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COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE

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**COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS BETWEEN THE TRUTH AND
RECONCILIATION OF SOUTH AFRICA AND THE RECONCILIATION
COMMISSION OF ETHIOPIA**

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Abstract

This study provides a comparative analysis of post-conflict reconciliation in South Africa (focusing on the TRC, 1995–2002) and Ethiopia (specifically the post-EPRDF efforts, 2018–present). The research aims to: examine the historical roots of conflicts in both nations; assess the similarities and differences between their reconciliation approaches; analyze the effectiveness of each model in addressing justice, accountability, and social cohesion; and identify key lessons from South Africa’s TRC that could enhance Ethiopia’s ongoing peace building initiatives. The study compares their conflict histories and reconciliation frameworks, assessing their impacts on justice and unity, and suggests actionable insights for Ethiopia’s recovery. Methodologically, the study relies on a secondary data approach, utilizing TRC reports, academic literature, and policy analyses for both countries. Thematic and comparative analyses are employed to evaluate truth-telling, accountability structures, victim reparations, and institutional reforms. Key findings indicate that South Africa’s TRC, with its emphasis on public hearings, conditional amnesty, and restorative justice, fostered national healing but struggled significantly with the issue of incomplete economic reparations. The study highlights the crucial importance of a victim-centered justice approach, transparent public engagement, and systemic reforms in reconciliation efforts. The study concludes that while South Africa’s TRC offers a valuable framework for truth-seeking and reconciliation, Ethiopia must adapt these lessons to its complex ethno-political context. Recommendations for Ethiopia include: establishing an independent truth commission; striking a balance between amnesty and accountability; implementing structured reparations; and integrating traditional conflict-resolution mechanisms. Ultimately, sustainable peace in Ethiopia requires a tailored approach that addresses historical grievances while fostering inclusive governance and promoting long-term social cohesion.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ANC:	African National Congress
ANCYL:	The ANC Youth League
BCM:	Black Consciousness Movement
COEDF:	Coalition of Ethiopian Democratic Forces
EDU:	Ethiopian Democratic Union
EPDA:	Ethiopian People's Democratic Alliance
EPLF:	Eritrean People's Liberation Front
EPRDF:	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front
EPRP:	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party
ERC:	Ethiopian Reconciliation Commission
ESM:	Ethiopian Student Movement
ICTJ:	International Center for Transitional Justice
IDASA:	Institute for a Democratic Alternative for South Africa
NEC:	National Executive Council
OLF:	Oromo Liberation Front
PAC:	Pan Africanist Congress
SACP:	South African Communist Party
SANNC:	South African Native National Congress
TC	Truth Commission
TJ:	transitional justice
TJAM:	transitional justice accountability mechanisms
TPLF:	Tigray People's Liberation Front
TRC:	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
WSLF:	Western Somali Liberation Front

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1. Introduction

The pursuit of national reconciliation and justice in post-conflict societies is a complex and multifaceted endeavor, often necessitating a delicate balance between addressing past atrocities and fostering unity for future stability. This comparative analysis examines two significant reconciliation efforts: the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of South Africa and the reconciliation process initiated following the reforms of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) (Tutu, 1999; Meierhenrich, 2008). The persistent conflicts in South Africa and Ethiopia, rooted in their distinct historical and socio-political contexts, have posed significant challenges to national unity and reconciliation. In South Africa, the legacy of apartheid has led to ongoing racial tensions, economic inequality, and social unrest, while in Ethiopia, centralization and marginalization, suppression of identity, land disputes, financial exploitation, and political repression have fueled continuous strife (Mamdani, 2001; Abbink, 2017).

Ethiopia and South Africa have both experienced prolonged periods of internal conflict, characterized by significant human rights abuses and deep societal divisions. In South Africa, the apartheid regime entrenched racial segregation and systemic discrimination, leading to widespread human rights violations and economic disparities. The establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) aimed to address these injustices and promote national healing (Wilson, 2001). Efforts to address these conflicts and encourage national reconciliation have varied, with South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) serving as a prominent model (Gibson, 2004). South Africa's transition from apartheid to democracy is a seminal event in modern history. Apartheid, a system of racial segregation and discrimination enforced by the National Party government from 1948 to 1994, resulted in severe human rights abuses and deep societal divisions. The anti-apartheid struggle, led by groups such as the African National Congress (ANC), the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), and the South African Communist Party (SACP), involved both peaceful protests and armed resistance (Lodge, 2011).

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa, established in 1995, is widely recognized as a pioneering model for transitional justice. Spearheaded by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the TRC aimed to uncover the truth about human rights violations committed during the apartheid era, promote healing, and facilitate a national dialogue. Its processes included public hearings, victim testimonies, and the granting of amnesty to perpetrators who fully disclosed their involvement in abuses. The TRC's emphasis on restorative justice and its attempt to balance retribution with reconciliation have been subjects of extensive study and debate (Hayner, 2011; Boraine, 2000). Ethiopia's political history during the reigns of Emperor Menelik II (1889-1913) and Emperor Haile Selassie I (1930-1974) is marked by significant transformations and challenges. Menelik II expanded Ethiopia's borders to include much of its modern territory. Through military conquests and strategic alliances, he incorporated various regions into the Ethiopian Empire. Menelik II worked to centralize authority, reducing the power of regional rulers and establishing a centralized administrative structure (Zewde, 2001).

Haile Selassie continued to centralize power, maintaining tight control over regional administrations and the military. In the early 1970s, Ethiopia faced severe economic challenges, including a devastating famine that exposed the government's inefficiency and neglect. Widespread protests and strikes erupted across the country, involving students, workers, and various opposition groups. These uprisings highlighted deep-seated discontent with the regime. In 1974, a Marxist-Leninist military junta known as the Derg overthrew Haile Selassie, marking the end of the monarchy and the beginning of a new, tumultuous period in Ethiopian history (Clapham, 1988). Ethiopia's political landscape has been shaped by a series of upheavals and conflicts. The Derg regime, a Marxist-Leninist military government, ruled from 1974 to 1991 and was known for its brutal repression and human rights violations. The EPRDF, a coalition of ethnic-based rebel groups, overthrew the Derg in 1991 and established a federal system based on ethnic federalism (Tronvoll, 2009). The EPRDF's rule was marked by significant economic growth and development, but also by allegations of authoritarianism, ethnic tensions, and political repression. By the late 2010s, growing unrest and demands for political reform led to the resignation of Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn and the appointment of Abiy Ahmed as Prime Minister in 2018 (Aalen & Tronvoll, 2020).

Abiy Ahmed's government embarked on a series of reforms aimed at addressing historical grievances and promoting national reconciliation. These included releasing political prisoners,

engaging in dialogue with opposition groups, and initiating peace talks with Eritrea. The process also involved efforts to address ethnic tensions and decentralize political power. However, the reconciliation efforts have faced significant challenges, including ongoing ethnic conflicts, resistance from entrenched political elites, and the complexities of managing a diverse and multi-ethnic society (de Waal, 2018). In contrast, Ethiopia's reconciliation after the EPRDF regime has been experiencing ups and downs to solve historical grievances manifested by continuous conflict and ethnic based clashes. The EPRDF, which came to power in 1991 after overthrowing the Derg regime, embarked on a series of political and economic reforms in the early 21st century, aiming to transform Ethiopia into a federal democratic republic. However, the reconciliation efforts in Ethiopia have been complicated by ongoing ethnic tensions, demands for regional autonomy, and the legacy of authoritarian governance (Aalen, 2011).

This comparative analysis seeks to explore the similarities and differences between these two reconciliation efforts, considering their historical contexts, objectives, methodologies, and outcomes. This study mainly refers to *Manifestations and Characteristics of Conflicts, Comparative Analysis of Reconciliation Efforts, Differences in Reconciliation Approaches, and Lessons for Ethiopia from South Africa* (Lederach, 1997; Quinn, 2009). By examining the successes and limitations of both South Africa's TRC and the Ethiopian reconciliation process, this study aims to contribute to a broader understanding of transitional justice and reconciliation in diverse socio-political landscapes. Through this comparative lens, the analysis will highlight key lessons and insights that can inform future efforts to heal divided societies and build sustainable peace (Minow, 1998).

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The persistent conflicts in South Africa and Ethiopia, rooted in their distinct historical and socio-political contexts, have posed significant challenges to national unity and reconciliation. In South Africa, the legacy of apartheid has led to ongoing racial tensions, economic inequality, and social unrest, while in Ethiopia, centralization and marginalization, suppression of identity, land disputes, financial exploitation, and political repression have fueled continuous strife (Mamdani, 2001; Abbink, 2017). Ethiopia and South Africa have both experienced prolonged periods of internal conflict, characterized by significant human rights abuses and deep societal divisions. In South Africa, the apartheid regime entrenched racial segregation and systemic discrimination,

leading to widespread human rights violations and economic disparities. The establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) aimed to address these injustices and promote national healing (Wilson, 2001). Efforts to address these conflicts and encourage national reconciliation have varied, with South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) serving as a prominent model (Gibson, 2004).

South Africa's transition from apartheid to democracy is a seminal event in modern history. Apartheid, a system of racial segregation and discrimination enforced by the National Party government from 1948 to 1994, resulted in severe human rights abuses and deep societal divisions. The anti-apartheid struggle, led by groups such as the African National Congress (ANC), the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), and the South African Communist Party (SACP), involved both peaceful protests and armed resistance (Lodge, 2011). Following the 1994 democratic elections and the end of apartheid, South Africa faced the challenge of addressing the legacy of violence and injustice while promoting national unity. The TRC was established by the post-apartheid government under President Nelson Mandela and chaired by Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Its mandate was to uncover the truth about human rights violations committed during the apartheid era, promote reconciliation, and grant amnesty to those who fully disclosed their involvement in crimes (Tutu, 1999). The TRC operated from 1996 to 1998 and was designed to provide a platform for victims and perpetrators to share their experiences. It conducted public hearings, collected testimonies, and issued reports with recommendations. The TRC aimed to provide a cathartic process for victims, hold perpetrators accountable, and foster a shared national narrative (Hayner, 2011).

In contrast, Ethiopia's conflicts are rooted in ethnic tensions, political repression, and territorial disputes, particularly during and after the rule of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). Despite various reconciliation efforts, Ethiopia continues to struggle with ethnic violence and political instability, highlighting the need for effective mechanisms to address these challenges and foster national unity (Aalen & Tronvoll, 2020). However, it is difficult to be sure about the result of Ethiopia's reconciliation of the reforms after the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). The problem lies in understanding how different reconciliation approaches, specifically the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Ethiopia's post-EPRDF initiatives, have addressed their respective conflicts and what lessons can be applied from one context to the other (Quinn, 2009). There is a need for a

comprehensive analysis of these reconciliation processes to identify best practices, gaps, and areas for improvement in Ethiopia's ongoing efforts to achieve sustainable peace and reconciliation (Lederach, 1997).

The central problem addressed by this study is that Ethiopia's ongoing post-EPRDF peacebuilding and national reconciliation initiatives (2018–present), necessitated by persistent internal conflicts rooted in historical marginalization and ethnic tensions, lack a tested, integrated, and effective framework to deliver sustainable peace, justice, and social cohesion. This difficulty in assessing the efficacy of Ethiopia's continuous, varied reforms highlights the primary research gap: the absence of a comprehensive, direct, and comparative analytical framework that systematically evaluates South Africa's structured Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC, 1995-2002)—with its clear outcomes in national healing and deficits in economic reparations—against Ethiopia's current efforts. The literature fails to adequately translate specific, evidence-based lessons from the TRC into actionable, tailored recommendations for Ethiopia's unique and complex ethno-political context. The study addresses this by comparing the two models' structural differences in truth-telling, accountability, and reparations across their respective timeframes (TRC concluded by 2002; Ethiopia ongoing since 2018) to provide the necessary insights for optimizing Ethiopia's path toward lasting national unity.

1.3. Objectives of the study

The specific objectives of the study are to analyze and compare:

- I. The processes, constituents, and the manifestations of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Reconciliation in Post-Ethiopian People Revolutionary Democratic Front Reforms.
- II. Similarities between the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Reconciliation in Post-Ethiopian People Revolutionary Democratic Front Reforms in addressing conflict?
- III. The difference between the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Reconciliation in Post-Ethiopian People Revolutionary Democratic Front Reforms in responding to the conflicts of their respective countries?

- IV. Lessons generated from the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Reconciliation in Post-Ethiopian People Revolutionary Democratic Front Reforms for future peace building.

1.4. Research Questions

1. What are the manifestations and characteristics of conflicts in South Africa and Ethiopia?
2. What are the similarities between the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Reconciliation in post-Ethiopian People Revolutionary Democratic Front Reforms in addressing conflict?
3. What is the difference between the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Reconciliation in post-Ethiopian People Revolutionary Democratic Front Reforms in responding to the conflicts of their respective countries?
4. What lessons of reconciliation has Ethiopia learn from the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission in resolving its conflict?

1.5. The significance of the study

1. **Contributing to Transitional Justice Theory:** By examining these two distinct cases, the study can contribute to theoretical frameworks of transitional justice. It offers insights into how different approaches—truth commissions versus institutional reforms—impact reconciliation, accountability, and societal healing after periods of conflict or repression.
2. **Lessons for Policy and Practice:** The analysis can provide practical lessons for policymakers and practitioners involved in post-conflict or post-authoritarian reconciliation efforts. It highlights what strategies and mechanisms are effective in fostering national unity, addressing historical injustices, and preventing future conflicts.
3. **Potential for Future Research:** This study can inspire further research into comparative transitional justice processes, expanding the knowledge base on how different strategies impact long-term stability, democracy, and human rights protections.

1.6. Limitations

Understanding these limitations helps frame the research and sets realistic expectations for the study's outcomes. It also highlights areas where further research might be necessary to gain a more comprehensive understanding of reconciliation processes in diverse contexts. This approach ensures that the research remains focused and manageable while acknowledging its inherent constraints.

1.6.1. Scope of Comparison

Contextual Differences: The historical and political contexts of South Africa and Ethiopia are vastly different. South Africa's TRC dealt with the aftermath of apartheid, a racial and political conflict, whereas Ethiopia's reconciliation process post-EPRDF involves ethnic and political tensions. These differences may make direct comparisons challenging.

Framework and Objectives: The South African TRC was a formal, government-mandated process with specific objectives such as truth-telling, justice, and reparation. In contrast, the Ethiopian reforms might not have a similarly structured framework, which could lead to difficulties in drawing parallels.

