



**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY**

**A QUEST FOR MODERNIZED ETHIOPIA: A
PERSPECTIVE FROM WESTERN MODERNITY**

BY

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May, 2021

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SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
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Approved by Board of Examiners

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Introduction

The quest for modernized Ethiopia has been a central issue of scholars, politicians and educators since 19th century. Roughly speaking, the time confronted with the question of serious socio-political changes such as modernization and centralization. Even though the Ethiopian intellectuals have scrutinized the Ethiopian process of modernization from contradictory perspectives the interplay between tradition and modernity surfaces the ongoing dialogue among the intellectuals. Scholars have endeavored to allocate ‘modernity’, ‘modernization’, ‘modernism’ in accordance with the Ethiopian situation. With regard to the Ethiopian process of modernization, the intellectuals advocate a different perspective of modernity that provokes significant questions such as: what is the relevance of indigenous Ethiopian traditions to appropriate modernization? what is meant by the standings modernization? these questions demonstrated the presence of unsolved conflicts among scholars on the issue of modernity. Other than demonstrating the presence of unsolved conflicts among scholars on the issue of modernity, such questions also showed the delicacy of the matter so as to require our careful consideration.

In fact, some intellectuals questioned the Westernized aspects of modernity and understood it as a certain form of indirect colonization. Such scholars stand for the reconsideration of the Ethiopian past. Perhaps the most prominent primary struggle in this track was the perspective of Asres Yenesew and he actively questions the Western process of modernization. In his masterpiece entitled *ንቤ አክሱም መኑ አንተ?*¹ (1951, E.C), Asres narrates the popular rationality and the quest for change during the Aksum period. Moreover, the book investigates the journey of Eurocentric approach and provides antithesis to the colonial thesis. Reconsidering the past is the central tenet of his publication and he reasonably pointed out the malicious mental colonization of the Eurocentric pattern. Being the proponent of the revivalists school Asres argues that Ethiopia adopted Western Education to facilitate the modernization process without owing consideration to the importance of the indigenous knowledge. The *Debteras* (the Ethiopian orthodox church elites), were skeptical about the Westernized manners and pushed the emperors to reconsider the past.

¹The title of the book is Ge’ez, which indicates the question of Axum beyond the European historical understanding of the Ethiopian civilization. Roughly, the title of the book can be translated as “አንተ አክሱም ሆይ ማነህ ይሉህል” in Amharic and “Oh Axum! Tell me, who they say, you are? In English.

Other post-colonial African scholars propose a genuine philosophy that compares the African past with the European enigmatic process. According to Messay Kebede the Ethiopian revivalists (nostalgias) fail to investigate the nature of other civilizations in terms of historical dimension. In an article entitled “Return to the Source: Asres Yenesew and the West”, Messay evaluates the notions of indigenous knowledge and modernity that were theorized in Asres’s work. In doing so, Messay’s crucial argument questions the ideas of the Ethiopian revivalist and accordingly, for him unlike other “African revivalists” such as “Negritude” Asres lacks the analysis of different civilizations in terms of divergent aspirations and means (Messay, 2013, p.70).

For the revivalists, Western-educated Ethiopians may think about how the Ethiopian change will be achieved, but they are oblivious to serious societal values that might lead to development. These Western educated generations showed Ethiopian backwardness in many respects. Accordingly, their concerning agenda rests on the critique of Ethiopian rulers, past, and persistent development. Adherents of this viewpoint, contend that the traditionalist project is not logical and inappropriate to the experiments of Ethiopia. According to these modernists, the revivalists call for an unrealistic return to the past is anti-developmental and it fails to unearth serious societal anxieties. In their interpretation, cultural revivalists in one or another way suppress political issues, for instance, class exploitation and oppression of regimes. This view extremely encouraged by the revolutionaries, and they propose that Ethiopian must make a ‘radical break’ with the past in order to shield the most crucial strains of the present. According to Markakis, the radical riots were subjected to ideology and they “had espoused Marxism in the 1960s and devoted themselves to the study of its application in Ethiopia” (1979, p.7). Moreover, for Maimire (2005), modernization, for those radicals requires a ‘clear break’ from pre-modern past so as to address urgent scenarios of the present Ethiopian, i.e. an endeavor to nurture the societies.

Since the late 19th century, the Ethiopian life was more complex than that of the previous times; because the elite’s concern was radical than before and specially the Western trained elites sought the change of the system. The time has confronted with the question of unification, change, and centralization. The Ethiopian political history predominantly Emperor Menelik’s

process of molding –*Makinat*² led the Ethiopian elites to contradictory understanding of history, politics, and way of development. In this vein, the resulting upshot was a dual coercion: pan-Ethiopian as well as ethnic association. That is because; both the ethno-nationalist and pan-Ethiopian elites understood history divergently. At this point, it is important to take the contemporary socio-political situation of Ethiopia in to account. Although, the idea of *Makinat* (ማቅናት) associated with unification and modernization, it also considered as a process of imposing new social structures. In this vein, Merera argues that “the process of *Makinat* involved evangelization of the local population, institutionalization of a new system of political control, imposition of a new political class, culture and language on the indigenous population” (2003, p.4). But, this kind of assertion fails to recognize the existence of cultural integration. During the unification episode, there was real culture to culture interchange.

However, for Fasil Merawi, still the Ethiopian discourse of modernity requires an intercultural understanding. His argument underlines the relevance of the inclusion of multiplicity in realizing genuine modernization. At this juncture, Fasil tries to question the idea of Ethiopian modernity in relation to centralization. According to him:

Although there is a debate regarding the essence of Ethiopian modernity, an argument is ongoing that the political project of modernity in Ethiopia could be situated in processes of state making, centralization and emergence of a highly homogenized population. Based on this, absolutism and centralization are identified as the key features of the modern Ethiopian state (2018, p.50).

The quest for emancipation, social justice, and ethnic equality has been evolving in Ethiopia since the revolution took place. The Ethiopian revolution took attentive intellectuals in direct contradiction with the monarchical, religious and political establishments. They challenged the monarchy, with the Marxist philosophy, frequently favoring radicalism. Immediately, they led the Ethiopian system of thought into class struggle and re-defining history. Those who were influenced by Marxism observed the Ethiopian modernization according to class struggle and social liberation (Christopher, 1990).

²The Amharic word that the Ethiopian emperors used during their marching and the emperors especially emperor Menelik used as an ideology in order to reunify Ethiopia. Even if, Menelik's accomplishment invites serious socio-political controversy; opposing interpretation: The Reunification understating, The Expansion understanding, The Colonial understanding (see, Messay, 2015).

The French revolution and other revolutions led many youth intellectuals to believe at a point that bourgeois system was fated to breakdown, and ready to appropriate Marxism. Many of the Marxists became enthusiastic about the formation of class-less society. They therefore tried to defend Marxism and how it comes about. Factually, the French revolution has been propagating in order to overcome injustice, oppressive regime, and to develop societal well-being. Indeed, fraternity, liberty, and equality were its rejoinder. In the same mood, other revolutions including the Ethiopian germinated for social justice (Bahru 2002; Christopher, 1990). It is clear that the notion of the Ethiopian process of modernization and political formation associates with the Marxist-Leninist recipes and that authorizes everyone to engage in socio-political revolt. In regard to the Ethiopian student movement, Andreas Eshete who is the prominent participant of the uprising taught us that the Ethiopian ‘student movement ‘plays a vital role in reforming the socio- political environment. At this juncture, he stated that “the Ethiopian Student Movement was a midwife of Ethiopian modernity” (Andreas, 2012, p. 20).

On the contrast, the outstanding thinker Messay doubts the alleged positive legacies of the student movement. According to him, the outcome is cultural dislocation and clear break of the Ethiopian enigmatic journey: Messay “is exceptional in being unapologetically critical of his generation’s infatuation with Marxism Leninism and the consequence of radicalism due to their separation from tradition” (Yirga, 2017, p.13). At this point, Messay’s gratefulness for the merit of indigenous social system taught us the misconception among the pattern of Western education and the engagement of radical elites (Messay, 2008). If we refer to the post- revolution era, instead of pluralism of ideas we only get various armed rebellions.

The history of epistemological change in Ethiopia radically evolved following the time of Haile Selassie I. In the name of modernization, the emperor advocated the merits of Western epistemology. At this time, literary discussions were dominated by the views of modernization. The adherents of Western mode of epistemology including the emperor intended to transform the country. Consequently, their efforts “utilize western conceptions of modernization and progress rather than a deeper appreciation of the traditional knowledge and philosophy of the country” (Yirga, 2017, p. 11).

It is true that the debate between revivalists and their contenders have divergent understandings of modernity and modernization. This is not only the outcome of philosophical interpretation of modernity and modernization, but such scholars also differ in interpretations of history, societies’

interaction, in general in the socio-political phenomena of Ethiopia. As a matter of fact, the Western modernity and the Ethiopian enigmatic traditions are in war of beliefs. The Western modernity is inspired by enlightenment dogmas and it needs individuality, markets, liberal democracy, while Ethiopian views grounded on communality and indigenous nostalgia. On the one hand the former introduces modernization with the upshots of dialectical experience, but the latter's philosophy of modernization was established without consideration of local societal systems, on the other. Here, one scholar contends that "critique and modernization developed in the West in a dialectical relationship. But in Ethiopia, modernization was introduced before we submitted our traditions, cultures, aspirations and needs to an internal critique. As a result, modernization in Ethiopia is "unconscious" of our history, traditions, aspirations and needs" (Maimire, 2010, p.5).

The other group which Addis Hiwot calls *Japanizers* (1975) presents Japanese mode of modernization. Bahru Zewdie in his book, '*Pioneers of Change: Reformist Intellectuals of the Early 20th Century*' (2002) recognized their restless quest for certain reconstruction of Ethiopia. In doing so, the intellectuals prominently issued the pedagogy of the Ethiopian. Mainly, their philosophy of modernization rests on fashioning Japan as model. The prominent of this *Japanizers* Gebre Hiwot Baykedagn in his *Atse Menelik and Ethiopia* (2003) rationalizes the Ethiopian political and social history, nation-making experience, and education system. The book contrasts the Ethiopian system of thought to the enlightenment histories of the West. Education was central to his claim and in his understanding the Ethiopian education system fails to produce competitive minds. At this juncture, Gebre Hiwot forced the emperors and Ethiopian to reconsider the Western epistemology. While Gebre Hiwot and other Western trained elites concerned about social justice, education, primarily their curiosity rest on modernization which indicates change but inappropriately it traded with Westernization (Messay, 2006). Many of their studies reveal the short coming of Ethiopian development and reasonably pointed out the assumption that underlies the adoption of Western pattern.

Many of the scholars who wrote about this issue focused either on the self-criticism or relevance of Western type education. Literatures on Ethiopian modernity provide us the process of modernization in comparison of the Eurocentric enlightenment ride. Consequently, many of us lack comprehensive understanding, and general accounts of the modernity project. The actual project of modernity presents the total philosophy of the Western Europe and there still remains

vast uncertainty, reservation, and lack of simplicity about the exact map of modernity what socially and politically projected. One of the most significant questions about the ongoing modernity in recent years has been that concerning relation to emancipation, and its domination, technological threat and in relation to indigenous knowledge.

Setting aside the controversy on the merit of Western modernity rather we should concentrate to on the process of modernization in Ethiopia and how we regard its limitations. Many of us conceive modernity as Westernization. This thesis is developed on the footprints of thinkers who pursue an alternative approach to modernity. Among others, Eguale Gebre Yohanes was one of the influential seekers of the alternative approach.

I have employed his master work, *Yekeftegna Temehert Zeybe* to strengthen my thesis. Eguale questions the tradition- modernity dichotomy. Instead, he pleads for a dialogue among cultures by recognizing the emergence of a new pattern, i.e. “synthetic tradition” that incorporates Ethiopian outlooks with the Western path. In relation to the Ethiopian modernity, the cultural revivalists failed to understand the global situation and adherents of the technological emergence also failed to consider the Ethiopian social values and their fate in the modernized world. Therefore, there is a need for a philosophy that allows for the integration of cultural values.

Chapter one brings to light the historical development and trends of modernity. The chapter demonstrates the central theme of modernity. Chapter two the Ethiopian outlooks towards modernity and at this manner my concerning point is whether Ethiopia has its own modernity design or is that the extension of the West. The Ethiopian project of modernity is failed project due to it lacks synthetic tradition. To place the exact map of Ethiopian modernization; the project loses ground to the indigenous mysterious. Still, many of us conceived modernity as superior of tradition. Questions like does Ethiopian system of thought appropriate modernization? What does modernity look like in Ethiopia? And the third chapter gives attention to the 20th century Ethiopia. That is why that was the time the Ethiopian indigenous knowledge faces many extraordinary challenge in the name of modernization. The final chapter will delineate the interplay among revivalists and modernity. It tries to discuss the fate of Ethiopia in the modernized world: regarding resist and adoption.

Chapter One

On the Notion of Modernity: An Overview

What is modernity?

Addressing the question what is modernity in article entitled, “Habermas and the other side of modernity”, Fasil (2018) highlights the complexity of the term. He summed up the idea of modernity, modernization, and modernism that are discussed in Jürgen Habermas’s standing point. Today, to find out the features of state, society and the query of meaning we should go through the discussion of the enlightenment thinkers. In this regard he argues that “the issue of the modern and modernity, continually surfaces behind contemporary discussions of meaning, validity, rationality, and generally truth across the disciplines” (Fasil, 2018, P.2).

Pioneers of modernity Kant, Hegel, Habermas, or Weber taught us that modernity is a new age. They characterized it by its prioritization of reason instead of theological doctrines. It concurrently legitimizes and challenges the organized center of the social establishment of the past. Modernity aims at instilling the idea that look at reason as the origin of authenticity. The enlightenment thinkers interrogated and critically delineated conventional understandings of the socio-political establishments of the past and medieval societies.

The idea of modernity is associated with emancipation. The modernist thinkers according to (Cahoone 2003; Fasil, 2018) are highly assertive of emancipation. The scholars related modernity to the authenticity of reason. In this sense, Habermas brand reason as an emancipatory monitor. Nevertheless there is rupture between philosophers in relation to modernity’s cannon and, emancipation. Its critics are doubtful of the idea of emancipation and Poststructuralists understand knowledge as part and parcel of control and domination. With this regard, Foucault asserts that “there is no transcendence,” liberation, or emancipation; “there is only an alternation of discourse: another truth, another power. Struggle produces a new domination” (Nederveen Pieterse, 1992, p. 14); poststructuralist’s genealogical works launched possible ways to rethink the formation of modernity via considering its cannons.

Furthermore, the genealogy of modernity was emerged in accordance with the European philosophical establishment. In either economic or political scenarios the concern was creating

world-wide social fates. The themes of modernity were characterized in accordance of the European standards but it turn out to be the determinant of global phenomena. In relation to this, many thinkers underlined, (Giddens 1990), (Dirik, 2003), (Cahoone, 1996), (Dussel, E. 2000), that modernity associates within the history of the west and it became radical and worldwide because of domination. Many of the publications concerned the preliminary development of modernity conceived it as ‘A European Miracle’ (Jones, 1987). In doing so, Europe came up with the colonial agenda that upholds the objective of modernizing the non-Western people. The Eurocentric thesis assumes the European socio-political situations as the only genuine standard.

Indeed, modernity encouraged radicalization of the past and accordingly it also closely intertwined with industrialization, urbanization, political and social reformation. The genealogy of modernity was regarded as a homogenized process that involved important socio-political scenarios, the rise of capitalist mode of approach for Marx and rationalization for Weber can be taken as instances. Indeed, the modernity process did happen in a Western manner that planned individualism, secularism, rationality in general associated with the enlightenment canons. Accordingly, “modernization involves industrializations, urbanization, increasing levels of literacy, education, wealth and social mobilization and more complex and diversified occupational structures” (Huntington, p. 68).

Habermas’s philosophical approaches about modernity brought a critical reflection on the discourse of modernity. In his work, *‘The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity’*, he identified the idea of modernity as a ‘discourse’ that resulted from various historical ends. The notion of modernity within Habermas’s interpretation was interrogated by enlightenment pioneers since the Cartesian tradition. According to Habermas, Kant presents, modernity principally connotes the advancement of reason and subjectivity, to sum up Kant inaugurated the legitimacy of reason. Accordingly, “in Kantian thought, he notes, modernity meant basically the progressive refinement of consciousness and subjectivity, specifically the segregation of reason into the domains of science, ethical freedom, and aesthetic judgment-a segregation apparently achieved without costs or charring effects”(Dallmayr,1987, p.683).

For Habermas, it is Hegel who firstly develops “a clear conception of modernity”(Dallmayr, 1987, p. 684). According to Habermas, it was Hegel who brings us a clear conception on the relationship between modernity and rationality until Max Weber continued. In doing so,

Habermas finds “Hegel's insurgency flawed and ultimately unsuccessful- mainly because of its "subjectivist" moorings and its excessively theoretical contemplative character” (Dallmayr, 1987, p.683).

Habermas in his book narrates how modernity has been discussed in the philosophy of Hegel and other prominent social theorists. Accordingly, Habermas tried to “give an insight into what the modern world looks like and also identifying the shortcomings of the major thinkers” (Fasil, 2011). For Habermas, modernity as a project establishes the idea of rationalization. This assumption led him against the Hegelian approach which requires the synthesis the dichotomies of spirit and reason. In contrast, Habermas theorizes modernity not a Hegelian mood. Furthermore, the legacy of Hegel according to Habermas continued in the ongoing discussions of “Young Hegelians” and “Right Hegelians”.

The principal aim of Renaissance, Reformation, and French revolution was to bring a new world; heralded a new kind of understanding and also presents concrete break with past and medieval systems. In this regard, the philosophical dimension of modernity refers to the process of transformation from mythological understanding to rational way of thinking. Modernity, in the sociological sense declares the change of life. To be modern, the society requires moving from feudal establishment to capitalism manner.

The philosophical dimension of modernity tells us, the status of change is a central issue and in the process of modernization it led to the claim that the modern age was an important transformation from the past. Accordingly, in the works of Habermas and other modernists the sociological attempt was held by rationality. The merits of reason according to Habermas or Kant rest on developing enlightened minds.

Additionally, Habermas advanced his emancipatory approach by forwarding his philosophical discourse in relation to linguistics. He presents the merits of lingual studies in a society. In his volumes ‘*Communication and The Evolution of Society*’ (1979) and ‘*The theory of Communicative Action*’ (1984) constructs language as the fundamental concern in studying a society. According to him, “the structures of linguistically established inter subjectivity – which can be examined prototypically in connection with elementary speech actions – are conditions of both social and personality systems” (Habermas, 1979, p. 98). The emancipatory project of

Habermas presents the power of language in creating harmonized society (Habermas, 1979, p. 117).

Because of scientific and technological advancements, the concept of modern, modernity, and modernization, becomes more complicated and ambiguous continually. Undeniably, the issue sides behind the emancipation question, social justice, decolonization process, and today's socio-political scenario. Modernity is not only the upshots of fundamental changes in production culture, social establishment, but also ideological systems.

Nevertheless, the alleged universal pattern of progress, but rather localized in geography, social system and time, that is, conceived as a separate legacy of Europe. In their writings, Hegel, Weber, Taylor and others taught us the intention of modernity, its nature; meanings are tied with the "West", with dialectic process and success of the West. The outcome became globalized. Here, Giddens contends that modernity "refers to modes of social life or organization which emerged in Europe from about the seventeenth century onwards and which subsequently became more or less worldwide in their influence" (1990, p.1).

In the West, modernity is considered as the transformation of systems; consequently, modernity became an autonomous "project" (to use Habermas's standpoint). In doing so, the incident encourage individual based progress; it regard the option that "every individual has the right to conquer his or her rights and choices and to defend them against established powers" (Touraine, 2009, p. 104). It implies that modernity empowers individuality and faces the ideal societal relationships.

More or less the project creates overconfident individuals and leads the world to sophisticated control systems. According to Cooke, Habermas's understanding of societal rationalization conceived within two distinct methods; "system" and "life world" (1997, p.5). In this regard, "system" refers to increasing material production, increasing difficulty, whereas "life world" is associated with socialization, rationalization of cultures, encouraging cultural integration. Many of today's problems such as exclusion, rational-irrational dichotomy, developed –developing dichotomy are the negative outcomes of modernity. Without overcoming the challenge of traditions modernity led the world of anxiety. Recently, many western studies strictly question the thought of modernity that claims to offer freedom and new forms of system (Foucault, 1997).

Due to this, in order to cope with the pattern of modernity, to identify the distinction among modern, modernity and modernization, it is crucial to demonstrate the very nature and meaning of modernity. As a result of its complex nature defining modernity has never been an easy task. The phenomenon modernity is subject to widely various interpretations. This is evident from the very definition of the term adopted by divergent analysts in the arena. Essentially, the definitions reflect many cultural and ideological views and in this chapter an attempt will be made to discuss the notion of modernity as a way of rationalization, as ideology, and its domination.

1.1 Modernity as way of Rationalization

The Oxford dictionary (1993) defines ‘modern’ as “the present and recent, in current fashion, not antiquated”. In this regard the western dimension of modernity was associated to the reconstruction of socio-political structures of the past and the past antiquities. Instead, it endorses the emergence of individuality in the philosophical, social and political arena. It “places the highest premium on individual human life and freedom,... believes that such freedom and rationality will lead to social progress through virtuous, self-controlled work, creating a better material, political and intellectual life for all” (Cahoone, 2003, p. 9).

Many philosophers and sociologists define and characterize the very notion of modernity in different ways. It is quite difficult to get a common definition of modernity. Put it differently, there is no consensus on what makes modernity modernity. The very etymology ‘modernus’ refers ‘just now’, the communal usage ‘modernity’ associates with rationalization of the life-world. Mainly, it associates industrialization and techno-science advancement. In Weber’s understanding, modernity was attained at the outflow of developing bureaucracy (Giddens 1990, p. 7). Weber conceived protestant ethos as a key for rise of capitalist’s tradition and modern society.

In today’s world, the search for a way of life has been significantly influenced by scientific fashions which resulted from the modernity canons. Hence, modernity was not only the outcome of fundamental changes in socio-political scenario but also it planted liberal democracy, materialism, Darwinism, capitalism, Freudian psychoanalysis, logical positivism to counter the past and medieval antiquity. Consequently, it led the world to the techno-artifacts surrounding. In pre-modern era the societal establishments were trusted within local communality, religion and traditions whereas the modern world devalues such societal themes and legitimizes personal trust

relationships. Habermas (1987) underlined the evolution of rationalization of the social systems and the notion of modernity associated with the emergence of technological advancement, secularism, and individualism.

According to Berman (1982), the idea of modernity associated with the goal of empowering man and to use Berman's words "to be modern is to find ourselves in an environment that promises us adventure, power, joy, growth, transformation of ourselves and the world — and, at the same time, that threatens to destroy everything we have, everything we know, everything we are" (1982, p.15). From Berman's perspective modernity has been portrayed as a threat for the possible human condition. In general Habermas's discourse of modernity presents the process of secularization and at this point:

For Habermas the will to reason is understood in an enlightened sense as signifying the will to reason free from dogmatic and ideological influences. The actual employment of critical reflection may be required only to remedy systematically distorted communication, though it resides as a telos in the structure of human communication (Badillo, 1991, p.46).

In the same mood, according to Habermas "if we are not free ... to reject or to accept the validity claims bound up with the cognitive potential of the human species, it is senseless to want to 'decide' for or against reason, for or against the expansion of the potential for reasoned action"(Habermas, 1979, p.177). Weber's understandings of modernity was associated with 'nation-states' and he characterized modernity as rationalization of socio-political structures. According to him, bureaucratization and domination are the driving force of modernity. May be his curiosity relies on his identification of enlightenment that place modern society in rational scheming. At this juncture, his "occidental rationalism" regarded the process of disintegration of religious understandings: that led the Europeans to rationalization. Weber's rationalization requires abandonment and distancing of religious understandings. Weber (1968) in the '*Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*' presents the way of capitalism and he regarding 'Protestantism ethic' for the emergence of a rational capitalist society. The very logic of Weber prefers the liberal nature of protestant religion and favoring it to run the life-world. Accordingly, Weber characterized modernity with the process of rationalization and disenchantment of the world

Following this Habermas elucidated the interaction between secularization, modernity and rationalization; “the internal links between the concept of modernity and the self-understanding of modernity gained within the horizon of Western reason” (Habermas, 1987, p.3). Habermas further discussed Weber’s sociology of religion. Accordingly, Weber characterizes “cultural modernity as the separation of the substantive reason religion and metaphysics. They are science, morality and art. And these came to be differentiated because world conceptions of religion and metaphysics fell apart” (Habermas, 1981, p. 8), Hence, in the process of evolution to rationalization “the demythologization of worldviews means the desocialization of nature and the denaturalization of society” (Habermas, 1984, p. 48; quoted in Fasil, 2018, p.5).

Modernity influences all sides of the human being. There are ample and plenty impacts of modernity on humanity. It brought both positive and negative influence on human beings. Today the impact of modernity progress in different areas and sectors has become greater than the previous. Consider Kant’s work in this regard argues that:

Enlightenment is man’s release from his self-incurred tutelage. Tutelage is man’s inability to make use of his understanding without direction from another. Self-incurred is this tutelage when its cause lies not in lack of reason but in lack of resolution and courage to use it without direction from another. ‘Have courage to use your own reason! This is the motto of enlightenment (1784, p. 1).

The method of rationalizations that begun during 18th led the life world to a new form of embellishment and following it is important to consider Foucault’s view on Enlightenment. According to him, enlightenment is not only the ends of capitalist culture, modern life world, but also it premeditated to place the linkage between reason and power (Foucault, 1997, P. 43).

In his influential work *Modernity, ‘Unfinished project’* Habermas exposes the nature of modernity with various conceptions. Hence, he wants to shed light and provide support about communicative approach. Habermas associates modernity with new way of world and declares differentiation of value. Habermas asserts that the discourse of modernity states the process of self- autonomy and in a philosophical understanding ‘modernity’ is associated with the new horizon and it legitimizes the process of self-realization:

Because the new, the modern world as distinguished from the old by the fact that it opens itself to the future, the epochal new begging is rendered constant which each moment that gives birth to the new. Thus, it is characteristic of the historical consciousness of modernity to set off ‘the most recent (*nuesten*) period’ from the modern (*neu*) age: within the horizon of the modern age, the present enjoys a prominent position as contemporary history. ... A present that understands itself from the horizon of the modern age as the actuality of the most recent period has to recapitulate the break brought about which the past as a *continuous renewal* (Habermas, 1987, pp. 6-7).

In modernity episodes, more or less the religious outlooks and communality became the target of modernity. In one or another way, the idea of spiritual prosperity reduced to material interest. Even if religion plays a role in creating an ethical belief, the notion of modernity is concerned in replacing it. As an alternative, every socio-political scenario is analyzing and interpreting with reference to reason. Accordingly, it established the capacities of reason over any societal systems:

The vision of history as a the unstoppable march of *les luminaries*; a difficult, but eventually victorious struggle of reason against emotions or animal instincts, science against religion and magic, truth against prejudice, correct knowledge against superstition, reflection against uncritical existence, rationality against affectivity and the rule of custom. Within such a conceptualization, the modern age defriend itself as, above all, the kingdom of reason and rationality; the other forms of life were seen, accordingly, as wanting in both respects. This was the first and most basic of the conceptualizations providing modernity with self-definition (Zygmunt Bauman, 1987, p.111).

