of ‘the people’ provides a source of dignity to all individuals, whatever their class. Mass education and mass democracy conducted in the vernacular are concrete manifestations of this shift towards a dignity-bestowing national identity’ (Kymlicka, 2001:218).

Another theorist Jeremy Waldron, in his conception of ‘cosmopolitan alternative’, primarily argues against the idea that our ethnic descent defined our choices and self-identity. He argues that, in today’s world, one can live by eating the cultural food of other ethnic groups, by listening to the music of ‘others’ and so on. So, we are only able to say they live off this person is ‘in a kaleidoscope of culture’-live in a variety of cultural traditions (Waldron, 1995:95). He claimed that people should choose ‘cultural fragments’ that come from a variety of ethnocultural sources, and they should not feel a particular cultural membership (Waldron, 1995:95). For Waldron, in the modern world, people live in a mixture of a variety of cultural fragments. For the question about the existence of any ‘distinct culture’, he argues that in a contemporary world there is a great cultural exchange, and international communication, and so speak about the ‘authenticity’ of a particular culture made a paradox with the real-life (Waldron, 1995:101).

Contemporary liberal political thinkers argue about the importance of cultural communities for individual choices. They argue that individual choices are rooted in cultural context, and this

cultural context is important to shape individuals and to make meaningful life choices. Additionally, liberals argue about the significance of cultural membership for individual freedom and choice. Will Kymlicka notes that “cultural membership is important in pursuing our essential interest in leading a good life, and so considerations of that membership is an important part of having equal consideration for the interests of each member of the community” (quoted in Harty, 1999:665).

For Kymlicka, individuals’ beliefs are important to give meaning to their lives, and to achieve their goals. To achieve these goals, individuals need the freedom to examine their beliefs. And, this freedom of individuals is rooted in social conditions that allow them to revise and criticize their choices. Through their experiences within a culture, individuals construct their life plans. But, Kymlicka argues that membership in ‘any culture’ may not always provide a secure context to individuals to construct their life plans; and so the conception of minority rights is important to guarantee individual rights. Kymlicka notes that it is not membership of a particular culture that creates individual disadvantages; rather it is the culture’s status as a minority culture in a multination state that creates the disadvantages of individuals.

In contrast to the arguments for the value of cultural communities, Katherine Fierlbeck argued that “people are...encouraged to find ‘meaningfulness’ by focusing upon the differences between groups, a passive form of identification which builds upon their capacity to exclude others and disposes them to set themselves in opposition to others” (quoted in Harty, 1999:676). As a defender of liberal nationalism, Yael Tamir also discusses about how an individual choice determined its national identity. The national identity of one person is the product of its own choice. Tamir insists that “the ability to choose one’s national identity transforms nationality into a universal value that transcends territorial borders so that so long as one can travel to another country, one has the possibility of changing one’s national affiliation” (cited in Harty, 1999:672). But this argument of Tamir, i.e. national identity is the product of individual choice, is rejected by both nationalists (nationalists-in-government) and liberal nationalists. Both claimed the centrality of national communities for the wellbeing of an individual. As Kymlicka notes, “we can’t just transplant people from one culture to another, even if we provide the opportunity to learn the other language and culture. Someone’s upbringing isn’t something that can just be

erased; it is and will remain, a constitutive part of who that person is. Cultural membership affects our very sense of personal identity and capacity” (quoted in Harty, 1999:672).

But nationalists and liberals disagree about some views of national identity. As Harty notes, for nationalists, from the overall identity, national identity is the most important identity of an individual, and it is a product of cultural or historical factors. On the other hand, liberals argue that national identity is one element of personal identity, but it is not necessarily the most important, and also it is the product of critical and rational reflection of individuals (Harty, 1999:673). As Harty claimed, “For liberal nationalist, individuals have overlapping identities and their national identity is only one amongst these” (Harty, 1999:671).

Eighteenth and nineteenth century ideologies such as socialism, conservatism, liberalism, nationalism, and republicanism offered their conception of the ideals of liberty, equality, and community. As Kymlicka notes, most post Second World War liberals ignored the concept and value of community; they highly focused on concepts of liberty and equality. But in the 1980s a school of thought known as ‘communitarianism’ resurfaced the concept of community. (Kymlicka, 2007:463). For Kymlicka, the 1980s explanation of community is different from the traditional Marxian explanation and understanding of the community. Marxists see community as something that evolved from struggle and revolution within a society for the sake of building a socialist society and eliminating capitalism. On the other hand, Kymlicka states that, the 1980s communitarians see community as an already existing thing that refers to common social practices, understanding, and traditions (Kymlicka, 2007:463-464).

To clarify the concept of community, Kymlicka distinguish the Marxists as ‘backward-looking’, and the new, the 1980s, communitarians as ‘forward-looking’. For him, the backward-looking seek to form the past kind of communal bonds within the societies, and it opposes the increasing emphasis on individual choice and cultural diversity. On the other hand, Kymlicka put that the forward-looking communitarians accept permanent features of modern life like individual choice and cultural diversity or diverse ways of life. “‘Forward-looking’ communitarians, by contrast, disavow nostalgia for the past, accept that individual choice and cultural diversity are now permanent features of modern life, and acknowledge that earlier forms of community were too narrow and exclusive to be viable today. Hence they seek to identify and strengthen emerging bonds of community that can integrate diverse groups and life styles, for example by

strengthening forms of patriotism or democratic citizenship or civil society that encourage people from different backgrounds to work together” (Kymlicka, 2007:464).

Regarding the conception of community, Liberals argue that ‘individuals should be free to decide for themselves what sort of life they will lead’, and this implies the neutrality of individual choice from social practices. As Kymlicka notes, in contrast to liberals, communitarians argue that the ‘politics of the common good’ is important to understand and define what community is. Communitarians argue that individual preference or choice is dependent on how much he or she contributes to the common good or the community (Kymlicka, 2007:468). Communitarians like Michael Sandel and Alasdair MacIntyre argue that our social roles and contributions are important to decide about how to lead our lives, and also our identity is defined ‘under our being embedded in some shared social context’ (Kymlicka, 2007:468). For Kymlicka, this communitarian’s explanation of our ‘embedded’ nature in particular social roles is an exaggeration and it seems ‘misguided for most members of modern society’.