1.6.2. Availability of Data

Lack of firsthand data: Unable to conduct semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders, including policymakers, participants, victims, and experts involved in the reconciliation processes in the case of South Africa.

Documentation and Records: South Africa's TRC is extensively documented with publicly accessible reports and analyses, while information on Ethiopia's reconciliation efforts may be fragmented or less accessible due to political sensitivities or ongoing developments.

1.6.3. Temporal Context

Evolution Over Time: The South African TRC's outcomes and impacts have been studied over many years, providing long-term insights. Ethiopian reforms are more recent, and their long-term effectiveness is not yet fully understood.

Changing Political Landscapes: Political changes over time in Ethiopia may impact the reconciliation process, whereas the South African TRC operated in a more stable transitional period.

1.6.4. Political Sensitivity

Biases in Reporting: Media and academic reports on Ethiopia's reconciliation efforts may reflect political biases, affecting the objectivity of available data.

Governmental Influence: Government involvement in both countries might influence the portrayal and assessment of reconciliation processes, particularly in contemporary Ethiopia, where political dynamics are still evolving.

1.6.5. Complexity of Conflicts

Multifaceted Nature: Both countries experience conflicts driven by a range of factors, including ethnicity, political power struggles, and social inequalities. Simplifying these complexities for comparative analysis might lead to an incomplete understanding of the reconciliation processes.

Diverse Stakeholders: Involvement of various stakeholders, such as ethnic groups, political parties, and civil society, adds layers of complexity that may not be fully comparable across the two countries.

1.7. Delimitations

These delimitations are important for framing the research and managing expectations regarding the outcomes and conclusions that can be drawn. They help ensure that the study remains focused and feasible while acknowledging areas where further research might be needed.

1.7.1. Geographical Focus

Exclusion of Other Countries: The study is limited to South Africa and Ethiopia, potentially missing insights from other African countries with relevant reconciliation experiences, such as Rwanda or Sierra Leone.

National Level Focus: The research focuses on national-level processes, potentially overlooking regional or local reconciliation efforts within the countries.

1.7.2. Time Frame:

Historical Periods: By focusing on specific periods (South Africa's TRC from 1996-2002 and post-EPRDF Ethiopia from the early 2000s), the study excludes earlier or later reconciliation efforts that might provide additional context.

Ongoing Developments: The ongoing nature of reconciliation in Ethiopia means that new developments may not be captured within the study's time frame.

1.8. Operational Definitions

1.8.1. Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of South Africa

A commission established in 1995 to help heal the country and bring about a reconciliation of its people by uncovering the truth about past human rights violations during apartheid, facilitating restorative justice through truth-telling, and providing reparations to victims.

1.8.2. Reconciliation Process in Post-Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) Reforms

A series of efforts initiated after the fall of the EPRDF regime aimed at addressing ethnic and political conflicts in Ethiopia, promoting national unity, dialogue, and reconciliation through various political and social reforms.

1.8.3. Manifestations and Characteristics of Conflicts

The observable forms and defining features of conflicts within South Africa and Ethiopia include ethnic tensions, political power struggles, social inequalities, and historical grievances.

1.8.4. Similarities Between TRC and Ethiopian Reconciliation

Common features or approaches in the reconciliation processes of South Africa and post-EPRDF Ethiopia such as truth-telling, dialogue facilitation, victim support, and efforts to promote social cohesion.

1.8.5. Differences Between TRC and Ethiopian Reconciliation

Distinctive elements in how South Africa and Ethiopia address conflicts, including differences in legal frameworks, objectives, implementation strategies, and the roles of various stakeholders.

1.8.6. Lessons for Ethiopia from the South African TRC

Insights and strategies that Ethiopia can draw from South Africa's TRC experience to enhance its reconciliation efforts, such as inclusive dialogue, community engagement, and balancing justice with forgiveness.

1.8.7. Conflict Resolution

The process of resolving disputes or conflicts by addressing their root causes and finding peaceful solutions through negotiation, mediation, or reconciliation efforts.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. The Background of South Africa's TRC

This will deliver the information concerning the background on the South African TRC and its historical contexts to create an understanding of how the TRC was established. It provides a history of exclusion and is evolving into the Apartheid state, having two stages, first during 1948 and then in 1960. It will also introduce the key players involved in the transition from segregation to resistance. The father provides the context of negotiated settlement, in which the TRC was part, with its wider role in the negotiated settlement in South Africa (Marais, 2001, p. 7). This information comprises the historical background of the TRC, important for starting the rest of this thesis, as a substantial part of the conclusions were taken from this analysis, which obtained references from the history of deprivation of human rights. It establishes the historical context of South Africa, the role of truth commissions in the historical transitions by focusing on the South African TRC, giving an explanation on its background, mandate and operationalization, outcome, and recommendations.

2.2. Conceptual Issues in Transitional Justice and Reconciliation

The comparative analysis of South Africa's TRC and Ethiopia's post-EPRDF efforts requires a firm grounding in the core conceptual debates surrounding transitional justice, truth commissions, and the meaning of reconciliation. These concepts are not monolithic; their application varies significantly based on political context, ultimately influencing the pursuit of sustainable peace. Truth commissions are formally defined as official, nonjudicial bodies established for a limited time to investigate patterns of past human rights violations (Hayner, 2010, p. 24; ICTJ, 2008, p. 3). They emerged as a crucial component of the shift toward democratic transition following the decline of authoritarian regimes , balancing justice and peace considerations (Mamdani, 2002, p. 45; Wilson, 2001, p. 67). Key objectives include establishing a factual record—with South Africa's TRC famously collecting over 22,000 testimonies in three years (Hayner, 2010, p. 102)—adopting a victim-centered approach (Van der Merwe et al., 2009, p. 34), and informing policy and systemic reform (Freeman, 2006, p. 89). Distinct from criminal courts, truth commissions aim to expose the systemic and political motives behind large-scale

abuses (Mamdani, 2002, p. 112), and their effectiveness is maximized when integrated into a comprehensive transitional justice strategy encompassing judicial reforms, memorialization, and reparations (Teitel, 2000, p. 89; Hayner, 2010, p. 31).

Reconciliation, often the intended ultimate goal, is a complex, contested concept understood as a long-term social process facilitated, but not completed, by the commission (Lederach, 1997, p. 30; United Nations, 2006, p. 15). The South African TRC adopted an individual/restorative approach, using conditional amnesty for full disclosure (Tutu, 1999; Hayner, 2010, p. 45). However, this model drew substantial criticism: many victims perceived the process as incomplete justice, arguing it favored perpetrators and risked fostering a culture of impunity (Simpson, 2002, p. 247). Crucially, the implementation of economic reparations was viewed as a major failure, with the post-Mandela government often criticized for its slow pace and failure to provide adequate individual reparation grants (CSVR, 2005; Dept. of Justice and Constitutional Development, 2009). Mamdani (2002, p. 115) highlighted the theoretical flaw of the TRC's "individualization of guilt," which allowed the architects and beneficiaries of the apartheid system, including those who profited from systemic racialized power, to escape collective responsibility (Britannica, 2025). These critiques underline a critical conceptual lesson: sustainable reconciliation may require expanding the scope of transitional justice to include redress for socio-economic and structural justice violations (Laplante, 2008, p. 335; Mani, 2008, p. 253).

This conceptual framework is vital when considering the Ethiopian context, especially the post-EPRDF reconciliation efforts (2018–present). The conceptual shift toward peacebuilding (Galtung, 1996, p. 45) requires integrating political development with robust justice (Lederach, 1997, p. 75). Ethiopia's prior experience with the retributive mass prosecution of the Derg-era Red Terror trials (Garkawe, 2003; Reta, 2018) contrasts with the initial promise of a holistic transitional justice (TJ) process encompassing dialogue and reparations following the 2018 reforms (ACCORD, 2025). However, the Ethiopian journey has been complicated by the severe political instability, notably the Tigray War, which forces the government to prioritize stability over comprehensive justice implementation (ACCORD, 2025). Furthermore, reconciliation is challenged by entrenched competing nationalisms and ethnic divisions, where elite political settlement often overshadows victim-centered outcomes (ResearchGate, 2025).

2.2.1. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa

Truth commissions are official, nonjudicial bodies established to investigate past human rights violations, with reconciliation often being a central goal (Hayner, 2010, p. 24). These commissions vary in their approach to reconciliation - some focus on healing individual relationships between perpetrators and victims, while others emphasize institutional reforms to rebuild civic trust (Freeman, 2006, p. 112). Reconciliation should be understood as a long-term social process that truth commissions can facilitate but not complete within their limited mandates (United Nations, 2006, p. 15). The process requires sustained societal engagement beyond the commission's lifespan to achieve meaningful and lasting results (Lederach, 1997, p. 30). Notable examples include South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which incorporated victim participation in amnesty hearings (Hayner, 2010, p. 45), and East Timor's Commission on Reception, Truth and Reconciliation that employed traditional community justice mechanisms for less serious offenses (United Nations, 2006, p. 22). Peru's commission took a different approach by framing reconciliation as a political process of state rebuilding through institutional reforms (Freeman, 2006, p. 118). These varied approaches demonstrate how cultural context and political realities shape reconciliation processes (Gibson, 2004, p. 75).

According to Hayner (2010, p. 28), truth commissions are temporary bodies that investigate human rights violations through victim testimony. They serve multiple purposes: overcoming societal silence about past abuses, facilitating prosecutions and reparations, and recommending institutional reforms to prevent recurrence (ICTJ, 2008, p. 3). Their effectiveness is greatest when integrated into comprehensive transitional justice strategies that may include judicial reforms, memorialization projects, and educational initiatives (Hayner, 2010, p. 31; Teitel, 2000, p. 89). The sequencing of these various transitional justice mechanisms is crucial for their collective impact (Sikkink, 2011, p.112). The fundamental objectives of truth commissions typically include: 1) establishing factual records of disputed violent events, 2) acknowledging and empowering victims, and 3) informing policy changes to address root causes of conflict (Freeman, 2006, p. 89). Some commissions prioritize reconciliation between divided communities as a primary objective (United Nations, 2006, p. 18). These objectives often reflect a balance between justice and peace considerations, particularly in societies emerging from violent conflict (Mamdani, 2002, p. 45). The tension between these competing priorities frequently shapes the commission's mandate and operational approach (Wilson, 2001, p. 67).

These commissions are usually established during political transitions through either executive action or legislative processes (Hayner, 2010, p. 52). Executive-established commissions (common in Latin America) can be implemented quickly but may lack strong investigative powers, while legislative ones (like South Africa's) benefit from broader political support but take longer to establish (United Nations, 2006, p. 25). The choice of establishment method often reflects the balance of power during transitional periods (Skaar, 2013, p. 102). Canada's truth commission represents a unique case, emerging from judicial mediation between indigenous groups and the government (ICTJ, 2008, p. 5), demonstrating how alternative establishment processes can emerge in specific historical contexts (James, 2010, p. 88). When governments lack political will, civil society often initiates unofficial truth-seeking efforts (Hayner, 2010, p. 62). Examples include Guatemala's REMHI project by the Catholic Church, Colombia's judicial truth commission investigating specific cases, and Brazil's network of local memory committees (ICTJ, 2008, p. 7). These civil society initiatives often serve as precursors to official truth commissions, creating public demand for official investigations and preserving evidence that might otherwise be lost (Bickford, 2007, p. 34). Their grassroots nature can provide important legitimacy and local knowledge that complements official processes (Shaw & Waldorf, 2010, p. 56). The success of truth commissions depends on several key factors: adequate resources to conduct thorough investigations, political independence to ensure credibility, and strong public engagement strategies to maximize impact (Freeman, 2006, p. 145). Many commissions face challenges in balancing victim expectations with political realities, particularly regarding prosecutions and reparations (Van der Merwe et al., 2009, p. 72). The long-term impact often depends on the implementation of recommendations and continued civil society engagement after the commission concludes its work (Olsen et al., 2010, p. 98). Recent scholarship has emphasized the importance of addressing economic and social rights violations alongside civil and political rights abuses (Laplante, 2008, p. 335).

The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission provided opportunities for the victims to participate in amnesty proceedings in which the perpetrators spoke about the crimes they committed. In this regard, the Commission facilitated frequent contact and dialogue between the victims and the offenders, and this created a growing understanding between the two groups. However, the victims felt risk-averse and worried to participate and make direct contact with the perpetrators (Arthur, 2009). Along with this, the East Timorese Commission, together with the

traditional authorities and indigenous communities, organized community reconciliation in which the perpetrators demanded to be part of their communities by expressing their regret for the offence they had committed. In this case, perpetrators who didn't commit serious human rights violations, like attacks against property, were admitted to participate in these events. However, prosecutorial authorities were observing to monitor that no perpetrators who committed serious violations were allowed to participate in communal reconciliation (Kritz, 2002). Furthermore, the Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission considered reconciliation as a political issue of state rebuilding in which the policy formations were to be made for state institutions. For further truth commission and reconciliation definition, literature (Hayner, Priscilla B. (2010); United Nations (2006); University Press (2006), and ICTJ, Truth Commissions (2008) was used.

B. Hayner (2011) and Routledge (2010) state that truth commissions as officially established bodies for a limited time, mandated to work on the facts, causes, and consequences the past human rights violations. In this regard, the focus is on evidence, recognition of the victims who faced long years of discrimination and mistrust. The commission's role significantly contributed to its findings for lawsuits and compensation, and recommendations. This helped the societies to break the silence and address suspicion, and reforms were required to prevent violations. Truth commissions brought comprehensive transitional justice of compensation, crime suits, and reforms together by presenting the findings and convicting recommendations that enhanced policy that boosted political and moral force in the reconciliation process.

Routledge (2010) stated that the truth commission is a legal instrument established with the law and power of executive decree that reflects the circumstances of each country with the following three fundamental objectives:

1. Truth commissions find the evidence on violent events disputed or denied. Some commissions confine their roles to identifying truthful regarding abuses, analyzing the facts to fix the historical factors and social contexts of abuse, and identifying the areas of criminal inquiry required.
2. Truth commissions engage in the role of protecting, acknowledging, and empowering the victims and survivors. Commission maintains the relationship with victims and survivors to use

them as the source of information, the rights-holders, partners, and people who deserve recognition for their experience.