Additionally, the project of modernity aims to provide serious socio-political solutions to the global questions. This insight, the front view of modernity, is considered as a process of releasing. Here, modernity regarding continuous departure from religious insights and underlines on critical remarks. By doing so, one can understand the aim of modernity in our today’s world; it is the driving force of the world and in order to argue modernity as way of thinking, we should able to see the perspectives of enlightenment which tell us how

modernity has programmed our life. And more, to uncover how it challenge the global context, this days, the pattern of institution, system of politics, different relations has programmed in accordance with the pattern of modernity; it became more radical and worldwide (Giddens, 1990) and the very notion of modernity presents itself as a new phenomenon that detached from any other systems and it courage's itself to use its own self-understanding and to use Habermas:

Modernity can be and will no longer borrow the criteria by which it takes its orientation from the models supplied by another epoch: *it has to crate its normativity out of itself*. Modernity sees itself cast back upon itself without any possibility to escape. This explains the sensitiveness of its self-understanding, the dynamism of the attempt, carried forward to our time, 'to pin itself down' (Habermas, 1987, p. 7).

The fact that modernity can endure without models on the basic its self- legitimization and it grounds a notion of critical investigation beyond any epoch. For Habermasean modernity inaugurate a self-escapement from the past and sketches a self-justifying outlooks. For important re-considerations may be credited to Kant, Henri Bergson, Weber, to name but a limited that their writings presented the enormous upshot of cultural riots. Thus, as way of thinking is branded by the move from religious myth to the rational system. The fact that the very nature of modernity established individual's authority and undermined the interplay among societal enigma. The process of modernity sketches technocratic structures and it associated with the power of reason in emancipation, radicalization of human progress.

1.2 Modernity as Tradition

Many are not satisfied with approaches of the explanation of modernity based on a few interpretations. Indeed, studies reveal the limitations with modernity and reasonably jagged out the assumption that it is primarily European accomplishment, the radical opposition of the past antiquity, and entirely reconsider is the association with indigenous values. In this stance, the Western sociologists and anthropologists argued the existence of antagonism between tradition and modernity. What is more, they put such charters communal life, illogical life style, stagnant development for traditional societies whereas; the modern societies connote techno-science achievement, continuous change, individualism and rational lifestyle.

From the time of decolonization process, African philosophers have taken the status of indigenous tenets as a crucial maker of a society's level of progress. It means they turned to a critical insight on their society's past and present establishment in order to afford an alternative line of modernity and to counter the colonial thesis. In relation to the above, the African thinker Messay in his book '*Africa's Quest for a Philosophy of Decolonization*' (2004) argues the interplay between tradition and modernity. According to Messay, the African's entails "[t]he recognition of the concomitance of myth and rationality, of traditionality and modernity" (2004, 208). In Short, Messay narrates the merits of tradition and he vindicated the logic of every traditions. In accordance of his Bergeson, Messay favors the merits of myth in endowing people. In this stance, Messay presents considerable claim to strength the place of myth in history of philosophy. For Messay, "[b]oth Africans and Westerners draw their inspirations from a mystical source, which becomes philosophy as a result of rationalization" (Messay, 2004, p. 35).

More importantly, Messay's book focuses on debunking the interplay between African and Western philosophy. In doing this, Messay problematizes the project of Eurocentrism. What is more, in the part "Western Discourses on Africa", Messay questions such contradictory dichotomies: logical –pre-logical, mythical – rational. That is because; there is no inferiority and superiority between the African and the Western philosophy. He discusses civilization is not radical achievement rather is a process. In this manner, the Western societies also passed through mystical situation and they share this mysticism with Africans. He contends:

The tendency to minimize the part of the irrational to decorate the "white man" with the honors of rationality becomes obvious when we recall how little the affirmative is supported by facts. Whether we take the Bible, the foundation of European Christianity, or the ordinary belief of the Westerners, the role of dreams as revelation of profound truth is largely accepted (2004, p. 34).

In spite of this, many African and non-African thinkers inaugurate to question the legitimacy of modernity and quest for reconsideration of tradition. Adherents of multicultural thoughts regard the existence of rationality in every culture. In this manner, the argument that every culture can be a ground for philosophy surfaces in the academic circle. In this regard the intercultural standpoint teaches us the existence of rational outlooks in every culture. According to Bekele Gutema (2015), "there is now a robust

understanding of philosophy that recognizes the existence of philosophy in many cultures” (p.141). Theophilus Okere also contends:

It is clear that all philosophies [are] local and even individual before it can be universal; and nothing can be genuinely universally valid unless it was first authentically personal and interested within a given culture. If this is the case for philosophy, it is likely to be the case for human knowledge, since every form of human knowledge must be situated or generated from within a culture or bounded by presuppositions, prejudgments, interests etc (Okere, 2005, p. 21).

Whether we realize or not, with modernity, the first thing that comes in our mind is its Eurocentric definition: regarding modernity as innovative process. We also and rightly associate modernity with various intercultural approaches. Today we are faring and rapidly moving more from modernity is by very nature its –complicated and multi- dimensional miracle. Accordingly, in this section, I shall provide the discussion of the feature of modernity as tradition. Many ethnocentric sociologists and anthropologists presented that modernity is a radical opponent of tradition. Human beings have been producing and using intentionally various objects in rejoinder to some needs subsequently to the early Stone Age. Nowadays, human beings continue to make well-sophisticated machines to confront needs. Though, the Western socio-anthropology investigation denies such a continuous progress of human beings. Instead, those who blinded by colonialism tenets getting to dichotomy: tradition and modernity. At this juncture it is important to note the legacy of Levi Bruhl, one of ethnocentric anthropologists and in his book *‘Primitive mentality’* narrates the criteria of pre-logical and advanced societies. According to him, mystic fits to the non-west and rational thinking belongs to the West. At this time, to use Messay’s word: “the social technological retardation of native peoples is wholly due to this inability to think physically and logically. Some such turn of mind is adamantly opposed to scientific thinking and technological orientation; it is only fit to wallow in magic” (Messay, 2004, pp.3-4). Contrary to Bruhl scholars questioned the objectivity of Western traditions (wisdom, knowledge, modernity). They affirm relativity than this, advocating every culture have its own knowledge, and it can be a ground for development and reform. In this regard we could find a statement in Achebe’s *Arrow of God*, “wisdom is like goatskin bag; every man carries his own. Knowledge of the land is also like that” (1964, p. 16). As Kenzo stated that postmodernism bring “to think differently and otherwise about Africa”(2002, p.323). As a result Kenzo strongly argues that "it

is legitimate to think of Africa in terms of postmodernism because the current postcolonial situation calls for it, and it is beneficial to think about Africa in terms of postmodernism because postmodernism clears free space at the margins of Enlightenment reason where true alterity can be sought and expressed" (Kenzo 2002, p. 324). At this point, postmodernists' critiques of modernity narrate the limitation, and the immediate outcomes of modernity. Accordingly, 'the project' failed to realize its promises. The central themes of enlightenment are emancipation of man but instead it led to subjugation of technological artifacts.

It is clear that, modernity presents science as a remedy for everything. But, postmodernist challenge this and another central canon of modernity. As Masolo noted: "the historical merit of the postmodernist critique arises out of its questioning of the validity of taking the Western model of rationality as the yardstick for judging others" (1994, p. 127). Accordingly, there is no one universal tradition, plus it is true; every tradition has its own progressive nature. In fact, our system of life not the as our ancestors; there is change time to time. Thus, we have critically analyzed and jagged the organs, aspects, and manifestations of modernity. At this point, it is critical to note Hountondji's (1983) assertion and accordingly the very difference between Africans and Europeans rests "merely in the evolutionary stage attained, with regard to particular types of achievement . . . merely in quantity or scale" (Hountonji, 1983).

The historical development of Western tradition, science and technology is the outcome of particular human culmination. However, some philosophers, sociologists, and anthropologists such as Bruhl, Kant, Hegel, Taylor, and Weber understandings of modernity led the thematic concern to dichotomies; modern-traditional, logical-primitive society. Accordingly, it is important to refer Hegel:

[T]he peculiarly African character is difficult to comprehend, for the very reason that in reference to it, we must quite give up the principle which naturally accompanies all our ideas-the category of universality...The Negro, as already observed, exhibit the natural man in his completely wild and untamed state. We must lay aside all thought of reverence and morality, all that we call feeling, if we would rightly comprehend him; there is nothing harmonious with humanity to be found in this type of character (1980, p. 196).

The encounters provoking change do not take place among the same mediators in all environments. Modernity cannot be achieved by technological fashion alone; “modernity is both the culmination of the past and the harbinger of the future, pinpointing a moment of potential breakdown in socio-cultural relations and aesthetic representations” (Childs, 2000, p.16).

In addition, throughout time there is cultural borrowing and intercultural interaction and accordingly “modernity, then in the way it has developed in the Western societies, cannot claim or be proven to be superior in all of its manifestations to other cultural traditions; despite the fact that a number of its ideas, values, and institutions have assumed the states of a model for other non-Western culture” (Gyekye, 1997, P.270).

Colonial rule projected not only the world of wealth and material production but also it profoundly aimed to replace the European system of thought over non-European systems. This led them to justify their invention of otherness:

The justification for subjugating non-Western peoples instead of engaging in free economic exchanges emanates from the perceived otherness of these people, which otherness justifies the hegemonic position of the West. The myth of the “white man” calls for the attribution of otherness to non-Western peoples, and subjugation constitutes its validation following the scientific criterion of successful practice as a confirmation of truth. While anthropology establishes the otherness of non-Western peoples, conquest confirms materially the superiority of the “white man” (Messay, 2004, p. 10).

In fact modernity associated the process of self-legitimation of reason and the enlightenment set to ensure reason alone in the world, but it is questionable:

Mythology itself set off the unending process of enlightenment in which ever and again, with the inevitability of necessity, every specific theoretic view succumbs to the destructive criticism that it is only a belief-until the very notions of spirit, of truth and, indeed enlightenment itself-become animistic magic (Adorno and Horkheimer, 1972, p.11).

Contemporary studies reveal the integrity of other cultures and try to seek justifications to limit the scope of modernity. The intercultural investigation requires a way that modernity appropriate into different contexts and traditions. And the intercultural assumption problematizes the polarizing dichotomy of modernity and tradition. In this vein, the

solution is not dichotomizing cultures rather regarding cross-cultural dialogue. It is an endeavor to achieving democratic modernity by correcting the domination aspect of modernity. Accordingly, we need to propose a future which grounds tolerant, pre-colonial history, cross-cultural outlooks, and synthetic tradition, precisely push our future beyond the ethnocentric standard (Dussel, 2002, p.236).

1.3 Modernity as Ideology

To begin with, it is important to note modernity as emancipatory project. In one way or another it is possible to conclude that all of its antagonisms and impasses are associated with its goal i.e. the project of emancipation. The central concern of the project modernity is either in philosophical dimension or hypothetical promises; it is a journey to liberation, a struggle to emancipation, and to acquire personal autonomy. In fact, modernity declares scientific reasoning for reconstruction of past and to make radical worldviews possible. Consequently, the very term ideology refers a set of collectively believed ideas whether they manifest orally or in some other interactive form, in a society and in the leading cosmology. In either socio-psychological role or socio-political utility, ideology brining individuals with the sense of identity, forced to pioneering and emancipation. Therefore it condition revolution and reform for the reconstructing of the future world life.

Turning our attention to Habermas's understanding of 'modernity'; as I try to mention in the above Habermas further discussed his notion of modernity based on Weber's sociology of religion. Weber's theory of rationalization with secularization distanced religious outlooks. In doing this, Habermas tries to discuss the idea of modernism, modernization and postmodernism. As Fasil pointed out, the project of Habermas's modernity is based on two most modernist philosophers Weber and Hegel. He further, discussed that the intellectual movement of postmodernism and post structuralism tells that the enlightenment understanding of reason is suppressive; and Habermas projected his conception of 'communicative rationality' as an alternative (2012, p.86). Regarding this, the notion of commutative rationality conveys a post-metaphysical understanding of reason; "participant necessarily suppose not only that all taking part are using the same linguistic expressions, in the same way that no relevant opinions have been suppressed or excluded, that no force is exerted except that of better argument" (Cooke,

1997, p.34). According to Habermas, Postmodernists' radically question modernity and tried to approach a new version. Consequently, Habermas provide "communicative rationality" in order to questioning Derrida's deconstruction and Foucault's theory of disciplinary power, he notes "fail to recognize the communicative processes of modern societies under the employment of ordinary speech acts"(Fasil, 2012, p.86).

Modernism is an aesthetical movement that confronts modernity and modernization. According to Childs modernism manifest radical movements in technical experiment, aesthetics rather than chronological sequence. It concerned on cultural advancement. Modernization regards socio-economic concerns; "in relation to modernism, modernity is considered to describe a way of and of experiencing life which has arisen with the changes wrought by industrialization, urbanization and secularization; its characteristics are disintegration and reformation, fragmentation and rapid change, ephemerality and insecurity" (Childs,1989, pp.14-15).

The liberal project applied the enlightenment traditions of examination to the clarification and study of system of thought and force for typically human realms of progress. As a result, the modern political ideology distinctively makes a new form of consciousness. According to Max Weber the objective of modernity is to guarantee capitalism. In his work he demonstrates the merits of protestant ethics behind the peak of Western capitalism. Taking account the religious structure of the world and Weber recommend particular mentality.

Meanwhile, the notion of modernity was related with a sense of individuality, of rupture of the past, and struggle for technological knowledge and secular outlooks. The current focus on the formation of a harmonized nations-state articulated through the thinking of liberalism, and it accompanied a critical attention to guarantee the rational of modernism. The notion of modernity within major aspects, advocated the need to apply the whole political conception of the enlightenment understanding of individual autonomy in tangible socio-political practices. The philosophical dimension of the enlightenment depends on practical and concrete aspects than on ideal inauguration. To use Marx, "the question whether objective truth can be attributed to human thinking is not the question of theory but is a practical question. Man must prove the truth, and power, this-sidedness of his thinking practice" (Marx, 1978, p. 144).

The ethnocentric historical dimension taught us the superiority of the Europe over the rest of the world. In this context, Europeans considered modernity and scientific advancement as superior over the rest of world they encounter. The history of modernity presents that modernity brings us

a new way of social and political understandings. In the same vein, it is important to note that the notion of ideology, ideologies that emerged since nineteenth century. In the upshots of the French revolution ideologies required to provide projects of entire socio-political construction. The process of political modernization consist a process of separation, new social establishment, and makes liberal democracy possible. Thus, modernity associated with by the move from theological to technological regime, processed from mystical to rational understanding. Also, the modernity philosophers emphasized the use of reason in the modernization discourse, and still conceived as ideological engine of the modernity phenomenon.

Can we say we are free from the upshots of modernity? Equally, modernity as project looks at humanism as a center of radical development. The project clearly has the ethos of self-formation autonomy. In his work, “An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?” Kant qualified the enlightenment project as releasing. To express in his words “Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-incurred immaturity. Immaturity is the inability to use one's own understanding without the guidance of another”. In this regard, the notion of reason becomes the fundamental principle of the ongoing socio-political scenario. As the movement the modern age concerned on human ability as the end, since it declares that “Humanism, the fundamental principle and the intellectual, perhaps, also ideological engine of modernity, placed the ultimate value in individual, humans, and in their rationality”(Cahoone, 1998, p.8). The qualification of this era is a form of political authority i.e. liberalism. In a world power is rationalized in accordance with individualism. Indeed political modernization tell us that the age is the age of enlighten individuals. Modernity as ideology can be conceived as the predominant understanding of our age.

1.4 Modernity and its Domination

To start with, in Western measurement Adorno and Horkheimer discuss the development of enlightenment. Thus it can be considered as a “progressive thought” that “has always aimed at liberating men [sic] from fear and establishing their sovereignty” (Adorno and Horkheimer, 1997,p. 3). These two modernist scholars tried to question the project of enlightenment. In their book, ‘*Dialectic of enlightenment*’, they considered as the tool of control; “the subjugation of nature was made the absolute purpose of life within and without” (1997, p. 31). Paradoxically,

according to them, enlightenment promised to emancipate man, but consequently lead to subjugation of reason; “enlightenment was itself the force that had led to the nightmares of fascism and the totally administered world” (Osborne, 2005, p. 4). Consequently, instrumental reason has developed many forms of influence on the socio-political arena.

The historical understanding of modernity presents a sole notion of Western progress. The historical dimension considered modernity as a process of transformation. In fact, the term ‘modernity’ itself raises a number of contradictions. As we have seen the Western dimension of modernity nurtured the idea of dichotomy between the Europe and non-Europeans. Thus, the technological achievement of the Western displays direct contradiction with non-European scenarios. In this stance, Eze assert that: “[t]he shine and the glow of Europe’s history, progress, and modernity are therefore framed against the darkness of Africa” (2002, p.53).

Meanwhile, as a historical title, modernity motivates conflicting understandings. It is true that, the themes of modernity have been part and parcel of the entire field of socio –political. That is because different scholars have carefully studied how modernity becomes governing social existence. In the field, scholars like Weber (1949), Hegel (1952), Kant (1961), Habermas (1971) present that modernity was associated with reason. The age of modernity was not only the energy of technological viewpoint but also the departure from theological tradition.

Thus, we may characterize modernity as movement, plan to build technocratic systems, social embellishment, and worked for uniformity of nature. Accordingly, philosophers of modernity expose the victory of reason over faith. The theological rules began to decline and in contrast the enlightenment project marks a radical stand against the past. Boldly speaking the nature of modernity infers a sense of rupture from past state of concerns and Bruno Latour noted that:

[T]he adjective 'modern' designates a new regime, an acceleration, a rupture, a revolution in time. When the word 'modern,' 'modernization,' or 'modernity' appears, we are defining, by contrast, an archaic and stable past. Furthermore, the word is always being thrown into the middle of a fight, in a quarrel where there are winners and losers, Ancients and Moderns. 'Modern' is thus doubly asymmetrical: it designates a break in the regular passage of time, and it designates a combat in which there are victors and vanquished (1993, p.10).

In addition, the project of enlightenment legitimizes the universality of reason and began the denunciation of religious/ theological rules. Here, the logic of modernity declares the age of reason. In this account, the very project of modernity associated with scientific development. Thus, the merit of the instant of modernity ties with the project of universal historical conception and with a center of Europe.

It is true that modernity as movement proposed to release man from religious and traditional system of thought. Thus, according to Messay (2004), the idea of modernity characterized by change, and therefore it considered as a movement to progress. Indeed, “the concept of modernity is usually crystallized around the development of rationality in the modern European period which is supposedly individualistic, reflective, and multidimensional in trying to question every aspect of our lives (Fasil Merawi, 2012). Or it “can be defined as the ideas, principles, and ideals covering a whole range of human activities that have underpinned Western life and thought since the seventeen century” (Kwame, 1997, p. 264). Generally, the modernity dogmas developed after 18th century declares that societies were joining the modern values, radically abandoning their traditional values. Today, modernity became not only a social project but also it became controlling system. The theoretical sketch announces empowering globalization that solely holds rational phase of the historical development.

The central concern of modernity was individualism that associations gave birth to the autonomy of individual. To sum up, it declares that the promise to individual freedom. Thus, the central narrative of modernity has emerged as the result of the collapse of religious and traditional notions. Additionally, we are living in pattern of globalization. Certainly, in fact, in relation to the previous, globalization challenges the entire surface of the universe; it is no longer a project that has to be enforced.

The modernization theory in non-European societies was managed by the colonial thesis that the modern values (the European) are rational than any other values. Thus, all indigenous practices was interrogate in accordance with ethnocentric path. Accordingly, modernity reaches in non-European societies “through the midwifery of colonial rule,” (Bahru, 2002). Hereafter, modernization was considered as Westernization and it rests on alienation of cultural identity (Messay, 2006, 1998, 2004).

Thus, non-European achievements evaluated in harmony of European realities. According to the historical narratives of the west, democracy emerged after French revolution, and this opened up a new political insight in the coming world. The homogenous dimensions of the Europe tell us that modernity development and its discourse was associated with the European social structures. In this implication, the notion of cultures dissolves in to a singular ethnocentric path. Consequently, several theorists shed light on how modernity discourse makes this homogenous development. In line with this thesis Mitchell provide accordingly:

[T]he modern age presents a particular view of geography, in which the world has a single center, Europe,...that imagines itself a continent-in reference to which all other regions are to be located; and an understanding of history in which there is only one unfolding time, the history of the West, in reference to which all other histories must establish and receive their meaning” (2000, p. 5).

Modernity discourse legitimizes not only transformation of cultures but also it erases many of non-Western cultures from history and indigenous genealogy. That is why Africa misplaces its essence and gets to abnormal imitation of the West. Unfortunately, only with few exceptions, the conception of modernization that has become predominant is the colonial conception, namely, “modernization versus tradition”. This erroneous understanding led to an educational policy that advocated full Westernization through the extirpation of the traditional legacy of lagging societies.

Today, the contradiction between Western conceptions which advocate individualism, scientific understanding, and liberalism while denying systematically that the content moves the world. The leading Western modernist elites for instance Darwin (1809-1882) and Freud (1856-1939), questioned religious embellishment and pushed to the scientific understanding and challenged the idea of religion. The elites are loyal to question the life-world beyond religious circumstance and describe the very concept of enlightenment in the opposition of traditional understanding.

In fact, the idea of modernity was also associated with an intellectual movement led by the philosophers. We might reconsider the 19th century Western theorists Weber, Durkheim, and given a vital road map of socio-political realms. The pioneers led the world from metaphysical view to scientific understanding. It is not a single kingdom but upshots of

multiple concerns. To make sense modernity was not belongs to singular development rather it is culmination of human development.

Certainly, the enlightenment project discovering the world-wide in either political or economic advantage it surfaces the psyche of the non-Western too. Today, all societies get to compute with the Western development phenomenon, this is evolving towards European's manner. That is why the very nature of modernity proclaims escaping from the past for constructing new socio-political structures, and the theocentric dogmas were epitomized by techno-science continuing. Nevertheless, in contrary of its positive contributions modernity led the world to dilemma, anxiety, and subjugation. In contrast to a grand narration of modernity many scholars getting to negate the very establishments of modernity. A number of pre-modern social phenomena delimited by the remit of dynamics of modern totalitarian socio- political movement and the cultural anthropologist considered the relevance to cognize the enduring circumstances. The globalized force of modernity eradicates what pre-modern societies had in common. It led the World system to various dichotomies. Today, our world experience such class difference, tradition-modern, backward-civilized, undemocratic- democratic.

The modernity canons fail to recognize the existence of extra socio-political understandings. In its place, enlightenment philosophers forcefully protect modernity, for instance the standing point of Habermas (1980, 1987) imply that modernity considered as an incomplete project. It is true that, the idea of modernity subjected to controversy; on the one side it predicts urbanization, individual freedom, industrialization, scientific advancement, and the logic of pluralism yet this age confronted not only positive upshots but also the modernity episode faced genocide and holocaust. What is more, it challenged day to day societal interaction and led to a pessimist world.

Consequently, scholars begun to scrutinize it and uncovers the limitation of the project. Here, it is important to refer Foucault. His philosophy delineates and questions the grand foundations of modernity. In his book '*Punish and Discipline*' presents a system of domination sketch in the mass of social institutions that begun during the modern era. Accordingly, hospitals, schools, and any social institutions use the same systems of power and these institutions control by surveillance. The logic of Foucault asserts that the birth of modern science inherently linked to power relations.

In the post-modernism scene, the idea of modernity confront with criticism. In this respect, Foucault presents a new perspective to question of modernity. In his book he examined the genealogy of European modernity. In his study he takes the idea of *Panopticon* and he worked on it. Accordingly, the *panopticon* arrive constant observation and surveillance. Consequently, the features of man became the object of investigation. His book presents the interplay between power and knowledge as follows:

Power produces knowledge (and not simply by encouraging it because it serves power or by applying it because it is useful); that power and knowledge directly imply one another; that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same power relations ... power-knowledge, the processes and struggles that traverse it and of which it is made up, that determines the forms and possible domain of knowledge.(Foucault, 1977, pp. 27–28).

One of the most convincing ideas is that Foucault develops the notion of madness to confront the enlightenment scenario. The teaching of enlightenment, according to Foucault is empowering reason over nature, hence, “enlightenment reliance upon universal principle and reason is always incipiently totalitarian, because the appeal to an always correct Reason is itself a system of control and will always exclude what it makes marginal, simply by seeing it as non-rational” (Butler, 2002, p. 46).

According to him, modernity established the performers under detached power; Foucault has been criticized for setting the actors under impersonal structural power, which cannot be challenged in circumstances. Because of this only the possibility is moving on from one structure to another. For Foucault, “death of the subject” refers the perspective that human struggle has its meaning only in a given institutions. Foucault tries to question a normative perspective of reason, and the critical remarks between reason and power.

As modernity is a value laden project its consequence became more radical ever before. Here, more or less the project proposed to shape the world according the Western life styles. When talking about modernity we ought to note that the political dimension, the homogenous process, and its autocratic features of modernity. The Eurocentric modernity

understood as liberal, progress, dynamic, and technological. This is not to infer that pre-modern was persistent. Many pre-modern developments experienced progressed periods in their cosmology and scope of outlooks.

In the assessment of philosophy, the African philosopher D.A Masolo associates the very idea of philosophy with the search of identity (Bekele, 1998, p.1). Masolo focused on empowering oneself. Indeed, the notion of Western modernity declares to negate non-Western world. Regarding this juncture, it is possible to assess easily what the prominent Western scholars' project. That is why the prominent African philosophers focused on pre-colonial African social structures. In doing this, thinkers such as Wiredu, Gyekye quest for development in Africa, but they are not approaching it simply as copycat Western patterns. Such philosophers argue that Westernization in Africa will require a significant consideration on the understanding of indigenous outlooks. Consequently, modernization does not claim that indigenous outlooks must be absolutely abandoned.

In doing so, Wiredu regards consensus democracy. In his study (1996) clearly notes the pre-colonial political truth and decision making tradition of Ghana's "Ashanti". Consequently, he questions the relevance of majoritarian democracy in African societies and he regards "non-party polity". Accordingly, his project serves to enlighten the existence of such system of thought in the non-Western world. The "consensus" shows "a manifestation of an immanent approach to social Interaction", and "consensus as a basis of joint action was taken as axiomatic" (Wiredu, 1996, p.182).