For Kymlicka, many communitarians, like liberals, are committed to individual autonomy, but unlike liberals, they give much attention to the social conditions that are important to exercise individual autonomy, and they called this a ‘social thesis’. One of the prominent communitarians Charles Taylor claims that individual autonomy ‘can only be developed and exercised in a certain kind of social environment’. For Taylor and others, sufficient cultural options are required to make meaningful our choice of life, and the state must also intervene in promotion of sufficient options and to promote particular options (Kymlicka, 2007:469). But, as Kymlicka notes, others like Ronald Dworkin argue that sufficient options should exist; but the state should not intervene in the evaluation of these options, and the options must be evaluated by the choices of private individuals (Kymlicka, 2007:470). Kymlicka notes that both liberals and communitarians agree on the need of communal practices, but they disagree on the intervention of the state in the evaluation of those practices, and also liberals grounded in shared beliefs about universal principles of justice, but communitarians grounded in shared conceptions of the good life. In general, the idea about ‘the need for communal practices’ is important to advocate the existence of cultural diversity and pluralism.

In the conclusion of his article, Kymlicka claimed that in modern societies, it is important to recognize both social diversity and individual choice. Additionally, in a modern nation-building

process, multiculturalism and minority rights are very important; “in the absence of multiculturalism, and minority rights, nation-building inevitably leads to the systematic marginalizing and stigmatizing of minorities” (Kymlicka, 2007:475).

Another important argument regarding the concept of multiculturalism is about its significance for accommodating the differences of ethnocultural groups, and its protection of individual autonomy and ‘citizenship’. Scholars tried to set different views about this issue. One of the scholars Jeff Spinner-Halev tried to explain about types of multiculturalism, and their relation with the liberal concept of citizenship. At first, Jeff Spinner-Halev forms two kinds of multiculturalism; these are ‘strong multiculturalism’ and ‘inclusive multiculturalism’. Spinner-Halev argues that ‘strong form’ of multiculturalism threatens citizenship by creating a society with several distinct cultures. In a strict multicultural society, people are not interested in citizenship, and of building a state; rather they only focus on the interest of their cultural group. In a strong form of multiculturalism, groups want to protect their cultural practices as distinct and separate from others, and this can be thought of as ‘cultural pluralism’. On the other hand, in inclusive form of multiculturalism, groups want to protect their cultural practices by accepting ‘the plurality of beliefs and doctrines that people hold and partly about the different cultural practices that people have’, and this can be thought of as ‘diversity’. Spinner-Halev states that ‘inclusive multiculturalism usually enhances citizenship’ (Spinner-Halev, 1999:66).

Spinner-Halev also suggests two levels of liberal citizenship; these are ‘legal level’ and ‘moral level’. In the legal level of citizenship, people are treated equally without any discrimination, and they also tolerate each other. Here, non-citizens are also benefited; because ‘citizens typically shouldn’t discriminate against non-citizens’. The second level, as opposed to the legal level, requires the moral demands of citizens. If citizens focus only on self-interest, injustice would happen, and so citizens must be motivated for the public interest and the common good (Spinner-Halev, 1999:67).

For Spinner-Halev, inclusive multiculturalism fulfills the second, i.e. moral, level of liberal citizenship, and it wants to include people those who are excluded from the cultural norms. Members of the excluded groups are not demanding to maintain a distinct cultural identity; rather they want to be included and recognized in the history of the larger group. This kind of multiculturalism does not aim to celebrate different cultures; rather it aimed to include the

formerly excluded (Spinner-Halev, 1999:68). However, Spinner-Halev claimed that “Diversity [inclusive multiculturalism] does not entail the eradication of all cultural differences, but the differences that are preserved are typically less robust than the similarities that coexist with it” (Spinner-Halev, 1999:69).

Multiculturalism becomes a threat to citizenship when groups try to keep their identity like ‘partial citizens’, these are groups of citizens like Hutteries in western Canada- those who do not much involve in the public affairs of the state, and but they want the state to help them. Spinner-Halev argues that people have a right to culture, but even the culture is their own, they do not have a right to a particular culture. If groups benefited from the public institutions and resources of the mainstream society, they may have to change some of its cultural values (Spinner-Halev, 1999:82).

Kymlicka states that to deal with multiculturalism we should look primarily at ‘the justice of claims by ethnic groups for the accommodation of their cultural differences’. As he states, traditional liberal theorists, see justice as a ‘color-blind’ or ‘difference-blind’ act of institutions. But, the act of these institutions may create an advantage for majority groups, and it may stigmatize and exclude the members of the minority groups.

It is important to adopt multiculturalism for accommodating ethnic and cultural difference, but the question is what kind of multiculturalism to adopt. For Kymlicka, it is important to adopt multiculturalism that incorporates ‘group rights’, and to promote justice within ethnocultural groups (Kymlicka, 1999:116). Kymlicka tried to distinguish two kinds of groups; the first one is ‘internal restrictions’ group rights that the group restricts the choice of its members or individual choice in the name of promoting cultural traditions. For Kymlicka, these kinds of group rights are unjust because it violates individual autonomy and it also creates inequalities within the group. The second one that Kymlicka listed is the ‘external protection’ group rights, and this is a kind of group rights that are declared by the minority groups to protect themselves from the vulnerability of the larger society. Language rights, the regional devolution of power and guaranteed political representation are kind of external protection group rights that are important to promote justice between ethnocultural groups (Kymlicka, 1999:116).