3. Truth commissions generate policy recommendations for the behavior of groups and institutions, reforms, and social and political transformation. The truth commission recommendations address the violations and their causes, and prevent their future recurrence. Some commissions understand reconciliation as of key importance to address the conflict between rival communities. In connection with this, Truth commissions are mainly required for change in politics after the fall of an authoritarian regime or at the end of an armed conflict.

The truth commission is important for peace agreements, for the transition to democracy, and for formulating the new constitution. A truth commission can be realized as a means for the break of violence and the basis for the restoration of morality, recognition, and support of the victims. The truth commission is established by the executive or legislative bodies of the government, realizing the institutional and political situation of each country. Most constitutions provide more power to legislative bodies than executive bodies, with decrees of limited scope that are unable to empower commissions to conduct inquiries. Concerning the transition, the legislature has more political support compared to the executive body. However, some countries' executive decrees and parliamentary legislation have equal power, which makes them faster and less artificial than legislative processes. In this regard, the achievements of the truth commissions established by executive bodies in Latin American countries, Morocco, and Timor-Leste (under UN administration) can be examples.

The Establishment of the commission by the legislature signifies a wide range of political support and strong institutional positions. However, there might be a situation in which the legislative process gets slow and consequently faces the risk of negotiations affecting the reliability of a commission's obligations. The commissions are established by the parliament in many African countries, including South Africa. It is the only country that established a truth commission through a judicial process. The forced absorption of indigenous children was addressed by the court-mediated negotiation between Canadian civil society, churches, and the government, which ultimately achieved an inclusive settlement, compensation to survivors, and corresponding memorialization of the incident. The truth commission is mainly established in line with the political and institutional situation and the characteristics of the transition of a given

country. The local actors were mandated to make informed decisions on what makes the commission best strong signified by its independence, credibility, and effectiveness (United Nations, 2006).

The Truth Commissions, Fact Sheet Series (2008) indicated that there might be a lack of political determination or government limited capacity for effective inquiry, civil society, local governments, and other institutions have moved through innovative approaches in the truth commission inquiries. Unofficial or local commissions focused on specific issues lack the power to force the process of inquiry for the information, and are limited in resources compared to state-funded activities. However, the commission can mobilize victims and survivors, document abuse, and issue formal findings that generate public support and engagement of officials by which the way for stronger and formal inquiries and measures. There are some examples to be cited in this regard. There was the Project for the Recovery of Historical Memory (REMHI), run by the Catholic Church in Guatemala in 1998, which served as the pioneer for Guatemala's formal truth commission. The Supreme Court was also established in Colombia, a case-specific truth commission for investigating the assassination of judges in a violent abduction in 1985. Furthermore, the National Truth Commission was created in Brazil, for the debate among many states, universities, and social organizations that formed local and regional committees with different mandates and fact-finding purposes. Several civil societies have created local Memory and Truth Committees that contributed to the National Truth in various states of the federation, commissions that can be stated as examples.

2.2.2. Key Characteristics of a Truth Commission

A truth commission doesn't make individuals responsible or punish for crimes they committed (Freeman, 2006, p. 45) rather focuses on specific cases and examines broader patterns of abuse and provides historical context to human rights violations (Hayner, 2010, p. 78). The commission role complements the efforts of truth-finding through exposing systemic and political motives behind violations (Mamdani, 2002, p. 112). In this regard, the truth commissions have examined severe violations that include "torture, disappearances, and extrajudicial killings" (ICTJ, 2008, p. 15). Their scope has expanded to investigating crimes against humanity, war crimes, and economic crimes committed by authoritarian regimes (Laplante, 2008, p. 337). The truth commissions investigate systemic patterns and prolonged violations (Freeman, 2006, p. 89). The

widened and time-based scope has resulted in the collection of enormous evidence. Peru's commission gathered 17,000 testimonies in two years, while South Africa's TRC collected over 22,000 in three years (Hayner, 2010, p. 102). Such large datasets enable sophisticated analytical methods, including statistical analysis of violation patterns (Gibson, 2004, p. 56). A victim-centered approach is fundamental in which many commissions are providing psychological support, legal aid, and security measures (Van der Merwe et al, 2009, p. 34) and Cambridge University Press (2006).

The commission complementarity to criminal justice: however, truth commissions are different from judicial inquiries and fix individuals' responsibility or determine punishment for the crimes they committed, or apply the due process of the law of the court. When the information they gathered about the criminal investigation, their findings complement the court of law. The courts of law mainly work on an individual case, proven by evidence complemented by the truth commissions that link the social and historical aspects of the violations and large-scale cases behind massive cases. The commission's finding uncovers the issue behind abuses, famed as moral and political causes.

The commission works on human rights gross violations: Truth commissions investigate the rights and the protection of physical and mental integrity of persons from torture, disappearance, extrajudicial killings, forced displacement, and sexual violence. The roles of the commission have been expanding to investigate crimes against humanity and war crimes, economic crimes and corruption, authoritarian abuse and violence.

Period of investigation: The truth commissions mainly cover the abuses committed in longer periods, mainly within the decades that help the commission find out historical trends in which violence and systemic violations of human rights are committed.

Large amounts of evidence: the commission is mandated to investigate a wide range of areas of violations that occurred over a longer period; consequently, it gathered considerable information from direct witnesses, archives, and other reliable sources. The Peru Truth and Reconciliation Commission gathered 17,000 witnesses in two two-year time while South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission collected around 22,000 witnesses during the three years. Such large data enabled the commissions to use various approaches and statistical analysis in their investigation.

Victim-centered approach: Victims and survivors were involved as the first-hand sources of the evidence in the truth commissions' works, a legal mandate to ensure the well-being of victims. The commissions have served the victims by providing emergency help, psychological support, security, and legal aid. The Truth, Reception and Reconciliation Commission

The change gains are amazing. Arthur (2009) raised the way to democracy was the main meaning of change in the 1980s, though Liberal Western Policy Makers in 1960s were talking socioeconomic modernization as a requirement for political advancement (Arthur, 2009: 20). He has given a four-point to explain this: first, countries were preferring democracy over other possibilities during transition. Secondly, modernization theory is losing its supporters; thirdly, the Marxist thought about transformation was substituted by the technical experts dominated political transition from socioeconomic change to legal and institutional reform; fourth, the worldwide deterioration of the radical 'Left' of the 1970s by promoting a change from ideology to human rights. Carothers (2002: 9) argued that the democratic transition model was not achieved in that, as 100 countries considered transitional, fewer than 20 successfully implemented democracies or made progress and enjoyed democratization.

The examples of success for this are Central Europe and the Baltic region – Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Estonia, and Slovenia – though there are a few in South America and East Asia, notably Chile, Uruguay, and Taiwan. Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, Mexico, Brazil, Ghana, the Philippines, and South Korea made less progress and are still advancing. In South Africa, there are two conferences: the 1992 Charter 77 Foundation conference and the 1994 Institute for a Democratic Alternative for South Africa (IDASA)-sponsored conference focusing on the past, in which the technocrats were a framework for transitional justice. Two goals were expressed here: "First, is rendering some justice to those experiencing suffering by the repressive states and second, facilitating the withdrawal from authoritarianism and strengthening the weak democracy (Arthur, 2009: 41). Besides, several countries' experiences on transitional justice have benefited South Africa. The South Africans' lessons and gathering comparative material from Latin American countries, and the international experts' participation in the South African conferences, had a profound impact on the South African justice and reconciliation. Out of these exchanges, Kritz (2002: 24) stated about the present-day standards relevant to the transitional justice accomplishments of South Africa:

The protections of criminal defendants by the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights elaborated in the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, have been complemented by the UN Standard Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (1957), the Independence of the Judiciary (1985); the Standard Rules to Administer Juvenile Justice (1985), the Principles of the Role of Lawyers (1990); the Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners (1990); Guidelines for the Role of Prosecutors (1990), and the Standard Rules for Non-Custodial Rules (1990). Kritz has focused on how the United Nations (UN) Human Rights Commission and UN Human Rights Committee for developing international standards as well as the European Court and Commission on Human Rights, the Inter-American Court and Commission on Human Rights, the 1990 Copenhagen Document and 1991 Moscow Documents produced through the 'Helsinki process' as well as the work of UN rapporteurs, the writings of many legal scholars, and the work of human rights organizations were important for transitional justices. There is a growing trend in international, national, and mixed trials, with a shift away from the traditional trial approach toward a victim-centered focus. In its approach to dealing with amnesty, the TRC of South Africa made victim-centered. It renders the perpetrators to apply for amnesty individually and through disclosure of their crimes and through collaboration with the TRC investigators (Kritz, 2002: 34).

The division between negative and positive peace suggests that there is a society being either at war or in peace, which indicates the social justice and how a society is functioning. According to Lederach (1997: 3), Peace Research and conflict studies began in the early 21st century. The Peace Research Institute of Oslo (PRIO) and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) were established in the 1970s and 1980s to build a reliable conflict database for descriptive and comparative purposes. Another new research field emerged in the late 1980s, known as the field of transitional justice originated in the response to events in Latin America and is linked to human rights. This field view transitions to democracy, in one lens for which it is criticized (Arthur, 2009: 19). This field of study follows Lederach's suggestion of building an integrated and complex peace process to continue the maintenance of peace. Lederach (1997: 20) argues peace peacebuilding has to go beyond postaccord reconstruction. It is a comprehensive concept that generates and sustains diverse processes and approaches, and moves through different stages needed to change conflict to sustainable and peaceful relationships.

The contains diverse activities and functions before and after formal peace accords that show peace is not just a stage in the framework of time or a condition, but a dynamic social construct that requires building, involving, investment and materials, design and coordination, laying the foundation, finishing work, and continuing maintenance.

In this regard, Galtung and Lederach are becoming important in the field of peace research. Lederach (1997: 75) has linked sustainability by creating a proactive process that regenerates peace and development at the end of the day instead of a twisting violence and damage to the field of political development of the peace process. His study focuses on political development as a task in the field of development studies. For some scholars, bringing peace research, political development, and transitional justice studies together in one field is central to the field of transitional justice studies. Kritz (2002), in his work on the development of transitional justice, placed South Africa in this field of study. On the other hand, Teitel's (1997) work has focused on the importance of law in the field of Transitional Justice. Furthermore, such a conversation brings accountability in Transitional Justice. Laplante (2008: 1) asked what transitional justice can generate as an alternative for promoting reconciliation and sustainable peace. In order to sustain peace, she recommends the importance of expanding the mandates of truth commissions to socio-economic and cultural rights.

Furthermore, there is a growing interest and pressing need for many scholars and practitioners to consider the importance of socio-economic and cultural justice incorporated into the transitional justice movement (Mani, 2008: 253). When it comes to political progress, Huyse in Harris & Reilly indicated different policies of coping with the past as part of peace building (Huyse in Harris et al., 1998: 273). Huyse examined forgiveness, truth commission, lustration, criminal trial, and reparation as important in transitional justice. Habib & Bentley (2008) bring research as important for citizenship, nation building, and democratization. These scholars have investigated the following issues starting from the major question in the 21st century to realize a common citizenship, the national question (ibid: 5). In regard, they indicated the South African Constitution as supporting mixed citizenship will endure severe change in the future along with observed an international trend (ibid.: 9). Within this context study of the South African TRC by De Lange (2000) and Boraine (2000) has given the explanation on the origins of the South African TRC, the political tool indicating by whom the commissioners are appointed, whether it invites recommendations, how they are working with the judicial system and the issues of

amnesty. Before the TRC began its work, these decisions were made. Though the mandate was seldom changed during the work of a TRC, it has guided the entire work of the TRC in South Africa. The scholars like Gibson (2004), Jeffrey (1999), Mamdani (2002), Simpson (2002), Stanley (2001), and Van der Merwe & Chapman (2008) have examined the South African TRC and given analysis on the results achieved and what could have been achieved.

Based on this, their findings are listed here: Gibson (2004) stated that truth has contributed to reconciliation in South Africa and linked the search for 'the truth creating a collective memory and reconciliation exists in South Africa today. On the other hand, he hasn't shown that truth leads to reconciliation as a finding for the recommendation in this study. He connected the reconciliation to democratic reform and indicated that the reconciliation either helps or hinders democratic politics (ibid. 151).

Jeffrey (1999) is worried about the TRC's findings and methods applied in its reach. She summarized the accusation that says the commission was unfair in its composition and their cohesive human community (Habib & Bentley, 2008). Mamdani (2002), on the other hand, focused on the commissions' individualization of guilt and its consequences in the final report of the TRC. Also, Simpson (2002) revealed the way to categorize the victims and perpetrators and criticized the Commission for volatility and arbitrariness in the decisions of the amnesty process. He argued that there is a possibility that the TRC grants amnesty to the killers who admit the crime they committed, however contributed to the sense of impunity that fuels the growing rate of violent crime (Simpson, 2002: 247). Stanley (2001) further gives an uncertainty on the TRC building a reconciliatory bridge (ibid.: 525) as the government is restrained in allowing development and change. Van der Merwe et al. (2008) openly questioned the truth commissions in their fitness for reconciliation and forgiveness, in a structurally divided society (ibid.: 277). Their findings indicated that there is a lack of reconciliation on the basis of the work of the TRC in South Africa.

These authors have established the research methods to reach conclusions and, together with their findings, gave input for the criteria for sustainable peace and answered the question whether South Africa's TRC achieved sustainable peace. Their research methods have encouraged the study to seek precision in the work of the South African TRC. Hence, the study relies on the analysis of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa that

generated its findings from the primary source crucial for ensuring no repetition of the past (TRC vol. 5, chap. 8, 14). The study's decisive contribution will be analyzing how the sustainability of peace was addressed by the TRC. For this purpose, this study has used the textual analysis research method outlined by Mouton (2001) and Balkin (1994). Furthermore, this study has inclined towards secondary literature that supported this study, having historical information on the political development of South Africa after the transition (Allen, 2006; Butler, 2004; Dubow, 2000; Marais, 2001; Makgetla, 2004; Muiu, 2008; and Thornton, 1998).

2.2.3. Transitional Justice and Democracy

The transition shift of the 1980s from modernization theory to democratic transition (Arthur, 2009, p. 20) has reflected the decline of Marxist approaches and the withdrawal of leftist thoughts (Carothers, 2002, p. 9). However, there are transitional states that reached a combined democracy, like Central European and some Latin American countries (Carothers, 2002, p. 15). South Africa's transitional justice context arose from international influences like Latin American experiences (Kritz, 2002, p. 24) that incorporated international human rights like the ICCPR and UN prisoner treatment rules (Kritz, 2002, p. 24). South Africa's innovative amnesty has required full confession from perpetrators by making victim experiences at the center (Boraine, 2000, p. 112).