Although, the Western dimension of modernity has aimed at an emancipatory project, it has left the world with confusion. For instance, the Africans are in experience of confusing situations. More or less, modernity imposed the colonial thesis in Africa, it fashioned orientalist discourse and lead the life world in to Western mode in the name of modernization. As one scholar stated that the African condition sandwiched in dilemma, "the social fabric was completely devastated and a new culture of violence was implanted. Traditional African systems of conflict resolution were destroyed and, in their places, nothing was given" (N.O Mimiko 2010; quoted in Arowolo, 2010, p.3). The mimic of cultural Westernization led the Africans to the discontinuity of self-empowering. In one or another way, the Western culture has an impact on African socio-political themes. As Mudimbe stated that:

We are dealing with ideology. Modern African thought seems somehow to be basically a product of the West. What is more, since most African leaders and thinkers have received a Western education, their thought is at the crossroads of Western epistemological filiation and African ethnocentrism. Moreover, many concepts and categories underpinning this ethnocentrism are inventions of the West. When prominent leaders such as [Léopold] Senghor or [Julius] Nyerere propose to synthesize liberalism and socialism, idealism, and materialism, they know that they are transplanting Western intellectual Manichaeism (1988, p. 185).

This is the pushing factor for the Africanists scholars; cultural exclusion, political dependence, and epistemic side of Africans. The reason behind is to question the Westernized aspect of Western modernity. That is why Wiredu approached “consensus” political tradition, or Gyekye shows the healthy interaction of African and Western tradition. Thus, African modernity needs to transcend Eurocentric modernity. Indeed, the hegemonic characteristics of modernity exclude many others. European social systems such as urbanization, bureaucratization, and industrialization dominantly shaped the makings of the contemporary world. That is why serious critiques of modernity came from postmodernism. Thus, the movement aimed at questioning the grand narration and teachings of modernity. It regards a skeptical understanding to the radical promises of modernity and the tenets of enlightenment.

Moreover, transmodernity provides an opportunity to think cross-culturally. Dussel presents a liberation project that aimed at transcending a hegemonic path of modernity: “it is a new liberation project with multiple dimensions: political, economic, ecological, erotic, pedagogic, religious” (Dussel, 2000, P.474). In more general terms, to hold transmodernism is to assume a liberation standpoint regarding most of the teachings of modernity and the philosophies of enlightenment that bound it. This transmodernism turn is appropriately seized by Dussel.

The philosophy of transmodernists is centered on revisited and questioned in an attempt to dislodge the hegemonic inclinations of the west. It is in this purpose to confront the offensive attitude of modernity and the enlightenment. In fact transmodernism as a critical move which informs the practice of inter-cultural dialogue, hence the main image of transmodernism seized in recognition of historical and cultural context out of which philosophy is born. Thus, the very philosophy considered as a new trend that tries to push the notion of modernity beyond

modernity or postmodernist legacy. Dussel the pioneer of this approach regarding an alternative paradigm to overcome what modernity lost. He shows the need to transcend beyond Eurocentric understanding of modernity (2009, p.499).

To conclude, the project of modernity has not yet completed and it aims at building a differentiation between the past and the modern world. The normative conception of modernity tell us that modernity continue mapping the horizon of enlightenment, with its certain aims emancipation, rupture of past, and self-legitimation. The modernity process affects the past and medieval social establishments. Tradition is amongst which experienced the influence of modernization process.

Chapter Two

Is there an Ethiopian conception of modernity?

This chapter discusses dispute concerning the nature of modernity and modernization in Ethiopia. In relation to this, there is a divergent understating on the nature of the Ethiopian process of modernity. The dispute surfaces on the merits of Western kind epistemology for modernized Ethiopia. In this circumstance, there are many serious fantastic and contradictory thoughts that are being told about the Ethiopian history of modernization. Religious scholars (the Ethiopian orthodox members) trace the Ethiopian history of modernity back to the time of Aksum. These scholars regard the inspiring obelisks that were built during the time of Aksum as inferring instances of the Ethiopian people success and transformation.

According to Ephraim Isaac (1971), the Ethiopian indigenous school system concerns self-understanding and this system has been existed for the past sixteen centuries until now. In the history of Ethiopia the rise of Tewodros II discloses an important transition and according to Bahru (1991) the emperor led the country to modernization and announced ‘industrial revolution’. Tewodros attempted to revolutionize the Ethiopian socio-political establishments. What is more, for Bahru the Ethiopian publicized military technology in the time of Tewodros aimed at bringing a balance of power with the Europeans. At this point, Levine argues that the pushing factor of the Ethiopian emperors to modernize is external threat (2007, pp. 43-44). But this judgment fails to consider the presence of any local conception of modernity in Ethiopia. Indeed, the emperor was very dreamful to transform Ethiopia, and was interested in indigenous modernization. Tewodros’s chapter was encouraged by unification and his socio-political programs were rested up on the *Kebra Nagast*. As historical documentation taught us Tewodros was eager to modernize and he “wanted to see his countrymen learn from the technical advances made by West European countries’ (MOE, 2006a, p.59). Due to this many of the Ethiopian playwrights^[3] artists, historians, and poets are interested in Tewodros’s story. Other than that “[a]s Ethiopia's political history shows, starting from Emperor Tewodros, whose experiment in

^[3] . For instance the Ethiopian laureate Tsegaye G/ Medhin wrote a theater named ‘Tewodros’ and the story try to expose the emperor's dream and his critics.

opening Ethiopia to "modernity" was cut short by his death at the battle of Makdala in 1868, Ethiopian monarchs had a strong desire to create a modernizing autocracy" (Paulos, 2008, p.92).

In discussing Tewodros's success and failure many Ethiopian and foreign scholars try to offer thoughtful internal and external causes. In a pioneering study on Ethiopian history, Professor Mesfin Woldemariam wrote on the nature of Ethiopian success and failure of transformation in general. The study of Mesfin tries to unfold the reasons behind our failure. What is more, his book 'መከሸፍ እንደ ኢትዮጵያ ታሪክ' scrutinizes historical progresses in Ethiopia and their stagnation. For him, the failure of change in Ethiopia resulted from the tradition of war, rebellion and conspiracy of power ambition. Thus, according to him particularly emperor Tewodros failed to emancipate the people from such problems and because of that he even failed from his throne (Mesfin, 2005, p.15).

Regardless of his energetic "interest of transforming Ethiopia, Tewodros was not able to move forward on his modernization track. The clergy, on one side, and the resistance of a few regional powers on the other, were formidable obstacles for his endeavors" (Setargew, 2017, p. 115). Furthermore Setargew provides another substantial argument to why Tewodros's mission was died in infancy: "more important Tewodros's modernization fervor did not come to function because, as many scholars of Ethiopian history would say, his ideas were ahead of time and did not, therefore, find a fertile soil on which they could grow" subsequently, the emperor's project lacks clear 'cultural preparation'; he inaugurated to modernize Ethiopia not in evolutionary manner rather in a radicalized mood: "Tewodros failed, at any rate did not have the necessary time to nurture and launch the project" (Messay, p.646) or "he lacked any social or institutional base upon which to build: national unity eluded him; there was no historic bureaucracy; no national administration had survived the division of the country" (Crummey, 1969, P.465).

The rise of Western education in Ethiopian goes back to emperor Menelik II and the emperor was so passionate to cope with diplomatic technique, foreign language, technological advancement, and to rationalize the political process. The educational path in the first stance concerned in producing translators. Adopting the Western method of education created a wide rupture between the traditionalists and the modernists. The traditionalists, who traced the Ethiopian past and historical memos interested in past antiquities, argued for reconsidering of the past.

Even so, on the contrary Western educated elites such as Gebre Hiwot and his colleagues prefer to adopt technological and scientific methods of the West. Thinkers in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries associate *Zämänawinnät* with the emergence of industrialization. They alarmed on the notion of *Zämänawinnät* and associated it with the reduction of illiteracy, poverty, and more with the advancements of artifacts. More or less the intellectuals suggest epistemological reform and advocate a Japanized model. Adherents of this perspective argue that modeling Japanisation led the Ethiopian to socio-political transition (Bahru, 2002, p, 203). In this the *Berhanena Selam* magazine plays a central role in publicizing their thoughts. For instance Fitawrari Däressa Amänte who was one of the Japanizers stated “Japan was in the same state as Ethiopia” (quoted in Bahru, 2008, p. 205). At this juncture, Japan realized modernization via hybridizing of her traditional and Western inputs; and this is the most interesting encounter for the Ethiopian Japanizers. Here, what is might be unique is, the ruling system proclaiming to modernize Japan in all aspects; in political, economic, and cultural (Levine, 2007, p.43). And more, “Japan appropriated Western modernity without losing its Japanese soul” (Teshale, 2008, p. 357). However, the Ethiopian intellectuals fail to address modernization between internal and external inputs; as their counterparts did. Slightly in Ethiopia modernization has often been confused with Westernization. That is because, when it characterized, quite often meant lining as Western norms. Many of the elites consider modernization not as a human culmination but as a unique end of the European advancement. In the same manner, Western educated elites consider the Western education as a potential advancement for all problems and to use Fanon “[a]ll the elements of a solution to the great problems of humanity have, at different times, existed in European thought” (1968, p. 314). Moreover intellectuals in Africa fail to make synthesization between the African present and the European experience to the African situation (Mudimbe, 1988, p. 165).

Predominantly, the history of Ethiopian education interweaved with the Ethiopian Orthodox Church schooling system. The church has its own epistemological process and the pedagogy scheduled not only religious dogmas but also it programmed political and social programs. In the system the *Merigeta* (common name for the teachers) teaches the religious and secular settings. The schooling process starts from the level of *Nibab Bet* and passes in a hierarchal manner to *Metsehaf Bet*. Indeed, the tradition produces various experts; preachers, judges, and translators. In this manner, the church possibly contributed to the discourse of Ethiopian modernity.

However, this doesn't lead to the exclusion of other Ethiopian traditions from the discourse. The church as a system has fixed a special teacher for special education. For instance, a student is required to study in different provinces for instance at Gojjam *Qine*. The *Merigeta* teaches the students with censure, discipline, and he encourages creativity. The students are committed to the lesson. As Setargew argues that the students are very curious to carry responsibility and to have a "comprehensive understanding of the extent to which students as well as their teacher are committed to their educational endeavor, it is crucial that student lifestyles and more particularly the nature and source of their sustenance is explored" (2005, p.113).

As we mentioned in the above the cultural revivalism questioned the relevance of Western mode of pedagogy in Ethiopia. Asres (1951, E.C) argued that indigenous education (the church way of schooling) is relevant to Ethiopia. The merits of education rest on creating individuals with critical and self-responsible manner. It can also be the basis of Ethiopia's process of modernity. It is true, however, the 20th century pioneers (to use Bahru's assertion) begun to question and even their publications interrogates a new transition. The intellectuals tramped and emperor Haile Selassie himself stated "Ethiopia is like a sleeping beauty but is being awakened by modernization" (quoted in Paulos, 2008, p.91).

In multiple dimensions, the Ethiopian socio-political system has been characterized by conflicts, struggle, transformation, and emancipation (See Bahru, 1991; Teshale, 2008; Andagachew Tiruneh, 1990; Messay, 2008). In the same vein, the genre of the Ethiopian artistic works such as novels, poems, theaters rests on cultural transformation. In this stance, we can refer the works of Hiruy W/Selassie, Girmachew T/Hawryat, Dagnachew Worku or Haddis Alem Ayehu. The themes of Western education and modernization have been reflected in their works. At this point, in one or another way, many of the Ethiopian writers regarding modernization with the expansion of Western education. For instance Haddis in his '*Fikir Eske Mekabir*' (Love unto Crypt), which was published in 1966 (1958, E.C), reacted the socio-political milieu of the then time Ethiopia. As a result, Haddis exposes the structure of feudalism and its feature in Ethiopia through his spokesperson Gudu Kasa. The book narrates the clash of traditions. Hiruy also in his '*Addis Alem*' (New World) critiques the Ethiopian societal establishments. Even, he himself the scholar at the Ethiopian Orthodox Church he do not abstain from critique. The novel narrates the curiosity of an Ethiopian young and how the Western curricula led him to rationalization. The

intention of Hiruy rests on the merits of education but unfortunately he led the main character to the antagonism of the Ethiopian social establishments. They nurtured antagonism between cutlers and characterized the Ethiopian tradition as stagnant journey.

In the world the late 18th c and 19th c nurtured massive radicalization in various faces of systems: economic, social, and political. That is because numerous factors play in radicalizing the centuries like industrial revolution, technological development. While, the West displays relative socio-economic progress, yet it presents itself as reformer of others. Advocating this position, Hiruy argues, despite its material development, it dismantles serious spiritual attributes. In discussing the discourse of modernity, Hiruy problematizes the exclusive material advancement of modernity. More importantly, he argues that “Ethiopians should only learn about the greatest scientific and technological achievements of Europeans by preserving their own indigenous cultural values” (Fasil, 2019, p.67). Hiruy taught us the merits of indigenous realities for realizing genuine modernization. What is more, he tries to depict the European advancement with wondering.

The emperors in their regime presented various remedies that are aimed to transform the State. At this juncture, the elites begun to write and interrogate the fate of Ethiopia in globalized world, they burst a major debate nearby modernization process. The intellectuals characterize the Ethiopian system as backward and challenge the emperor for adoption the Western system. As a result, the elites character the Ethiopian modernity as cultural lag. For instance, Kebede Mikael in one of his books *‘Ityopyanna Mirabbawi Sillitane’* problematizes the Ethiopian modernity, and he argues that the Ethiopian modernization lacks evolutionary path and has not reached to produce the men of pioneer and for him Ethiopia lag behind the West with technological prosperity (1948/49, p.103). Consequently, the reformists propose a mechanism to challenge the European domination. However, if we consider Levine’s critical grasp of the ‘Japanizers’, he contends “it is hard to imagine two societies more dissimilar than Japan and Ethiopia” (1997, p, 1).

The primary aim of education in Ethiopia is to afford interpretative generation in the socio-political arena. The emperors both Menelik and Haile Selassie aimed at transformation of Ethiopia. Nevertheless, the proposal is narrow to the Ethiopian context. The elites approach the educational process either from abstract dogmas or material advancement without considering

the global progression as well as the Ethiopian situation. Mainly, the project compares the State with the material advancement. Such kind of assertion fails to consider the questions how Ethiopia could enter into capitalism with agrarian development? how Ethiopia enters into political bureaucracy with religious dogmas and traditions? Conventionally the Ethiopian associates *Zemenawi ewket* with Westernized character such as scientific, rational, and empirical. Some of the Ethiopian elites appropriated Western notion to characterize the Ethiopian activities. Setting aside its merit, the Ethiopian scholar not just borrowed ideologies from the West but also aimed to plant it on Ethiopian earth. For instance, in Dagnachew's 'Adaffirs' Ato Woldu problematizes the Ethiopians understanding of knowledge; the Ethiopians understanding rests on *taamir* (miracle) than *haliyo* (mind) (Dagnachew, 1971, p.156).

Thus, in this chapter, I shall discuss the idea of modernity and the Ethiopian understanding in a precise mood. In addresses and unearths different issues ranging from the concerning the pattern of modernization. Therefore, in this chapter, we will consider issues like the idea of modernization and its Amharic equivalent *Zemenawi Sillitane*. Consequently, the view of *Zemenawi Sillitane* associated with material progress. Here, there is a concept *lamat* (ልማት) usually used to elucidate the notion of development/civilization. The very question is whether the Ethiopian modernization process is an extension of the West or not. The Ethiopian associates the idea of *Sillitane* as building Western kind intuitions. It is therefore, the genealogy of the Ethiopian modernity necessary against the intervention of indigenous knowledge in a process of modernization.

2.1 Considering At the Pattern: The Process of Modernization in Ethiopia

The status of 'modernization' is strongly recognized in Ethiopian academic circle since late 19th century. The elite have issued this status of modernization with transformations and any other fashionable topics. The process of Ethiopian modernization since the period of Tewodros II intertwined with military advancement and socio-political reforms. The efforts were made to cope up with the Western development through innovation and reform so as to reduce societal strains; illiteracy, poverty, and backwardness. However, in relation to this the Ethiopian intellectuals have provided multidimensional understanding on the nature of modernity. Even if, their writing is contradictory many scholars have attempted to deal with the project of modernization. Their studies concern on social justice, education, political bureaucracy, and on

the making of nation state. One of the central themes of twentieth century elites was the interplay between tradition and modernization (Bahru, 2002, p.1).

A PhD thesis entitled “Ethiopian Modernism: A Subaltern Perspective” by Elizabeth (2010) discussed the nature of modernity, modernism, and modernization in Ethiopia. For Elizabeth, the Ethiopian elites were and still are unsuccessful in providing a genuine approach on the process of modernization. She argued since it is a global phenomenon, the project of modernity subjected to continuous contradictions and discussion. Her study shows that the Ethiopian modernist elites fail to realize the modernity rupture and contradictory natures. In this same manner, Elizabeth affirms that, even if Ethiopia has no colonial history but the treatise of modernity required to be theorized in way that unearths the history of colonialism, imperialism and the nature of multidimensional approach of modernity. The study concerned on the legacy of Fine art school and analyzed them from the point of view of decolonization and pan-African art. In doing so, she tries to point out the idea of modernism in current Ethiopia. The paper traces the works of prominent Ethiopian painters: Gebrekirstos Desta and Skunder Boghossian. The dissertation makes a critical contribution on these and other modernists, and the thesis presented the work Boghossian as an anti-thesis of the Western understanding on African societies. The artists provide crafts and led the academic circle beyond the Eurocentric invention. His contribution herald’s deconstruction and more plays in a decolonization movement.

Modernity has been originated and characterized in Europe and latter to be a world-wide phenomenon. For Giddens modernity is nurtured instrumental progress such as military power, industrialization, capitalism, and surveillance equipment (1991, p.15). The system of the world characterized according to the European advancements. In this stance, the modernist thinkers considered the European societies as evolutionary. In his work ‘*The System of Modern Societies*’, Talcott Parsons wrote the distinction between modern and non-modern societies. His study label the notion of demarcation in terms of pattern of change. According to him, the modern society refers industrial advancement, universalistic pattern, evolutionary, and bright pattern whereas the non-modern society connotes on the contrary. In his study the notion of modern society brings:

a single evolutionary arena in the West, which is essentially the area of Europe that fell heir to Western half of the Roman Empire north of the Mediterranean. The

society of Western Christendom then provided the base from which what we call the system of modern societies took off (1972, p.1).

In this stance, modern society, for Parsons, is valid to the west alone, that achieve the idea of evolution through the set of protestant ethic. The work recommended that, non-modern societies must develop a system that aimed to achieve capitalist values. What is more, his description lies on the idea of modernization within a transformation of a traditional society to industrial advancement and he assert the Western as peak of society. In the same vein, Weber emphasized that the Western civilization can be considered as trans-civilizational and trans-historically. He contends:

A product of modern European civilization, studying any problem of universal history, is bound to ask himself to what combination of circumstances the fact should be attributed that in Western civilization, and in Western civilization only, cultural phenomena have appeared which (as we like to think) lie in a line of development having universal significance and value (Max Weber, Author's Introduction, 2002).

As a result, Eurocentric scholarship conceived that the West wisdom exists as a stage of development and change. In this regard, the concerning point of African philosophy shifted to question the hegemony through deconstructing, reconstructing and building or synthetizing the Western themes. This concern is demonstrated by the continuous discourses on the issue. Theoretical literatures question the categories of modernity and tradition. The Western dimension labels society with the pattern of industrialism and capitalist mode of production and leads the life world to individualism. Prominently, Weber categorizes society with the advancement of capitalism and his notion of modernization rests on Protestant reformation.

If this is so, the non-European scholars are initiated to engage in the politics of globalism. The post-colonial African thinker began to issue the circumstance of modernization in the context African socio-political establishments. The elites then entered in the issue with an African perspective. As we have seen in the first chapter the discourse of modernity led the life world in contrast to the past. The very etymology *modernus* refers to the present, just now, or today. The genealogy of modernization promises to 'clean break' the past antiquities. Consequently, not only the African but a number Western scholar underlined the merits of traditional values in spite

of socio-political consciousness (Gyekye 1997; Mesasy, 2004). Their studies reveal the nexus between tradition and modernity. In short, the modern advancement, i.e. technological rationality, considered as the present tradition. From the general understanding of tradition, according to Gyekye “every society in the modern world inherits ancestral cultural values, implies that modernity is not always a rejection of the past” (1997, p. 217).

There is different system of life between West and Africa. The Western system attributed by individualism, as well as capitalist mode of production, while the Africans concerned on communality and cultural outlooks. In his book *‘The Invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy, and the Order of Knowledge’*, Mudimbe, recognize the need to defend and reconsider the idea of humanism and universalism from the point view of multidimensional approach. In general, the book repudiates the post-colonial African philosophy and philosopher. As we know the colonial thesis brought not only epistemological difference but also it presents metaphysical demarcation between the Western and non-western. And that is why the leading Africanists provide the notion of *Negeritude* in order to parallel the hegemonic thesis. Mudimbe contends:

If they believed in affirming their difference, it was, according to him [Senghor himself], because of anthropologists and Black Americans. Also, in the period between the two wars they were privileged witnesses of the crisis of Western values. Moreover, their recent discovery of Marx gave them reasons for utopian dreams. Senghor’s explanation is plausible. Up to the 1960s, anthropology, Black American ideology, and Marxism had a significant impact on the African intelligentsia (1988, p. 88).

According to him, it is questionable that the notion of *Negritude* is ground on the invention of others. For him:

Because of the colonializing structure, a dichotomizing system has emerged, and with it a great number of current paradigmatic oppositions have developed: traditional versus modern; oral versus written and printed; agrarian and customary communities versus urban and industrialized civilization; subsistence economies versus highly productive economies (1988, p.17).

Now let us consider the Ethiopian process of modernization. Elizabeth in her dissertation tries to rationalize the Ethiopian modernization, particularly the visual modernization. Her dissertation concerned with the artistic imagination of the Ethiopians. Thematically she questions the nature of modernism in relation to painting. According to Elizabeth, modernism was initially associated with the European understanding and it came to non-western society through colonialism project, especially in African case the nature of modernism is intertwined with the idea of colonial contact. Certainly, the Ethiopian socio-political situation conditioned with the notion of colonialism and the politics of decolonization.

In his scholarly engagement on the nature of Ethiopian modernity, Professor Andreas Esthete understood the discourse of modernity in Ethiopia with different important times. According to him, the treatise of philosopher Zera Yacob, the movement of *Dekike Estifanos*, and the legacy of Gebre Hiwet can be considered as the discourse of Ethiopian modernity. He also associates the discourse of Ethiopian modernity with the two critical movements: the student movement and aesthetic movement of modernism. Andreas characterizes them as a midwife to Ethiopian modernity. Even according to him, “there was little interplay between the modernity of the Student Movement and the modernism of the new generation” (2012, p25), both of them plays in pioneering the Ethiopian modernity. The Ethiopian student movement, according to him, happened in order to realize social justice, equality, and to deconstruct the predecessor regime (2012, p.22). Consequently, he makes a comparison between them: the Ethiopian student movement issued the question justice and equality and it awakens the society: it is characterized by radicalization; the aesthetic movement cultivated abstraction.

The question then is what kind of Ethiopian perspective on projecting modernization has been upheld in late 19th and 20th centuries, the extension of European or a fusion of both? In this stance, my thesis stands to argue that the Ethiopian project of modernization is the extension of the Western. That is why The Ethiopian leaders and elites approached the idea of modernity in accordance with the Western understanding.

In answering the above question scholars try to sketch the nature of modernization in Ethiopia. And in an article entitled, “A Critical Dialogue Between Fifteenth and Twenty First Century Ethiopia”, Maimire Mennasemay makes a comparison between the process of modernization in Ethiopia and the Western world. What is more, the article tries to sketch the idea of

modernization with two Ethiopian critical periods; Fifteenth and Twenty First Century. According to him, modernization standards “the quest for emancipation – a life of freedom, equality, justice, and prosperity - has been germinating within Ethiopia since the Adwa victory of 1896” (2010, p.1).

According to Maimire, the nature of modernization associated with emancipation and his discussion relies on the movement of *Dekike Estifanos*. Accordingly, the movement issues emancipation and system reform. Maimire’s central argument is making a comparison between *Dekike Estifanos* and the twenty century Ethiopia in theorizing modernization. In his work Maimire presents a logical critique on the Ethiopian modernization. For him, the Ethiopian leaders failed to project the idea of modernization out of critical investigation. Accordingly, “all three regimes pursue modernization in Ethiopia - a process of "passive" modernization- and not the modernization of Ethiopia”. And he characterized as ‘passive modernization’ that originated from the Western pattern. What make his characterization interesting is (so as strengthen my thesis) Ethiopia’s unique socio-political history and the process of modernization need reconsideration in accordance with relevant socio-political contexts. What is more, he analogize the Ethiopian pattern of modernization as follow: “it is like a clock without a spring: it is driven by external capital and external knowledge” (2010, p.2).

More recent scholars also engaged in a further discussion of such issues. In his book Bahru (2002), basically scrutinized the legacy of late 19th and early twenty century elites. The work examines the socio-political engagement of the elites reflected in their literary works and inaugural speech. Regarding to this, Emperor Haile Selassie himself considered modernization as solid as the pioneers. The emperor highly inspired by colonial conquest and projected to build education center. Consequently, the idea of *Sillitane* has been equated with modernization or Westernization.

Kebede Mikael plays a great role in characterizing the pattern of civilization. Kebede essentially presented four books on the subject. Their philosophical foundations are critical of Ethiopia’s backwardness, and appreciate the rapid development of the West. According to him, Ethiopia has more chance to learn about the system of development from foreign mainly from Japan. In Kebede’s understanding, the idea of modernity emerged in Europe and it became worldwide through technological progress. According to him, Ethiopia primarily excluded from such useful

legacy because of geographical isolation from the European that first produced the idea of modernization.

For Kebede and other Japanizers like Hiruy W/Selassie who experience the Western education was much enthusiastic to describe similarities between Japan and Ethiopia. The intellectuals expression, according to Levine “noticed among those similarities was the fact that Ethiopia and Japan were the only non-European countries to defeat modern European imperialists (Ethiopia against Italy in 1896, Japan against Russia in 1905)” (2015, p.2).

At the point, there is a great difference between Ethiopia and Japan. In this regard, Ethiopians have not yet awakened from their stagnation; however Japanese were committed to study about modernization. Even if, the two countries share the same ethos, in frightening Western hegemony, contrary to Ethiopians the Japanese were curious to change their country with cooptation. For Yirga unlike their Ethiopian Japanizers, the Japanese glorified their traditions. As a result, in multidisciplinary approach in television program, magazine, the Japanese issued the uniqueness of Japanese culture (2013, p.163). They gave strength to their culture. More importantly, the Japanese elites present a cultural ideology named *Nihonjinron* which literally means “discussions of the Japanese” refer to the vast array of “literature which thinking elites have produced to define the uniqueness of Japanese culture, society and national character” (Yoshino, 1992, p. 2; quoted in Yirga, 2013, p. 163). Based on this in Japan “between 1945 and 1978 more than 700 books were published with *Nihonjinron* as the title, many of which saw multiple reprints” (Yirga, 2013, p.163).