As Kymlicka notes, currently many scholars criticize the form of multiculturalism not because it is inherently unjust, rather they argue it as a cause of instability. “Many critics claim that multicultural accommodations are misguided, not because they are unjust in themselves, but rather because they are corrosive of long-term political unity and social stability. They may promote justice in principle, but in practice they are dangerous” (Kymlicka, 1999:120). They argued that multiculturalism involves the ‘politicization of ethnicity’, and through time it creates competition, mistrust, and hate between ethnic groups. For Kymlicka, these kinds of criticisms are silly and it came from the misunderstanding of western democracy. In a western liberal democracy, multiculturalism did not lead ethnic groups to hatred and civil war. Kymlicka notes that;

Multiculturalism, on this view, may not lead to civil war, but it will erode the ability of citizens to fulfill their responsibilities as democratic citizens-e.g. it will erode their ability to communicate, trust, and feel solidarity across group differences. And so even if a particular multiculturalism policy is not itself unjust, examined in isolation, the trend towards the increased salience of ethnicity will erode the norms and practices of responsible citizenship, and so reduce the overall functioning of the state (Kymlicka, 1999:121).

I think as Kymlicka and others claimed, in the current multicultural world it is impossible to deny the significance of ‘national identity’ for both individuals and groups. But, the central question is how we can reconcile liberals’ individualism questions, and nationalists’ highly interest of national identity. As a defender of liberal nationalism, Kymlicka and others tried to reconcile these interests by forming a multicultural theory that advocates both individual freedom and choice and cultural diversity or national identity. I think, like Kymlicka, our national identity is grasped from the social context or community; but this social context or community must incorporate liberal principles such as individual freedom, democracy, and social justice. Unless and otherwise, by denying and subjugating individuals’ freedom and choice as well as group rights, it is impossible to form a genuine multicultural state. For establishing a democratic multicultural state, it is also important to build democratic institutions for those who formulate and protect both individual liberty and cultural diversity.

Additionally, it is obvious that if groups are highly focused on their difference, they lose a sense of community and a common purpose. They also ‘no longer provide a shared experience or a common status’. A modern democratic state can not only be established by the justice of its

institutions but it also depends on the attributes and qualities of citizens. Thus, citizenship is important for the whole group to have a common purpose, interest, and to work together. However, Kymlicka argues that a modest form of multiculturalism does not harm citizenship; rather it recognizes the identity of different groups and aimed to create a diverse society that lives together. I think a multicultural or multiethnic society can avoid inequality and create reciprocal relations among groups if it works in the spirit of interculturality.

CHAPTER THREE

Examining Ethiopia's Ethnic Federalism from Intercultural and Multicultural Perspectives

Nowadays, the political sense of national identity and issue of minority nationalism is a universal phenomenon that national minorities struggled with the state over the issues of language rights, ethnic group rights, political representation, and resource distribution. Western countries tried to manage this question of minority nationalism by adopting multination federalism. Many scholars argue that the multination federalism model of western countries is well to manage ethnic diversity peacefully, democratically, and to respect individual rights and freedom.

In western democratic states, through multination federalism, national minorities can establish and govern their territorial autonomy. Through the power of territorial autonomy, national minorities can create their public institutions, and operating with their language. As a result, in multination states, there are two or more nations and each of them has a right to exercise their language to maintain itself as a distinct society and have a distinct culture. Regarding the notion of 'multination federalism' and 'ethnic federalism', David Turton notes that 'multination federalism' and 'ethnic federalism' describe the same thing, but they are different in their purposes. "'multination federalism' describes the federal subunits themselves, while 'ethnic federalism' describes the principle used to define the subunits" (Turton, 2006:3).

When we come to the case of African states, most African countries are not willing to adopt the model of multination federalism; because they contain many minority groups, and unlike the western states, the dominant or larger group tried to assimilate the minorities through its language, history, and culture. In addition to this, the security fear forces most African states not to be willing to adopt multination federalism. As Kymlicka notes, in Africa, "history suggests that dominant groups are rarely willing voluntarily to accept multination federalism if they fear that their members living on the minority's autonomous territory will be persecuted or endangered" (Kymlicka, 2006:50). This idea of some groups come from the fear of the violation of human rights of their members; but in the West, as Kymlicka suggested, this fear has been overcome 'by the clear evidence that members of national minorities fully embrace liberal democratic values, and partly by the development of multiple mechanisms for the legal protection of human rights' (Kymlicka, 2006:51). Human rights should be protected by

professional police forces and independent courts at the regional, national and international levels. Thus, for Kymlicka, the emergence of multinational federalism is the best solution to end conflicts among groups.

Additionally Kymlicka notes that in many African states, ethnic conflicts are not understood as ‘competing nationalisms within a single state’, and so this became one of the reasons not to build multinational federalism in many African countries. In addition to this, for Kymlicka, in African states ‘even where the phenomenon of competing nationalisms does exist, the conditions that enable states voluntarily to adopt multinational federalism do not exist’ (Kymlicka, 2006:51).

In exploring and examining Ethiopia’s ethnic federalism, we should have to focus on the issues of how it treats the rights and status of many ethnic groups of the country, and of how much the ethnic federalism aimed to create multicultural and democratic citizenship. Additionally, it is important to see how the ideologies of the EPRDF affected the intercultural communication between ethnic groups, and of constructing multicultural federalism. The next two sections will deal with these issues.

3.1 Rethinking of the Ethiopia’s Ethnic-based Federalism

Ethiopia adopted an ethnic federal system when the Ethiopian peoples’ Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) took power in 1991 and based its ideas of ethnic federalism on Stalin’s theory of nationalities. Most argue that the ethnicization of Ethiopian politics is directly related to the ideological hegemony of Marxism-Leninism among students and intellectuals in the 1960s and 1970s. During the students’ movement in the 1960s and 70s, they took the Marxist-Leninist ideology as a solution to the ethnic inequalities that existed in the country. But Kymlicka argued that we can’t consider Ethiopia’s ethnic federalism is the total copy of former socialist federations. Because it incorporated many principles of western models of multinational federalism. The Ethiopian federalism differs from the western multinational federalism, not in constitutional principles, rather it differs in practice. “...some commentators even argue that the constitution ‘is only meant for foreign consumption, and not for internal implementation’, and that constitutional commitments to federalism and democracy are a smokescreen for the practice of centralized one-party rule”(Kymlicka, 2006:54).