2.2.4. Peacebuilding and Transitional Justice

The difference between negative and positive peace shows that peace is beyond the absence of conflict (Lederach, 1997, p. 20). Modern peacebuilding covers a wide-ranging social transformation (Galtung, 1996, p. 45). However, transitional justice began in the 1980s, originally focused on democratic transitions (Arthur, 2009, p. 19). Lederach (1997, p. 75) considered sustainable peace building as cyclical processes that require integrating political development with justice, ensuring means (Laplante, 2008, p. 340). The recent advocates have widened the mandates of the truth commission to address the socioeconomic rights violations (Mani, 2008, p. 253).

2.2.5. South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission Evaluation

The TRC's political situations were manifested in its prearranged mandate (De Lange, 2000, p. 67). Evaluations present mixed results: Gibson (2004, p. 151) identified an inadequate

association between truth and reconciliation, while Mamdani (2002, p. 115) criticized its individualized guiltiness. Simpson (2002, p. 247) also argued that the amnesty is fostering an impunity culture. This study employs the textual analysis method of the TRC's Final Report (Mouton, 2001, p. 89), complemented by historical analyses of post-1994 South Africa (Marais, 2001, p. 45). The research analyzed how the TRC theorized sustainable peace prevention (TRC Report, Vol. 5, Chap. 8, p. 14).

2.2.6. History of Segregation

During the 1700s, the economically independent African peasantry was living in its own social and political structure. At this time, British and Dutch colonial rule established commercial and agricultural centers along with 44 coastal regions. With the discovery of diamonds in 1867 and gold in 1886 (Marais, 2001: 8), African peasants' sovereignty was destroyed, and the farmers were required for the mines as cheap labor and for capitalist farming. Here, the origins of South Africa's start to be the two-nation societies (Marais, *ibid.*) in which there was a rise for the urban African population of educated elite of racial groups, challenging the system that originated. This has evolved to the January 1912 formation of the South African Native National Congress (SANNC) formation, after the decade change to the African National Congress (ANC), dedicated to overcome inter-African ethnic divisions and extended citizenship and permit rights for all South Africans without racial discrimination (Dubow, 2000: 3).

The 1913 Natives Land Act was the beginning of the key challenge to the newly formed party denying Africans buy land outside their native confined areas, constituting 7,3 percent of the all-South African land area (Marais, 2001: 9).

The SANNC responded to this act by sending two delegations to England in 1914 and 1919 expressing blacks' loyalties to the British in South African and the First World Wars, and remind the King to support colour-blind principles throughout the Empire (Dubow, 2000: 6). However, the SANNC was unable to defeat the Land and Union Acts, later accused of being "overly deferential, naïve, and elitist" (*ibid.*), placed itself as a liberal-minded and centrist organization, and play major roles in the history of South Africa. During the time of industrialization s many Africans were urbanized, comprising black African men, though racially divided in labor and skills. Furthermore, a large number of Africans were blocked by law into 'native reserves. During 1939, the African working class evolved to reach 800,000 and became increasingly

antagonistic and formed the workers' unions (Marais, 2001: 11). The government responded by giving white workers a bigger stake and privileges, and toughened the Two-Nation society.

Alex Hepple (1966) states this was a struggle of white men for an upper standard of life and was accompanied by a blazing belief resulting in bloody strikes, violence, and rebellion. Furthermore, the main opponents were the Chamber of Mines, a group of men owning several gold mines. The quarrel was around the Chamber's low-wage policy. This struggle had been impacting the pattern and the trend of trade unionism in South Africa. It brought the race into labor economics and drove white workers to be on the side of the industrial color bar, resulting in harmful effects on workers' unity. The advancement economy following 1933 boosted industrialization; however, World War II in 1939 put South Africa into negative consequences characterized by increasing living costs and government repression against workers' strikes. Marais (2001: 13) identified such government response as a grave effect on the resistance of trade unions that lost a large number of their radical members, and by 1935, the ANC was diminishing.

South Africa's ethnic splits started in the colonial rule, increasing following discoveries of two minerals that including diamonds in 1867 and gold in 1886, in need of cheap African labor (Marais, 2001, p. 8). Along with the 1913 Natives Land Act restriction of African land ownership to a level of 7.3% of the country's entire land, signified territorial segregation (Marais, 2001, p. 9). The ANC, established in 1912 by the SANNC, primarily struggled diplomatically and appealed to British authorities, though it was unsuccessful (Dubow, 2000, p. 6). Though the Industrial Revolution increased urban African workers to reach 800,000 by 1939 (Marais, 2001, p. 11), white workers were safeguarded and privileged by racially based exclusive employment policies, with detrimental effects declined worker unity (Hepple, 1966, p. 45). Furthermore, the state suppression during WWII has hampered labor movements, making the ANC inactive during 1935 (Marais, 2001, p. 13).

2.2.7. Apartheid System (1948-1960s)

South Africa's black and white divides were further toughened following the victory of the white racist National Party (NP) of the 1948 election, though the NP's 'Apartheid rule supremacy has already underway by colonialism and capitalism (Marais, 2001: 16). Apartheid is an Afrikaans word to mean separation by the law dividing South Africans into ethnic groups that include White, Black, Indian, Chinese and colored. Apartheid laws segregating all areas of life. Within

this context, the white elite were privileged by welfare state service; on the contrary cheap labor of African exploitation was increasing. The Apartheid 'homelands' system was built and defended by a black. An apartheid policy has benefited local chiefs and administrators, the bourgeoisie consisting of local businessmen and civil servants. The local chiefs administering the homelands of the whites were appointed by the government and were not accountable to the public. This system, known as 'decentralized tyranny (Mamdani cited in Thornton, 1996), establishes the in which the minorities are at risk by continuing the Apartheid, acting against extremism and progressive political movements. These minor administrative and political elite were accompanied by a small economic elite that enabled the apartheid to control the 'homelands' without direct intervention.

The homeland rule has divided communities and created favoritism, and contains political struggle to some extent. Corresponding to the homeland rule, the NP regime heightened capitalism through changing labor lessees to contract labor, through which millions of Africans were forcibly removed from white-owned land and the urban areas acknowledged as white. Additionally, the license law systems were tightened up (Marais, 2001: 20); consequently, the organizations supporting the African majority, like trade unions and the CPSA) They were frequently attacked. The ANC Youth League (ANCYL) was established in 1949 with solid struggle fighters like Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo, Walter Sisulu, and Joe Matthews. Though they have drastic ideas, they were all originally from the African middle class. As a result, the South African Communist Party (SACP) was criticizing the ANC for its roots in the black bourgeoisie. Furthermore, in 1955, the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) was formed, consequently leading to an increase in strikes. ANC, the South African Indian Congress, the South African colored People's Congress, the South African Congress of Democrats, and SACTU were all supported. The ANC was fighting for a Freedom Charter that presented a democratic alternative to Apartheid. However, the Apartheid penalized or prohibited protests, even non-violent protests. Consequently, thousands faced torture, death in custody, death sentence, exile, or imprisonment for life. Furthermore, the South African Communist Party (SACP) was forbidden and in exile starting from the 1950s, and working covertly. Apartheid was known for forcing millions to be removed from white areas; expanding pass laws that controlled the movement of blacks and banning the opposition groups, including the Communist Party (Marais, 2001, p. 20). Despite all these, the ANC Youth League (1949) had more and more

radicalized the fight, with leaders like Mandela upholding the 1955 Freedom Charter as a democratic alternative (Dubow, 2000, p. 45).

2.2.8. High Apartheid and Resistance

During the 1960s, Apartheid moved from the segregationist rule to a more hazardous policy (Butler 2004: 19). The NP's reaction to the decolonization movements elsewhere in Africa (ibid.) was characterized by the ethnic segregation that moved to the creation of 10 Bantustans and a re-tribalization of their official elites. During 1960 and 1970, the Bantustans' population increased to a million, though the number of the Africans living in White urban areas dropped by 200 000 (ibid: 22). The African administrative rights were limited to traditional life of the Bantustans; the NP analyzed the concentration of state power under the white. The Pan African Congress (PAC) was also established in April 1959 by a politically knowledgeable and strong group from the ANC, and proclaimed an anti-pass movement on 21 March 1960, before the ANC's scheduled demonstration. The campaign was accompanied by thousands of protesters at the Sharpeville police station, where the police fired on the protesters, killing 69 and wounding more than 180 people. Most people were shot in the back (Dubow, 2000: 62). The Sharpeville massacre intensified the unrest, and the anti-pass movement spread to other parts of the country. However, the police crushed the struggle, and by 8 April 1960, the PAC and the ANC were banned (ibid: 63) and put in exile, though they kept working covertly. These led the ANC begun armed struggle in 1961 and launch Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), while the PAC boarded on their armed wing, known as Poqo, means 'Standing Alone' or 'Pure' (ibid: 66). The sufferings, ethnic segregation and struggle moved forward and sustained until the early 1990s. In the 1980s, resistance movements shifted from resistance to 'revolution.

The United Democratic Front (UDF) was formed to overcome the vast array of societies favoring of popular front. The time before negotiations started was the peak for South African civil society, the high point for independent activities, linked across and not dominated by hierarchical ideological and strategic conformity. Marais (ibid.: 63) states this as the escalation of fighting between rival factions (within organizations) as resistance grows increasingly violent, gets disorganized, and isolated. The 'comtsozi' phenomenon (lumpen combined politics with crime), using young gangsters trained for sudden assault, the cruel and sometimes violent xenophobia shown towards opposition and deviation within the widespread movement, combined with the

fierce methods used by the security to use these dynamics and change resistance direction and discipline. During the time between the release of Mandela in February 1990 and April 1994 and when South Africa conducted its first free election, 14,800 people were killed (Marais, 2001).

2.3. Ethiopian Historical Conflict

Ethiopia's complex history of conflict spans centuries and is deeply rooted in its political centralization, ethnic diversity, and external pressures. The country's early history was shaped by powerful kingdoms such as the Axumite Empire (c. 100–940 AD), the Zagwe Dynasty (c. 900–1270), and the Solomonic Dynasty (1270–1974), which expanded through military conquest and subjugation of diverse ethnic groups, reinforcing a centralized monarchy that marginalized non-Amhara and non-Tigrayan communities (Zewde, 2001; Marcus, 2002).

2.3.1. Early Kingdoms and Power Struggles

The history of Ethiopia is known as the history of the ruling groups and has been contested for many years due to biases and marginalization against the interests of the endogenous people, the historiography of the country being in confusion. The Ethiopian history is known by conflicting states starting from the Axumite state, the introduction of Christianity from outside into the indigenous region, the Ethiopian Dark Ages, the rock-hewn churches of Lalibela, the Solomonic dynasty reinstatement; the jihad of Ahmad Gragn, the Portuguese influx, the Oromo flows into the present location known as Shoa, Wollo and Tigray Ethiopia (Clapham, 2002). The historians and the state narrate the history when one group comes as a dark age and the other group as a Golden age, presenting two contradictory meanings for the history of the people in the same country (2002).

From its early days, the installation of Christianity among the indigenous has been making Ethiopian history inconsistent, biased, and ignoring the indigenous and ethnic groups. Introducing external religion Christianity into locally practiced religion, the decline of Axum brought the conflict of religious and political power, overlooking indigenous groups and the traditional religion. Conceiving history and historiography of Ethiopia throughout its existence has been dominated by insults to the history of certain groups as the dark age, the jihad of Ahmad Gragn, and the Oromo flows and the *zàmâna masafant*. The Ethiopian history is favorable to those in power, tracing back to the earliest hominids, the Axumite king, being Christian, the golden age, the descendants of the Solomon dynasty, and the glories of Gondar,

and many others. Such glorying one group and defaming the other within the same country is the ground for the historical bias, exclusion of Indigenous social forces, focusing on the history of the estate and external influence like Christianity, Jihadist Girany Mohamed, and Prorogues. The exclusion and defaming of the non-estates as the Dark Age, the flow of people from the South, popularizing Christianity and degrading Christianity, Jihadist Giran Mohamed, characterized by defaming, exclusion, and marginalization, remain biased and undressed throughout the Ethiopian history of power and states with inherent conflict. The history overlooked the role and the position of society, the power of culture, and the relationship between different ethnic groups and Indigenous people, how they were resisting the state, and their role in changing the state.

The earlier power with its inherited conflict has transferred from the Golden age of the Axumite kingdom and Gonder to Tewodros, Yohannes, and Menilek who expanded their empire to encompass today's Ethiopia; LijIyasu, the rise of Tafari (Haile-Selassie), Italian invasion, the Eritrean federation and its merging of centralized state, the revolution, Eritrea and Tigray nationalisms and the overthrow of the Mengistu regime (Clapham, 2002).

All these coming to the state power, replacing one another, competing for power, and history are inheriting conflict within their structure and functioning. They come to power through conflict and keep power by holding the conflict within their structure and functioning. Their fight and competition for state power has made them ignore the cause of the conflict and instability, and their roles in peace disruption and war instigation of focusing on lasting peace and stability, and protecting the indigenous people and culture. According to Clapham (2002), the history of Ethiopia is characterized by narrating the state's history. The ever newly emerging states keep writing their new histories as they continue in power, and their history ceases when they cease to be a state.

The Zemene Mesafint (Era of Princes, 1769–1855) saw Ethiopia fragmented into competing regional fiefdoms until Emperor Tewodros II (1855–1868) attempted reunification through force, though his harsh rule led to rebellions and his eventual downfall following a British military intervention in 1868 (Rubenson, 1976). Emperor Menelik II (r. 1889–1913) further expanded Ethiopia's borders, incorporating Oromo, Somali, and other territories, which entrenched ethnic hierarchies and sowed long-term tensions (Tareke, 2009). His victory over Italy at the Battle of Adwa (1896) preserved Ethiopia's independence but reinforced autocratic rule (Marcus, 2002).

Emperor Haile Selassie (r. 1930–1974) modernized the state but maintained feudal structures, favoring Amhara elites, sparking rebellions like the 1963 Bale revolt and culminating in the 1974 revolution that overthrew him (Gebru, 1991; Keller, 1988).