Furthermore, in his manuscripts Kebede presented the socio-political issues. Indeed, Kebede is one of the great thinkers who paid relentless quest for societal development and change in Ethiopia. He provides us four Amharic books in order to clarify the Ethiopian inadequacies and the way out. These are ‘*Ityopyanna Mirabbawi Silettane*’ (1949), ‘*Japan Enndemmen Selletenech?*’ (1955), ‘*Ye Silettane Ayer*’ (1960), and ‘*Silletane Me'aalte Min'dinnech?*’ (1964). According to him civilization connotes with equality of men, religion, knowledge and race. In his ‘*Ye silettane Ayer*’ (the air of civilization) relates the idea of civilization with the abolition of slavery and what is more, the book narrates the advancement of technological rationality in the West and it argues the merits of modern education (Western type). In doing so, Kebede’s philosophical aspect appreciate the socio-political achievement of the Roman Empire. Kebede in

his book *Ityopyanna & Mirabbawi Silettane* recommends Ethiopia to promote an international socio-political establishment.

The historian Bahru analyzes the process of modernization in Ethiopia and his study characterized the process of modernization with the idea of unification and inter-country aggregation. His book '*A History of Modern Ethiopia*' discusses about the period not the essence of modernity. In fact, emperor Tewodros constantly struggled for unification. More or less, he tried to minimize the church's power and the local landed aristocracy. I think the project of unification leads Bahru to character the discourse of Ethiopian modernity with State formation.

The political history of the Ethiopian taught that the Ethiopians conscious of independence and Christianity for long time. This is why the Solomonic dynasty leads the country until the revolution took power. The Ethiopian essentially governed in accordance with *Kibra Negast* (Glory of the kingdom), a book that documented the Ethiopian situation and the Bible Solomon. The book narrates the nature of Ethiopian in front of God. The philosophy fundamentally lies on the legitimacy of religious laws. According to Paulos Milkias, Western kind education, secular mode of training begun during Tewodros II and he contends:

With modern education came a new power relationship. As Ethiopia's political history shows, starting from Emperor Tewodros, whose experiment in opening Ethiopia to "modernity" was cut short by his death at the battle of Makdala in 1868, Ethiopian monarchs had a strong desire to create a modernizing autocracy. The first ruler to embark fully on this course was Emperor Menelik, followed Emperor Haile Selassie. Both relied heavily on Western type schools to produce a new type of intelligentsia and establish a new system of government (2008, p.92).

This implies that the nature of the Ethiopia's modernity cultivate the Western path. From this point of view, the Ethiopians sought for modernization without considering the Ethiopian grounds. According to Paulos, the idea of modernity in Ethiopia qualifies overcoming socio-religious power. Meanwhile, the Education program planned to produce educated elites and according to Bahru Zewdie (1992), missionaries also play a great role in facilitating the programs. Consequently, the modern Ethiopia since the introduction of

modern education until now presented in its most parts a Western epistemological trend at the expense of indigenous thought systems.

The reign of Emperor Haile Selassie planned to transform the State; primarily it committed to accomplish Menelik's initiative that he had left behind and the establishment of a unified system. The regime has also another role to protect the sovereignty of Ethiopia from the harassment of colonialists and imperialists. The regime aimed to cope up with modernization and Levine in his '*Wax and Gold*' state that: "In retrospect, it would seem that the most profound aspect of Haile Selassie's accomplishment has been to dislodge the transcendental religious value of loyalty to the Emperor. His mission has been above all a secularizing one ... the autonomous significance of the church has been reduced "(1965, pp. 212-13).

Thus, the emperor is more initiative to expand the education system. In order to cope up with the West, as a result Ethiopian education begun to be dominantly secularized and the indigenous schooling system has begun to cease. Consequently, various Ethiopian novelists, journalists, and Western trained elites understood modernized in line with Western pattern. Hence, with this position, one may wonder about what early Amharic fictional works look like; predominantly, the novels issued thematically the disparate between the Ethiopian and Western civilization. Such works basis up on questioning and interrogating a new paradigm. Prominent scholar dedicated to rationalize not only the Ethiopian process of modernization but also interdisciplinary approach. For instance, the most linguistic scholar Yonas Admasu and Mengsitu Lemma contributed a scholarly work on Amharic literature that traces the nature of literature in accordance with Western's shelf.

Yonas (2002) has written an article entitled "In what were they writing about any way? Tradition and modernization in Amharic literature", and in this article Yonas presents the idea that theorizes the role of intellectuals in analyzing the nature of Ethiopian modernity. His attempt to write this article was to question the intellectual's understanding in relation to modernity. The article focuses on two generations of interpretation. Furthermore, in his article "From Traditional to Modern Literature in Ethiopia" (1973), Mengsitu describes the notion of modernization within Amharic literature. Consequently, Mengsitu's article narrates the chronological development of

Amharic writing and considers a shift in a language medium from Ge'ez to Amharic as a pattern of secularization and approach of modernization.

In fact, the Ethiopian emperor, Haile Selassie projected to lead Ethiopia to transformation. To do so, his curiosity lies on establishing Western mode of pedagogy. This is why; he planned to create a rational bureaucracy that needs educated elites. Although he intended to end the civilized political bureaucracy, the education philosophy itself emerged as problem. In the west political bureaucracy achieved through continuous rationalization, because as I have discussed earlier for thinkers like Weber the system can be established through rationalization and capitalist consciousness.

The late 19th century is indeed a different moment in the history of Ethiopians for numerous reasons. Firstly, it was this epoch that brought a new form of social structures for Ethiopia. Emperor Tewodros was very curious to unify the country and to lead it into material production. Regarding this, Mehammed Girma argues that the Ethiopian emperors from antiquity nurtured a good heart for firearms. Secondly, it was equally in this period that early Western educated Ethiopians like Afework G/Yesus, Gebre Hiwot, and Workineh Eshete, in their efforts to theorize modernization and its role on state formation, facilitate change, and on emancipation of society. Thirdly, at that time Ethiopia began to program education according to Western models. In this regard scholars like Maimire or Yirga question the Ethiopian modernization process.

According to Maimire or Messay modernization is not mimicking others or refuting tradition from process rather it entails inclusion of tradition. Concerning this, in the following sections I will try to discuss the arguments of these scholars and others. More importantly, for Messay modernity in Ethiopia play a huge role in alienating Ethiopia from its history. This indicates that the Ethiopian discourse of modernity fails to consider the country's antiquity. In this vein, Maimire tried to find emancipatory knowledge as a remedy to some of the extraordinary problems that Ethiopians are facing in social, economic, and political poverty.

2.2 Tradition- Modernity Dichotomy: The Ethiopian Perplexity

The leading example of modernity associated with the development of economic advancement, socio-political change, and empowering individuality. In one or another way the scenario of modernity manifests the socio-economic experience of European societies. The beginning of the

origins of modernity signifies the philosophical tradition of Europe and its periodization. The socio-political dimension of modernity favored the emergence of radical individuals. This dimension set the European path of political radicalization modernity apart from any purported alternative approach, i.e. non-European or else.

It is an energetic phenomenon established from various socio-political evolutions. Modernity as a phenomenon led the social structure to mechanical rationality than ever before. The very word 'modern' has been mainly associated with the beginning of a new epoch. If we take the works of enlightenment philosophers into account, the philosophical perspective of modernity presents the principle of subjectivity and it was Descartes's 'cogito' that established "I" as a preliminary approach. The discourse of modernity approaches Cartesian epistemic tradition with its demonstration of personal logic. The vibrant faith of modernity prioritizes a destructive or radicalized approach. Within this treatise modernity nurtured changes in styles of economy, the rationalization of society, and more it errand radicalization.

The modernists' thought developed in the enlightenment episode suggested that societies need to converge towards a new, gradually alienating their old-style values. This insight challenges not only the European but also it challenges the world-wide society. The project sets science rationality in order to characterize the establishment of any societies. The Western context of modernity was appropriate within the socio-cultural establishments of the European society and thus delaminate cultural difference among the European and the non-European societies. In doing so, in the setting of Western path, the cultural uniqueness of the European has become the center of change and development.

The modernist's project that developed in accordance of the Western path dichotomized the world as traditional and modern. The tradition-modernity debate surfaces the interdisciplinary discussion. The modernity line concerns the statement that the modern life world is the critical upshots of modernity's engagement. Thus, it detached itself from the traditional antiquities. The enlightenment thinkers committed to bring a vision of modernity as advancement and they give a new explanatory thought- to the growth of industrialization, abandoning traditional values and legitimizing individualism.

In history Ethiopian society especially since the late 19th century cultural conflicts have been noticeable. Those who are educated, especially those who have learned Western skills, began to question and challenge the Ethiopian social system. The scholars used Westernized solutions as a solution to the problems of Ethiopia. The nature of modernity has been superficially associated with fashioning urbanization, speaking foreign languages, and abandoning religious traditions.

The direct adoptions of theory regarding modernization to Ethiopia create a dilemma due the absence of a critical interpretation of modernization. The Ethiopian modernist elites argued for the separation of ‘Ethiopia modernization’ from the indigenous social system. And in order to contextualize the interplay between tradition and modernity, it is important to map the Ethiopian understanding of modernity.

Rimrod Raphaeli in his article called “Ethiopia: Emperor, Elites and Modernization”, discuss the issue of modernization in Ethiopian intellectual history. The paper tries to address the conflicts among the Ethiopian generations. The generation he classified as ‘old’ and ‘modernized’ can possibly be characterized as conservative and progressive respectively; for him the old elite refers, “conservatism in Ethiopia traditionalist sympathies and opposing modernization and national integration”. The modernized elites began to question and characterize the Ethiopian journey as backward style and they:

Are highly dissatisfied with the status quo. They compare the lot of the Ethiopian people with that of the people in other countries, and particularly with those in other Afro-Asian developing countries, and they find their own condition humiliating. They want the large part of the Ethiopian population to have the same chance they themselves had. Indeed they see it as their duty and obligation to help the people mobilize” (Raphaeli, 1967, p.3).

In relation to the Ethiopian modernization case, Fikirie also contributed an article entitled: “Alienation: A Result and impact of Western education on the intellectuals”, and in his study he presented a critique on the notion of elites and the idea of modernization. His investigation questioned the idea of modernization without considering indigenous social values; culture, language, history, and religion. In his interpretation of the idea of modernization and the Ethiopian experienced, he puts as follows:

Modernization and “civilization” were understood to be two words defining the same concept. Westerners were supposed to be highly civilized. Hence the acquisition of Western education to “civilize” and modernize Ethiopia after their model. This implied that Ethiopia was not civilized or was less civilized than the West (2007, p.1).

Fikirie, in his project of investigating, he argues that alienation of our tradition led us to the dilemma. For Fikirie, adaptation of the Western education favors the instinct of the Ethiopian social values. According to him, the historical development of Western tradition, science and technology became the culmination of modernization. For Fikirie “if one was to define civilization as a high achievement in science and technology, Ethiopia was not indeed civilized” (2007, p.3). The remedy is not shambling Ethiopian tradition by the philosophy of Western, instead questing a cross-cultural dialogue is a liable one. Than regarding the Western dominancy, it requires to provide a just association of culture within intercultural horizon.

The merit of his article lies in his discussion of the Ethiopian and Western traditions. He underlined the very problem of Western education on the Ethiopian mind. He characterized it as a process of ‘alienation’. Accordingly, the Ethiopian educated elites favor the Western mode of social life. For Fikirie:

The generation that received Western education before the invasion had been exposed more to Ethiopian traditional education, culture and way of life than the generation which followed. They had already been adults when they entered grade one having spent so many years in Kine and Zema bet or serving as shepherds, and even farmers contrary to the generation after the War which joined Western schools at relatively early ages without being too familiar with Ethiopian culture and way of life(2007, p.3).

The Western Ethiopia elites value the social establishment of the western than the Ethiopian. For instance, an individual prefers the philosophy of ‘Marx or Kant’ rather than the treatise of Zera-yacob and Weld Hiwet. Literally, the term tradition, myth, proverb are controversial, on the one hand, they considers as identity and on the other hand, they

depicted as a persistent manifestations that are inappropriate to transformation. In history of philosophy, the classical philosophy of Plato has interest in such traditions (Russell, 1946, p. 112). In this regard, Messay (2004) argues for the compatibility between tradition and modernity. In this regard, such societal elements are essential in giving birth to transformation. The very philosophy of Messay presents the role of myth in strengthening people. Following this, he recognizes the coexistence between “myth and rationality, of traditionality and modernity” (2004, p.208). In this respect, contemporary scholars concerned on hermeneutical understanding that approaches analyzing to activate life experience. Although prominent European philosophers such as Kant says: “reason could not help in indulging in mere mythology in characterizing the Africans” (Bekele, 1998, p.73). But the sanding point of Messay problematizes the demarcation between myth and rationality. For him, “a separation of this kind does not entail that Western thought is free from mystical leanings” (2004, 30).

Many programs in Ethiopia are trying to connect modernity. For instance, the curriculum nurtured modernity with transformation as Westernization. Indeed, to take the very nature of modernity, we need to engage the genealogy of it in Ethiopia, especially since the late 19th century, education was the route for the introduction of Western modernity. Contrary to indigenous wisdom, modern education aborted the merits of indigenous insight. This impels, when we think of the genealogy of the interplay between Ethiopia and modernity, we should do so in relation to Ethiopian history before modern education and after the introduction of modern education. The Ethiopian attitudes towards the tradition-modernity relation habituated by the Western attitude and we need to accept the timeline.

Messay (2013), supposed as the scholar who invented and defined in his article “The Ethiopian Conception of Time and Modernity”, presents that the Ethiopian history was abandoned since the introduction of Western modernity. That is “because of this perception, she has become the follower and copier of Western countries. She has become a follower not only in the fields of economics and technology but also in that of culture” (2013, p.12), as Messay rightly put it, the Ethiopian have their own time understanding. Furthermore, “to comprehend the Ethiopian conception of time correctly, we need to

accept a basic point of departure. That is, like any pre-modern view, Ethiopians observed time as a repetitive occurrence” (2013, p.12).

2.3 Modernization vs. *Silletane*: The Ethiopian Dilemma

Throughout human history, life has changed; if we go back and examine history, man is not indolent to win, to interpret nature. It is true that in every age and culture there is a slightly different civilization or system. Modernization theory was raised out of by western scholars and it maps a universal process of transition. The modernization developers characterize modernization with the idea of literacy, innovation, urbanization, and capitalist mode of production. These scholars recognized the concept of rationalization and individual alignment from religious and traditional outlooks and Weber’s like thinkers theorize modernization with the notion of rational bureaucracy.

The question of modernization in Ethiopia became the central concern during the late 19th and 20th century. In this stance, the intellectuals offered rich potential for analyzing cross-cultural judgments, most of the elites concerned with revising and deconstructing the Ethiopian traditions. Like many of his contemporaries, Gebre Hiwot recognizes the comparison between Ethiopian tradition and foreign development. For Mehamed Girma (2018) the Ethiopian intellectuals Gebre Hiwot and his colleagues, presents that Ethiopia might not achieve modernization through its enigmatic process. In the period, the elites concerned adaptation and the quest for modernization with European mind.

The Ethiopian ‘modernists’ consciously question modernization and equate the Ethiopian situation with other expansions. The two most prominent according to Messay (2006), Gebre Hiwot and Afework critique the Ethiopian backwardness and present a comparison among the Ethiopian and foreign consciousness. Accordingly, the Ethiopian backwardness caused by “internal conflicts and wars blocked socioeconomic progress and the development of knowledge by promoting warlike values and plunder as a noble way of life” (Messay, 2006, p.19). In doing so, as Gebre Hiwot stated, “whereas other peoples were progressing thanks to their knowledge and know-how, we [Ethiopians] remained so far behind because of our conflicts,” (quoted in Messay, 2006, p.19).

In the Western dimension modernization refers to the rationalization process. At this point, the Weberian approach favors the realm of rationalization in shaping the world. Central to Weber's thesis is the idea that the success of modernization in Europe depends on the makeover of the existing religions. The European societies develop the industrial capitalist in line with 'protestant ethic'. Thus, Weber's argument is dedicated to argue that the basis of his bureaucracy grew up in between religious evolution and the development of human consciousness. When we came to Ethiopia, we can notice the confusing understanding of modernization. At this point, as Maimire (2010), rightly theorizes it the Ethiopian modernization process fails to include self-aspirations or self-rationalization process.

Thus, the very notion of modernization refers to changes in production technological artifacts including social transitions from traditional to industrial societies. In contrast the idea of civilization or its Amharic *Sillitane* connotes not only material advancement but also it includes social, religious, and moral consciousness. For Fikirie:

The acquisition of Western education to "civilize" and modernize Ethiopia after their model. This implied that Ethiopia was not civilized or was less civilized than the West. If one was to define civilization as a high achievement in science and technology, Ethiopia was not indeed civilized. However, if civilization meant a high achievement in religious moral, ethics, and philosophy in general, music, culture, literature, arts, architecture, history, warfare and even politics, then Ethiopia was highly civilized. The concept of civilization was not what Ethiopian leaders overlooked was that Western science, technology and education brought with them an unexpected baggage (2007, p.3).

Tracing the effort of Ethiopian elites in characterizing the idea of modernization, as I mentioned in the above there is a perplexity between modernization and *Sillitane*. For Mehammed (2018), the scholar's analysis of modernization shows that the need to overcome religion and cultural dogmas in order to realize modernization. In this study Mehamed argues, "[f]rom Afework and Gebre Hiwot's analysis, we can deduce that the real hindrance for modernization lay within the existing political and religious paradigm" (p. 5). In contrast Messay questions such a modernization paradigm. In his study he gave a positive attitude for the relevance of tradition and he characterizes the idea of

“modernization as a process of reforming traditions”. Messay’s philosophy provides the merits of the *Kebrä Nagast* as a guarantee of “as a source of national ideology that mobilized Ethiopians to protect the independence of their country as a chosen nation of God” (Yirga, 2013, p.8).

Habtam Alemachew (2009 E.C, p.201) presents critique on the idea of *Sillitane* and modernization that are conceived in Ethiopia’s intellectual tradition. According to him, there is a great distinction between *Sillitane* and modernization. He associated *Sillitane* not with technological advancement rather with nonphysical prosperities: like language, religion, history, and *Fidel* (ፈደል). In his study, he problematizes the Ethiopian in understanding *Sillitane* and modernization. For instance, according to him, Kebede Mikael in his famous book ‘*Japan Endemin Selletenech*’ fails to approach rightly. Japan was not poor in *Sillitane* rather in technological progress. This is because why the Japanese begun to adopt Western modernization not *Sillitane*.

Conceptually fundamental Ethiopian thinkers begin portrayal of modernization by criticizing the Ethiopian social establishment. The elites like Kebede advise the Ethiopian to dedicate much of their time to secular education. What is more, in the 19th and 20th centuries, the Ethiopian elites who have exposure about the Western made a distinction between traditional and civilized systems. This distinction is continued in contemporary socio-political discourse too. Traditional system refers to communality, religious understanding, and in contrast the modern system associated with the idea of radicalization that emerged with the French revolution.

In Ethiopia, confusion in the understanding of modernization begins with its interpretation. The elites characterized it as their Western teachers have said. That is why many scholars identify modernization as Westernization. According to Bahru (2005), the Ethiopian elites contextualized the idea of development in the vein of Westernization. An Italian educated elites Afework Gebre Yesus also try to rationalize the Ethiopian ‘backwardness’. In many ways, Afework shows a positive understanding of the Ethiopian past. Even so, he argues that the Ethiopian monarch failed to provide considerable reform to transform the country; “he put his faith in the civilizing mission of colonizers and pushed for forging a strong political alliance with Italy, which he regarded as modern and thus highly advanced”(Mehamed, 2018, p.3).

What is more, Afeework advanced his '*Tabbya*' for lingual development in Ethiopia. The genre of the novel rests on cultural conflicts between Christianity and non-Christianity. In one or another way the plot tries to shed light on the then socio-political situation. According to Mesasy, Afeework's novel's has similarity with the one Ethiopian manuscript, *Kibra Negast*- a book essentially narrates the political history of Ethiopia and it issues the Ethiopian brilliance. The scripture is the source of sociological tradition or to use Messay's word "[i]t 'can be considered as the founding myth of the merger of church and state'" (quoted in Solomon Dejene, 2008).

The history of imperial Ethiopia is intertwined with events of the state's religious understandings. The modern education history of Ethiopia exposes a deep survival between indigenous and Western conception. Here, traditional conceptions are considered as means of acceptability, values related to what are conceived as self-understanding and self-ability, originating from the religious dogmas. It nurtured the Christian ethos and standards that could help to deal with the church's legitimacy. According to the elites, in Ethiopia despite a long history of epistemological trend, the emperor failed to update or to appropriate it with the European inclination.

The fundamental philosophical encounter of this movement is to reconstruct and fashion modernization through losing. At this juncture, the Ethiopian leaders and modernist elites wanted to situate Western skill to defend Ethiopia's independence. Relating this, Teshome Wagaw (1990), provides a comprehensive study on the history of education in Ethiopia. According to him, even Ethiopia victory over the colonial mission at Adwa in 1896, the Ethiopian leaders seek to copy Western model of education. That is because, they were very curious to meet the European skill. The problem lies in poor perception of educational or social modernization. The proposal which was offered by the elites had its own drawbacks; it nurtured adoption of Western knowledge, not ever equated. In order to cope with the Western the Ethiopian began to popularize modernization with material expansions. Meanwhile, the proposal failed to move the whole public sphere.

Some of the Ethiopian elites equate the idea of European modernization as Sillitane/ civilization. In this regard, Fikirie used the terms "Modernization and "civilization" were understood to be two words defining the same concept". In the west the concept of modernization refers technological and scientific development.

2.4 The Success and Failure of Modernity in Ethiopia

In an article entitled “The roots and fallouts of Haile Selassie’s educational policy”, Messay presents critiques on the notions of modernity and modernization that are theorized in Haile Selassie’s educational policy. Messay’s standing point questions the idea of modernity adopted by the emperor. The article traces the shortcomings of the policy and chiefly he concerned the idea of modernity and the invention of imperialism. In relation to the Haile Selassie’s educational journey scholars have divergent understandings. The cultural revivalism as I mentioned in the above is characterized it as ‘mental colonization’. The emperor declares Western mode of pedagogy to facilitate his political development. According to Messay, “Haile Selassie was all the more willing to push for Westernization as the marginalization of Ethiopia’s traditional values and institutions was the *sine qua non* for the establishment of his autocratic rule”(Messay, 2006, p.3).

In fact, there is no consensus at describing the socio-political nature of contemporary Ethiopia. The Ethiopian political history, state formation and state-society relations are subjected to controversy. For Richard Greenfield “Ethiopia’s history has been renowned for 3000 years, but during that long period the implements of farmer, the business of the small trader, and all other spheres of life have not seen changes. There has been no progress whatsoever” (1965, p.2). But in contrast the Ethiopian historian Teshale Tibebu considered the Ethiopian history as strange civilization in Africa: accordingly, “it [is] one of the very few places that managed to sustain unbroken civilization free of foreign corruption” (1996, p. 414).

A PhD thesis entitled “From Kingdom to Elitdom: Tradition and the Question of Relevant Education in Ethiopia” by Yirga Gelaw (2013) underlined the idea of education in Ethiopia in relation to indigenous schooling and western mode of pedagogy. The study analyzed the relevancy of tradition for socio-political cohesion and it questions and problematizes the Eurocentric view that contemplates traditions as useless. The dissertation provides how the Ethiopian leaders develop Western kind of consciousness in order to transform the country. Undeniably, the Ethiopian imitate Western education and political system, consequently, the Ethiopian indigenous educational pedagogy immediately replaced by Western models (see Teshome, 1990; Yirga, 2013).

Ethiopian modernization process is not successful. Both the political and the economic transformation failed to achieve its objective. To sum, in examining the question modernization in Ethiopia intertwined with the western systems. The logic of the emperors rests on reformation of local system of knowledge. According to (Birhanu and Demeke, 1995; Teshome, 1979), Emperor Menelik II strongly recognized the merits of modern (Western type) education in order to build strong state and he launched the first school at his palace that need to produce mainly language trained generations.

Since the curriculum lacks intercultural dialogue, it led the country to socio-political backwardness. To understand Ethiopia's shortcomings, it is important to note the initial failure of the curriculum. It is true that the primary goal of education intertwined with the idea of change and progress or as Messay argues "educational policy in most countries has been designed as the best and unique method to achieve rapid modernization" (2006, p. 4). This is why; the Ethiopian emperors' especially Haile Selassie, were certified with the agreement of Western education.

Modernization is too complex and it is the result of various historical and cultural examinations. In the western world, the logic of modernization passed through radical socio-political riots. Roughly, there are continuous regime changes; from autocratic regime to liberal democracy, from religious outlooks to scientific outlooks.

Messay's essential argument is concerned on the Ethiopian revolution and he intertwined the Ethiopian political and societal situation with the revolution. Thus, the revolution according to Messay embedded from the consciousness of Western trained elites. Indeed, "it is not possible to understand Ethiopia's continuous political crises and economic stagnation since the Revolution of 1974 without bringing into play the decisive role of its Western educated elite" (2006,p. 5). The pedagogy of Haile Selassie according to Yirga led the country to 'native colonialism' (2017) and according Messay led the country to 'cultural dislocation' (2008). Both Yirga and Messay agree on the negative outcomes of Western mode of educational policy. In his book entitled '*Native Colonialism: Education and the Economy of Violence against Traditions in Ethiopia*', Yirga critiques the notions of modern education in Ethiopia. *Native colonialism* states that, even if the Ethiopian were not subjected to the rule of colonialism, but in the 20th century develops colonial consciousness in the pedagogy programs and he argues modern education in Ethiopia ground on epistemological violence.

As the title of underlines, the central theme of this book is concerned with interplay between indigenous epistemology and Western education. Accordingly, he exposes the history of indigenous schooling in Ethiopia and its critics with various conceptions. Yirga tries to find educational programs with societal strains and achievement and he spots challenges of Indigenous knowledge. Hence, he wants to shed light and provide justification to the relevance of indigenous schooling. To do so, as he stated in the introduction of the book, he charges a great deal to provide philosophical, historical, and sociological insight to the merits of indigenous curricula. Yirga problematizes Haile Selassie's educational policy and he challenges it. According to him,

Western knowledge serves as a dominant epistemic location for Ethiopian elites to present their ideas as universal, neutral and objective truths, simultaneously ignoring the fact that western knowledge is it-self local (not universal) and promoting Western epistemology as the only basis of knowledge (2017, p.13).

In colonized history the interplay between education and modernization, tradition and modernity are issued in accordance with the Eurocentric insight. The Ethiopia history is different as Asres (1951) Messay (2006); Yirga (2013), but the Western trained elites traded the idea of modernization with Westernization. The earlier Ethiopian scholars characterizing the process of modernization fail to consider the Ethiopian societal worries and seeing indigenous remedies and have nurtured a concept of their own country similar to 'oriental' understanding. In contrast scholars like Yirga recommend, "People should not be disconnected from their traditional experiences because their experiences embody the most important resources for their education. Only in this way, education becomes an internally driven and dynamic cultural experience" (2017, p. 93).

The notion of modernization has always been inclined towards the analysis of socio-political transition. The prominent theories of Weber, Durkheim, and Habermas focus on the transformation of society from a traditional system to modernized capitalist or industrial mode of establishments. The thinking of modernization links with the idea of systems change. Accordingly, Weber's understanding of modernization is associated with rationalization and bureaucratization. The Ethiopian emperor, Haile Selassie projected modern education that aimed to simplify his bureaucracy. In one his inaugural speech said:

Ethiopia is making great strides in her effort to reach the stages of modernity that the West has achieved. In order for this project to succeed, she needs the relentless support of educational institutions and teachers like you which are key mechanism towards the success of modernity. You as leaders of this endeavor should feel very much responsible to give the best you can to the improvement and dissemination of education and the glory of Ethiopia (Haile Selassie as cited in Fere Kenafir, 1963, p.311).