In Ethiopia, traditionally interethnic conflicts are often linked with cattle raiding and land disputes. But, especially since the time of the students' movement, the interethnic relation of different ethnic groups based on the questions of equality of ethnic groups and the recognition of different identities. It is possible to conclude that the current ethnic-based politics of Ethiopia hold its root from the movements and questions. Nowadays, ethnic groups see themselves based on how political elites and political activists exploit the issue of ethnic identity. The political elites and activists tried to strengthen the image of their ethnic group, and also they vilifying the image of other ethnic groups. More of the interactions between individuals and groups are organized along ethnic lines, and ethnicity has become the rallying point for government and opposition parties alike. The government party EPRDF has redrawn the map of Ethiopia along ethnic lines, and it claimed this as an important to incorporate all ethnic groups. Most argue that it is the EPRDF's perception of ethnic territory because other groups or parties did not discuss and participate in the issue. But others like Eva Poluha argue that the issue of ethnic identity in Ethiopia has been emerged out of the interest of different groups. Poluha notes that "Ethnification in Ethiopia is not the work of one ethnic group or the government, but of intellectuals from all groups who have devoted much time and energy promoting it. However, the incumbent Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) has taken the initiative" (Poluha, 1998:38).

The current politicians or ethnic groups in Ethiopia tried to find a unique and pure culture of their ethnic group. They are arguing about the equality and recognition of all identities, but, in fact, all demand to explain the culture and tradition of their ethnic group as unique and distinct; but as Wimmer said it is difficult or impossible to get a complete and pure culture of a particular group which is free from the influences of other cultures. In Ethiopia, political activists or nationalists tried to use and expose their own culture and language alone. And so this affects constructing a state which has diverse societies, and which they have common things. This means that, if societies exaggerated their distinct language and culture, they can't build a multicultural or multiethnic state that reflects the diversity of society.

The education curriculum also becomes another critical issue in the current ethnic-based politics of Ethiopia. All regions teach by their language, and this affects the drafting of the curriculum of education in the country. It is obvious that enhancing one's language and culture is the natural

desire of all human beings, and it is also a human right issue. But when we come to the case of Ethiopia, this issue becomes a source of disagreement between different groups. For instance, including History education in the curriculum becomes a difficult thing in the country; because most often thought that the history of Ethiopia shows only the history of a particular ethnic group (especially the Amhara ethnic group), and so it excludes other ethnic groups. I think, we have a lot of things that we shared in common, and so possible to prepare a common history education curriculum that reflects our diverse cultures, traditions, and societal values.

As many say, it is important to know more than one language. Countries like Ethiopia have more than 80 ethnic groups and languages, and so we are lucky to know more than a single language. But, nowadays, this diversity of our languages become our main reason for our ethnic conflicts and become a problem to draft a national education curriculum. The existence of many languages is important to express different things in different ways; because each language has its own particular nature and concept. It is important to know no language will be completely adequate to express and understand different things, and so we should have to use different languages to express our ideas completely.

In current Ethiopia, difficulties have been encountered in the interethnic relation of different ethnic groups, and especially it is difficult for those whose parents or grandparents moved to another place and they were born outside of their ethnic group area. In my opinion, Ethiopia's political system or federalism is still not free from centrism. It focuses on ethnic or regional-based issues and this is what I called it "ethnic-centrism" or "regional-centrism". Throughout the whole regions of the state, the administrators of the regions argue about the advantage of their ethnic group or their region. This attitude of the administrators or this may also be the feeling of the peoples of different regions, forces the country not to enter into nation-building. Thus, it is important to develop "an all-Ethiopian identity" through intercultural views. An all-Ethiopian identity must reflect the diversity of the Ethiopian populations. As Trudeau and others claimed, the federal system of a given state will be at risk and endanger if the nationalism it cultivates is unable to generate a national image. I think the Ethiopian ethnic federal system can't create a national image through the nationalism it cultivated. So, it important to adopt the principles of liberal nationalism to generate a national image.

In addition to this, Ethiopia's ethnic federalism also can't protect individuals' rights because of a lack of rational constraint on group rights and because of the lack of democratic institutions those who maintain individuals. Lack of constrained group rights forces different people to do what they want to do in a group, and this made a negative impact on individual freedom and rights of the citizens.

Intercultural philosophy is important to rethink our ethnic federal system. Intercultural philosophy aimed to emancipate any society or group from any kind of centrism. For the last 27 years, Ethiopia's ethnic federalism created a sense of centrism on ethnic groups. All ethnic groups tried to explain themselves as unique, and have a unique 'center', and so this affects their interethnic relation and communication with one another.

Ethiopia's ethnic federal system differs from the typical western multinational federation that explicitly sets the rights of self-autonomy for all ethnic groups and it also affirms the right of secession, and these rights are constitutionally guaranteed. Even in countries like Nigeria and India, in countries those who have multiethnic groups like Ethiopia, secession right is not constitutionally guaranteed, and thus it can claim that Ethiopia adopted this principle in the constitution as a new experiment, and this issue becomes debatable until now.¹ Different scholars from the homeland and abroad argue that ethnic federalism is the main reason for the current ethnic groups' conflict in Ethiopia. Eva Poluha states that;

An agenda of ethnification and ethnic decentralization is politically dangerous. Focus on one's own ethnic group to the exclusion of others is necessary in order to make demands in the name of the group. It entails enhancing the norms, values, virtues, history and homogeneity of one's own group. At the same time, by its own logic such behavior means repressing the rights of minorities, even within their own areas, because there is no place on a majority ethnic group's agenda for minorities. As a consequence, the behavior and discourse of those promoting their own culture becomes antidemocratic.

...it will be impossible for Ethiopia to pursue an ethnification process as defined above and to promote democracy at the same time. Yet, although decentralization on an ethnic basis cannot be expected to promote democracy-but will, rather, endanger it-it is also obvious that democracy cannot be promoted without respect for existing cultures-or the rights and interests of women in the various ethnic groups (Poluha, 1998:39-40).

¹ Historically socialist federation countries have incorporated the right of secession in their constitution, but now all the countries are divided into many separate independent states.