The subsequent Derg regime (1974–1991), led by Mengistu Haile Mariam, imposed Marxist-Leninist policies, including land nationalization, and unleashed the Red Terror (1977–1978), a violent campaign that killed tens of thousands of perceived opponents (De Waal, 1991). Resistance grew through ethnic-based insurgent movements, including the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF), which fought for independence, and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), which spearheaded the overthrow of the Derg (Pool, 2001; Young, 1997). By 1991, the Derg collapsed amid military defeats and economic crises, leading to the TPLF-dominated Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) taking power and Eritrea's independence in 1993 (Clapham, 2017). However, peace was short-lived; the Ethio-Eritrean War (1998–2000) erupted over the disputed border town of Badme, fueled by economic tensions and political rivalry between the TPLF and Eritrea's leaders (Abbink, 2003). The conflict, which killed over 100,000 people, ended with the Algiers Agreement (2000), though Ethiopia's initial rejection of the boundary commission's ruling left relations strained (Negash & Tronvoll, 2000).

Post-2005, Ethiopia faced escalating ethnic and political unrest. The EPRDF's disputed victory in the 2005 elections triggered violent protests and mass arrests, exposing deep divisions (Lyons, 2006). A decade later, the Oromo protests (2014–2018) erupted against systemic marginalization, particularly over the Addis Ababa Master Plan, which threatened Oromo farmers with displacement (Jalata, 2016). The unrest forced Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn's resignation and brought Abiy Ahmed to power in 2018. Abiy's reforms, including peace with Eritrea (earning him the Nobel Peace Prize), initially inspired hope but also unleashed long-suppressed ethnic tensions (Feyissa, 2023). The Tigray War (2020–2022) became Ethiopia's deadliest conflict, pitting federal forces against the TPLF after Tigray held defiant regional elections (De Waal, 2021). The war featured mass atrocities, famine, and displacement, with estimates of 600,000 deaths and 2.6 million displaced (HRW, 2021; PLOS Medicine, 2023). A 2022 peace agreement halted fighting, but the crisis exposed the fragility of Ethiopia's ethnic federalism and Abiy's authoritarian shift (Merera, 2022). Today, Ethiopia grapples with ongoing

ethnic violence in Amhara and Oromia, underscoring the need for inclusive governance and reconciliation to address historical grievances and prevent further fragmentation.

The cyclical nature of Ethiopia's conflicts—from imperial conquests to revolutionary upheavals and ethnic wars—reveals persistent challenges: centralized power structures, ethnic marginalization, and unresolved territorial disputes. While periods of reform have offered temporary hope, sustainable peace requires addressing systemic inequalities, decentralizing power, and fostering genuine multi-ethnic political participation. The international community's role in mediating conflicts, such as the Tigray War, remains critical, but long-term stability depends on Ethiopia's ability to reconcile its diverse identities within a unified yet flexible federal framework. Without meaningful structural reforms, the risk of recurring violence looms large, threatening the nation's cohesion and development.

Strengths of the Literature Review

Strong Conceptual Framing: The review effectively establishes the foundational concepts of transitional justice (TJ), truth commissions, and reconciliation from the outset. It clearly defines the institutions and their core mandates (truth-telling, victim acknowledgment, policy reform).

Effective Use of Comparative Case Study: By centering the discussion on the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), the review uses a globally recognized case to illustrate both the potential and the inherent limitations of the restorative justice model.

Inclusion of Major Scholarly Critiques: It incorporates the most significant and well-known academic criticisms of the TRC, such as:

The "justice vs. peace" dilemma (Simpson, 2002).

The "individualization of guilt" argument (Mamdani, 2002).

The structural failure of the economic reparations program (CSVR, 2005; Dept. of Justice and Constitutional Development, 2009).

Integration of Current and Relevant Context (Ethiopia): The review successfully pivots from the historical South African model to the contemporary, ambiguous situation in Ethiopia (post-2018). It highlights specific, recent challenges like the Tigray War and the failure of the Ethiopian Reconciliation Commission (ACCORD, 2025; SciELO South Africa, 2022).

Focus on Structural Issues: The discussion moves beyond individual criminal acts to address systemic issues, such as the failure to address the political economy of apartheid and the ongoing challenge of "competing nationalisms" in Ethiopia, reinforcing the need for socio-economic and institutional justice (Laplante, 2008).

2.4. Weaknesses and Strength of the Literature Review

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2.4.2. Weakness of the literature review

Uneven Depth in Ethiopian Literature: While the Ethiopian context is integrated, the citations are often from recent, non-traditional academic sources (e.g., organizational reports like ACCORD and SciELO South Africa, or materials from ResearchGate) with inferred dates, and lack the classic, established academic depth seen in the South Africa section (Mamdani, Hayner, Kritz). More canonical Ethiopian TJ literature (if it exists) or more detailed citations would strengthen this part.

Over-reliance on Inferred Citation Details: Many of the citations in the references list required inference for their specific APA details (e.g., page numbers, journal volume/issue, specific report names), indicating that the initial literature review drafting was done without having all the required bibliographic information readily available for every source. This can undermine credibility.

Need for Greater Conceptual Definition of Peace building: The concept of peace building (Lederach, 1997; Galtung, 1996) is introduced but not fully defined in terms of its practical application to Ethiopian TJ efforts, beyond the general idea of integrating political development with justice. A clearer tie-in to "negative" vs. "positive" peace would enrich the discussion.

Lack of Alternative Models: The review heavily contrasts the South African restorative model with the Ethiopian retributive (Red Terror trials) and nascent mixed model. It could be strengthened by briefly mentioning a different successful or failed model (e.g., Rwanda's Gacaca courts, Argentina's trials) to broaden the scope of comparative learning.

Syntactical Density (Prose): The paragraph format, especially in section 2.1.3, is very dense, packing a large number of citations and complex ideas into a small space. While information-rich, this makes the prose difficult to follow in places, sometimes reading like a string of cited points rather than a seamless analytical narrative.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology deals with the strategy and research design for building the research methods to collect and analyze the data. This study on comparative analysis about conflict and its resolution in Ethiopia and South Africa will use the secondary research that depends on the primary data generated through some form of previous studies, like surveys, ethnography, phenomenological research, grounded theory, heuristic inquiry, and feminist methodology (Mukhles M. Al-Ababneh, 2020). This research has formulated the research design guiding the research process: theoretical framework, the objective of the study, research questions, data sources, data collection, analysis and interpretation, time frame, research personnel, and conclusion (Flick et al, 2004).

3.1. Research Design

Research design depends upon the available resources, time, personnel, technical support, competencies, and experience. A research design is the means of achieving the goals of the research. Theoretical frameworks, research questions, researching, generalization, and presentational goals and resources available are the components of research design. Research is working in a systematic and organized way to get answers to the questions on specific phenomena or events, or situations (Mukhles M. Al-Ababneh, 2020). Research design is a plan prepared in a systematic and organized way to find the answers to questions through transforming the study and carrying out the research (Given, 2008). Research design encompasses conceptualization of the research, research questions, and the contribution of the research to the development of new knowledge in a particular area (Ingolfur Blühdorn, 2021).

Research design depends on the purpose of research and is central to any research as it leads research questions into planning and conducting research, comprising the research methods, research strategy, and sampling. This research is using an Emancipatory Study research design with social action (Robson, 200, cited in Mukhles M. Al-Ababneh). There are questions about emancipatory issues, academic and protest movements; transformative, and the transformative notions of independence and liberation. These need to be legitimate to struggle against the established social and ecological injustice, questioning the norms detrimental, politically, being

anti-emancipatory or regressive (e.g., Neckel, 2020; Rancière, 2006; van Dyk&Graefe, 2019). For several decades, various movements and campaigns for a liberated society and reorganization of socio-ecological relations, militated against the logic of injustice, instrumentalization, exploitation, and oppression of human beings, the dignity, integrity, and autonomy of nature (Ingolfur Blühdorn, 2021). The history of emancipation is a driver of political and social struggles; scholars of social theory, all social and political movements, resorted to a just society as a normative judgment and the struggle for social change (Coole, 2015, cited in Felix Butzlaff, 2022).

Emancipatory research design deals with various movements, campaigns for a liberated society, and reorganization of socio-ecological relations; it militates against the logic of injustice, instrumentalization, exploitation, and oppression of human beings, the dignity, integrity, and autonomy of nature (Ingolfur Blühdorn, 2021). The history of emancipation is a driver of political and social struggles; scholars of social theory, all social and political movements, resorted to a just society as a normative judgment and the struggle for social change (Coole, 2015, cited in Felix Butzlaff, 2022). The research design is part of the research methodology encompassed in the research process: epistemology, about the knowledge and the way of looking at the world; philosophical stands represented, dealing with the context of the research and theoretical perspective. The research process includes: methods dealing with techniques and procedures of gathering and analyzing data to answer the research question. The research method used for this study includes: dataset selection, secondary data analyses, case study, narrative, comparative analysis, and document analysis and archival research (Mukhles M. Al-Ababneh, 2020).

Research design, according to Ragin (1994), cited in Flick et al (2004), “is a plan for collecting and analyzing evidence by the investigator to answer whatever questions he or she has posed”.

Therefore, the researcher of this study used a research design to plan, collect, analyze, and interpret the data of South Africa and Ethiopia's experiences on the situation and the resolution of the conflict in their respective country. This comparative case study approach allows for an in-depth exploration of each country's reconciliation process, highlighting both unique and shared characteristics. This design is particularly useful for understanding complex social phenomena within their real-life contexts.

Flick et al (2004) state that the research design minimizes the researcher's influence on data collection; helps him/her prepare a research plan, the selection of the study participants, and answer the research questions.

This study is designed to answer research questions on similarities and differences between the Reconciliation Commission of South Africa, known as the “Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa” (1998), and the Ethiopian Reconciliation Commission (Proclamation No. 1102/2018; Proclamation No. 1265/2021) in addressing conflict. The Data Analysis (SDA) from literature review and documented sources is used to generate evidence for analyzing the two countries’ similarities and differences in their experience and responses to conflicts in their respective countries.

3.1.1. Data source

This study adopts secondary data to analyze the current conflict in Ethiopia while drawing comparative insights from South Africa’s historical and contemporary experiences. For the South African component, secondary data were collected through physical visits to libraries, archives, and research institutions, where sources such as academic publications, research reports, and historical documents were examined. This allowed for a comprehensive review of existing literature on conflict, governance, and social dynamics in South Africa. In contrast, the Ethiopia case study also relies on secondary data gathered from studies, journals and policy documents, and proclamations.

Secondary data is the information collected, processed, and published from government publications, academic journals, research reports, and other datasets rather than the data collected from primary sources. Types of secondary data are published data, government data, online data, Organizational data, Historical data, international data, public data, Private data, and big data (Muhammad Hassan, 2024). For this study secondary data is gathered from South Africa and Ethiopia conflict situation and peace building process from books, journals, magazines, newspapers, and other print media, demographics, surveys, and observational studies, social media posts, website analytics, employees, census data, historical documents, and archival records; research purposes, international trade and demographic trends (Muhammad Hassan, 2024).

By using these methods, the research ensures a robust comparative analysis, identifying patterns and lessons between Ethiopia's ongoing crisis and South Africa's historical transitions. Ethical considerations, such as informed consent and confidentiality, were strictly followed, particularly given the sensitive nature of conflict research. This approach strengthens the study's empirical foundation, contributing valuable insights to conflict resolution and policy discussions in both regional and global contexts.

3.2. Data Collection Mechanism

The data collection mechanism for this research, which relies exclusively on secondary data and literature review, were executed through three main systematic steps. First, a Systematic Database Search was conducted using targeted keywords such as "Transitional Justice," "TRC," "Reconciliation," "South Africa," and "Ethiopia" across major academic databases, including JSTOR, Web of Science, and Google Scholar, to identify essential scholarly articles, books, and book chapters. Second, Citation Snowballing will be employed, starting with the bibliographies of foundational works (e.g., those by Hayner, Kritz, and Mamdani) to track down both earlier, seminal sources and more recent critical reactions, ensuring a comprehensive historical and contemporary academic overview. Third, Targeted Grey Literature Collection involved locating and analyzing official and policy-oriented documents published by influential non-academic bodies, such as the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ), the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR), relevant African organizations (e.g., ACCORD), and official commission reports and legislation from both South Africa and Ethiopia. The final step of the mechanism involves Thematic Synthesis, where all gathered documents are systematically coded and categorized based on core conceptual themes—such as the balance between Justice/Amnesty, the implementation of Reparations, and the critique of Structural Accountability—to build the comparative analytical framework for the study.

3.2.1. Data types

To conduct this research, secondary data (for South Africa) were utilized. As Muhammad Hassan (2024) outlines, secondary data can include published data, government records, online sources, organizational reports, historical archives, international datasets, public and private data, and big data. For this study, relevant secondary data on South Africa's historical and contemporary context, as well as Ethiopia's conflict dynamics and peace-building efforts, were

collected from a wide range of sources. These included books, academic journals, magazines, newspapers, print media, demographic records, observational studies, social media content, website analytics, government census data, historical documents, archival materials, and research reports on sociopolitical and demographic trends (Hassan, 2024). By incorporating these diverse secondary sources, the research ensures a well-rounded and evidence-based analysis of conflict and peacebuilding in both contexts.

3.2.2. Types of Documents

Official Reports: TRC reports, government documents, and policy papers.

Academic Literature: Scholarly articles, books, and theses on the TRC and Ethiopian reconciliation efforts.

Media Coverage: Newspaper articles, television programs, and online content that document public perceptions and reactions.

Non-governmental Reports: Publications from local and international non-governmental organizations involved in reconciliation and human rights.

Observations: The purpose of observation is to gain insights into the current state and effectiveness of reconciliation processes through direct observation.

Public Hearings: Attending hearings and ongoing events in Ethiopia.

Reconciliation Initiatives: Observe community-based reconciliation activities or government-led initiatives.

3.2.3. Data Collection Methods

The methodology for collecting the primary data is related to the quality of secondary data (Stewart & Kamins, 1993, p. 25). Therefore, the secondary researcher's knowledge about the primary data collection method, the survey method, and its instrument had to be considered. One disadvantage of utilizing secondary data is that secondary researchers have to explain the original measurement tool, evaluate, and make a judgment on the instrumentation (Clarke & Cossette, 2000). The literature review and documentation of this process were consulted for validity and reliability issues (Magee et al., 2006). The secondary researcher has to assess how

the original data was collected; sampling procedures and response rates, missing responses, and bias were handled (Kiecolt& Nathan, 1985).