Inappropriately, the program presented the ideology of the European and legitimized the trend of Western education. The elites force to European trend and rationalize it “Africa lags behind the West in the cultivation of rational inquiry”, the role of intellectuals should be to change the primitive, irrational basis of knowledge in Africa (Wiredu, 1980, p. 43). According to Basvik (1985) argued that the education program was a “foreign transplant”. For Bahru (2014) her study concerned on the development of radical consciousness of Haile Selassie’s student that led the country to revolution, consequently, her study reveals that the university was a place of political training.

Coming back to Messay’s rational investigation on how Haile Selassie’s project of modernity failed he argues that: “besides the cultural drawbacks of colonization and neocolonialism, the fact that Ethiopians became psychologically decentralized, as in any colonized country, even though they were not submitted to colonization, confirms the universally Taking Bahru Zewdie’s *‘The Quest for Socialist Utopia: The Ethiopian Student Movement, C. 1960-1974’*, that narrates the Ethiopian student movement with cross-examination studies; essentially the book covers the positive legacy of the movement. The very notion of the book considers the issues like self-determination, and explores the socio-political upshots. Bahru in this treatise problematizes Messay’s project reconsidering traditional knowledge favor to the orthodox school system, and according to him, it is exclusively not representative of knowledge out Christianity. Though, the new work on Ethiopian thought modernization stances in manifest contrast to the social values and earlier Ethiopian birthrights. It accuses the past antiquity as a rigid achievement. The elites on the one hand focused on the superficial achievement of change without balancing traditions.

In an article called, “Ethnicization of Ethiopian politics since the fall of Haile Selassie”, Messay provides critical interpretations on the process of radicalization in Ethiopia since the 1960s.

Attempts have been made to understand the issue stated in the radicalization process including checking the upshots. The article describes that the revolution is influenced by an extension Marxist formulas. According to him, the organized ideology issued in accordance with the Eurocentric structure, and consequently, it radicalized the Ethiopian past. Western educated according to Yirga:

Unlike the traditional scholars, their personal lifestyle and character became irrelevant to the traditional precepts of the people. They could accumulate the privilege of being a learned person, in terms of social position and material reward, without the responsibility to distribute it according to the traditional expectations of the people (2013, p.177).

In the same vein, Akililu Habte (2010) also describing the spirit of the student movement as follows:

The students thought they knew everything. They thought they knew... how to run a government, how to teach at a university, how to be a president of a university, a minister of education, an administrator. They knew it all. The consequence was disaster.

The rise of radical consciousness leads the country to socio-political fragmentations. That is why the event in Ethiopia took about socio-political change through the philosophy of the West. According to Messay (2006, 2008) the introduction of Western kind of knowledge to Ethiopia with the cultural dislocation and it produces ethno-nationalist prophets.

For Bahru “Marxism-Leninism became a dogma that could interpret the Ethiopian reality, not a theory that could be deployed intelligently to analyze it” (2010, p.271). Thus, the driving force behind the proposal was the question of emancipation, which modernity encouraged. However, in the name of emancipation, the Ethiopian adopt the philosophy of rejecting the past within Marxism recipes. As a result, it announced a beginning of a new chapter. It excluded the values of history and Ethiopian indigenous tradition from the program.

Certainly, Ethiopia, a country according to Messay, “with a long history of survival and independence, defined by a form of pristine Christianity colored with African traits, remains an enigma” (Messay, 1999, quoted in Mehamed, 2008), the *Kebrā Negast* presents the Ethiopian brilliant past. According to him, the *Kebrā Negast* is ‘a national epic’ that established the synthetic coordination between ‘church’ and ‘state’ and considered as the best guarantee for “Ethiopia’s survival” in an antagonism environment (2006, p.7).

Indeed, the significance of such Ethiopian books was reduced to inexpensive, instead their socio-political themes considered as a fairytale. The secular education for Elizabeth “was given much emphasis after Emperor Haile Selassie’s (1892-1975) return from exile in 1941” and she argues “one cannot therefore talk about the inception of higher education in Ethiopia without the critical engagement of its Western genealogy”(2010, p.59). If this is so, the program failed to consider the indigenous schooling. In this stance one scholar says “modern Ethiopian scholars have hardly made any attempt to interpret the significance of the *Kebrā Negast*. The significance of the book has been reduced to the mythical ideology of divine rule, and the content has hardly been regarded as anything more than a legend (Yirga, 2013, p. 63).

What the Ethiopian church’s education program disciplined within the sense of Ethiopian history and the teaching process, to use Sylvia Pankhurst’s words “rich in content, revealing a deep knowledge of the Bible, of Ethiopian history, and of the stories and legends which have gathered during the centuries around the great personalities and events of religious and national tradition” (Pankhurst, 1955, p. 245: Quoted in Messay, 2006, p. 7). The *Kebrā Negast* was according to Levine (1974) “the foundation of the nation of Ethiopia with particular significance and destiny” and the means of “defending the worth of the national identity so established” (1974, p.107). He says:

Its appeal transcends the claims of any parochial loyalties in Ethiopia. It glorifies no tribe, no religion, no linguistic group, but the Ethiopian nation under her monarch. It declares this nation superior to all others...provides a mandate for the Ethiopian kingdom to expand its dominion in the name of the Lord of Hosts (Levine, 1974, p. 107).

From the inception, scholars question the emergence of modern education in Ethiopia. For instance, Eguale in his '*Yekeftegna Temehert Zeybe*' debunks the default of modern education. Recently, as I mention in the above, Messay and other prominent scholars problematize the curricula. The scholars commonly noticed that the Ethiopian had their own history of curricula, but the modern pedagogy grounds on its exclusion. Hence, the modern curricula debarred indigenous schooling and "Emperor Haile Selassie had eroded the traditional owner of the church, and the church intelligentsia, the *debteras*, who were not required to help run or legitimize a modern system of governance" (Paulos, 2008, p.92). The transfer of tradition of Ethiopia to the Western type lifestyle is considered as the path of modernization. However, it produced the inception of concussion and consequently, the image of the socio-political establishments characterized by contradictions.

Let us consider the positive ends of modernity in Ethiopia. We are now on the road of globalization, that characterized by forwarding to one world system. In the manner, globalization entails technological world that the Western dimension of modernity regarded it. The early Ethiopian elites forward the 'idea of transformation'. The elites like Gebre Hiwot certainly are busy in making comparisons and contrast among Ethiopian and Western development. Most of their writings exposed to analyze the path of transformation and the peak of Western advancement. In this regard, Emperor Haile Selassie shows socio-political reforms and he favors forward to political modernization. Elizabeth in her dissertation claims that the Ethiopian history of modernization also intertwined with European colonialism. At this point, Yirga's *Native colonialism* is probably the best book on the issue. The book tries to present the shortcomings of the Ethiopian education system. According to him the beginning of modern education leads the Ethiopian to self-colonialism. He contends:

The period of Emperor Haile Selassie between 1960s and 1970s is a pivotal time in the rise of native colonialism not just due to the replacement of Haile Selassie by military leaders in 1974 but more importantly due to the high level of epistemic and physical violence that produced the dominance of western epistemology in the country (2017, p.12).

Maimire in his interpretation of the Ethiopian modernization process characterized the process as a failed project. That is why he presents a valid assertion in relation to the Ethiopian pedagogy system. To use his words: “the failure of modernization in Ethiopia is also the failure of knowledge: of Ethiopia and of modernization. Our failed understanding of the subjective and objective conditions constitute of Ethiopian issues and of modernization is thus an inherent component of the present political, economic and social crises”(p.3). In his study, Maimire Ethiopian borrowed the idea of modernization with superficial understanding. Politically, both the emperor's political motive and Derg's socialism or the ethnic federalism failed to modernize the country. That is why, the “regimes pursue modernization in Ethiopia, and not the modernization of Ethiopia” (2011, pp.1-2). More importantly, Maimire tries to show the relevance of *Dekike Estifanos* in realizing Ethiopian modernization. Even the primary concern of the movement was religious reformation and importantly “gestate new ideas about power, law, institutions, and knowledge” (Maimire, 2011, p. 6). In order to overcome serious socio-political fragment, Ethiopian needs to question from within Ethiopian context.

To overcome these crises and make possible the modernization (Ethiopia, knowledge that is rooted in and nourished with the aspirations and possibilities for emancipation that inhere in Ethiopia's past, present, and future is indispensable. Such knowledge will put Ethiopian springs, as it were, into the clock of Ethiopian modernization. The modernization (Ethiopia, though possible, is yet to happen (2010, p.3).

Maimire questioned the exclusion of tradition from the authority. The Ethiopian serious socio-political pitfalls rooted in failure of knowledge. At this point, Maimire's provides critical and historical analysis of Ethiopian realities as a method so as to notice the roots and extent of the delusion. Consequently, the origins of the misunderstanding have been clearly discussed, he clearly argue that deconstruction of the delusion and the reconsidering of the idea of modernization in Ethiopia. Certainly, this may possible with appropriating indigenous rationality. Hence, “the exclusion of these surplus meanings and effect of -the exclusion of Ethiopian cultures from the process of knowledge” (Maimire, 2008, p.27). More importantly, Maimire suggested that “Ethiopian intellectuals are to play a constructive role in the creation of a democratic, prosperous, and just society, they need

to "think in front" and not "on behalf" of the oppressed and exploited" (2008, p.27). For Maimire, "Ethiopia's life-conditions are not waiting for an imported responses; rather, the signs of possible solutions incubate in the life-conditions themselves as their surplus meanings or surplus history" (2008, p.27).

Modernization implies a particular kind of change in at least one of the above factors, bringing about corresponding changes in the other categories. A social system has an internal logic in that its various parts bear a necessary relationship to one another. Thus, a society imbued with ancestor-spirit, and in which authoritative decisions are made by witch doctors, is not capable of sustaining a massive industrial economy.

The Ethiopian modernization requires political willingness. As we can mention Emperor Haile Selassie's Ethiopia appropriate modernization as Westernization. And during the military regime Ethiopia experienced Marxists principles and a million were subjected to a philosophy of socio-political emancipation. The country faced a bad story 'red terror'. In the time of EPRDF, we adopted the idea of ethnic federalism and the regime considered as the response to Ethiopia's socio-political situation; the regime projected the notion of ethnicity and eroded the Ethiopian past. Surprisingly, there are still those who stand by Marxism to understand Ethiopia's current problem. And the Ethiopian modernization requires political initiatives. That is because "modernization requires the bridging of political communications from several quarters and the distribution policy decisions through modern institutions; it also requires the transferor of ultimate loyalty from the monarch to the nation-state" (Paulos, 2008, p.95).

In general, each standpoint emphasizes how Ethiopian theorizes the idea of modernization. I argue that the Ethiopian modernization is an extension of the Western and it developed with the distancing of our social value and social strains. Specially, since the late 19th century the Ethiopian experiment many Western ideologies to cope the global world. Therefore, in the next section I will discuss the emergence of modernity in the 20th century Ethiopia and its critics.

Chapter Three

The Emergence of Western Modernity in the 20th Century Ethiopia

The quest for socio-political change in Africa has been significantly influenced either by the adoption, refusal, or pursuit for a synthesis with Western artifacts rationality. Since the time of the Africanism movement, the leading Africanists have questioned to make available concepts and theories that could help them to clear a new dogma for Africans. This condition has been reflected in the works of Senghor. The notion of Negritude that Senghor articulated was intended to awaken the black consciousness. In his works, Senghor has addressed the question of Africanity. For Senghor, the very notion of Negritude is not concerned about obscure rationality rather it primarily intends to glorify the dignity of African humanity. Accordingly, “negritude, by its ontology (that is, its philosophy of begin), its moral law and its aesthetic, is a response to the modern humanism that European philosophers and scientists have been preparing since the end of the nineteenth century “(Senghor, 1970, p.184). In this regard, Messay (2013) argued that the Negritude consciousness was able to challenge the misconceptions of the Europeans and show the deep history of African civilization. In the same vein, the Ethiopian historian puts it “in Africa Senghor emerged as the eloquent spokesman of the movement. In addition, the reaffirmation of black dignity and black values, which Senghor strove to convey though his preferred medium poetry, came to be known as negritude” (Bahru, 2002, p.12). The central notion of the movement was:

For the Black people to achieve a place in the world – a place the Black race had been denied by the European colonists. On this note, the movement emphasized the fact that the people of Africa had a worthy culture and history comparable as equal to other cultures such as those of Europe (Mawere and Mubaya, 2016, p. 87).

The development of literary works played a critical role in raising awareness of the movement. This mainly trudged by Aime Cesaire and his colleagues, questioning beyond the ethnocentrism (Masolo, 1994). For Mawere and Mubaya (2016), Csaire’s understanding enables black people to accept their identity, history and culture. What is

more, the literary movement ultimately aimed to praise the history, culture, and identity of the Negroes in order to challenge racial discrimination. And to quote Irele:

The literature of Negritude is dominated by the collective consciousness of the black writer as a member of a minority group which is subordinated to another and more powerful group within the total political and social order. The literary preoccupations of the movement revolve around this central problem, the Negro predicament of having been forced by historical circumstances into a state of dependence upon the West, considered the master society and the dominating culture. The literary themes Negritude of can be seen as a counter-movement away from this state: they constitute a symbolic progression from subordination to independence, from alienation, through revolt, to self-affirmation (Irele, 2003, p. 38).

This kind of intellectual movement shows us that history and culture are essential for the establishment of a successful system. That is why African scholars have so strongly challenged the Western views. When we came to Ethiopia, we can experience the clash between indigenous consciousness and Western systems of values in a peasant society projecting the process of modernization. More specifically, I will try to discuss the interplay between the notion of modernization and traditional revivalists in the 20th century. The idea of modernization in this case connotes industrialization, urbanization, abandonment of religious dogmas and copes with techno-science rationality. In Ethiopian case, since the late 19th century Ethiopia encountered with radical changes and challenges. For Sara “the beginning of the twentieth century was marked by profound changes in the configuration of Ethiopia as a polity. In the new international order, Solomonic emperors came to rule a precisely-defined and contractually-demarcated territory, in accordance with newly minted international legal concepts” (2017, p.429). For Yirga “[f]or Ethiopia, there was a clear contradiction between the sources of military power and national ideology. Ethiopians were interested in acquiring the arms of Europe in order to defend themselves against it” (2013, p.156). Internally change seeker generations came to stage and externally there was fear of invaders. Under a new socio-political regime, with a new vision for the country, Ethiopia has attempted to show a new socio-political system. For instance, in an intellectual dialogue in *Berhanena Selam* magazine, the educated elites issued the notion of

modernization and traditionalism. The notion of modernization has been a center concern of the elites.

The elites discuss the socio-political and economic realisms of Ethiopia along the standard of Western societies. Ethiopian peculiar realities had been questioned in the activism for the imitation of Western practices in the technological spheres. This elucidates the grand failure of Ethiopia, new socio-political tradition ascending from transforming of farming, expansion Western education are not in line with local consciousness.

The Ethiopian regimes show more curiosity to cope with Western mode of modernization. For instance the Ethiopian regimes Zedingle and Suseneyos were curious in the socio-political structures of the Europeans (Mehamed, 2018). Politically, the Ethiopian faced internal division during the period of zemene mesafint; that Ethiopia “a country accustomed to fraction (Marcus 1994, p. 57). In an effort to unite the Ethiopian nation in rejoining the Zemene Mesafint (era of prince) challenge, emperor Tewodros II began revolutionary programs. The emperor exercised progressive and unique ideology; he had long been regarded as an icon of unification in Ethiopian culture and history. For Bahru Zewdie (1991) the most important feature of Tewodros’s period was the struggle for unification and for equivalence with the Western world. He appropriately put the transforming passion of the emperor thus: “the man who represented the first effective response to both the internal and external challenge- to the squabbling princes as well as to the ‘Turk’ –was Kasa Haylu, who, on his coronation in 1855 as emperor Tewodros II, inaugurated the modern history of Ethiopia (Bahru, 1991, p.27). In fact, the history of Tewodros brings a new insight in Ethiopian history. The time was a new chapter that Ethiopia starts towards industrial evolution. The purpose of Tewodros’s rising was the end of Zemene Mesafint. Historians character him with ambiguous personality as war hero, as a brutal leader, as beginner of state formation, as a reformer. At the time Tewodros was a radical man and he shows humbleness for the Ethiopian *Kebra Negast*.

Ethiopia promoted in a manner which involved the characteristics of the dual socio-political structures, which ruled by traditional and modern segments. The traditional systems refer to agrarian socio-economic structures, and it applied to characterize the Ethiopian indigenous customizations. In this regard many authors in the Eurocentric circle explain Ethiopian enigmatic processes in terms of backward and lag. For instance, the modernist’s elites like Gebre Hiwot

and his contemporaries “had the concern that Ethiopia might not find the resources for modernization within itself” (Mehammed, 2018, p.3). This kind of critique argued that the Ethiopian leader failed to need encourage Western like- change, because they are so zealous to old Ethiopian old systems.

The reformist’s intellectual, according to Bahru Zewdie considered the idea of modernity and modernization as Westernization. What is more, the idea of modernity was associated with the phenomena of economic transformation. Bahru contends:

There are probably few concepts as ambiguous and elusive as that of modernization...indeed, all countries have their modern period of history, that of Western Europe at one end of the spectrum posing back to the sixteenth century while in some countries of Africa and Asia the onset of the period is deferred until the twentieth. A fundamental problem of the concept has been its ethnocentric bias that is its close association with the Western experience. A result of this association has been that modernization has all too often been synonymous with westernization. Thus, some of the experiences of the west, such as industrialization and the growth of democratic institutions have come to serve, consciously or unconsciously, as the yardsticks for the modernization of a society. Such an identification of the concept with the western experience is not difficult to understand, given the fact that it has been western social scientists, and particularly American social scientists who have popularized it. This is not to say however that attempts have not been made to come up with more universal definitions of the concept (2005, p.1).

In this analysis, Bahru’s understanding thought us to consider modernization with the idea of technological change, political transformation. His book presents how the Ethiopian reformists nursed it with Westernization. According to Elizabeth (2010) Bahru’s study lacks critical engagement of ‘modernity’ and modernization’. For her, Bahru “talked about Ethiopian modernization without tackling the concept of modernity as a philosophical construct of Occidental rationalism” (2010, p. 8). What is more, she links the genealogy of modernity in Ethiopia with the construction of otherness. Bahru, in his historical study continued to criticize the influence of Western paradigm on the Ethiopian intellectual history (2002, p.3). However, his character also couldn’t escape from the Western notion of modernity. For Elizabeth Bahru “fails

to come up with a coherent framework that situates Ethiopia and Ethiopian intellectuals” (2010, p.21), he criticized the Ethiopian historiography to use the term without defining. Elizabeth in her criticism of Bahru argues that he consider modernity a concept which have universal definition. Concerning this Elizabeth puts:

Any meaningful discussion of modernity, modernism, and modernization in Ethiopia has yet to take place among Ethiopian intellectuals. Scholars have attempted to talk about the projects of Ethiopian modernity in a narrow range of meaning that neglects to construct the processes of modernity within the discursive space of its multiplicity and cultural specificity (2010, p.1).

In Ethiopian history, Tewodros “seen as the opener of the modern era” (Crummey, 1969, p. 469), that is because he is ambitious to transform Ethiopian socio-political traditions along modern standards. For Crummey “Tewodros had some concept of modernization” and he argues more:

He had little, if any, idea of the social consequences of Ethiopia's emulating Europe. Perhaps of even greater importance is that he lacked any social or institutional base upon which to build: national unity eluded him; there was no historic bureaucracy; no national administration had survived the division of the country; urbanization was practically unknown (except, perhaps, in a most rudimentary form); there did not even exist a well-developed class of feudal nobility; and finally, foreign assistance was not forthcoming on a scale at all relevant to the country's needs (1965, p. 465).

The emperors, according to Merera (2008) begun to interrogate the Western education and technology in order to ‘facilitate the nation building process’ in the 20th century. Merera argues that “[a]n appetite for European technology had begun earlier with Tewodros, but it was Menelik who was able to materialize it in a more feasible and tangible manner. The railway, bank, modern education, roads and bridges, international trade, a semblance of modern ministerial system” (2008, p. 4).

The history of Ethiopian society tells us that the Ethiopian political version and similar dealings were closely linked to the religious dogmas. The church was important in shaping the politics and social cohesion. In this regard, the two prominent Ethiopian historians Tadesse Tamrat and Merid Wolde Aregay tried to ponder the socio-political history of Ethiopian. Tadesse in his

masterpiece ‘*Church and State in Ethiopia, 1270-1527*’ (2017) presents an account of the socio-political structures, made by kings to churches. Taddese’s study shows the historical record and narrates the socio-religion struggle of the Ethiopians. The study rightly presents the socio order of the Ethiopians and the legitimacy of divine intervention. Asafa Jalata also states the socio-political conditions of the Ethiopians “social order, which is good, can be created and maintained only through hierarchical, legitimate control, a control that ultimately must be authorized by God” (1993, p. 40).

Meanwhile, Ethiopia is one of the record independent countries in Africa, with socio-political traditions. The country was governed for centuries by Christianity systems (see Bahru, 1991; Mehamed, 2018). According to Mehammed “the rulers, for the most part, claimed patrilineal descent from the biblical King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba” (2018, p. 1). The Ethiopian Orthodox Church plays a crucial role in legitimizing the rulers. In this regard, the Ethiopian provides the *Kebra Negast* and *fetha Negast* in order to legitimize the socio-political scenarios. The *Kebra Negast* (glory of kings) narrates the story of Queen Sheba, King Solomon, and their offspring Menelik I. The book shows the genealogy of the socio-political and religion manner of the Ethiopians. In short, “the effect of the *Kebra Negast* is to make the Ethiopian emperor both physical descendant and spiritual successor to the kings of Israel. The genealogical tie is argued by the legendary union of the Queen of Sheba and King Solomon, whose offspring, Menelik I, is held to have fathered the line of royalty which allegedly ruled at Axum and was restored in the thirteenth century” (Levine 1965, p. 151). As Levine states (1965,p.269), “the *Kebra Negast*, the Ethiopian national epic, has served chiefly to legitimate the royal line that came to power in the thirteenth century and to cement once and for all the union of monarchy and the church” (1965,p.269).

Even so, in the twenty century, radical Ethiopian individuals began to expel the social and religion interaction. The Ethiopian regimes attempt to bring transformation from religious models to the secular forms. Ethiopian has adopted the Western education system as a solution to overcome poverty and other social strains. This forced emperor Menelik to open school. According to Teshome, Ethiopian leaders chose the Western mode of education in order to alleviate backwardness and established a school “after the European model, independent of traditional education institutions” (1990, p. 69). The Ethiopian regimes of the twentieth century,

especially Emperor Haile Selassie I attempted to copy a Western mode of successes. He attempted to create rational secular socio-political conditions on the basis of Western kind of epistemology. According to Kiflu Tadesse the Ethiopian leaders:

Traveled along the path of Europeanization. However, Emperor Haile Selassie was truly the father of Europeanization; schools, factories, roads, hospitals, and other facilities were built. A modern army came into being. As part of the modernization process, the Ge'ez script would have been abandoned (2016, p. 198).

For Habtamu Alebachew (2009, E.C, 2017, G.C) the Ethiopian nature of modernity was associated with the process of state making. In his book ታላቁ ተቃራኒ⁴ stated that, the Ethiopian considered the secular education as hallmark of state making and centralization process (p.198). Consequently, he stated that the Ethiopian advocates the Western epistemology in order to validate constitution and other modernity canons. However, there is a clear drop, more or less Ethiopian governments or elites since the time, tries to character the Ethiopian modernization without religious outlooks.

In fact, Emperor Haile Selassie appropriated progressive processes to modernize Ethiopia. According to Bahru, the emperor try to seized constitution, expansion of education, centralized government in order to transform the country (2002, pp. 137-148). Especially the constitution intended to accomplish centralization and modernization (Clapham, 1969, p.35). It was Teklehawariyat Teklemariam who wrote the 1931 constitution of Ethiopian. He tried to appropriate various experiences from abroad; from European and Asian countries. The merit of the constitution relies on centralizing the country; “[t]he most important historical goal that the 1931 Constitution meant to achieve was to break down the powers of the regional lords, who gradually had become strong, so as to bring them under the powers of the centralized state machinery”(Jembere, 1998, p.66). Even if, the constitution fails to censor the emperors power it shows the emperor’s “drive to reform and modernize Ethiopia” (Alem Ante Gebre Selassie (1992, p.206), still the structure of the constitution regards ‘the contact between the emperor and the people’.

⁴The title of the book can be translated as ‘The Great Contradiction’ and narrates the socio-political tension of the Ethiopians. The book puts Menelik’s legacy as the center of political continuous disagreement.

Considering the role of education, Messay argues that it is the best mechanism to realize modernization. For Messay “educational policy in most countries has been designed as the best and unique method to achieve rapid modernization” (2006, p. 2). More importantly, “education is a high word; it is the preparation for knowledge, and it is the imparting of knowledge in proportion to that preparation” (Newman, 1852, p. 172). In making a modernized state education a hallmark, he notes that genuine modernization does not require the abandonment of history and tradition. The merits of the Ethiopian educational systems rest on change and development. Education expected to help to overcome backwardness and to bring social justice (MoE, 2008).

Many of the confusion of transformation and change lead the people to the sense of alienation and otherness. In the logic of industrialization, capitalism and urbanization, Ethiopia was not developed but the Ethiopian has succeeded in a time of great achievement in their history. For instance, scholars such as Messay, (2006), Yirga, (2013); Teshome, (1979) claimed that the Ethiopian have had learning experience since the time of Axum Obelisks. According to Yirga (2013), church education targeted not only at producing religious elites but also civil servants.

Paradoxically, Ethiopia’s education program is highly dependent on Western epistemology. According to Habtamu, the Ethiopian system of education fails to consider the Ethiopian situation. As a mission, the Ethiopian leaders understand the merits of education to realize development at all faces. Many of the Ethiopians strongly believed in the value of secular education, and as Seyoum (1996) stated that secular education is considered as the only mechanism to escape from poverty and backwardness.

Yet, the education program fails to consider historical events in the modernization process. Specially, History has lost its place during radicalization movement. It makes the country look like it was only with war and backwardness. The past was a time of “complex problems the country has plunged in by dictatorial, self-centered and vain regimes” (MOE, 1994, p. 4). What is more; it narrates the shortcomings of indigenous schools to produce civil servants.

Consider on the Ethiopian dilemma. The issue of modernization was associated with Westernization. The intellectuals in their scholarly engagement tended to equate ‘modernization’ with ‘Westernization’. The modernist’s literature shows the relevance of Western epistemology in order to survive with modernization. As Yirga puts it, in Ethiopia, indigenous social systems

conceived as “an epitome of backward beliefs and practices” (2013, p. 222). As we have seen in our history, each regime chanting strange philosophy in order to facilitate their own socio-political establishment. During the revolutionary Ethiopia, socialism became the fundamental political understanding. At this juncture, Marxist- Leninist recipes considers as the main philosophy that guide the socio-political of the country. Hence, “there had been no other time in the Ethiopian history that education was conceptualized as an important means to secure political power”.