But scholars like Kymlicka suggests that ethnic conflicts in Ethiopia are not caused because the federal system is established based on ethnic line and institutionalized ethnic identities. Kymlicka insists that,

The problem, rather, is that this process of institutionalization has not always been the outcome of peaceful democratic mobilization, but rather has been imposed from above and/or captured by local elites who do not represent the interests of the wider group. Moreover, this process is unable to ensure the protection of human rights, and democratic freedoms of all citizens within the federal autonomies, leading for example to discrimination against people who belong to the ‘wrong’ group and to violent clashes over land ownership or residence rights.... ethnic federalism can indeed be a vehicle for the construction of a free and just democratic society (Kymlicka, 2006:58).

I think, even in an ethnic-based federal system, it is possible to accommodate ethnic diversity. This will be achieved by legally set that all ethnic-based regions are the residents of all ethnic groups of the country, and as the liberals like Kymlicka stated, the regions must respect and protect the rights of the minority groups within their territory. In multiethnic states like Ethiopia, the members of different ethnic groups’ lives in the territory of one another, and so, to build a democratic multiethnic Ethiopian federal state, there should be rules that protect the rights of the members of other ethnic groups those who live in the federal territory of another ethnic group. Furthermore, in addition to protecting group rights, ethnic-based regions must respect and protect the rights and freedoms of individuals. As Graham Smith suggested, a democratic federation is important for sustainable federalism, and this will achieve if the regional units are respecting minority rights, and there must be incorporated more than one ethnic group and respect individual freedom (Smith, 2000:348). When we come to Ethiopia ethnic federalism, the regional units established based on the identity of the majority ethnic group within the region and have less attention to the minorities who lived in that region, and this affected the rights of the minorities. Additionally, it also lacks democratic institutions to protect individual rights and freedom.

Currently, in Ethiopia, most people are forced to leave the place which they lived for a long time, and this has happened because they were born out of other ethnic groups, but live in the territory of another majority ethnic group. I think the current Ethiopia ethnic federalism opens the door to ethnic groups to use their self-governing power to suppress others whom they claimed or thought as ‘outsiders’ or ‘former oppressors’. Currently, because of a lack of democratic institutions and

other reasons, it is clear that the ethnic federalism of Ethiopia can't solve these fears of security and human rights of the members of different ethnic groups those who lived 'outside' the territory of their ethnic group. As Kymlicka claimed, "The ultimate stability of post-conflict multinational federalism, however, will probably depend on overcoming the security and human rights fears that prevented their peaceful adoption in the first place. In Ethiopia, for example, it is difficult to see how genuine autonomy will be possible for groups like the Somalis, who are viewed by the government as secessionists, backed by foreign enemies" (Kymlicka, 2006:52).

As Kymlicka suggested groups may use the power of self-governing 'to engage in implicit forms of ethnic cleansing, stripping people of their property rights and dismissing them from public service jobs'. Kymlicka notes that strong institutions are important to the effective protection of both 'the geopolitical security of states and the security of individuals' basic human rights and interests'. The existence of strong institutions allows all the actors, i.e. states, majorities, minorities, to form an alliance and to share the same liberal values. And this can reduce ethnic mobilization and conflicts in multinational states. "Ethnic mobilization is no more (less) difficult to manage than the environment or health care: it is just one of the routine tasks of the state" (Kymlicka, 2006:53). When we come to the case of Ethiopia, because of the lack of strong institutions, the ethnic federal system can't control ethnic mobilization and conflicts.

For some, it is irrelevant to emphasize 'group or ethnic identity'; because it creates disintegration and miscommunication among ethnic groups. But, in my opinion, for multiethnic states like Ethiopia, it is relevant as well as mandatory to recognize 'groups' identity'. The main thing is how we can be able to accommodate and reconcile multiple group identities. To accommodate and reconcile multiple group identities, all ethnic groups must participate in different kinds of discussions, and also it is important to respect the ideas forwarded from different groups. In addition to this, to accommodate multiple group identities, it is also important to adopt the liberal multicultural perspectives that advocate the rights and freedom of individuals and their benefit. Individuals must participate and be incorporated in multi-cultures, and this is important for their multidimensional choices and plans. Thus, I think, the existence of multiple identities can not affect the relation and communication of individuals as well as groups.

But when we come to the current case of Ethiopia, the existence of multiple ethnic identities become a social and political problem. The reason behind this is :(1) the ethnic federal system-

the ethnic federal system of Ethiopia, from the beginning, established not to show the positive aspects of diversity; rather EPRDF adopted to keep its power safely-dividing, ethnic groups, for not to work and corporate together. (2) the second reason is the aim of extreme nationalists-extreme nationalists from different ethnic groups tried to use the existence of multiple identities to achieve their political agendas. (3) lack of rational constraint of group rights is also the cause-Ethiopia's ethnic federalism simply set some principles of group rights, but it did not constrain these rights through principles of individual freedom, social justice, and democracy. As liberals like Kymlicka claimed it is important to constrain group right through these liberal principles. Thus, it is rational and critical for Ethiopia's ethnic federalism to constrain group rights to achieve individual freedom and make social justice.

Additionally, in Ethiopia, all regions have their regional anthem, and their regional anthem deals with the integrity, culture, and tradition of their regions or ethnic groups. So, my question is do we have a national anthem that reflects our common identity, culture? I think we do not have. The national anthem said about 'Ethiopia' in general, but the song is transferred through the Amharic language, and so because the citizens of most regions did not know the language of Amharic, they can't understand what it said. The national anthem songs only in federal units (i.e., in Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa), and so we cannot say that we have a national anthem that reflects our multi-cultures, diversity, and common citizenship. In addition to this, about the national flag, the constitution set a single flag and emblem that expresses the country, and until now this flag officially at work; but still now there is an argument about the flag and the emblem in the flag. From different groups, there is a grievance that the flag does not represent our 'group' or 'identity', and so this still becomes a controversial issue in the ethnic federalism politics of Ethiopia.