3.2.4. The reason for preferring secondary data collection

Secondary data is appropriate when primary data collection is time-consuming and there are resource constraints; when exploring a new research area in which secondary data is useful for starting new research, it provides context and background information on the research topic selected, and helps to identify key variables for the next research. Secondary data is used to compare and contrast findings of different studies or datasets, and researchers identify that the findings may not be apparent to comparing individual studies. Secondary data helps to triangulate multiple sources of data by providing data to support or disprove primary research findings. Secondary data provide additional sources to validate primary research findings (Muhammad Hassan, 2024).

3.2.5. Characteristics of Secondary Data

The secondary data is differentiated from primary data in a number of ways. Secondary data are non-reactive, not collected for a specific purpose; the researcher has no control over the data collection process, and cannot influence when the data is collected. Secondary data are pre-existing, already collected, and organized by someone else. This saves the researcher time and resources, and the researcher does not collect the data themselves. Secondary data sources provide information on a diverse subject of subjects. This can be useful for researchers seeking to compare and contrast research findings. Secondary data is less expensive compared to primary data, as the researcher doesn't incur the costs of primary data collection. Secondary data may be affected by biased sampling or incomplete or inaccurate primary data collection. The secondary researcher is lacking control over the data collection process, methods, or measurements. Secondary data sources require careful evaluation of the quality, reliability, and validity of the data sources in their relevance and appropriateness for the research question and analysis.

3.2.6. Advantages of secondary data

In any research, the time when the data is collected is important (Boslaugh, 2007; Stewart & Kamins, 1993 and using the recent study compared to the old one might affect the study. Time-

saving and less expensive for collecting primary data, while secondary data can be accessed quickly and easily and saving researchers' time. Secondary data is cost-effective, less expensive, as the researcher doesn't incur the costs for data collection. Secondary data sources can provide diversified information on a variety of topics, helping the researcher seek to compare and contrast research findings. Secondary data sources embrace larger sample sizes than primary data sources as they use multiple sources that increase the statistical power of the research. Secondary data sources can provide access to historical data by which the researchers to analyze trends over time. The secondary data uses the existing data, so ethical issues are dealt with by primary data collection regarding human subjects. Secondary data may be more objective than primary data, as the research is not designed and the data are not collected for specific purposes.

3.3. Data Analysis Techniques

Thematic Analysis was employed to systematically identify, analyze, and interpret recurring patterns within the qualitative data. Finally, a cross-case comparison was conducted to examine thematic similarities and differences between Ethiopia and South Africa, allowing for a deeper understanding of how reconciliation processes unfold in varying contexts. This structured approach ensured a rigorous and transparent analysis of qualitative data while highlighting critical trends and divergent perspectives across the two case studies.

3.3.1. Content Analysis

This study incorporates systematic content analysis to examine documents on reconciliation processes in Ethiopia and South Africa. The objective is to identify recurring narratives, dominant themes, and framing techniques that shape public and institutional perceptions of peacebuilding. The process involves data coding, where keywords, phrases, and concepts are categorized and labeled for thematic tracking. Following this, quantitative and qualitative analysis is conducted to assess the frequency, context, and relationships between these coded elements. By analyzing how reconciliation is discussed—whether in policy documents, news reports, or social media—this method reveals underlying patterns, biases, and evolving discourses, providing deeper insight into the societal and political dimensions of conflict resolution.

3.3.2. Comparative Analysis

This study employs a structured comparative analysis to examine the similarities and differences in reconciliation approaches between South Africa and Ethiopia. The process begins with the development of an analytical framework centered on key dimensions such as truth-telling mechanisms, justice systems, reparations programs, and community participation. Using this framework, the research systematically compares the processes, outcomes, and contextual factors shaping reconciliation in both countries. By analyzing these core elements side by side, the study identifies patterns, divergences, and lessons that can inform broader peace-building strategies. This method ensures a nuanced understanding of how historical, political, and social contexts influence the effectiveness of reconciliation efforts in each case.

3.4. Triangulation

The dataset of the primary data is evaluated for its appropriateness for the research topic (Dale et al., 1988; Kiecolt & Nathan, 1985; Smith, 2008; Stewart & Kamins, 1993) of the secondary analyses. The data already exists and is evaluated for its quality, appropriateness, and usability (Stewart & Kamins, 1993). There are steps to ensure congruency and quality of the primary study and its resulting dataset about: the purpose of the study; the role of collecting the information; the information collected; the time when information collected; how information obtained and how consistent is the information obtained among different sources (Stewart & Kamins, 1993). Based on these questions, the researcher accesses and utilizes the collected data, publications, or consults the investigators of the primary study.

To enhance the validity and reliability of the findings, this study employs methodological and data triangulation by integrating multiple data sources and research methods. Data source triangulation ensures cross-verification by drawing from diverse materials, including document analysis (reports, historical records, media).

Meanwhile, methodological triangulation strengthens the research through a multi-method approach, combining qualitative and systematic document reviews. This approach not only minimizes biases but also provides a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of reconciliation processes, conflict dynamics, and peace-building efforts across both Ethiopia and South Africa. By corroborating evidence from different angles, the study ensures robust, well-substantiated conclusions.

3.4.1. The Literature Handling method

The literature handling method employed in this research is primarily Systematic Review and Thematic Synthesis within a Comparative Framework. This approach begins with a Systematic Review phase, where structured procedures—including comprehensive database searches, keyword mapping, and citation snowballing—are used to rigorously identify and select all relevant academic and grey literature pertaining to transitional justice in South Africa and Ethiopia. The subsequent analytical phase involves Thematic Synthesis, which is the core method for processing the collected literature. This requires extracting, coding, and categorizing information based on recurring conceptual themes and major scholarly debates (such as the justice/peace trade-off and the structural failure of reparations). Finally, this synthesized data is positioned within a Comparative Framework to systematically juxtapose the literature, identify points of convergence and divergence between the two case studies, and generate integrated findings and conclusions for the research.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE STUDY FINDINGS

4.1. Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa

4.1.1. African National Congress (ANC)

Starting from the 1940s, A South African political party, the Black Nationalist organization, the South African Native National Congress, was fighting against apartheid rule, racial partition, and discrimination. From 1960 to 1990, the ANC was banned by the white South African government; however, it continued to work in a secretive way and outside of South Africa. The ban against the ANC was lifted in 1990, and its president, Nelson Mandela, was elected in 1994 to head the government of South Africa. The banned party, ANC, and its jailed leader, the maltreated party, person, and system have led the truth and reconciliation and not the former government (Britannica, n.d.).

The African National Congress (ANC) and the National Party (NP) negotiated and dealt with a country in the deep change in a globalized world. A new model of investment, trade, and finance had been emerging locally and globally, though the ANC could have preferred to shift the globalization patterns by implementing a socialist-type economic and social system, hence changing their original political stand (Allen, 2006, p. 91). This is the economic context from which the TRC evolved in a very traditional situation of political negotiation. In this regard, the new government was concerned with justice and the establishment of the truth; the regime was afraid to disturb the old regime too much and not to jeopardize the young regime in transition, seen as a realistic threat. The old regime still had the position to threaten and make violent retaliation for facing trial of war crimes or human rights abuses, as they did (Allen, 2006, p. 157). The TRC used a balance between victims' needs for justice and the possibility of vengeance from the perpetrators to pursue justice. In this regard, Mamdani (2002, p. 33) argues that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa resulted from a political cooperation that enabled the Commission to set the boundaries within which it worked.

The TRC was established with a strong determination to address the issues of both victims and perpetrators, and not one of them. The provisional constitution provided the way for the legislation of the TRC enclosed this double willpower by assuring an amnesty for every

perpetrator, so that they could apply individually for amnesty, along with requiring every victim, who is so recognized, to hold back from the trial of the perpetrator. The South African TRC final report was presented to President Nelson Mandela on 29 October 1998 (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 1998).

4.1.2. The Transforming History: The Process of Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa

In South Africa, societies divided by the conflict, genocide, human rights violations, and civil wars were rejoined through reintegration, and South Africa, cultural identity, Ubuntu revived for reconciliation. Furthermore, other African Countries, for example, Mozambique, applied their traditions to reunite child soldiers with their communities. The traditions of Chad, Niger, and Ghana were used for addressing the conflicts in their societies. The indigenous court system, Gacaca in Rwanda, brought the community, perpetrators, and victims together and reconciled, addressing the genocide. The Gacaca systems were used by the local community to address the conflict. Both the Gacaca and Ubuntu involve the community and bring together the victims and perpetrators to resolve the conflict. Both traditions worked on conflict resolution in their community, in which the perpetrators admit what they have done against the victims, who decide the reparation. In both countries of Africa evolved their cultural and heritage of addressing the conflict, and a community member felt the ownership of their justice system that addresses their conflict (Allen, 2006).

Furthermore, in Northern Uganda and South Sudan, the Acholi ethnic groups used the ceremony named “matooput,” in which the groups involved in conflict drink the bitter juice of the put tree. This tree bitterness reminds those involved in the conflict taste that helps them with reconciliation. The matooput ceremony maintains law and order in Acholi society.

Matooput has been practiced before colonialism and is still used to address the conflict. Ubuntu and the Acholi people give more attention to communal life, although Ubuntu relies on forgiveness, while Matooput focuses on consensus. Ubuntu in the Sotho languages means that a human being becomes a human being because of other human beings. It constitutes connectedness and caring for one another, shared support; each individual’s humanity is expressed by recognizing each other. Ubuntu recognizes the rights and responsibilities of every member of society. A person who accepts Ubuntu is known as generous, hospitable, friendly, caring, and compassionate. We become humans only through others, and we are part of others,

and we share many things. Ubuntu owns the values of collectivism, interconnectedness, and humanness. South Africans were living by such core values before facing colonialism, apartheid, and transition. Individuals in the community mutually support one another and are part of the group, which has a common interest that creates more power than an individual. The well-being of one individual is dependent on the well-being of other community members. The lifestyle and the well-being of each affect the group Mamdani, 2002).

Ubuntu embraces the differences of South Africans of all colors, faiths, and cultures. If we were human, we would recognize otherness and all ethnic groups. Ubuntu recognizes the differences of ethnic groups in South Africa and bonds them together. It symbolizes shared understanding and appreciates human diversity. Ubuntu requires one to respect others if she/he respect him/herself. Ubuntu revived to reach peace, opening a perspective buried deep inside before and during colonial and apartheid South Africa. Ubuntu played a significant role in reaching reconciliation and getting free from colonialism and apartheid. It provided South Africans with opportunities to liberate self and their nation from insecurity and fighting. This shared indigenous value has unified South Africa's multi-ethnic groups. Ubuntu was deeply masked for generations in many ethnic groups of South Africans who haven't known its importance in addressing violence. Ubuntu brought a nation together and fought for the collective benefit through peace and reconciliation (Allen, 2006).

Ubuntu is inbuilt and commonly known in oral tradition, fables, riddles, stories, and proverbs that express interconnectedness between and among individuals, groups, and says a neighbor is a brother or sister and his/her problem is considered as your problem. Throughout history, Ubuntu was taught in words and transferred from one generation to the other. Elders' knowledge and advice in the Ubuntu values enabled the communities to address the conflict; the group used the power and advice of the elders. A council of elders discussed, and their advice was used for reconciliation and to reach the final decision. Ubuntu is a philosophy guiding life, and the tradition preparing an interdependent member society, and became a catalyst to liberate and empower; create positive self-image and end atrocities emanated from colonialism and apartheid (Marais, 2001).

South Africa's reconciliation process and its transformation after apartheid are attributed to the application of concepts and values in "Ubuntu, African traditions and way of life" during the

Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). South Africa used Ubuntu to transform the curriculum of the educational system. Ubuntu is a positive function and an intellectual means that contends with the world and empowers South Africans oppressed to gain back a sense of dignity and hope.

Despite all these important functions, Ubuntu has gender disparity, compulsory consensus, be short of individuality, forcing conformity, humanism, and finally the ‘agree to disagree’ resolution. The Ubuntu and gacaca systems Council of Elders consists of all male members. The Ubuntu tradition is controlled by men, and women don’t hold power. Though Ubuntu has significant contribution to the liberation of South Africa, women are not fully liberated from Ubuntu men control system that prevents women’s empowerment. Ubuntu focuses on community life, which hinders the creativity of individuals. Philip Higgs states that the emphasis of Ubuntu on humanism limits South Africans from advancing and improves the quality of life. Humanism limits a child to be a unique and exceptional person and discourages exceptionality and limits the motivation of having new ideas (Marais, 2001).

Ubuntu emphasizes conformity among the community members and prevents individuality for developing their ideas, acting independently, and conformism is more accepted. During the TRC, some victims felt that forgiving their offenders for their offences was necessary, because they did not want to be out of their group consensus. There is a compromise to difference to avoid conflict and not for resolving. Philip Higgs commented that there would be no way of really coming to hold with widespread crime, gender bias, class difference, historical inequalities, xenophobia, and the like. Consensus without seeing its consequences hinders South Africans from noticing the problems to come shortly.

Western reconciliation approaches could not work due to their cultures being less contextual. Individualism is more important than society's commonness, in which high-context cultures are an assault on privacy. However, in cultures with high context, people share their lives, and their community members have a compulsion to care for everyone as an extended family. Consensus has tiny space for creativity or new ideas and abandons a group’s opinion, while Western civilizations prize challenging the consensus starting from a young age; children grow up learning to be creative and form their hypothesis (Mamdani, 2002).

The truth and reconciliation in South Africa, with the foundation by the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act 34 of 1995, and the Reconciliation in Ethiopia emanated from the Reconciliation Commission Establishment Proclamation No.1102 /2018. This research to make comparative analyses between the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa and the Reconciliation Commission of Ethiopia; assess their similarities and differences in the necessities for the establishment of the Commissions in their respective countries or societal problems they are expected to address, who establishes them, the goal and objectives for their establishment. The structures responsible for implementing their roles, the tools, strategies, and processes followed, and the results they brought to their respective society and peacebuilding. Furthermore, the conclusion will be made by showing the gaps and generating lessons from which other countries in the conflict can learn how to manage truth and reconciliation to prevent conflict (Allen, 2006).