Scholarly studies reveal the incompatibility between the Ethiopian social strains and modern education. The relevant remedy is according to the studies develop pan-Ethiopian systems. According to Messay (2006) education in Ethiopia is westernized and it is consciously taking the Western approach. The pedagogical thoughts in Ethiopian focus are European approach with minor consideration of Ethiopian phenomenon. This is the cause why the Ethiopian radicals aspire for revolution in a foreign manner.

3.1 The Legacy of Modernity and its Adoption

This section aims to map out the setting of modernity as a field of movement in the ongoing social, political, and economic theorization of Ethiopian, with a particular focus on the works of the ‘modernizer’ Ethiopian elites. I will try to scrutinize how the notions of modernity, modernization and adoption are theorized in Ethiopia. According to Bahru, Messay, Matteo Salvatore, Teshale, accounts of modernization take the Ethiopian early 20th century Ethiopian experience. In this stance, Ethiopian leaders showed longing to learn the setting of modernization; especially they were very curious to learn about Japanese modernizers. In doing so, most of the late 19th and early 20th century Ethiopian adherents of modernization tended to bring change. For Bahru, “the burden of addressing the problems of Ethiopia’s modernization in the early twentieth century fell on the shoulders of the educated elite” (2002, p.209).

In order to modernize Ethiopia’s socio-political structures, Ethiopians elites went abroad to study Western science and technology. As the prominent Ethiopian historian Bahru Zewdie puts it, the idea of modernization was associated with Western experience, and its charting process of transformation. What is more, the nature of modernization associates with such essential features: urbanization, secularism, techno-science development (Bahru, 2002, pp. 1-2).

The question of change influenced Ethiopian studies during the late 19th century and 20th century. Educated elites, according to Teshale (2008), “advocated change in Ethiopia” (p.357), adherents “admired modern Western civilization (me’erabawi seletane)” (p.357), although the idea of modernization requires for analyzing cross-cultural dialogue and longtime comparisons, the Ethiopian elites became more passionate to know the material development. Adherents of change including the *Japanizers* produced publications in order to theorize the idea of modernization according to the European surroundings.

Numerous thinkers have made significant contributions towards exposing problems. Early insight came from Gebre Hiwet Baykedagn’s examination of the Ethiopian living with poverty and war. Gebre Hiwet focuses on Ethiopian state building project and way of development. And as his contemporaries he suggested the superiority of the European advancement. It was these intellectuals who were very regret on the Ethiopian backwardness and shock on the colonial control, questioned the notion of change. One of the most advocated leading outlooks was modeling Japan. The reformist notes the similarities between Ethiopia and Japan; they have in common history of independence, rule of system and seclusion.

In his two works: ‘*Atse Menelikena Ethiopia*’ and ‘*Mangestena Yahezb Astadadar*’, Gebre-Hiwot has raised various issues, and the books are pioneering works on development Economics, political economy of Ethiopia and skill studies. The Ethiopian historian characterized him as a reformist intellectual of the early twentieth century Ethiopia (see Baharu, 1991, 1995 and 2002). For Bahru, Gebre Hiwet provide in contrary of his contemporaries: “he was arguing not so much for the adoption of Western ways and modes as for an autochthonous path of development” (2002, p.101). Here, Messay argued on the contrary, for him “Eurocentric conception of history prevented Baykedagn from developing any positive view about Ethiopian history and culture and [...] this failure led him to prescribe wrong remedies despite his remarkable insights into the dangers of economic dependency”(2006, p. 815).

According to di Matteo Salvatore (2007), the Ethiopian modern scholar, Gebre Hiwet provides critical points in order to enlighten Ethiopia. According to him, he was very much concerned with the nature of the Ethiopian economic system. Salvatore, in his instigation tries to point out Gebre Hiwet’s legacies on economic study, pedagogical insight, and way of transformation. And for him, “as part of his desire to foster the wellbeing of all Ethiopians Gäbre- Heywät considered

the creation of a new school system a fundamental Stepping stone on the path to a dignified future for the new generations of Ethiopians”(p.568). Hence “he was a true pioneer who has reflected on the national, political, conceptual and social processes of Ethiopian modernity” (Elizabeth, 2010, p.42).

Gebre Hiwet’s understanding provides insight on the merits of historical knowledge. Definitely, in his investigation, he problematizes our historical understanding. His ‘*Atse Menelikena and Ethiopia*’, documented the very notion of history, state-society relation, and the merits of education and the path of development. In his study, Gebre Hiwet as a pioneer failed to overcome serious social misjudgments, but he tried to sketch the path of socio-political modernization. Concerning this, Gebre Hiwet underlines the purpose of societal innovation in attaining genuine modernization. In this manner, he problematizes both the Ethiopian movement and people. Furthermore, in his investigation, he reviews historical understanding of the Ethiopian and presents the merits of learning history. To quote:

It is good to learn history. For officials of the palace, it is even more important to learn history so that one can know what is good or bad for the country. History is nevertheless useful if it has truth in it. To write an objective and truthful history is nevertheless not easy. You need the following three God given gifts: 1) One has to observe objectively, 2) One has to have a fair judgment of things so that one refrains from being partial to things that he favors and 3) One has to be proficient in language so that one can translate what is seen and judged. Our historians however sin on all these categories. Instead of looking at the larger picture, they look into smaller details. If our history is true and partial, our Emperors are going to need all the help that they can get from mythical allusions (implying that there had never been a true historical analysis of our Emperors and that our Emperors make up their own histories with each successive regime (quoted in Elizabeth, 2010, p.44).

At this point, the question is how the Ethiopian intellectual understands the idea of modernity. It is thus that senior Ethiopian authors devoted themselves to reveal this thought. For instance, Hiruy Wolde Selassie in an Amharic novel, titled *Addis Alem* try to problematizes the Ethiopian socio-political condition; Dagnachew Worku in his master piece *Adaffirs* issues a conflict among traditions. In the both book, the main characters set themselves as opening people’s eye to

rational understandings. Since the early twenty century the thematic trend favors secularization. The former literatures, especially Geez scriptures were obviously according to religious outlooks: more or less their genre concerned on moralizing fear of God, idolizing history, narrates the uniqueness of the country. Whereas, the late reformists pictured their character with dichotomy and they give rationality for some western trained activist. There is conflict between traditions: Ethiopia's and West's.

For Gebre Hiwet and other reformist's analysis, the Ethiopian social system was a hindrance of modernization. At this point, the elites played a significant role in theorizing the country's reformist program. More or less, the Ethiopian elites played a significant contribution in shaping the country's socio-political journey. Roughly, these thinkers fail to consider the evolutionary feature of culture. For Mohammed "they could not overcome the conservative system that was ingrained in Ethiopian cultural identity and yet stifled the efforts to change and frustrated its agents" (2018, p.5). Roughly, the elites quest for placing the West's knowledge in order to modernize the country. Gebre Hiwet approached a form of government that would promote the modernization: "[t]he sort of ruler Ethiopia needs", Gebre-Hiwot propose 'was a man of order, energy, intellect who is both a friend of Progress and Absolutism' (Caulk, 1978). Gebre Hiwet, in his study presents the Japanese model of modernization; that energized with radical economic reform.

In his investigation of Gebre Hiwet Messay regards the movement of Japanese modernization and he considered it as a successful progress between tradition and modernity. For Messay, Gebre Hiwet "propose insightful recipes for the modernization of Ethiopia, but he also attempts a thorough account of the root of Ethiopia's social and technological retardation" (2006, p.816), but he seeing Ethiopia through the eyes of western understanding: "as is characteristic of Western-educated Ethiopians, Baykedagn is baffled by the Ethiopian" (2006, p.816). But according to Elizabeth (2010, p.83) Gebre Hiwot tries to plant modernity not as Western dimension but in between indigenous knowledge. He tried to point out why Ethiopia lags behind; and he regards the Western knowledge as a solution; to use his words, *የኢሮፓ አዕምሮ* (Europe Mind (2003, p.28). Gebre Hiwot therefore think about the importance of Europe's' mind in order to attain change.

If our Ethiopia accepts European mind, no one would dare attack her; if not, she will disintegrate and be enslaved. Hence, let us hope that His Highness Menelik's heir would examine and follow the example of Japanese government (Bahru, 2002, p. 206).

He approached a comparison between the Ethiopian and European values; basically he associated the idea of change with the value of education. In his book, we can find phrases like *aemero yeleelew hezb*, *temehert yeleelew hezb*, *sereat yeleelew hezb*, and he pictured the relevance of education on the making of harmonized socio-political structures. In one another way, Gebre Hiwot regard 'tabula rasa' project to Ethiopia. That is why; he fails to discuss the relevance of history and indigenous realities in realizing change.

The elites are predominantly concerned in bringing technological development, but interestingly attempt to question the idea of modernity in relation to moral spheres. However, their study failed to consider the Ethiopian ground. They suggest reform based on the Western anthropologies; they appeal to technological skill as solutions to overcome backwardness. They fail to recognize the evolution of socio-cultural development. Whereas roughly the modernists links modernization to the process of learning a foreign language rather reconstitution one's original ancient and patterns of outlooks.

More or less, the reformists advocated the Japanese path: the elites were very concerned to find various historical similarities between Japan and Ethiopia. Moreover, one of the most significant contributions with Japanisation is provided by Kebede. Kebede in his book '*Japan Endemin Selletenech*' (1955) attempts to cover the gap and to unfold the path of development; at the title/subtitles of the book suggesting something, the central concern of the book is concerned with the history of Japanese modernization. Kebede, in his study presents how Japan became modernized. Accordingly, he exposes the nature of modernization. Hence, he wants to shed light and provide support to Japanese way of development. He compares the Japanese miracle with the Ethiopian history. In the book Kebede narrates the idea of transformation. What is more, the book presents the Japanese curiosity to modernize their state. As he states, the Meiji reformation plays a significant role in transforming the country.

Like many Japanizers, Kebede recognizes the similarities between Japan and Ethiopia, and what Japan realizing modernization during the Meiji period. In the beginning of the book, Kebede taught us his purpose is not only to narrate the Japanese miracle, but basically he aims to show the path for Ethiopia's modernization. Accordingly, for him, the Ethiopian lacks not only material prosperity, but the fail to think about change (1955, p.101). The most important point for Ethiopia that learns from Japanese experience, according to Kebede is the need to regime change; the Japanese government led the reformation.

For Addis the reformists favored the leader of progressive feudalists in order to approach the idea of modernization. In the beginning Haile Selassie conventionally considered as progressive leader.

It must be obvious that-the pre- war Radical reformers the Japanizers as we prefer to characterize them- represented an autonomous identity aspect from the two dominant tendencies, the ultra and enlightened feudalists. In the struggle between the two feudal forces they obviously allied themselves with the enlightened nobility-especially the Teferi corporate group. In fact it could be established that the Japanizers were an important sources of enlightenment for the Teferi corporate group. And as a conscious anti-feudal "bourgeoisie" radicals their ideas transcended The Teferri corporate group (1975, p.77).

Thus, the Japanizers present the serious similarities between the two countries, arguing that Japan realize modernization between her tradition and Western modernity. For Kebede the idea of modernization associates with scientific advancement. Industrial development essential to safeguard once country independence: "Japan wanted to appropriate Western technology to safeguard its independence, values, and social system, so too have Ethiopian leaders nursed the same goal" (Messay, 1997, p. 641).

From the early beginning, Kebede's writing about civilization developed out of his critical reflection on the Ethiopian stagnant prosperity. In '*Yesilitane Ayer*' (1960) for instance, Kebede criticized Ethiopia's way of living. The book narrates the existing questions about the relevance of reformation. If, on the hand, the elites would take seriously the relevance of reformation, precisely they favor change. They would be able to criticize the functioning of adoption, but it

nurtured between confusion. The dilemma shows that, the reformists basic ground, that modernization is marked by the production of adopting, but it fails to consider the relevance of the Ethiopian social situation in realizing modernization. At this point:

A good example of this is Japan. Japan started her path to modernity not by following Europe, but by returning to the source of her own history. It is this movement that allowed for the Meiji Restoration and the renewal of the Emperor's position as a divine figure. Since the return signified that the attempt to modernize had the Emperor's sanction, it facilitated the implementation of necessary social and economic changes in the name of the Emperor. Because modernization was approved by the traditional belief in the divine nature of the Emperor, it not only gained wide acceptance but also created great eagerness among the Japanese for its realization (Messay, 2013, p.15).

Unlike the Japanese government, the Ethiopian leaders were not agreeing to reform the political situation. What is surprising is, there is no clear understanding about the relevance of adopting Western technology in a peasant social system. The mass of peasants were in a state of farming and the modernization thought, what the reformists proposed, had not been communal. At this point, Japanisation records serious dialogue among the reformists. Levine made various socio-political comparisons between Ethiopia and Japan as follows:

Consider their political records. Japan shows continuous political stability over the past half century. During the same period, Ethiopia witnessed numerous revolts and attempted coups; a rash of civil wars, leading in the case of Eritrea to outright secession; two forcible changes of regime; and, at present, a regime held illegitimate by some sectors of the population and by a vocal expatriate community. Japan has maintained a civil society that permits a wide range of free political and cultural expression, whereas Ethiopia holds more independent journalists in prison (2015, p.1).

In the modernist's tradition, Japanisation was a logical understanding to realize regime changes (Bahru, 2002, p.203). They characterize modernization with narrow connotation, the position of the intellectuals expected change to be real: "progress only meant the

movement of science and industry” (Elizabeth, 2010, p.38). In the very discussion, Japanisation provides as a defense against European hegemony, but according to Messay (2006), Japanisation was not really a counter of Eurocentrism, rather it housed Eurocentric tendencies. In Messay’s evaluation, Gebre Hiwet intended challenge the Ethiopian king to realize Westernization. What is more, Messay also critically assesses the reason why Japanisation failed. According to him, the Japanese view concerned on their cultural ability of change, they conceived the Western hegemony as a danger to their culture. Moreover, the regime was very curious to implement Western skill in accordance of Japanese culture. While, the Ethiopian Japanisation failed to correct cultural policy. Accordingly, for Messay the Ethiopian leaders failed to energize power from their tradition, and that is because why it failed to realize.

In fact, the reformists provide valuable contributions to transform their country. But their efforts fail to consider the tradition-bounded living system. This is because; the Ethiopians were in the state of tradition and religion outlooks. It is something difficult to issue scientific thinking in the fear of God societies. This is why some of them were criticized as heretics. What is more, among the reformists Afework shows ambiguous personality; on the one hand he advocate Italian colonialism and on the other hand he admires the Ethiopian system. He is a “mixture of admiration and disdain” (Gebru Tareke, p.146). In the same vein, Mehamed Girma also question Afework’s understanding of modernization. According to him “Afework's suggestion that temporary colonization by Italy might bring about the much-needed social and economic reform was risky if not outright dangerous” (2018, p.5).

Furthermore, Bahru discussed the cultural estrangement of the Western trained students, and unlike their complement Japanese who skilled with technology, the Ethiopian curiously relies on studying social sections: “Ethiopians preferred social studies” (Bahru, 2002, p. 79). This indicates that their primary curiosity was not to investigate technology rather they need socio-political reform. Accordingly, “the fundamental point that needs to be underlined by way of explaining why Ethiopia could not be the Japan of Africa is that, even before the Meiji restoration, Japan had attained a higher stage of social development than Ethiopia in the twentieth century”(Bahru, 2008, p.209).

3.2 Modernity and its Antagonists: The Cultural Revivalists

In examining the discourse between modernity and its critics, the key concerning points becomes the merits of indigenous traditions and techno-science development in realizing social, political, and economic modernization. The Ethiopian educated elites, especially Western trained elites have examined this issue from a Eurocentric angle. The relevance of indigenous traditions in activating transformation reveals a conflict of understanding between elites. In doing so, the ‘cultural revivalists’ paid a restless charge in searching relevant understanding to counter the Eurocentric hegemony.

The reformists group grew out of Western epistemological culture. The intellectual tradition was very much obsessed on adoption. Consequently, either the Japanizers or the radical groups failed to question what we have. On the contrary, Scholars in their work; Following in the footsteps of the ancient Axum and Lalibela, there are those who analyze the history of Ethiopian society. Church elites, historians, and philosophers have said a lot about the good history of Ethiopians. In the manner, several elites from Aleka Asres to Professor Messay, from Doctor Eguale to Professor Mesfin Wolde Mariam- claim that the Ethiopians have a history of civilization, progress and strength. They also suggest a re-visitation of the past as a remedy for today’s problems. They emphasize the need to go back in history to bring about change that knows the heartbeat of Ethiopians and to build a better social order.

The Ethiopian revivalist’s intelligentsia, such as Asres advocated renewal in Ethiopia. We can see some understanding like the opposite move in Asres *ትግልና ክብር* ማለት ማን? Asres’s book focused completely on the Ethiopian history and aims to challenge Eurocentric understanding. His historical investigation tries to assess the root in order to get genuine historical insight about Ethiopia and Ethiopian. Asres tried to challenge biased understanding and regards the importance of history. In this manner, the argument of Asres tries defend the Ethiopian history. That is because:

The essential thing, for people, is to rediscover the thread that connects them remote ancestral past. In the face of cultural aggression of all sorts, in disintegrating factors of the outside world, the most efficient cultural weapon a people can arm itself is this feeling of historical continuity (Diop, p.1991, p.211).

The theme of Asres's book is indicative of his concern to place Ethiopian than Eurocentric biased understandings. Here, for Teshale, "the most systematic Critique of Eurocentrism to come out of the EOC intelligentsia is that of Asres Yenesew " (2008, p. 358). In Teshale's investigation Asres seeds to significant critiques on Eurocentrism: "against the European intellectuals and against those Ethiopians who have fallen for the Eurocentric paradigm" (2008, pp. 358-359).

Scholarship on cultural revivalists has provided theoretical development in history and modernization. In this regard, the works of Asres can be regarded as reexamination of historical events. Predominantly, the revivalist groups advocate that the genuine modernization in Ethiopia can only be realized through the reconsidering of Ethiopian past. Regarding this, in a philosophical study Messay presents "self-improvement is not copying another: it is renewing oneself. This happens by going back, that is, by going to the source of one's own civilization. This movement will bring a change of direction which is known as "renaissance" (Messay, 2013, p. 14). Messay in his study provides an analysis on the meaning of tradition. He regards modernization as 'renewal' that is why he recommends this "it is necessary, as a first step, to break with Europe's understanding of history, which travels in a single line and direction" (2006, p.14)

Asres (1953, E.C) argued that indigenous schooling was relevant to modernization. The purpose of education, according to him to prepare individual for ability and in his book, ጠቃሚ ምክረ⁵ Asres presents ample reason in order to authenticate the logic of 'renewal'. The book considered includes intellectual legacies, history, folklore and civilization. In Asres work the most important theoretical insight is his analysis and description of historical facts in the contrary of other intellectual understandings. To quote Messay:

The importance of Asres's statement emerges when we see how his position directly clashes with the prevailing idea about Ethiopia. Most historians, archeologists and linguists attribute Aksumite⁶ civilization to Semitic immigrants from South Arabia, and so assert that the present inhabitants of the northern part of Ethiopia, namely, Tigreans and Amhara, are Semitic rather than black Africans. Accordingly, all of

⁵Literally, the title of the book was translated by Professor Messay Kebede (2013) as 'Useful advice'.

what Aksum has accomplished and the greatness of its civilization, included the written language of Ge'ez, are duplications of South Arabian civilization. The racist underpinning of the assertion is not hard to establish: since Ethiopia had an ancient and advanced civilization, its originators, so argue Europeans, must be Semitic invaders from Arabia, obvious as it is that blacks are not capable of such a realization. Concretely speaking, this means that Ethiopia moved to an advanced stage of civilization when Semitic invaders from South Arabia subdued the original black inhabitants known as the Agaw people (2014, p. 65).

Asres in his works approached the civilization of Ethiopia. He associated the discourse of Ethiopian civilization with the notion of independence, with Geez alphabets, and with spiritual prosperity. In highlighting the role of history in realizing transformation, Asres plays a significant role. In a highly challenging judgment, he questions the role of Western educated Ethiopians. He explains that Ethiopia has been robbed of its history by these peoples.

According to him, Ethiopia faces serious socio-political dislocations since the Western educated elites came to stage. The Western trained natives began to critique as Western scholars and books. Asres associates the value of learning with the study of history. He argued that the benefits of learning by examining the historical past of a country. That is because; it leads to finding treasures and deficiencies. In addition, Asres in his investigation try to revisit the very nature of history, civilization, and political realities. His purpose is not defending Geez or some other Ethiopian civilizations but also he wants response to European discourse about Ethiopian historical understanding.

However, the notion that modernization requires revisiting history and self-improvement are wrong for the fundamental scholars. They offered a multifaceted critique of indigenous knowledge. Of course it is one substance to cite the existence of enlightened intuitions in historical Ethiopia and to show their relevance for contemporary Ethiopia. Asres argues that the emphasis on history and indigenous schooling provides a more substantial understanding of transformation.

According to Asres, the Western trained elite not only fail to recognize the depth history of Ethiopia, but underestimate the relevance of history in realizing a comprehensive change. Regarding this professor Messay argues that, “it cannot be denied that Ethiopia’s ownership of history has ended since the coming of modernity. Ever since her leadership in history was snatched away by Western countries, Ethiopia has been seen as a backward country, especially by Ethiopians who have tasted Western education” (2013, p.12). For Messay (2013) the idea of modernization habits in Ethiopia appears to require revisiting at least some religious understanding and historical events. But, for Bahru (2014), the Ethiopian past that Messay grounds as a means of Ethiopian process of modernization lacks cultural and religion consideration.

The point about science and modernization, according to Messay and other revivalists, is not simply to mimic Western forms of advancement. Rather, modernization requires ‘renaissance’; Messay presents as an example the Japanese experience, “Japan started her path to modernity not by following Europe, but by returning to the source of her own history” (2013, p.15). The Western educated elites, for Asres are passionate to critique the Ethiopian tradition; they are directly against it as alien views. Although Ethiopia lived as an independent state with historical and religious properties, she became very eager to mimic others because of modern western education. In the name of modernization, according to his historical assessment, the imitation Westernization of Ethiopian education has generated Westernized individuals.

Furthermore, Maimire contends serious critical assessment on the mimic nature of Ethiopian modernization. His study tries to dismantle the ongoing superficial modernization of Ethiopia. More importantly; he tries to show the nurture of modernization. In the West modernization has developed, according to him, with “constant self-questioning. At this point, he discussed the project of Enlightenment: that housed self-questioning as a motto. Accordingly, “the modernization of the West cannot be dissociated from the critique inaugurated by the enlightenment, understood as the West’s constant self-questioning of its relations to and of its practices on itself, giving birth to the humanities and the social sciences” (2011, p.4).

Asres' objective was not only to counter the Eurocentric misunderstanding of Ethiopia other than that he aimed to teach the Ethiopian past for his people. As Maimire said that "Ethiopia is not a historical tabula rasa" (2008, p.20), Asres importantly question that why the historical Ethiopia became eager to mimic others. In order to react, he proposes a renewal approach:

Establishing a link between Ethiopian modernization and emancipation through a critical re-appropriation of our history also requires that we consider our past, not only as a narrative of events, but also as a learning process that generates questions, ideas, and hopes that make possible new experiences, new historical paths and alternative possibilities (Maimire, 2011, p.5).

More importantly, Asres try to depict the merits of Geez learning. For him it used to uncover thoughtful scientific understanding (Tekami Mikir, p.43). In short, the Ethiopian Qine practice nurtured serious active questioning and understanding. The primary aim of the schooling is to provide critical manner.

In such a school [qiné school] discussion and asking questions is (sic) encouraged. Since the students in such an atmosphere throughout the Ethiopian tradition have been trained to think rather than believe, they have been dissenters more often than not. Since they tend to rely on reason rather than on mere faith, they tend to be more philosophical than their counterparts the priests are. Indeed, it can be said that Ethiopian philosophy in its true sense, i.e., philosophy based on primacy of reason, originated in the kine [qiné] school (Quoted in Claude Sumner, 1994, p.224).

In general the revivalists regard renewal knowledge. To sum, the question of change is the inquiry of historical consideration. As Tsenay (1998) suggesting "Historico-Hermeunitical" and the very notion of hermeneutics approached historical interpretation. For Asres also the Ethiopian modernity requires serious interpretation of past. That is why he tries to discuss the merits of K/Wolde Kifle's book.

3.3 Radical Spirits and the Ethiopian Social Values

The history of radicalization in Ethiopia started around the 1960's and 70s. At this connection, the radicalization movement attempts to enlighten the Ethiopian socio-political and economic situations. Although discussions which tried to understand the lucidity of the Ethiopian revolution as popular revolution, it is argued that the movement was political and it is an extension of foreign movements. The revolution took attentive intellectuals in direct contradiction with the monarchical, religious and political establishments and some have been described as philosophical radicals against what was inborn since the revolution. They challenged the Monarchical system with the Marxists philosophy, frequently favoring radicalism. Since the 1960's in Ethiopia the decade when the Ethiopian faced revolution and the Marxist generation came to age, was a time of extraordinary disputes among the old generation and radicals.

Undeniably, it is one of the most controversial issues in Ethiopia's political and social history. It was subjected to various questions like, is the movement was public? is that related to Ethiopia's real social problems and historical events. Hereafter, the nature of the Ethiopian student movement is part of the larger ongoing socio-political scenarios. In this regard many of the participants tried to place the tone of Marxism in the strength of their socio-political consciousness. Attempts have been made to legitimize the relevance of the movement in order to overcome social, political, religious and economic injustice. Participants such as Kiflu Tadesse, Hiwot Tefera, Tadeleceh Haile Mikael and others tried to write the exact ideological motives of the student movement. In their attempts to historicize the Ethiopian condition and narrates pushing factors of the revolution. In this manner, Andreas Eshete, who is the prominent thinker on fraternity, argued fraternity with its begging as the virtue of revolution in addition to liberty and equality. More importantly, Andreas associates the idea of modernity in Ethiopia with the Ethiopian student movement. The Ethiopian student movement, according to him, plays a role in harmonizing the Ethiopian condition (Andreas, 2002, p. 22).

Indeed, the driving force behind the movement was the belief that we can find the truth with the help of socialism. Consequently, the Ethiopian riots questing to possess the whole aspect of the country. More importantly, in the history of Ethiopia, thinkers like the philosopher Zera Yacob paid an uneasy charge for reformation and change. In accordance with this, philosopher Andreas

also situates the Ethiopian treatise of modernity in the movement of *Dekike Estifanos* and in the pioneering question of Gebre Hiwet (Andreas, 2002, p.21). He branded radicalization with socialism. For him, “[s]ocialism was championed because it would serve the aspiration to bring about modernity by revolutionary means” (Andreas, 2002, p.25). In the manner, the Ethiopian student regards the revolutionary changes and it inspired by the Marxists radical demands. In contrary, Messay one of the active advocator of Marxism disprove the idea of modernization with revolution.