3.2 Ethiopia: Creating Multicultural Citizenship

In contemporary political philosophy, the concepts of ethnic group rights and democratic multicultural citizenship are the main and critical issues that the world communities face. Most argue that the virtues and practices of every individual member of any ethnic group are important in the process of establishing a genuine democratic multicultural citizenship. It is possible to construct a democratic state through responsible and virtuous citizens. For William Galston, there are four kinds of civic virtues that are relevant to responsible citizenship. These are; "(i)

general virtues: courage; law-abidingness; loyalty; (ii) social virtues: independence; open-mindedness; (iii) economic virtues: work ethic; capacity to delay self-gratification; adaptability to economic and technological change; and (iv) political virtues: capacity to discern and respect the rights of others; willingness to demand only what can be paid for; ability to evaluate the performance of those in office; willingness to engage in public discourse (Galston 1991: 221-4 in Kymlicka and Norman, 2000:7)". These virtues are important for the qualities that are required for citizens to live together, and so the government should have support to ensure responsible citizenship. But, these virtues can only be expected in a society that has a just relation between groups. Without the existence of equality between groups or individuals, it is impossible to justify these virtues. And also, these virtues require that the citizens of a given state must feel that the state represents and recognize the identity of their group. Unless and otherwise, it is irrational for the state to develop these virtues and ensure responsible citizenship.

In current multiethnic or multicultural societies, it is important to promote the above civic virtues to make democratic citizenship. Some argue that the interference of government is important to promote responsible citizenship as well as to control undemocratic attitudes that ethnic groups tried to impose on their members. I think, it is very important to promote ethnic group rights, but it is also important to balance and control these rights; because some may use these rights to subjugate others, and also often used to make disintegration between groups or individuals. Thus, it is important to maintain and constrain both individual and group rights by establishing democratic institutions those who acknowledge group identity and other individual identities. Additionally, the promotion of common or multicultural citizenship must take into account the levels of pluralism in ethnicity, religion or other forms of diversities.

In modern multicultural citizenship, citizens must justify their demands as free and equal citizens. They should tolerate the opinions and ideas of others, and there must respect the cultures and values of others. It is very important to understand that how the qualities of citizens affected the democratization and multiculturalism process of a given state. Most theorists argue that "...the functioning of society depends not only on the justice of its institutions or constitution, but also on the virtues, identities, and practices of its citizens, including their ability to co-operate, deliberate, and feel solidarity with those who belong to different ethnic and religious groups" (Kymlicka and Norman, 2000:10). Unless citizens have the qualities of living

together, cooperating, and tolerating each other it is impossible to establish a democratic multicultural state.

Some scholars argue that the existence of ethnic group rights or identities affected and inhibited the promotion of common citizenship in a given state. The promotions of ethnic group rights in public life involve the ‘politicization of ethnicity’, and this will create mistrust and antagonism between ethnic groups. They also thought that without the concept of common citizenship, giving the right of self-determination for ethnic groups may develop an interest in secession, and this may lead the federal state to disintegration. Without a sense of common citizenship, it is impossible to form a genuine intercultural communication between different ethnic groups, and also it may often diminish their sense of solidarity, and thus they may need to secede from others and to live alone. Thus, as many argued, “...liberal democracies must prevent ethnic identities from becoming politicized by rejecting any minority rights or multiculturalism policies that involve the explicit public recognition of ethnic groups” (Kymlicka, and Norman, 2000:10). For Kymlicka and Norman, liberal democracies can achieve this by promoting ‘the virtues, practices, and institutions of democratic citizenship’. To prevent ethnic identities become politicized, multiethnic countries should foster such features as ‘public reasonableness, mutual respect, critical attitudes towards government, tolerance, willingness to participate in politics, forums for shared political deliberation and solidarity’.

Some think multiculturalism as a cause of civil war. If there are multiple cultures or ethnic groups in a given state, ethnic groups or cultures may be entered into the difference of interests, and lack of common values. And so they may enter into conflicts, and their members may enter into civil war. In multicultural or multiethnic societies, one of the controversial issues is about building common citizenship. The existence of different ethnic identity within a given state may erode the overarching identity of citizens, and it may also create different kinds of perspectives about the citizenship of that state. As Kymlicka and Norman note (2000), “. . . it is surely true that if ethnic, regional, or religious identities crowd out a common citizenship identity there will be difficulty maintaining a healthy democracy” (p.35).

But, I think, diversity is the undeniable fact of the contemporary world, and so it is important to recognize and accommodate this fact. Multiculturalism often becomes a cause of civil war if there are discrimination and inequalities between groups or cultures. Thus, we should have to

reconcile diversity through the intercultural perspectives of equal participation of all cultures in dialogue and of creating intercultural communication. And also, we should have to adapt and develop liberal multicultural principles of individual freedom, group rights, social justice, and democratic citizenship. We can be able to adopt these principles by creating a successful democratic ethnic-based federal system. For creating a successful democratic ethnic-based federal system, it is important to build democratic institutions. Democratic institutions are important to protect the basic human rights of citizens, and to resolve the inequalities or injustices among different groups.

On the other hand, some scholars argue against the concept of recognizing multicultural policies in multiethnic societies. They argued that multiculturalism policies involved the ‘politicization of ethnicity’, and through time this creates antagonism, competition, and mistrust between ethnic groups. Thus, by rejecting multicultural policies, liberal democracies must prevent ethnic identities from becoming politicized (Kymlicka, 1999:120). Additionally, they argued that, if ethnic groups are encouraged to turn inward and focus on their ‘differences’, this will reduce their sense of common citizenship.² But when we come to the multicultural practice of America, the difference of ethnic, or religious groups did not lead them to fight rather they can build a nation by tolerating each other. Their multicultural policies prohibiting hate speech, the media avoid ethnic stereotyping, and also in their program, they give visible representation to social diversity. I think, even if the situation of America and Ethiopia is different, it is important and possible to borrow these features to form our successful multicultural federal system-because these features are important features of democracy. By borrowing these features, it is possible to protect the rights and identities of individuals and groups. It is important to draft a policy that protects the rights and identities of individuals as well as groups from biases and stereotypes.³

² Different scholars tried to define the concept of ‘common citizenship’ in different ways. Here, I used this concept in the way that Bhiku Parekh defined or understood it. As Parekh claimed ‘common citizenship’ refers to “a common sense of belonging among the component cultural communities that make up a multicultural society is essential for its stability and unity. Four conditions are necessary for that sense to be present: constitutional accommodation of diversity, justice, a multiculturally constituted common culture, and a shared sense of loyalty to the political community” in Bhikhu Parekh (2010), ‘Common Citizenship in a Multicultural Society’, *The Common Wealth Journal of International Affairs*, Vol.88:449-460.