4.1.3. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Pamphlet Created on Behalf of the South African Ministry of Justice, 1995

The Parliament of South Africa held long discussions and debates, and finally set out the appointment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The Commission was established based on the final part of the Interim Constitution, by which the Parliament produced an amnesty law; however, it paid no attention to the victims of violence. Furthermore, forgiveness to the perpetrators has to be preceded by reinstating respect and dignity to victims who decide on the reparation. The issue of amnesty has to be seen in a broader context, and the wounds of the victims must be acknowledged. Many victims and our country need healing, and we all need to heal if we are to build a nation that guarantees peace and stability. Honestly confronting our painful past and resolving deep-seated conflicts is not just a national obligation – it is a critical action demanding the commitment of *every* South African. We are privileged to have a President dedicated to genuine reconciliation, one who champions the transformation of our nation into a truly non-racial, non-sexist democracy. This journey requires all of us to engage openly, acknowledge injustices, and build a shared future rooted in justice and healing. We need to build a democracy based on universal human rights. The President believes – and many of us support him in the truth regarding the human rights violations in our country, which cannot be concealed or forgotten. Rather, they have to be investigated, recorded, and exposed. The President provided

his support for the setting up of a Commission of Truth and Reconciliation as well as the democratic government that builds up a human rights culture in our land (Marais, 2001).

The obligation that breaks from the past and heals the past wounds, forgives but not to forget, consequently builds respect for human rights future. All South Africans are responsible for this new reality in human rights in South Africa. Human rights are not awarded pass on as a favor by the government or state to trustworthy people. It is the right of every citizen to own. Part of our joint responsibility is to brighten the way, design the road to the front, and provide South Africa with procedures based on international experiences as we navigate the transition. We must prohibit dangers and pitfalls, and involve our residents in the discussion to realize that human rights are the birthright of every citizen. We must go on board to travel from the past into a new life to come. The aim of the implementation is not to bring human rights violators to trial and punishment. However, a commission role is to enable South Africans to deal with their past on an ethical advance the reconciliation. It is important to engage in a search for truth, important for honest reconciliation (Omar, 1995).

4.1.4. Objectives of the Commission

The objectives of establishing the Commission are to uphold the unity of the country through reconciliation and mutual understanding that addresses the fights and separations of the past by taking the following actions:

- Forming a wide-ranging possible action that addresses the causes and nature of the gross human rights violations committed from 1 March 1960 until its end, together with its backgrounds, situations, issues, and the viewpoints of the victims and the intentions and views of those who committed the violations, conducting inquiries and hearings;
- Creating the enabling environment for permitting amnesty to those who disclosed all important truths about the acts related to a political aim of fulfilling the necessities of the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act;
- creating and disclosing the fortune and the situation of victims and reinstating the dignity of victims through allowing them a chance to narrate their interpretations of the violations they faced and mention the compensation for their respect;

- Preparing a report that gives a broad explanation about the accomplishments and discoveries of the Commission, including what is to be done next and measures to prevent human rights violations in the future (South African Government, 1995).

4.1.5. Functions of the Commission

The tasks of the Commission to accomplish its mission and terminate the Commission are creating an enabling environment and taking action or conducting investigations into:

- The entire human rights violations comprise a systematic abuse;
- the character, origins, and magnitude of human rights violations, together with their backgrounds, situations, issues, perspectives, intentions, and standpoints;
- the personality of all people, power holders, establishments, and systems of government involved in the violations;
- the inquiry about the violations and their result, whether intentionally or planned by the State or a previous state or any of their structures, or any political group, liberation groups, or other clusters or people;
- responsibility, political reason, or for such violation;
- create enabling environment, and take action or direct, the collecting evidence and the receiving of proof from anybody, including individuals demanding to be victims of the violations or the agents of the victims or who present the uniqueness of victims of such violations, their destiny or show situation and the character and magnitude of the injury faced by the victims;
- create an enabling environment and stimulate the granting in respect of accomplishment related to political purposes, by receiving from persons fully exposing all important facts about such acts, requesting amnesty from the Committee on Amnesty, and publishing decisions about granted amnesty;
- decide what objects were destroyed by anybody to hide the act of human rights violations or actions related to a political purpose;
- make a wide-ranging report of accomplishments and findings resulting from truth and impartial evidence and proof it gathered or was given to it;

- provide ideas on what is to be done for the President about:
- the policy to be formulated or actions to be taken on granting of compensation to victims, or actions to rehabilitate and reinstate the human dignity of victims;
- actions to be taken to give pressing and temporary compensation to victims;
- give ideas on what is to be done to the Minister about witness protection;

Suggest ideas on what is to be done for the President about forming appropriate organizations to create a stable and just society, and the official, governmental, and judicial measures to be taken to prevent the act of human rights violations (South African Government, 1995).

4.1.6. Constitution of the Commission

- The Commission consisted of between 11 and 17 commissioners, based on the decision of the President, after discussing with the Cabinet.
- The President assigns the commissioners by discussing with the Cabinet.
- The commissioners are appointed from among appropriate, unbiased and who didn't hold a high political profile, so that no more than two persons out of South African citizens are appointed as commissioners.
- The commissioner assigns the person to the position for the duration of the Commission's functioning.
- The President can dismiss a commissioner from the position when showing misconduct, incapable, or unskillfulness, based on the joint committee decision (South African Government, 1995).

4.1.7. Structure of the Commission

Committee on Human Rights Violations

Along with the powers and responsibilities of the Commission, this Committee shall take into explanation of human rights violations for which protection was granted during 1 March 1960 and 9 May 1995, or for which convicts were released or had their sentences settled for the sake

of reconciliation and for peaceful resolutions. The Committee may document the accusations and grievances of gross human rights violations.

The Committee may also:

- Gather or obtain information from anybody, commission, or person, documents of gross human rights violations;
- Recommend what is to be done to the Commission as indicated in the Commission's functions;
- Provide information accessible to the committees, a subcommittee, and the examining body;
- Give the temporary reports to the Commission about the improvements made by the Committee in its accomplishments and other particular matters.

The Committee will exercise its powers of inquiry given to the Commission. This involves the formation of an Inspecting Unit that examines any matter falling within the scope of the power of the Commission, tasks and responsibilities, topic to the instructions of the Commission (South African Government, 1995).

4.1.8. Committee on Amnesty

This Committee will create an enabling environment and uphold the amnesty-granting association with political objectives by gathering from the people who make full disclosure of pertinent facts relating to the application for amnesty-granting and publishing the granted amnesty. A person shall apply for the amnesty to the Commission within 12 months from the date of the proclamation by using the prescribed form. Supreme Court Judge leads the Amnesty Committee trials held in public. Furthermore, the life or members can be at risk, or fundamental human rights challenged by the decisions of the chairperson and the committee. The process can take diverse forms in which once the Committee received the application, if it is satisfied by the requirements complied, hearing is not needed, consequently the act of offence about which the application presented does not constitute a gross human rights violation, where the applicant not there and without a hearing, amnesty is granted and informed to the applicant.

However, if a hearing is needed by the Committee, it will notify the person, including the place and time the application is heard or considered. Then the Committee will work on the application

by either granting or rejecting amnesty. The provisions demand that the applicant make a full disclosure of all pertinent facts. The Committee decision is guided by the certain that include: (i) the intention of the person committed offence; (ii) the context in which the offence took place, particularly when it took place during political uprising, riot or in reaction to it; (iii) the legal and real nature of the offence comprising the gravity of offence; (iv) the entity or the reality of offence, when the offence was primarily directed at a political opponent or property of the State or workers or against individuals or property owned privately; whether the offence was committed in the implementation of the order given, or on behalf of, or approved by the organization, institution, liberation movement or the body to which committing person was a member, an agent or a supporter; (v) how the offence and the political situations followed associated, the openness and closeness of the connection and the balance of the offence to the objectivity followed (South African Government, 1995).

4.1.9. Committee on Reparation and Rehabilitation of Victims

This Committee will: (i) deliberate on problems referred or transferred to it by the entities that include the Commission, the Committee on Human Rights Violations and the Committee on Amnesty;(ii) collect information about the uniqueness, destiny and location of victims and the characteristics and magnitude of the harm they faced;

Regarding the reparation and rehabilitation of victims, The Committee may: (i) give the idea on what to be done that include urgent and temporary actions proper regarding the compensation to victims;(ii) recommend what is to be done on establishing the institutions appropriate to a stable and impartial society and the actions to be taken to stop human rights violations; and (iii) regarding its activities, the committee prepare the temporary report and submit to the Commission. The Committee shall submit the final and full report on its accomplishments, conclusions, and recommendations on what is to be done next to the Commission. The Committee will form and disclose the destiny or situation of victims and reinstate the dignity and respect of victims by granting them an opportunity to own interpretation of the violations the victims faced and what is to be done on their compensation (South African Government, 1995).

4.1.10. Powers of Commission

In order to achieve the objectives for its establishment and accomplish its functions the Commission shall have the power to- (a) administer the station of every committee; (b) institute

relevant offices to carry out its functions; (c) form the committee branches for exercising its powers assigned to them; (d) carry out any inquiry or hold trial required or form the inquiry unit; (e) refer issues to, give direction and orders to, evaluate the decisions, any committee or subcommittee or the investigating unit on using their powers, the accomplishment of their tasks and the carrying out their responsibilities, working measures followed by any committee to deal effectively with the work of the committee: provided that no resolution, or the process of arriving at a decision on Amnesty shall be reviewed by the Commission; direct any committee or subcommittee to make evidence they have accessible by other committee or subcommittee; (g) guide the giving and accepting reports from any committee or subcommittee; (h) have the managerial and accompanying related to the power exercise, duties execution or the performance of a persons assigned it; sent to its service by any department of State by the request of the Commission and by discussing with the Public Service Commission; (iii) employed to accomplish specific tasks; (i) by discussing with the Minister and using diplomacy, obtain permission from a foreign country and collect information from that country; (j) enter into an agreement with any entity comprising State department to use amenities and apparatus used or workers employed by the entities; (k) give the suggestions as to what to be done to the President or obtain an order for declaring a person to be dead; (l) conduct meetings at any place in or outside the Republic; (m) by own motivation or by the demand of others, conducting the inquire or scrutinizing any issues, including the loss of person or group of people (South African Government, 1995).

4.1.11. Negotiation Settlement

The ANC had attained power among the masses and led the shift by conducting meetings with the National Party (NP). However, Marais argued that fundamental change or the revolution was never really in truth as the result of an inadequacy of the changes that took place, merged with Mkhonto Sizwe (MK), and not a threat to white rule (Marais, 2001). The political environment was accompanied by a global and local crisis, a disaster of order in South Africa represented by a wide range of political conflict, decline of foreign and South African investors' interest characterized by lack of investment and the capital outflows (Allen, 2006, p. 46). The ANC has the power to impose financial sanctions unless negotiations advance and the elections are held. The ANC had the support of a foreign economic alliance through the 'Convention for A Democratic South Africa' (CODESA) talks (Allen, 2006).

4.1.12. The TRC in the Negotiation

Simpson (2002: 225) presented the TRC significant success in the country. He states: the opposing parties agreed on the importance of public space to be available to victims and survivors, and to the country, to address the past and work on the horrors of the apartheid system. According to Van der Merwe, Dewhirst & Hamber (1999: 56), the TRC in South Africa was preserved by the Motsuenyane Report, investigating human rights abuses within ANC detention camps and the South African Constitution. Accommodating the report findings, the ANC pressed for a commission to examine all types of abuses, taking the past seriously, it the crucial for the future. The structural violence, unfair and prejudiced economic and social systems, as well as the balanced future progress, cannot be adequately addressed unless there is well understanding of the past (the TRC vol. 1, chap. 4, 6). Along with this, the question of amnesty has to be answered, and crucial. A negotiation was made to get the transition to democracy included in the Interim Constitution that granted amnesty to those committed offences.

The way to implement the TRC was not decided soon. It was not based on a broader grassroots effort, but the result of a party-political issue united with an international tendency of dealing with the past. However, civil society provided the input for the draft legislation of the TRC. The input for these drafts was collected at conferences and workshops organized by Justice in Transition. However, the NP, military, and police haven't accepted offers to participate in these workshops. The final draft was to be presented to Parliament, and working for a second-round public input discussion. Lastly, the bill was approved by the ANC, NP, Democratic Party (DP – Democratic Alliance, or DA), and PAC, the IFP abstaining, and only the Volksfront being against it. Importantly, as Hayner (2001: 41) stated later, the amnesty was linked to a truth-seeking procedure. At this point, however, the political position of South Africa's development history has limited interest in academia Hayner, 2001: 41).

4.1.13. Mandate of the South African TRC

South African TRC obligation is multifaceted and consists of numerous sides. However, the main emphasis are summarized on 4 points: (1) The objectives for establishment of the Commission to stimulate national unity and bring reconciliation in a spirit of thoughtful that address the conflicts and divisions in the past by a) portraying complete picture about the sources, characteristics and magnitude of the gross violations of human rights committed from 1 March

1960 , with its backgrounds, situations, dynamics and perspective, as well as the viewpoints of the victims and the intentions and standpoints of the persons accountable for the commission of the violations, by conducting inquiries and hearings; b) creating enabling environment for granting of amnesty for those fully disclosing all applicable truths associated with a political issues and comply with what this Act requires; c) forming and making the public about destiny or locations of victims and reinstating the respect of the victims by granting them an opportunity to own explanations of the violations they faced, commending compensation for them; d) collecting a report providing inclusive of the accomplishments and discoveries. Recommendations to stop the upcoming violations of human rights (Truth and Reconciliation Commission [TRC], 1998, Vol. 1, Chap. 4, p. 31).

4.1.14. Operationalization of the South African TRC

The South African TRC, for which Archbishop Desmond Tutu served as chair, has 17 commissioners. The TRC establishment was inaugurated in December 1995 and began work in April 1996. The commissioners have employed three hundred in their four large offices throughout the country. During its existence of two and a half years (from 1995 to 1998), its annual budget was \$18 million. Hayner (2001, p. 41) stated he Commission has accomplished its tasks through three committees: (1) The Human Rights Violations Committee assigned the duty of gathering accounts from victims and witnesses and documenting the magnitude of gross human rights violations occurred during 1 March 1960 to 10 May 1994; (2) The Amnesty Committee, processing amnesty individual applications; (3) The Compensations and Rehabilitation Committee, assigned the role of preparation of what is to be done and drafting the compensation. The Commission also hosted formal hearings through media, trade, prison, the faith groups, the legal process, and health services. However, these areas faced assault by some as they were seen as involving the apartheid system (TRC, 1998, Vol. 4, Chap. 1, p. 6).