Modernization is not expected to come from a revolution, from the overthrow of a class by another class. Nor is it the product of acculturation or Westernization. It is not an aspiration, but a duty, an obligation to tradition. Focusing on modern weaponry, it is a rescue mission, no more no less (2006, p. 642).

To be sure, Marxism influenced the Ethiopian activists. In fact, Marx contributed serious socio-political thought in the 20th century. It is therefore, it is not miraculous that the Ethiopian elites start to take Marxism seriously. What is surprising is, roughly many of them use it as a weapon to antagonize the old regime. Definitely, there is a question of land, equality of religion, and equality of ethnic. They fail to treat Marxism as a system of thought rather they argue that the revolution has an answer for every snare. In fact, in Ethiopia, if we reach back to Ethiopian history and look at the contribution of *Dekike Estifanos* and Zera Yacob, we can claim the existence of question for cultural and system reform. In this regard, the philosophy of Zera Yacob more concerned on axing religious thoughts. In his investigation he problematizes the idea of fasting, monastery life, and religious relativity.

According to Sumner, Zera Yacob used *hatata* to question beliefs and faiths (2004, p.176). More importantly, Zera Yacob underlines the merits of reason in searching truth. In the same vein, Tewodros Kiros (1996), and Teshome Abera (2016) compares Zera Yacob’s philosophy with Descartes’s distinguished contribution. As we have seen, the philosophy of Zera Yacob very much concerned on problematizing religious dogmas and conventional beliefs. And I think this the logic that many Ethiopian elites consider Zera Yacob as pioneer of modernity in Ethiopia. What is more, the movement of *Dekike Estifanos* contributes thoughtful conceptions. In his important work on the Ethiopian thought, Maimire presents the magnificent contributions of the *Dekike Estifanos*. The very history of *Dekike Estifanos* thought is contrary to the Ethiopian rigid

social system: a quest for reformation. Interestingly, according to Maimire, the movement shows that “the Ethiopian past is not just a collection of brute data” (Maimire, 2010, p.6). Maimire, in his study try to place the merits of Estifanos’s teaching in the process of transformation. To sum up, their teaching nurtured the seeds of emancipation. To quote him:

The lesson is that traditional practices and institutions are not internally homogeneous; they harbor contradictory meanings that reflect the social and political tensions of Ethiopia and bear emancipatory potentials. The Dekike Estifanos disclose this emancipatory potential of "litigation". Given the association of law with authoritarianism in Ethiopian history, the trans- valuation of litigation from a practice that articulates relations of domination to a practice that mediates the relation between the ruler and the ruled based on the principle of yeHeg Amlak could be read as a struggle for a law that emancipates. What we derive then from the practice of the Dekike Estifanos is an important lesson. Since the modernization of Ethiopia is possible only if modernization cashes into the cognitive, affective and normative dimensions of the lives of Ethiopians, it is necessary to develop an Ethiopian critical theory that retrieves the emancipatory potentials that gestate in traditional social practices and institutions and transvalue these into practices and institutions of emancipation(2010, p.13).

The twentieth century Ethiopian radicals however continue in idolizing Marxism and regard it as the remedy to all problems. One of their problems is they fail to translate Marxism according to Ethiopian condition as their predecessors had done. For instance, Teshome (1990), stated that the Ethiopian elites were nurtured synthesis and re-character as Ethiopian realities; “the emphasis had always been on incorporating the imported materials into Ethiopian realities as perceived and understood by the scholars and scribes of the time” (Teshome, 1990, pp. 47-48). To more, “[t]raditional education in Ethiopia had the purpose of maintaining the belief in the providential destiny of Ethiopia, as a beloved nation of God. To this end, Ethiopian scholars were determined to introduce, translate, or invent various texts from internal and international sources” (Yirga, 2013, p.120).

For Sumner (2005), interestingly the Ethiopian have a practice of Ethiopinsation of the external sources. For instance, the Ethiopian incorporating various philosophical out looks in the *Fisalgwos*. For him:

The author follows these sources step by step; but when the opportunity of adaptation to his allegories and to his religious speculations is suggested, he does not hesitate to elaborate them without scruple, abridging them, amplifying them, transforming them radically – a pattern of development and adaptation from original sources which will flourish in Ethiopia in the XVI century with the Book of the Philosophers and the Life and Maxims of Skendes (2005, p.217).

The aim of these writers was to expose the socio-political structures of the then time. Their critique searches something, an important change. On the contrary, the Ethiopian radicals adopted a Marxism- Leninism recipe and quest change with revolution. They take Marx's thought as a starting point. It is, however, accepting the philosophy without questioning rigorously. Instead of considering historical events, they choose tabula rasa reformation and resentment. As a result a number of radicals became defending revolutionary change. They issued their ideology in Ethiopia through several mechanisms. For instance, Yonas stated that "poetry was their chosen medium for the dissemination of their ideas of change" (2012, p. 77).

At this juncture, as Bahru rightly theorize it, the rise of global radicalism, the involvement of other African sponsored students and the rise of student political activism paly a roles on the Ethiopian student movement. Consequently, both the internal and the external factors led the Ethiopian to the extreme division: "[t]he sixties were a decade crowded with demonstrations, rallies, and active mobilization of forces against both feudalism and imperialism" (Addis, 1975, p. 95). According to Bahru Ethiopia a radical character in the 1970s and the student spirit nurtured a departure from the early twentieth century Ethiopian reformists; what he called 'pioneers of change': in ideological concern (2002, p.211).

One of the most comprehensive studies on the development of radicalization in Ethiopia was provided by Messay. He identified the source of radicalization in Ethiopia. The

Ethiopian philosopher Messay in his most important book, *'Radicalism and Cultural Dislocation in Ethiopia, 1960-1974'* (2008), tries to present critical marks of the Ethiopian student movement and debunk the real causes behind the radicalization process. He studied and noted in it pieces of information on pre and post revolution Ethiopia. For Messay the radicalization process requires multidimensional understandings. According to him, Western educated elites played a main role not only in the radicalization process but also in continuous socio -political inertia since the revolution of 1974. Messay has argued that the experience with the Western education led to "Cultural dislocation".

But it is Bahru Zewdie, who interrelate the student movement with adolescence. Professor Bahru in his most recent book (2005) contributed historical understandings. The main advantage of Bahru's book lies in its intention to present historically. Along with its manifest historical concern, the book marks critical points on its predecessors. Bahru believed that the student movement was regarded not as a philosophical outlook or other circumstance but as a historical one (Bahru, 2014, p.9). For him, it should be understood as time goes on. To use his words, "it has to be understood within the context of its time, not from the vantage point of the present" (Bahru, 2014, p. 9). This is because he gets into problematizing other studies, such as Messay's work.

Unlike Messay, who focused on the relevance of tradition and church education in realizing reformation, Bahru emphasized the irrelevance of revivalism. In his publication, Bahru observed the study of Messay lacks cross- cultural consideration. According to him, Messay made a major problem in analyzing the potential of church education as the basis of transformation (Bahru, 2014 p. 8). Here, Bahru underestimates the relevance of such an indigenous thought in realizing genuine modernization;

What underlies the possibility of our talking about the 'modern' can never be understood without its early history. Early narratives are bridging texts that establish connections between present spaces of discourse and the past. Furthermore, present Ethiopian modernity discourses are a product of different discourses where present discourses have shaped the interpretation of past ones (Elizabeth, 2010, p.53).

For more, Maimire associates the notion of modernization with the idea of the re-consideration of past and the Ethiopian modernization, according to him, requires the recovery of “knowledge that is rooted in and nourished with the aspirations and possibilities for emancipation that inhere in Ethiopia's past, present, and future is indispensable”(2010, p.3). One of the most interesting assertions of the book is its in-depth analysis and comparison of the works of historians and the upshots of the movement. Messay strongly argued that it is Marxism which leads the Ethiopian student to radicalization. Relation to radicalization movement, Scholars such as Teshome (1990), Balivisk (1985), and Addis Hiwet (1987) prized various socio-political injustices in the radicalization process.

The modern education, according to Messay fails “to produce domestic, homegrown intellectuals who would have conceived of modernization as an upgrading of traditional value” (2008, p. 193). Although the movement aims to eradicate injustice and realizing transformation, the activists consider the Ethiopian condition as alien situation. As Messay said that, “doubtless, the students had the good intention of correcting glaring injustices and modernizing their country” (Messay, 2015), but they controlling Marxism in authoritarian manner. What is more, the Marxism was too Eurocentric. The movement, according to Teshale (2008) was strongly influenced by the Eritrean liberation front (ELF).

This new beginning of the socio-political understanding has proved to be significantly dislocating. The movement from the beginning encountered serious problems: it failed to negotiate indigenous customizations and historical events with their Marxism. Marxism by its very didn't nature nurture power ambition rather it stands for emancipation. In Ethiopia it became idolizing dogma rather than the survival of the country. According to Teshale process of radicalization in Ethiopia date back to 1960. Although, the coup failed, it projected coordination with radical intellectuals and soldiers. The coup gave a lesson to following Marxists. According to Bahru (2014) the question of justice, development, and political change are mainly the leading factor of the Ethiopian revolution.

Such movements are political in the senses that, going beyond narrow educational goals and sectional concerns; they champion the interests and struggles of oppressed classes and nations. Indeed, in underdeveloped societies where classes tend to be weakly grounded in forces and relations of production, and as such lack adequate material and ideological capacities to act as

autonomous agents of socio-economic change in the sense originally theorized by Marx, progressive student movements and other "unconventional" carriers of revolutionary consciousness and practice acquire special political importance.

Concerning the Ethiopian radicals, in one or another way, in fictional works or non-fictional works, many elites tried to depict the nature of the Ethiopian radical movement and their surroundings. Regarding this, in the 1970, the Ethiopian novelist's, play writers and poets Dagnachew Worku wrote a novel in the name Adaffirs. The novel discloses the historical view of the Ethiopian society. The book takes its title from its main character. The character, Adaffirs is an educated young man who is curious to enlighten his people. In the novel, there is a conflict of generation, tradition, and understandings. What is interesting, Adaffirs considered himself to the task of opening peoples understanding. The novel gives a full look about the conflict between tradition and its critiques; it presents the young radical's quest for possession of everything. What is more, in the name of modernity, it shows how much they reject superstition and religious understanding.

In the same vein, in an article, entitled "Modernity, Eurocentrism, and radical politics in Ethiopia, 1961-199", Doctor Teshale, presents critiques on the nature of the Ethiopian leftists. Teshale in his analyzing tried to make a comparison between the Ethiopian cultural intelligentsia and revolutionaries. Like Messay, for Teshale also recognizes, "Marxism was deeply embedded in the Eurocentric structure of knowledge. Ethiopian Marxism by extension was Eurocentric in its grasp of the Ethiopian situation. It rejected Ethiopia's past as being one reactionary pile of refuse badly in need of cleaning" (2008, p.346) and it "came onto the Ethiopian political scene in the context of the global radicalization of the 1960s. It consolidated its political foothold in the 1970s, and began its precipitous downward spiral in the 1980s. In 1991, it lost its hegemony in Ethiopian politics" (2008, p. 346).

According to Teshale the Ethiopian radicals fail to make a dialogue between their descendants. And Teshale said that the Marxist groups break a relation of generation, instead "the Marxist groups scorned the Old intelligentsia as being 'bourgeois', 'feudal'" (Teshale, 2008, P.358). In his investigation he attempts to disclose why "Marxism in Ethiopia was episodic and died in its infancy" (Teshale, 2008, p. 349).

The outcome is socio-political fragmentation of one of the most horrible situations of the century. The radicals wanted to plant material thinking in the religious and traditional society. Teshale objected that the Ethiopian Marxists nurtured Marxism in peasantry social systems. At this point, for Teshale, “most of the student activists were from major urban centers” instead “[t]hey had no lived experience of peasant life” (2008, p.347). More importantly, Teshale contends two significant differences of the Ethiopian revolution in comparison with others, what he called ‘anomalies of the Ethiopian Marxist’. The first one is, according to him, “the ruling class of the old regime collapsed without putting up a fight” (2008, p.348) and the second ‘anomaly’ is the feature of post-revolution Ethiopia, consequently the Marxists nursed armed rebellions.

In fact, the Ethiopian Marxists fails to theorize Marxism seriously. According to Maimire (2005) they were a victim of *tabula rasa* theorization. Instead of analyzing Marxism with its philosophy, the class analysis based “anti-feudalist”, ‘anti-capitalist’ the Ethiopian Marxists sandwiched Marxism in ethno nationalistic understanding. He argues:

The problem in depicting Ethiopia as a colonial state is that the Marxist concept of colonialism is derived from the logic of capitalist reproduction, whereas traditional Ethiopia is not a capitalist society. Because of this hiatus, the adepts of the colonial thesis apply the Ptolemaic method of saving the phenomenon and add epicycles to the Marxist theory of colonialism until Ethiopian reality fits the borrowed theory (Maimire, 2005, p.8).

In Ethiopia’s history, Democracy has long been in question, and according to Maimire (2008), it “has inspired political struggles in Ethiopia since the 1960s” (2005, p.5), but for him, he characterizes it as a blind movement: “[t]hat democracy offers a solution to the problems of oppression, poverty, and social injustice has been Ethiopians' hope since 1960” (2005, p.4), it cultivated without consideration of Ethiopia’s historical and cultural anomalies. Since, it guided by wrong understanding and it lead to the wrong path. Consequently, according to Maimire Ethiopian political thinking has fails to interact their ideology with critical knowledge and the experience of Ethiopia.

Although the discourse of modernity in Ethiopia clearly reflected in the works of *Dekike Estifanos*, Zera Yacob and Gebre Hiwot Baykedagn, Andreas Eshete additionally articulated

modernity in the student movement of the 1960's. According to him, the movement achieves ethnic and religious equality. It regards modern bureaucracy, the overthrow of feudalism, and science and technology development. But on the contrary outstanding scholars like Maimire, Messay, Teshale and Paulo associate the movement with the notion of cultural dislocation. As I discussed in the above, Professor Messay associates the Ethiopian student movement with two outcomes; with cultural dislocation and the emergence of radicalism in Ethiopian politics. More importantly, according to him the very nature of Marxism entails to show history and society through conflict. This leads the Ethiopian student to integrate their history with ethnic conflict. His analysis questions the Western type curriculum and its influence on Ethiopians student. However Iyob Ruth (2008) in his review of Messay's Work problematizes Messay's standing point. He tries to simplify the very work of Messay and to defend the legacy of the student movement. Regardless of this, I think it is necessary to take account the post-revolution Ethiopia. The upshot is not democratic regime rather Ethiopians sandwiched in cultural polarization. What is more, as Maimire rightly puts it they lead Ethiopians to zero-sum understanding. In this same vein, they fail to associates the Ethiopians strains with other social and political philosophies. The critics of Maimire and Teshale also note that the Ethiopian student movement fails to see and compare according to Ethiopians reference.

Furthermore, Teshale contends that "the Marxist groups failed to note that many a prominent Western philosopher came out of Europe's deeply Christian-theological roots. Chief among these was Hegel" (p.358). Although, in Ethiopia the pre- Marxists elites like Haddis Alemayehu were thoughtful in understanding of Western modernity, "the Marxists opted for socialism as the shortest path to development" (2008, p.360). Subsequently, unlike its contemporary, the Ethiopian Marxism tradition failed in its early stages. Teshale in his study problematizes the pre and post history of Marxism in Ethiopia. Despite the fact that "[i]n the former socialist countries of Eastern Europe and Russia, there are still Communist Parties competing for political office. The Marxist tradition lives on, adjusting itself to the changes of the global situation" (Teshale, 2008, p.362), but the Ethiopian nursed counter-revolution.

Present-day Ethiopia government that means the Ethiopian people Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) took power and differed Ethiopia from the past in its socio-political systems. Politically, contemporary Ethiopia faced two extreme understanding; pan-Ethiopian and ethnic

based. Despite their struggles, they are lacking in terms of modernizing the political scenario. Thus, “[p]olitically, this has led to the transformation of Ethiopia into an aggregation of dispossessed and fragmented ethnic groups, dominated by a predatory state that uses the instruments of modernization to serve the interests of the ruling elites”. Bahru (2005) in one or another way try depict the legacy of the Marxist episode in Ethiopia. Either positively or negatively, for Bahru Marxism can nurture the notion of equality up to secession. It is however, their struggle subjected to continuous bloody war and “[m]any of today’s EPRDF’s critics were themselves advocates of this theory”. What is more, the radicalization history affects the tradition. More or less, Ethiopian faced the exclusion of tradition. For instance the powers of elders, presets, were collapsed.

The emergence of modernity, in Ethiopia, is without thoughtful understanding of the context. Consequently, it lacked to interact with indigenous authenticities; it leads the country to dislocation of tradition. The people sandwiched between longing the past and hope (between Tizta and hope). The point that the revivalists would highlight is that modernity is unsuccessful to appropriate the Ethiopian context; that is because it lacks to overcome our social stains. Thus, it needs a radical reaction in order to mold the pitfalls.

Chapter Four

The Interplay between Cultural Revivalists and Modernity

In this chapter I will try to discuss the interplay between cultural revivalists and the modernity understanding. In this regard, I will try to discuss the relevance of synthesization in mediating the dispute between revivalists and modernists. Regarding this, very few intellectuals can contend that Ethiopia's relationship with the west is unbalanced which amounts to the country's continuity in the historical, cultural and religious scenarios. There is no doubt in the fact that Ethiopia understands change and modernization coupled with mimicry of the west is also in charge of the country's perplexity. Thinkers like Maimire focused on indigenous realities in realizing modernization. Maimire maintains that it was the energetic activities of Ethiopian intellectuals which are crucial to the shaping of Ethiopian modernization. For instance, in Ethiopian history, the movement of *Dekike Estifanos* has played a crucial role in producing emancipatory discourse. What is more, Maimire questions the soundness of foreign instruction in the Ethiopian education. But he doesn't neglect the merit at all rather he problematizes the process of adoption. In his scholarly contributions, he provided a numerous critical assessments on Ethiopian pedagogy, democratization, philosophy, and process of modernization.

An important article, "Ethiopian Political Theory, Democracy, and Surplus History" (2005/2006), indicates the sense in which the Ethiopian horizon is not subject to various critical themes evolving from indigenous realities. Maimire presents a weakness in the adoption of foreign methodologies in the Ethiopian education. More importantly, Maimire proposes the emancipatory dimension that is rooted in the Ethiopian history. The emancipatory guide of Ethiopian found in Ethiopian "surplus-history" (2005, p.5).

According to him, education is the major path to emancipating Ethiopia from backwardness and oppression. He tries to present the way how Ethiopian attain emancipatory knowledge. In his critical evaluation, the Ethiopian education system fails to meet the Ethiopian realities. That is because, the Ethiopians adopt without genuine meditating; "Ethiopians borrow this knowledge without critically mediating it through their historical experiences and the intersubjective meanings constitutive of their social practices, it brings with it alien presuppositions which lead to policies that fail to cash into Ethiopia's social realities" (Maimire, 2005, p.2). The problem to

the supposed Ethiopian educational crisis, Maimire argues, although education is a path of self-rationalization but the Ethiopians considered it as unrelated collection. It is thus:

Education reflects a society's capacity to produce, reproduce, adapt, and consume itself because it is both an agent and a product of those pursuits. Diverse and often complex educational formations – each one distinguished by its own particular configuration of accepted knowledge, theory, practice, and institutions – that appear and disappear over the course of a society's history as it attempts to act upon itself and its environment, reproduce itself, and endow itself with meaning are neither created nor sanctioned by meta-social, evolutionary forces acting upon that society. Rather, they are produced by that society, within a “field of conflictive creation” that is marked by competing class interests and animated by “debates and conflicts, political initiatives and claims, ideologies and alienations (quoted in Getachew Feleke, 2005, p.513).

Roughly, Ethiopia as a country faced with European modernity since the 19th century. At this juncture, Ethiopian students went to the West for the gaining of knowledge. The Westernized Ethiopian elites, very curious to develop their country which is technological lag, by adopting the Western knowledge. Consequently, as Messay argues “the Ethiopian thinking must cease to posit modernization in terms of getting away from tradition so as to achieve westernization” (2006, p.4). Roughly, these elites learned Western education and regarded that modernization needed Westernization. For Messay Haile Selassie's educational policy encouraged Western cultural and political understanding. In the same vein, another notable Ethiopian scholar Paulos also presents the contradiction between the modernizing project of Haile Selassie and Western type educational system. As Maimire Paulos also associates the educational crisis of Ethiopian with fully imitating of Western path (Guluma, 2003, p.192). What is more, For Paulos “the political crisis of the 1960s and early 1970s was a reaction to the feudal, authoritarian regime, which introduced Western education and values "without changing the intrinsic character pertaining to itself” (Guluma, 2003, p.192).

The fully adoptions of Westernization have been criticized by many scholars, especially by the church trained elites, the *debteras*. Primarily, these elites' rejection of Westernization lessened from the exclusion of indigenous realities. In one or another way, the efforts of the *debteras* have

been spent in recounting the Ethiopia's historical events. In this manner, these elites characterized modernization from a materialist perspective that denied God. They considered secularism as atheistic living style. It is true, however, the religious elites focused on reconsidering the golden age of Ethiopia without bearing in mind the changes that have taken place in the global world.

In fact, the argument of the revivalists regards remarkable historical successes of Ethiopia. Accordingly, unlike most African countries' literary tradition, philosophical inquiry, and architecture the Ethiopia was not outcomes the influence of colonialism. Concerning this Mohammed Girma (2013), remark that the Ethiopian indigenous schooling system, what revivalists are concerned on, has extraordinary success. To quote him:

This schooling system has had some remarkable success stories: the architecture of Fasilidas in Gonder, the basilica of Axum, the unique literary system, the inimitable Ge'ez alphabet and numbering system, the liturgical art of St. Yared and the philosophy of Zar'a Yaeqob all have their roots in this system. It also built one of the oldest nation-states in the world and formulated functional bureaucracy. Socially, it created and maintained highly regarded social norms and ethical concepts such as *fereha-egziabiher* (fear of God) (2013, p.5).

Unlike, Westernized thinking, the revivalists focused on the significance and relevance of indigenous success to modernize Ethiopia. Consequently, the view challenges that Eurocentric understanding that considers non-Western traditions as backward. The imitation of Western social systems: education, institutions, and ideology neglect Ethiopian tradition gave rise to radicalism in the country. Thus, the failure of the imitators in the reforming state led a political deterioration, emergence of radicalism and ethnic extremism.

The subject of the innovative Ethiopian discourse of modernization was basic to find an answer to the question of return the sources of Ethiopian belief and civilization to generate a renaissance from inside. This requires opening the gate of critical investigation regarding both the Ethiopian and Western worldview. Indeed, change and development of a society is not where the society is, however is going to, accordingly no society has ever remained stagnant. Ethiopian modernists

thinkers habitually inclined to stress the integration of Ethiopia into the material advancement which intended to lead Ethiopia into modernization.

Of course, contrary to those who argue that European epistemology, political decision making, are far superior than Ethiopian, the revivalists group spent in confronting it. Roughly, in my opinion, it is close to extremism. At this point, it is necessary to negotiate them. Accordingly, Eguale goes on to suggest, generates a cross-cultural dialogue articulated in the forms of synthesization.

Eguale Gebre Yohanes, a scholar in both religion and academics who lived in 1932-1991 who provided the essence of synthesis among the Ethiopian and Western civilizations. The celebrated thesis of Eguale's work questions tradition- modernity dichotomy or Ethiopian-Western civilization. Moderately, he tried to unfold the possibility of synthesization. The central concentration of his philosophy በተዋህዶ ክብሩ (*betewahido kebere*) presents the idea of harmonization between civilizations. The term *betewahido kebere* has religious origin and Eguale used as a philosophical standing to solve the "spiritual problem" (1956/63, p.79) that Ethiopia was facing at the time. In this manner, the term refers to the synthesization of two civilizations in harmony.

In fact, the philosophy of Eguale aims at integrating Ethiopian with Western knowledge. And the very philosophy of him was found in his continuous of radio lectures and later they collected into a book with a title '*Yekeftegna Temehert Zeybe*'. The special issue of his intellectual discourse is to analyze the Ethiopian worldview and integrate it with ideas and outcomes of modernity. To sum up, Eguale tried to displays the possibility of adoption of Western artifacts on the roots of *Yaredic*(ያረድኖ) Ethiopian civilization.

In fact, there is a view that the indigenous social structures are incompatible with modernity and unable to modernize Ethiopia. That is because, especially why Emperor Haile Selassie began to cross-examine the Western world. Here, Eguale's proposal offers a solution to the problem of cultural dichotomies. Concerning this Eguale's work suggests the method of attaining modernization. Even if the book abstains to criticize the Ethiopian realistic societal strains such as poverty and the tradition of war it tries to portray the way about attaining change. In his work Eguale has raised various issues, and the book housed pioneering understanding on the meaning

of education, civilization, tradition, and more importantly the method of synthesization. What is more, the book also presents analysis on prominent philosophical understanding. For instance, the author tried to analyze the Hegelian dialectic process within the Geez version. As is the case with respect to other philosophies and views, the question is, how do we establish a harmony between Ethiopian and Western tradition? What kind of knowledge does Ethiopia need? What do we have, what do we want? How will it be a success?

Many people may presume possibility of the incompatibility between tradition and modernity. And one may also wonder about the very synthesis of them. The interplay between tradition and modernity continues to be an important issue in the academic circle. But, what kind of relationship do they have? Broadly speaking, Ethiopians modernist thinkers concerned on scientific advancement. More or less, they regard the argument that Western values have certain significance for Ethiopians. As we can refer something, modernity has institutionalized the claim that all knowledge takes from scientific understanding. According to Giddens modernity nurtured dynamism and it has create a “run-way world” which is radical than ever in terms of social change and mode of conduct (1991, p.16).

The Ethiopian philosopher Eguale projects to push the Ethiopian discourse of modernity beyond cultural difference. According to him technological development is not a unique contribution of the Western World rather it is a human culmination. His project aims to negotiate the two civilizations means the theocratic civilization of Ethiopian and the techno-centric of the Western. In his study, civilization is human inquiry, doesn't belong to certain group and it is not badness to establish a harmony between spiritual and technological prosperity (1956/ 63, p.78).

The hegemonic idea of modernity as fair-minded thought, regarding reason, progressing from its alleged Western societal values to Worldwide, is offshoot development. The Westernized narrative of the modernity of history was concerned to establish an emancipatory paradigm through reason. Enlightenment, communication rationality, and others forms of facilitation project discourses that become passionate and shape the ongoing experiences and social structures. These processes have been established relatively by mono-cultural understanding by pioneers such as Immanuel Kant, Max Weber and Jürgen Habermas. Rather than reject their project as merely Eurocentric, Eguale proposes an intercultural modification that logically theorizes the project of synthesization. The concept of *betewahido kebere* which is better describe as the communication of viewpoints. Instead of cultural separation and viewpoints, the

project regards cultures process across multi-cultural systems and viewpoints. This argument requires reducing the idea of cultural extremism.