³ Nowadays, the Ethiopian government starts to draft some rules that prohibiting hate speech. And, it also starts to form some additional rules to control the works of the media (currently some media are informally accused by different groups-some argue that ‘some media are releasing “news” that forces ethnic groups to disintegration and that forces them to see each other as an enemy’).

Some argue that the existence of ethnic group rights is important for an equal existence of all ethnic groups, and the rhetoric of common citizenship is raised and expressed by the dominant ethnic group for the sake of dominating other groups by eliminating their ethnic group rights. The dominant ethnic group tried to extend its language and culture in the minorities by claiming the promotion of common citizenship, and the insignificance of the ethnic group rights.

As Kymlicka, Taylor and others claimed “When the citizens’ ethnicity is officially ignored in the name of building an ethnically blind polity, the cultures of majority ethnic groups impose themselves on minority cultures” (cited in Oduor, 2019:116).

The membership of an individual in a particular culture or ethnic group does not create a disadvantage for an individual; rather the cultural or ethnic group status can make a disadvantage on the individual. If the culture or ethnic group status of an individual is considered as a minority or if it is excluded, this may affect the choice and plan of an individual.

As some argued such kind of overcrowd of ethnic identities is the main problem in the current politics of Ethiopia. All ethnic groups tried to maintain their particular identity and culture, and these create a lack of common citizenship in the country. Additionally, the overcrowding of Ethiopia’s ethnic groups’ identity hampered the democratization process of the country. I think for the last 27years, the ethnic federal system of Ethiopia can’t build multicultural institutions that integrate different ethnic groups, and so this gradually eroded the citizens’ views about their communal identity and relation with one another. To build a multicultural state and integrate different ethnic groups of the country, it is important to build multicultural institutions that teach the historical integration of different ethnic groups of the country.

Some argue that ethnic federalism may encourage different ethnic groups not to focus on the common identity and it may lead them to focus on their particular cultural, ethnic group, and language. But, I think, as some scholars argue, ethnic federalism cannot erode the common identity of different groups, rather it encourages them to focus on common identity-because the ethnic federal system treat them equally and respect their unique and distinct identities, cultures, languages, etc. When we see current Ethiopia’s ethnic federalism, it didn’t build institutions to integrate diverse ethnic groups, and this eroded the citizens’ common identity and makes them see one another as an enemy. Currently, in Ethiopia, it is impossible to turn back from ‘ethnic

politics’, and so it is important to build democratic institutions that resolve the questions of different ethnic groups-it is important to work on issues like inequalities, unfair distribution of resources, injustices, and the like. If we can able to solve these issues, we can able to turn back our feeling of commonality and solidarity. As Kymlicka claimed ‘identity politics’ is the undeniable fact of the current politics of the world, and so states should treat the questions of all groups equally, and also states must increase their power to treat the questions of all. Thus, I think, Ethiopian state must also increase its power and treat the questions of all groups equally.

When I claim about our ‘common identity’ or ‘civic identity’, I am just claiming about our ‘common values’ that created our inter-ethnic relations for a long time. Because we lived as neighboring ethnic groups for centuries, we shared a lot of things and we built ‘common or shared identities’. But within the past decades, we lost the sense of our commonality in the name of ‘ethnic-politics’ that didn’t establish institutions to protect individuals and groups, and so this eroded the commonality of individuals and groups. Here, I want to claim that, the sense of our commonality is eroded not because of the ethnic federal system; rather it is eroded by the lack of institutions that handle the ethnic federal system, and also the absence of genuine governance made a high level of grievance between different ethnic groups. As Oduor notes “...it is a fact that neighbouring cultural groups have regular interactions through marriage, trade, and warfare, all of which result in their accepting aspects of conceptual and material culture from one another” (Oduor, 2019:110).

I think, for the past two or three decades, Ethiopia’s ethnic federalism formed ethnic group rights based on the concept that the state was highly dominated by one ethnic group (i.e., Amhara ethnic group), and so it is relevant to declare ethnic group rights. Most argued that the rhetoric of ‘Ethiopianness’ is explained by the Amhara ethnic group to turn back their historical dominance on others and to suppress other ethnic group rights. After Ethiopia adopted ethnic federalism and ethnic group rights for decades, these kinds of arguments are continued.

I think it is irrelevant to blame one ethnic group for decades to form a genuine ethnic group rights, and of a democratic multicultural state. Rather, as Jeff Spinner-Halve said, it is important to form an ‘inclusive multiculturalism’ that included all ethnic groups as equal and that formed a sense of common citizenship among different ethnic groups.

As scholars claimed, in multi-ethnic countries the perspectives of ‘multiculturalism’ are important to form a democratic state and multicultural citizenship. As Kymlicka and Norman note (2000), “...multi-ethnic countries are more in need of such things as public reasonableness, mutual respect, critical attitudes towards government, tolerance, willingness to participate in politics, forums for shared political deliberation, and solidarity” (p.11). I think these things, i.e., public reasonableness, mutual respect, and the like, are important to Ethiopia to accommodate its ethnic diversity as well as to form multicultural citizenship.

Conclusion

Nowadays, the issue of national identity is a universal phenomenon that different groups struggle for the recognition and enhancement of their culture, language, and identity. In the contemporary world, it is mandatory to recognize the identity of different groups, and this is important to build multicultural states in particular and to build an intercultural world in general. Here, the central question is how we can be able to reconcile the interests of different national identities. Scholars suggested that federalism is the best mechanism to accommodate the interests of different identities. By adopting a federal system of administration, it is possible to solve the questions of different groups. But, it is important to build democratic institutions to establish a successful federal system. These institutions are important to protect the interests of both individuals and groups, and also they are important to constrain them. In addition to this, in a genuine federal system, it is important to understand that ethnic identity is not the only identity that reflects the interests of citizens or individuals.

As scholars claimed, ethnic identity is not the only identity that expresses the political choice of individuals or groups. But, when we come to the current Ethiopian politics, ethnicity becomes the central and major factor that determines political choice in all societies and ethnic groups of the country, and this is the result of ‘wrongly’ adoption of the system of ‘ethnic federalism’ since 1991. Ethiopia's ethnic federalism adopted without the participation of different groups, individuals, and also it adopted without analyzing the ethnic consciousness of the citizens. It simply magnified that ethnic groups are radically different, and they have a unique and pure distinct culture.

Federalism is indeed important to accommodate diversity, but this is possible if it is clear how federal boundaries are drawn and how powers are shared. Ethiopia’s ethnic federalism has drawn regional boundaries based on ethnic lines, and it gives the rights of self-determination until secession for all regions. This right is debatable since it is incorporated in the constitution. Most argued that secession right is incompatible with federalism, and it creates the demand for disintegration among ethnic groups. Groups may intimidate the federation by using this right, and also it affected the federal government by giving absolute rights and autonomy to regional units. But others argued that the incorporation of secession right in the constitution is the best mechanism to stable federation; if there is a threat in the federation, the right of secession

guaranteed the right of self-autonomy for any region. In my opinion, the session clause, as it had in social federation states, it didn't bring integration between different groups. Rather than drafting this clause, it is better to work to build democratic institutions that maintain the interests of individuals and groups. Additionally, within the ethnic federal system, it is better to build multicultural institutions that protect unjust and unfair treatments that will occur in the federation.

It is undeniable that any individual born out of one or the other ethnic group, and this becomes the identity of him/her. As a member of one ethnic group, an individual can learn the culture, traditions, and values of that group. This membership of an individual, as Kymlicka said, is important for the life choice of that individual. But, it is very important to understand that the membership of an individual cannot limit his/her freedom to choose the membership to another group. In addition to this, it is very important to know that there are common values that all ethnic groups or human beings in general, shared. So, any individual should be open-minded to know the common things that we all shared, and he/she must also be open-minded to intercultural relations and communication.

Unless there are a fair and just intercultural relation and communication between different ethnic groups, it is difficult and impossible to establish a multicultural/multiethnic state that accommodates diversity. To build an intercultural communication between different ethnic groups in Ethiopia, it is important to participate all ethnic groups in dialogue and allow them to express their culture, political need as well as their aspiration to live with others. Currently, most ethnic groups, especially in the southern region of the country, asked a question to be a region and this is a constitutionally guaranteed right. But, in practice, those questions are raised by the sentiment to live only with one's own ethnic group. The main reason for this is a lack of interethnic and intercultural communication between groups, and thus it is important to develop intercultural perspectives to solve those problems.

And also, it is important to understand that all ethnic groups have their own peculiar culture and tradition, and also it is relevant and necessary to understand that they have also common and shared cultures and identities. But, the ethnic federal system of Ethiopia focused only on the distinctive culture and identity of ethnic groups without building democratic institutions to govern these distinct cultures and identities, and so this created the current ethnic conflicts and

tensions. In current Ethiopia, ethnic groups are focused only on their own identity, and this forces them not to focus on the issue of what is common between them.

In addition to this, as many scholars claimed, without the sentiment of common citizenship, it is dangerous to give a right of secession for regions. In Ethiopia, the ethnic-based federal system gives the right of secession for all regions, and this right is constitutionally guaranteed; but this ethnic federal system gives less emphasis in establishing of common citizenship among ethnic groups, and so because of this reason, currently, the sense of common citizenship among ethnic groups are highly eroded.

In order to build a democratic Ethiopian state, it is important to adopt a ‘multicultural federalism’ that builds a common national identity without suppressing ethnic and religious diversity. Multicultural federalism is important to foster a vibrant public sphere that encourages all ethnic groups’ participation and democratic intercultural dialogue. The multicultural federalism must be respecting the rights of individuals as well as groups. It is not important to focus only on one of these rights. As liberal multiculturalists claimed, it is important to understand that a cultural membership of an individual is important for its choice, but his/her freedom and rights should not be limited/denied in the name of group rights.

For Ethiopia, it is important to build a multicultural federal system that which it is based on the intercultural relation and communication of all ethnic groups. To achieve this, all ethnic groups must participate in the intercultural dialogue, and all must be open-minded to respect the ideas of others, and also be open-minded to learn from others. The current ethnic federal system can’t resolve the questions of different ethnic groups, and this created a high degree of disintegration between ethnic groups of the country. Thus, it is important to reconstruct this ethnic federal system through perspectives of interculturalism and multiculturalism. To build a democratic multicultural Ethiopia, it is better to focus on the common identities and cultures of ethnic groups. And also, the system should not suppress individual rights and freedom by giving absolute rights for group rights. It is important to limit group rights through liberal principles of individual freedom and rule of law. The current negative activities of ethnic groups in all regions should be limited by the rule of law, and this is important to sustain the federal system of the country and to accommodate ethnic diversity.

The main perspective of intercultural philosophy is dialogue that required the participation of all groups. By using this perspective, the Ethiopian federal system should participate in all ethnic groups in the dialogue to draft a constitution as well as to draft other kinds of state policies. As we know, the current constitution is drafted only by the participation of some groups or individuals. Thus, by eliminating this limitation, we should have to enter into intercultural dialogues that all ethnic groups participated freely and equally, and so through these intercultural dialogues, it is possible to establish a multicultural country that all needs to live together.

In addition to these, the ethnic federal system of Ethiopia must understand the concept of ethnicity in the instrumental or constructive approach, rather than in primordial sense. As I explained in the first chapter, the primordial approach understands ethnic groups as homogenous and bounded entities. But, as scholars suggested, this approach forgets that a single ethnic group cannot exist in isolation; for its existence, it is mandatory to enter into interethnic relations and communication. The instrumental approach understands the concept of ethnicity as a socially constructive thing, and subject to change. This understanding is well to enter into intercultural communication and relation. If we are aware that our ethnic identity is in flux, we become a volunteer to interact and communicate with others.

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