According to Eguale, the purpose of education in our country has been associated with Western civilization since the 1900s. Regarding this, the Ethiopian life world sandwiched between Western civilization and Ethiopian civilization. For Eguale, the Ethiopians succeeded spiritual civilizations such as educational system. Here, the Ethiopian lacks not an epistemological or literary system rather than technological progress. As a result, Eguale regards not leaving the Ethiopians past as “old-fashioned” or to fully adopt the Western civilization alone, instead concerned on synthesization (1956/63, p.58).

In or another way, the Ethiopian discourse of modernity characterized by antagonists specially the influence of the church. In the name of secularism, either the political modernization or educational system tried to exclude religious dogmas from the modernization process. At this point, the Ethiopian understanding of modernity or its Amharic *Zemenawi-Silettane* associates with materialized understanding. For Paulos “it is important to note that the Amharic word *Zemenawi-seletane* has an anti-clerical connotation” (2008, p.93). This understanding character modernization with acquiring knowledge with Western type, but in Eguale’s philosophy, the idea of civilization associated with self-empowering that developed through self-questioning. As a result, civilization entails evolutionary process that rooted in self-questioning, investigating nature, and more importantly it encouraged self-knowing (Eguale, 1956/63, pp. 36-37).

According to Paulos, the modernization process in Ethiopia faced a great contraction. At this point, Haile Selassie’s Ethiopia was subject to contradiction in searching coordination among feudalism and modernization. The emperor concerned on “modernizing” mission, and the Western education get to shape the new Ethiopians social structures. Here, this education system is associated with liberal economic system, individualism, and secularism. As a result, Paulos argues that Haile Selassie fails to realize these ideologies in his feudalism structures. Paulos tries to summarize the existing distinctions between modernization and feudalism as follows:

Modernization presupposes the creation of appropriate participatory institutions for channeling temporal power to be shared and channeled through a more efficient bureaucratic decision-making process. Feudalism as a political system is highly personalized and makes no divisions between the political functions the institution of

the monarchy at the apex of the political pyramid. Modernization requires the bridging of political communications from several quarters and the distribution of policy decisions through modern institutions; it also requires the transfer of ultimate loyalty from the monarch to the nation-state. Feudalism is characterized by huge land holdings of a powerful aristocratic class and the granting of fiefs to subjects in return for loyalty and service to them monarch. Modernization requires the creation of political legitimacy for new elites or a meritocracy ho may not own land but who, nevertheless, draw significant benefits from their education and acquired skills (2008, p.95).

It would be oversimplifying the problem to say that all Ethiopian problems originate from modernity or modern education alone. Clearly, other Ethiopian strains are at exertion. It is true however; modernization seized controversial understanding in Ethiopia. On the one hand there are those who appreciate our sharing the story with the rest of the world. But on another hand there are those who condemn it. Consequently, it is the cause for cultural dislocation or political radicalism in Ethiopia. Contemporary Ethiopian intellectual discussion has been grappling with the quest for negotiation.

Politically, one of the major problems of Ethiopian and no-Ethiopian scholars have had to deal with, continually discussed (Messay, 2004; Maimire, 2008, Merera, 2003; Paulos, 2008, Teshale, 2008), is the problem of ethnic polarization and the state conflicts causing from ethnic chauvinism. Conventionally, ethnic dissection is one of the leading legacies of Italian invasion; the invasion wrongly stretched the distinctions between the ethnic's social systems. According to Maimire, the question of ethnicity has become the crucial issue of politics in Ethiopia since the 1960's (2008, p. 7). There were extra-ordinary concerns among the educated groups about socio-political inequalities in Ethiopia. More importantly, as Maimire argues that the quest for democracy has encouraged political thinking in Ethiopia, since the 1960's, "but it has suffered from the contradictory ways different political movements have appropriated it" (2008, p.5). The very notion of democracy, according to Maimire, requires genuine ground. And it regards computing understanding. In this manner, "in Ethiopia is not an "essentially contested concept," but a motley of borrowed concepts, and why the struggles over it neither develop nor sustain democracy, but lead to parallel monologues that conclude with violence"(2008, p.6).

In the 1960's and 1970's, particularly after the emergence of Marxism in Ethiopia, democracy has had a prominent surface on the ongoing socio-political situations. Indeed, intellectuals are divided into different categories based on their understanding and characterization of it. More or less, the radicalism movement focuses on the opposite side of meta- narrative understanding of Ethiopians. Contrary to the previous system, this projected religious prosperity, Marxism in Ethiopia putting reason in order to lead the ongoing social structures. Concerning this, the movement defines itself by its refusal of several promises of tradition and religion.

The recognition that modernity is a mediation of diverse cultural understandings and outlooks was recognized to an extent by intercultural thinkers. In fact, the transmodernists insight problematizes the project of modernity and postmodern. Here, the argument questions the capability of both modernity and postmodernism thinking in addressing serious human day to day problems. The critique of both the idea and the social function of modernity are called as Western discourse and demarcated the notion and character of modernity. Tracing and redoing the flowing conceptions of modernity that occur through the Western discourses over the very idea of modernity lefts cross-cultural dialogue that have led to the exclusion of other forms of understanding. Modernity is considered constructed as a discourse of emancipation, individuality, and as mainly Western in relation to the globalization of Western hegemony in 18th and 19th centuries. Prominent modernist thinkers like Habermas openly engaged with occidental understanding.

It is true that contemporary society owes its achievements to modernity, but also its dislocations. The cover of modernity is observable in exclusion of others and regarding others as uncivilized or primitive. As a result, these ills push the critical theorists of postmodernists, transmodernists and intercultural pioneers. Enrique Dussel, in the opening paragraph of his work "Europe, Modernity, and Eurocentrism" pronounces the failure of modernity. Dussel regards "a new liberation project with multiple dimensions: political, economic, ecological, erotic, pedagogic, religious" (2000, p.474). In this vein, his philosophy entails to push beyond a hegemonic and marginalizing tendency of modernity. The philosophy of transmodernity is born from evolving other cultures misplaced and suppressed by Westernized modernity.

In one or another way, Dusselian standing point regards the relevance of transmodernism understanding. More importantly, the philosophy problematizes the idea of *alterity*. Rather it suggests equal participation. What is more, in this day, no man can isolate himself. Likewise, no

society can also live with cultural purification. This is to say, in the process of national or international integrity, there is cultural interaction. But it is necessary to confront the power of one culture.

In the above, I tried to discuss the ongoing discussions on modernization in Ethiopians understanding. The revivalists as I tried to mention argued the necessary to re-orientating our past. Perhaps, this lacks to consider in mind the global context. On the contrary the modernists Ethiopian elites push the idea of modernity without consider the Ethiopian context. It is therefore, the Ethiopian modernization process requires resisting Eurocentrism and appropriating cultural dialogues. At this point, the philosophy of Eguale helps to find a healthy interaction between Ethiopian civilization and Western civilization. As we have seen, more or less the argument of the cultural revivalists tended to cultural hypocrisy and it fails to consider the global context. The modernizers also fail to consider the relevance of indigenous knowledge in realizing change. Hence, modernization does not refer only material development but also it includes spiritual well-being. Consequently, the project of Eguale will help us to understand change beyond cultural opposition. More importantly, the synthesis dimension helps to negotiate extreme ideologies. As we have seen in the contemporary Ethiopia, either the political understanding or state building subjected to continuous divergence. In this vein, the current political understanding rests on revolving young minds to their ethnic past or it trying to ethicizing the past. It is something difficult to experience a logical association between political viewpoints. The solution requires going beyond extremisms. Accordingly, “[i]n Ethiopia, attempts to analyze cultural encounters and dynamism must be founded on commonly shared structural patterns that emerged during Ethiopia’s long historical past and served as a source of societal solidarity and as a foundation of social cohesion” (Fasil , 2018, p. 60).

4.1 The Fate of Ethiopia in Modernized World

Nowadays in the course of our life, whether we recognize it or not, human beings constantly cope with the process of modernization. Every aspect of human life is twisted with it, and perhaps, it is measured to be one of the major pouring forces of human history. Following this there is an energetic debate in the World over the benefits and risks of globalization. Consequently the chief concern, such as the dangers of deconstructing for cultural traditions, the possible destruction of continuing patterns of historical feats, and the introduction of hegemonic

tendencies from the Western world. Despite confrontation to the idea of modernization, global forces have already had conclusive effects, particularly in the field of material development.

In this manner, Europeans consider their achievement as a universal paradigm of advancement. At this juncture, the development is not only refers material well-being alone but also other socio-political advancements. This because, Europe considers her socio-political structures as universalized. Regarding this, there is an ongoing Westernization struggle in non-European countries, particularly in Africa. More or less, many African countries ground their socio-political aspect on Westernization. Whether its relevance is questionable or not, Westernized thought such as democracy, capitalism, modernization, and others have become worldwide patterns. While the modernization process requires thoughtful crucial assessments, some of the big issues affecting non-European today are roughly imposed by the modernization patterns.

Following on this, the global social structures continued to experience serious socio- political debate. In this regard, after the publication of Temple's '*Bantu Philosophy*', the African elites have got courage to confront global hegemony. More or less, Eurocentrism regards modernized, civilized, democrat for the European. In the mood, the European became not only the preacher of freedom or democracy but the guardian.

In the face of this fact, Ethiopia is meeting the same vein as other developing countries. Regarding this, the destruction of indigenous traditions and the merits of Western type surfaces the ongoing debate. As I have tried to demonstrate some of the core insights of each standpoint, each also defends different views about the nature of modernization. Among them, probably the most conventional characterization of modernization, for a long period of time has been the revivalists view: considered modernization as imposition.

In this regard, the globalized modernity has forced Ethiopian to live with dilemmas, modern and traditional, which have opposite sets of living style. As a result, they are facing confusion of values. In contemporary Ethiopia, Western social structure such as aesthetic understanding, political views, dressing style, and epistemology are gradually replacing indigenous traditions (Fikirie Tolosa, 2007, p.3). Following this he argues "Western education has alienated Ethiopian intellectuals by uprooting them from their history, culture, language and society" (Fikirie Tolosa, 2007, p.1).

Meanwhile, modernization became the popular agenda, it was subjected to criticisms. Predominantly, a major fallacy in the modernization outline is the argument that Western socio-political, practices are the standards for modernizing the non-Western World. Another serious shortcoming of the modernization agenda considered tradition as the opposite of modernity.

The idea of modernization has created a thoughtful dilemma for Ethiopian scholars. Eradicating religious and traditional understandings from the program is not comfortable to cultural revivalists. More or less, it leads to dominance of Western type and marginalization of Ethiopian norms and values. In this regard, notable Ethiopian intellectuals such as Fikirie, Asres, Messay, Yirga and others problematize the fully applied Western methods.

In his study of *Dekike Estifanos* (2010), Maimire presents critical assessments of the movement. Accordingly, the target of the movement was not to destroy tradition, instead their view concerned searching emancipatory knowledge within their tradition. They associate the purpose of education with searching truth. There is a vocabulary ጥርጠራ *Mirmera* (inquiry) that can serve as the way of acquiring knowledge through questioning for the purpose of self-empowering. Accordingly, “[f]rom the perspective of the development of an Ethiopian critical theory, it is important to see how the *Dekike Estifanos* transform a conservative traditional value, shame, into an emancipatory revolutionary category” (Maimire, 2010, p.14).

According to him, the *Dekike Estifanos* make a number of attempts on the relation between man and power, institutions and human nature, and knowledge and emancipation. Their purpose accordingly is an Ethiopian critical inquiry. As I discussed in the former section, Asres (1951, 1953 E.C) was one of the prominent thinkers who considered the significance of Ethiopian traditions to Ethiopian development. As religious elites, he attempted to include Ge’ez into the curriculum: “Asres struggles to show that the contempt for Ge’ez and for traditional education does no more than deprive Ethiopians of the treasure of knowledge accumulated through centuries” (Messay, 2014, p.63).

The promotion of national uniqueness leads to inspiration. For instance, in Africa the notion of Negritude plays a significant role not only battling the Eurocentric bias but also in awakening Africans to their Africanity struggle. The central thesis of Asres is associated with self-knowing. Since, “For him, Ethiopian knowledge is like a hidden treasure; it is found in the monasteries and

in Ge'ez literature" (Messay, 2014, p.63), in order to provide relevant understanding to the need of Ethiopians, education should be rooted in their Ge'ez legacy.

More importantly, according to Asres Ethiopian indigenous civilization, before the beginning of civilization in the Western World, Ethiopians had the highest civilization. For instance, Ethiopians familiarized therapy illness with medical plants (Asres, 1953/1961, pp.22-27). Indigenous living styles are the sentiment of traditions in the sense that they play a prominent role in efforts to generate change. More or less they are relatively characterized as guardians of our historical continuity.

This is not simply a tendency to romanticize the past. It is not the case of nostalgia. I think it is easy to destroy them with Eurocentric understanding, but they can help to manifest our outlooks. The critics of indigenous traditions argue that the relevance of tradition is an anachronism that should not have continued in the twenty-first century. Indigenous understanding thus considered as remnants of stagnant social structures. The conviction of the treatise against indigenous understanding axes on radicalization thesis. The radicalization thesis according to Maimire nurtured zero-sum understanding; "[i]t is not surprising then that, since 1974, the revolutions and reforms that have cascaded on Ethiopians are reflected in modern Ethiopian literature as events that make Ethiopians strangers to their own history and society"(2005, p.4). In this view, therefore it is necessary to dismantle the branched hypothesis to confirm comprehensive reconsidering of our past, and consequently, facilitate the potential success of surplus inquiring. Accordingly, "[t]o overcome this radical lack of political self-understanding, Ethiopians need a political theory rooted in a critical appropriation of their history, capable of formulating political questions and answers in ways that posit Ethiopians as active historical agents rather than as mere recipients of the intellectual and material productions of others" (Maimire, 2005, p. 4).

In order to appreciate the relevance of self-inquiring Getachew Feleke (2005) and Levine (2007), argue that Japanese advanced modernization through generating their own traditions. They contend that the rulers were subjects to Japanese traditions. In the same case, according to Yirga (2013), the Japanese were very concerned on legitimizing Japanese uniqueness. In this sense the reliability of traditions is not questionable and largely rests with the self-generating. It is further argued that indigenous traditions play a very critical role in their subjects in the logic that they inspire and encourage their subject for genuine change.

According to Fikirie, the principal aim of Western education was the “acquisition and transfer of knowledge in the form of science, technology and education” (2007, p.1), and at the juncture the emperors both Menelik II and Haile Selassie, “didn’t foresee that it will alienate and uproot Ethiopian children from their origin: Ethiopian history, culture, language, psychology, philosophy, religion, music, literature, arts, and even society” (2007, p.1). He added:

after having gone through Western education, Ethiopia produced many technocrats who didn’t contribute an iota to the betterment of the life of the toiling masses, a few scientists from whom she didn’t benefit much, philosophers who were ignorant of the existence of Ethiopian philosophy, economists who didn’t have any impact on the economy of the country, revolutionaries who didn’t know the culture, tradition, history and mentality of the people in whose name they were dying and killing, political scientists, psychologists, sociologists and anthropologists who didn’t know a lot about the politics, psychology and sociology of their people, in addition to specialists and experts in various disciplines whose expertise had no relevance to Ethiopian realities (Fikirie, 2007, p.2).

The question of change and development in Ethiopia has led several scholars in contemporary time to search for the importance of Ethiopian indigenous institutions of renewal as alternative solutions to socio-political crises. Broadly speaking, Ethiopia is an old historical state principally formed through process. The process of modernization in Ethiopia fails to function with indigenous social structures together with Western modernity understanding; the process of modernized Ethiopia had contributed to the exclusion of numerous indigenous social structures from the modernization process. Indeed, the logic behind the adoption of Western policy by the Ethiopian government was concerned with the “modernizing” mission (Alemante, 1991). Even so, the socio-political progress of Ethiopia during the last decades has shown no sign of “modernization”. Instead, the Ethiopian people’s scenarios were replaced by ethnic polarization, bloody wars, and totalitarianism became the administrator rather than ever. For instance, it was after a long spontaneous struggle that Marxism became the political rationality and led the country to continuous socio-political fragmentations. This indicates that the Western values that were adopted in developing countries like Ethiopia, have become impractical.

At this juncture, the point is how the native Ethiopian scholar begins to interpret our history and this lead us to Maimire’s understanding of “Ethiocentrism”. According to Maimire, the reliable

emancipation requires not borrowing ideology rather our reflective engagement of our history. He regards to involve the Ethiopians history with comprehensive engagement; explore our aspirations, failures, and success. As result, as rightly Maimire puts it, Ethiopians would no longer borrow Western experience in order to solve their problems. Here, he doesn't censure the idea of borrowing concepts rather he problematizes the process of adoption without indigenizing it. Furthermore, for him (2005, p.25), either democracy or other concepts require internal understanding.

One may borrow a democratic theory, but one cannot borrow a democratic culture. A democratic culture cannot be created in the context of *tabula rasa* theorizing; rather, it grows from within one's own social practices and constitutive meanings, articulating with and differentiating itself from the existing practices and meanings; challenging, contradicting, innovating, and transforming them from within.

In this regard, Maimire's "Ethiocentrism" recognizes the need to look at Ethiopia's success, cultures, and aspirations from their own understandings. This position helps to reconsider, legalize, and propagated Ethiopian systems that cultured by Ethiopian perspective.

Perhaps the greatest drawback to the Ethiopinsation creativity is the fact that there are essential differences between Ethiopian scholars in their rejoinder to Ethiopian of modernization, as well as their choice of characterization. Some scholars regard Ethiopinsation as an irrelevant project. These include in the main the ethno-nationalists, those who considered the past as a brutal legacy. Other scholars have the tendency to produce an alternative paradigm from history. Mekuria Bulcha (1997), for instance argued that the Western type education in Ethiopia can produce essential intellectuals who can question social injustice and inequality, especially "a modernizing" (as he called) educational system enlightened the Oromo elites. In the same line, he tries to problematize the past history of Ethiopia by saying it was the time of the oppressed and subordinate. But such kinds of bold assertions fail to consider some remarkable success. Maimire interrelate such conclusions with deficiency of theorization. Thus, "[o]ne of the conclusions of *tabula rasa* theorizing on Ethiopian politics is that Ethiopia was formed as a colonial state. In the context of *tabula rasa* theorizing, Ethiopia's past appears as a collection of events with no discernable meaningful connections amongst them" (200s, p. 8). For him "the 19th century

consolidation of the Ethiopian state is not a miracle. It is the outcome of centuries of surplus-history that has in contradictory ways created the pre-conditions of the political, demographic, economic, religious and cultural interconnections” (2005, p.8).

As I mentioned in the beginning, this day more or less, it is difficult to live without global influence. Modernization culture became a part of globalization. In the name of modern society, many of the indigenous practices entails struggle to Westernization. In fact, if modernization is associated with scientific and industrial progress, the Western approach of the system is more advanced. But, this doesn't mean communality or other mode of life is the opposite of this.

It is important to know that in the assessment of the application of indigenous African thinking characterized by communality, mystical viewpoint, religious understanding, and many scholars have expressed divergent views. While some consider it as cultural nationalism, others try to relocate in contemporary scenarios. In this regard, Asmerom Legesse, the leading African anthropologist, tries to disclose the relevance of indigenous African knowledge of African in ecological understanding, political decision making, and more in confronting the Eurocentrism conception on Africans. Particularly, his study on the Ethiopian *Gadda* is the most remarkable one. His book '*Gada: Three approaches to study African Society*' (1973) aims to study African socio-political structure. More importantly, the study aims to challenge the claim that African peoples are uncivilized and had no structured systems. It is thereby proposed to rationalize such indigenous practices into modernization developments.

Thus, the promotion of cultural uniqueness will help us to reconsider some of the remarkable indigenous values. Currently, Ethiopia is confronted with two understandings. On the one hand, she needs to share the spirit of modernity and on other hand; she requires continuing with the indigenous realities. This does not mean that she is isolated from the world. Preserving interval values does not mean cultural purity. Rather from the point of the modern understanding, it is to regulate their context.

The Ethiopian native elites do not stop at analyzing the problem. The elites such as Yirga further suggest a remedy that aims to transcend the Ethiopian system beyond Eurocentrism on the basics of Ethiopia's "rich legacy of traditional philosophy and wisdom" (2017, p.3). More importantly, he argues that before the adoption of Western scientific truth, the socio-political structures require indigenous ground. According to him, the Ethiopians education curriculum especially the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido church nurtured education not as means rather "an endless

journey towards the boundless knowledge of the creator” (2017, p.43). This quest founded on the core values of wisdom, morality and humility. The recommendation here entails to put go back at the center of the country’s indigenous knowledge. However, this assertion doesn’t reject the merit of foreign ideas but circulated according to Ethiopian reference. What is more; Yirga recommends the need to decolonize the academy. In the same vein, Asres also presents the mental colonization of the Ethiopian mind

Furthermore, he regards the Ethiopian translation tradition *tirguaamme* (ትርጓሜ) in order to transcend the meaning of tradition beyond the modernity’s dogma. Accordingly, the tradition focused “through novelty of interpretation of local and the synthesis of external sources” it can “provides a valuable insight for the production of relevant knowledge” (2017, p.79). for him, the merits of *tirguamme* rests to “show the existence of an indigenous epistemological tradition that utilized an interpretative paradigm to evaluate the relevance and significance of knowledge, one which was later supplanted by new models imitated from the West without any consideration of the rich heritage that already existed in the country”(p.55). At this point, he presents the tradition as “a process that searches for meaning by focusing on the multiplicity, intention, irony and beauty of a given text” (p.80). This Ethiopian indigenous practice used translate the Ethiopian “wax and gold” practice, “allegorical puzzle games (እንቆቅልሽ- ምን አውቅልሽ), the art of judicial debating (እሰጥ፡ዓገባ), storytelling (ተረትተረት) and so on” (2017, p.80).

Conclusion

The discourses of modernity, modernization, and modernism are hotly debatable issues. In the West, the idea of modernity was associated with the emergence of new social, political and economic structures. In one or another way, the idea of modernity was characterized by the failure of religious and traditional systems. In the same manner, modernization also associated with the process of change, it nurtured the transition from religious thought to scientific outlooks. Regarding this, as we have discussed earlier the Western dimension of modernity has imposed dichotomizing understandings, such as modern and pre-modern, civilized and un-civilized, modernized and non-modernized, on the ongoing world social structures. At this juncture, the Eurocentric understanding considers its European social structures as a modernized standard.

Having said this, the Eurocentric elites regard the need to enlighten the non-Western world. Here, the very notion of enlightenment was associated with emancipation. In this regard, enlightenment promised to emancipate man from mystical and religious outlooks. But, the project, according to the opponents, fails to realize its goal. Instead it “masterfully masked the mastery of humankind under the exacting mantle of the progressive advancement of a singular humanity” (Tsenay, 2015, p.14). More importantly “unlike the other worldly orientation of the medieval past, the Enlightenment’s stance of learning and progress was a motivating factor of conquest, in seeking knowledge” (Tsenay, 2015, p.15).

As I discussed in the second chapter, the discourse of modernity in Ethiopia was associated with the idea of centralization. In this vein, scholars such as Habtamu Alebachew (2009, E.C) argues that the Ethiopian discourse of modernity was highly bounded to the centralization of power. According to his analysis, the emergence of Western type education was targeted to facilitate the modernization process. It is true, however, according to Fasil (2018) the discourse fails to consider diversity. More or less, this is the reason behind the current socio-political fragmentations. Literally the intention of *Makinat* was not to empower a singular tradition rather intended to unify the country. Regarding this, Ethiopians sandwiched in between two extremisms, ethno-nationalists and pan-Ethiopian. In conclusion, it is necessary to merge the theories of the two understandings. In this respect one may argue that “in Ethiopia, attempts to analyze cultural encounters and dynamism must be founded on commonly shared structural patterns that emerged during Ethiopia’s long historical past and served as a source of societal

solidarity and as a foundation of social cohesion” (Fasil Merawi, 2018, 60). Clearly, ethno-nationalists follow an ethicizing approach, as a result, it would mean denial to shared legacies and ultimately it advances the societal disintegration at the expense of unification. That is like; the pan-Ethiopian approach has also its own drawbacks. At this juncture, there is a tendency to see Ethiopia without considering diversity. For instance, the commonsense argument that comes from ethno-nationalists is that the pan-Ethiopian thinking is based on singleness and lacks cross-cultural consideration.

Numerous Ethiopian scholars such as Paulos (2008), Messay (2006, 2004), Yirga (2017) argue that the process of Ethiopia’s modernization learned from the Western social structures. More importantly, Paulos presents the incompatibility between feudalism and modernization. As I try to mention in the second, third, and fourth chapters, these elites problematize the relation of Western system of education and Ethiopian realities. Accordingly, borrowing ideologies such as Marxism fails to realize modernization in Ethiopia. This is because these thoughts lack to be compatible with Ethiopian aspirations, history, strains, and hope.

Orthodoxly, people argue that tradition is incompatible with modernity. Since modernity owes its character in the West and declares scientism. Consequently, it stands against religious and mystical outlooks. However, the opponents try to question beyond the Eurocentric dimension. In this regard, the postmodernism and transmodernism movements regard the drawback of modernity. Specially, the former considered it as imposition not as an emancipatory project. Tradition and modernity do not clash. As I mentioned in the first chapter, the outstanding philosopher Messay presents the relevance of tradition in realizing genuine modernization. Tradition has housed different relevance elements and according to Messay there is tradition in modernity and modernity in tradition, they interdependent to each other.

For Messay, imitative education in Ethiopia plays an extra-ordinary role in cultural dislocation. Concerning this, he argues that the curriculum plays in the radicalization process. What is more, he regards renewal. On the contrary, some of Ethiopian Westernized elites question the applicability of indigenous realities. Such problematizing would arise from misapprehension of the history and the authenticities of the native people of Ethiopia. Here, one may ask the question, is there an Ethiopian conception of modernity? in order to answer this question, it is necessary to reconsider the character of modernity beyond the Eurocentric understanding. In fact,

in Ethiopia, there is confusion in characterizing modernization. More or less, the idea of modernization in Ethiopia is considered as Westernization or Europeanization. At this juncture, according to Messay, modernity in Ethiopia deprives its history. Consequently, the Ethiopian considers it as opposite to the indigenous Ethiopian values.

It is true that the idea of modernity also infers the nature of human progress. As the revivalists regard that the idea of modernity does not require a superficial mimicry. Thus, it is necessary to reconsider the definition of modernity according to the Ethiopian living experience. In fact, as I mention in the above there is also antagonistic understanding in relation between modernity and cultural revivalism. In this regard, it is important to acknowledge the merits of reconciliation. As we have seen, the Westernized type of modernity in Ethiopia lacks to accommodate the Ethiopians perspective. For instance, the Westernized type lacks to consider the meaning of such realities from the perspective of Ethiopians, the Ethiopian traditional schooling; church education that encourages creativity, self- ability, and morality. More or less, the cultural revivalists conceived Western values as an exact opposite of Ethiopian values and the modernizers conceived it as superior to the Ethiopian indigenous values. This led us to uncritical rejection and confusing understanding of modernization. Here, the Ethiopian thinker Eguale provides a synthesis approach in order to overcome such antagonisms. For Eguale modernity refers an energetic process in the developmental history of mankind.

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