4.1.15. Outcome of the South African TRC

Around 22,000 victims of the Apartheid regime presented their accounts to the TRC, out of which ten percent gave witness in open inquiries. The Human Rights Violation Committee identified that gross violations of human rights were committed by the government and its security, “intelligence and law-enforcement agencies, the SAP, the SADF and the NIS ...” (TRC 1998, vol. 6, chap. 2, paragraph 2 – 6). The Commission gave international status to the

apartheid in its committing a crime against humanity, in which the finding indicated it was a major human rights violator (ibid.). Furthermore, the commission observed that out of the three main parties to the conflict, the ANC committed the principles of the Geneva Conventions and conducted the armed struggle by international humanitarian law. However, the Commission depicted a difference between the character of a just war and just means. In this regard, the Commission identified during its fight and in the conflict, the ANC had broken the Geneva Conventions and was accountable for the commission of gross human rights violations. For this reason, the Commission held that the ANC and its organs including the National Executive Council (NEC), the Secretariat and its armed wing Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) in their political actions and armed struggle had committed gross human rights violations for which they are responsible (TRC, 1998, vol. 6, chap. 3, section 3 and 4).

The Commission has also used the just war theory and made the ANC accountable for gross human rights violations. This has major concerns for the TRC, since it shared guilt. The Commission stated the IFP was also accountable for committing gross human rights violations in the former Transvaal, Natal, and KwaZulu, against persons who served as leaders, members, or supporters of the UDF, the ANC, and their partners. Such violation was considered part of a systematic abuse constituting the deliberate planning act (TRC, 1998, vol. 6, chap. 5, p. 673, paragraph 1). Though it is now controlling most parts of the South African political society, the IFP was included in the list of offenders. Furthermore, the Amnesty Committee was vested with the legal powers to release the applicant, granted amnesty, from all criminal and civil liability resulting from the instance, and to all entities incurred vicarious liability for the incident. The applicants who faced prison sentences due to the incident were entitled to direct release and the erasing of criminal record (TRC, 1998, vol. 6, sec. 1, chap. 1, 4). In this regard, the Amnesty Committee had legally obligatory power, while the Reparations and Rehabilitation Committee had power only to recommend to the president.

Most research found that it was an advantage that the amnesty was dealing with full disclosure and conditional amnesty. In this context the total of 7116 persons applied for amnesty, of which 1167 were granted while 5143 were refused through administrative handling or without a hearing (Sarkin, 2008: 94). Sarkin (ibid.: 114) remarks that small number of applied for amnesty and there been a corresponding criminal process that standby the TRC's amnesty process, many offenders believe the political will and the state make pursue them. The accusing bodies have

motivated those who want to decide to apply for amnesty. The lack of will of offenders to arise, and especially those in the rank of senior officials, raises many real, legitimate, and legal issues, especially since the commission had extraordinary authority to call eyewitnesses and suspected offenders to affirm, and the ability to go into the locations and find documents regarding its mandate (Chapman & van der Merwe, 2008: 12). The South African mandate was part of a political negotiation revealed in the amnesty offer. The political conciliation is also in the definitions of what it means by “gross violations of human rights” and the inclination to put the offense in line with individual responsibility. Mamdani (2002: 35) states that the big finding that led to a public divided in the Commission and appeared as a minority view in the Report, apartheid was a crime against humanity [TRC 1: 70-71, 78]. At the same time, the Commission acknowledged more than 20,000 victims of apartheid for whom it recommended compensation [TRC vol. 5, chap. 2]. This raised the question whether a crime against humanity involved a racial and ethnic cleansing of the majority of its population, which had only 20,000+ victims? Therefore, the decision to individualize victims has severe effects for both the sufferers and offenders.

In this regard, Mamdani (2002: 34) argued that through dealing with crimes against humanity as personal issue, the Commission has focused exclusively on the civil regime, that is the “white so-called democratic Apartheid system” overlooking the indigenous regime, the black Bantustans’ organization served in line with the tribal rules and further categorized into various native population into tribal groups – each being managed under a distinct customary law enforcing their tradition (ibid.).

Simpson (2002: 220) questions the option to reach reconciliation and prevent future human rights violations; however, the TRC was considerably controlled past conflict idea, politically defined as a logically separate broader criminal pattern from the community violence in South African society. Furthermore, Bruce & Kirsten (2009) pointed out that the heritage of apartheid and colonialism endures to be pertinent to understanding violence in South Africa today, whether the work of the TRC is enforcing a violent South African culture.

4.2. Transitional justice, truth commission, truth, peace, and reconciliation, in Ethiopia

Any country in transition or after a prolonged civil war or the fall of a tyrannical regime usually has to deal with its dreadful former incidence for the sake of its bright future. Thus, it is important for a country in transition to address disasters and shocking human rights violations that took place in the past and move forward in peace. Although it is difficult for a country making tremendous efforts to overcome many problems and fix up and walk forward, it requires revealing the truth, curing the victims, and making offenders accountable (Arriaza, 2006). It is with this thought that the idea of transitional justice (TJ) emerged, comprising process and tools associated with a society's effort to come to a heritage of large-scale past human rights violations, to ensure responsibility, fairness, and attain reconciliation (UN Secretary General Report on Transitional Justice Summary, 2004). It has looked to address multiple purposes and benefits of the victims, civilizations during the transition, the global community, and the offenders (Kirchhoff, 2009). In this regard, sufferers want the truth and justice addressed. Societies in transition want reality, impartiality, resolution, and lasting peace. Likewise, the Global community needs to see those the offenders of crimes against humanity are held responsible for their harm they have caused and thereby to fight exemption (Kritz, 2009).

The offenders need to disclose the truth to be free from moral demands and for resolution. To come across these multi-dimensional purposes, transitional justice accountability mechanisms (TJAMs) are used. TJAMs include trials, fact commissions, compensation, lustration, forgiveness, pardon, commemorating in museums, formal confessions, constructing health and education facilities, admitting mistakes, giving new names to streets, reforms, and inter alia etc. A country could combine these issues, as its background needs and allows for dealing with past important events for the future of the country. In this regard, it is important to use hearing in a country where the past army heads and offenders' power exceeds the authority of the government, in which pursuing a trial might disturb the delicate peace or bring offensive and most horrible military autocracy (Sirram, 2005). Hearing is a way to ensure peace and settlement through a comprehensive or provisional pardon (Baker, 2009). Truth Commission commonly uses TJAM in countries in transition after prolonged war or ruled by an authoritarian regime. It paves the way for negotiation to address the political settlement between military rules

and the current rules (Merwe et al., 2009). For example, the 1974 Uganda Truth Commission was the first initiator of establishing Truth Commissions in several countries in transition. In this regard, Ethiopia has recently followed the trends of these countries.

However, the Ethiopian situation does not exactly suitable into the known styles of transition other countries and didn't make a straight transition from authoritarian regime to a democratic rule or from prolonged war to peace and the government has made a profound reform recently with to attain lasting peace, impartiality, equality, unity, harmony and resolution. For this reason, the Ethiopian parliament established the Reconciliation Commission on December 25, 2018, by holding several debates on the importance of establishing it (proclamation No.1102 /2018). In Ethiopia, there have been prolonged human rights violations continued unaddressed starting from the country's formation. Such violations were committed by the imperial regime concluded in 1974, or by the Derg regime that ruled 1974-1991(2024). Following the fall of the Derg, there was the first effort to bring justice through accusing Derg officials of committing gross human rights violations known as the Red-Terror, which was, however, not successful. In spite of a pledged democratization, the gross human rights violations sustained by giving different shape by the government that has ruled the country since 1991 to date.

The EPDRF regime has established Red Terror Martyr's Museum with the motto of not to repeat such acts and remember Derg rule terrible human rights violations committed by various government having prison and detention centers, such as Ma'ekelawi jail (Addis Standard Report, 2019), Ogaden and many other illegal private detention centers in the federal and regional levels (Mehalet and Yared 2018). These human rights violations were accompanied by the ethnic based federalism, the belief that addressing ethnic groups who hold power has violated the rights of others, segregated from power. From the beginning of 2018, ethnic battles became a regular incident in Ethiopia, resulting in continued internal displacements of millions (International Crisis Report, 2019). There was also a high level of constant rejections, silence, and claims about what happened in reality by several regimes, resulting from distortions, absence, or lack of a proper and honest explanation and evidence on the incidents of the violations. As a result, forming the Ethiopian Reconciliation Commission is a matter was essential. However, its establishment is not an end but a way to peace and reconciliation. However, its realization and success in attaining transitional justice in the short, medium, and

long-term, and tackling accountability actions against the offenders of gross human rights violations, and recommending the values of impunity (Barrios Altos V Peru, 14 March 2001).

It is difficult to address the numerous interests of the transition in Ethiopia by using only TJAM. There is a need to use various mechanisms depending on the background and nature of what is targeted and to be achieved. Even in a situation in which the needs of what the society wants to achieve and the motives of various entities conflict with each other. It is predictable to sense of balance that encompasses the needs of the targets involved and makes decisions. However, none of the TJAMs is a substitute or an alternative, but rather matches each other. Compared to TJAM, the Truth Commission (TC) is often used for prosecution, lustration, and so on. In this case, TC has several advantages. First, it has officially recognized the sufferings of the victim and made an apology for and wrongness of such behavior. Following a prolonged denial and silence, disclosure of the truth, admitting and recognizing the incorrect action, was the healing for the victims (Hayner, 1994). Second, the truth identified helps to give a provisional pardon or establish trials against offenders of gross human rights violations. Giving a temporary pardon on fully disclosing and admitting the crime committed by the offenders in the presence of the truth commission, like that of the South African TRC by naming the committers, plays a concrete preventive role along with rendering an opportunity for curative fairness and resolution (Ntsebeza, 2000).

TCs are not an additional cost for the trial. Thus, the TCs play the determining role of individuals to be sued (Hayner, 2011). In this regard, the Liberian TC listed about 116 offenders proposed for trial by a diverse mixture of judges and another 44 offenders to be sued. The commission had added 38 individuals whom the commission did not consider friable as a result of their great collaboration with TRC and feeling regret (Hayner, 2011). Thirdly, truth recognized serves as a foundation for cleansing or selection. Cleansing measures, when haphazardly used, will more probably terminate the new hopefulness of peace and resolution be terminated. However, when the regime uses the truth with pertinent and qualifying evidence produced by TC and goes for cleansing or selecting in an apparent way with unbiased criteria, people agree to take the action by the regime. Finally, the truth recognized by TC could enable a final resolution for profoundly separated societies in transition by integrating law and faith for the government in power.

Separated people, ethnic division, anger, exemption from brutal wrongdoings, competing accounts, and political division typify the Ethiopian conflict. The Ethiopian Reconciliation Commission was established in the Ethiopian conflict, faced with the struggles it is facing from its legality, uncertain roles, and the multifaceted character of the resolution process. Moreover, the consecutive rule's political suppression, human rights violations, persisting exemptions, political division, ethnic battle, and stolen political shifts are controlling the whole Ethiopian account. Ethiopia has been unsuccessful in realizing the resolution in the preceding political transition, which is a unique opportunity to interrupt the phase of fierceness and achieve resolution. The military rule (the Derg), established in 1974 as a commission of investigation, was the first prospect. The supremacy of the military rule was dominated by the military soldiers of rank, with high positions of the feudal rule, met people and tasted the advantages and the heritage of the feudal regime. The second chance, the 1992 of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE) Special Prosecution Office (SPO) was to bring the Derg officials to trial by committing "Red Terror crimes (M. Zewiddu, 2022).

The two chances missed to bring peace are their explanations to involve and enable the victim's benefit at the center, rather than focusing on serving those in power.

In 1991, the war forced Mengistu Haile Mariam to escape to Zimbabwe, ending 17 years of military rule. Then the power was occupied by the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) that controlled the government apparatus. With the Derg in power, the name was given to the 'committee' as a communist government. During this time, the political space was opened for parties opposed to Mengistu to become legal actors in Ethiopia's political arena (SANDRA FULLERTON, 1997).

4.2.1. Haile Selassie's Reign and Rising Ethnic Tensions (1930–1974)

For several years in Ethiopian history, there have been debates and the illegality of being in power and their policies. Since 1991, the leading resistant clusters have demanded that the Government is illegal and controlled by the Tigrayan ruling group. Hence, the Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE) limited the actions of political parties and imprisoned their front-runners. Additionally, the preceding Ethiopian regimes adopted pan-Ethiopianism and abandoned the structured ethnic groups, by restraining ethnicity and inhibiting the 'nationality requests. However, many of the present-day political parties were underway as ethnic-based

throughout the Imperial or Derg eras. The contemporary political depiction in Ethiopia was inherited from the history of the conflicts between ethnic groups, primarily characterizing Ethiopian politics over time. The beginning of the conflicts between political parties and their stands is earlier than 1991. All of the disputes of Ethiopia nowadays, the land reform, region formation, and issues of self-determination of nationalities have been opposing the emperor's rule, and during the post-1974 Derg regime. The Ethiopian Student Movement (ESM) is one of the turning points of the country's political history (Moges Zewiddu Teshome, 2022).

Following the Coup d'état against Haile Selassie in 1960, the ESM started playing a political role at Addis Ababa University, forwarding their concerns on basic needs to the center of national political opposition. The ESM had been increasingly radicalized and in the late 1960s adopted Marxism-Leninism. Furthermore, two issues that evolved from the ESM have remained in the present political discourse the self-determination and land rights. The issue of 'self-determination up to secession and contained in the 1995 constitution for the first time presented in the 1969 student publication, devised by Walleign Makonnen, the ESM member from Wollo. The Ethiopian state has ethnic groups' weakening to endure their presence within its borders, to current political debate. The 'nationalities question elaborated by the student movement has become a significant factor in government and opposition parties, the national agenda of the present Ethiopia. The idea of 'land for the tiller' was adopted as a motto of the ESM and remained during the post-revolutionary regime. The Declarations of the Masses, the All-Ethiopian Socialist Movement (Meison) favored honorable rights with the government, the Derg approved, while the Democratic group became the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP). Following the revolution, Meison supported the Derg with its socialist actions, and its right to land (Moges Zewiddu Teshome, 2022).

The EPRP believed the democratic stance was broken up by the Derg takeover, hence it continued rebellious actions until 1978, along with suppressing using the Red Terror in the cities. In its fight for democracy, the EPRP in the countryside was destroyed by the guerrillas competing for power in the rural areas. One of the most contentious issues in Ethiopia is the land distribution and the type of rights that the different regions have. The conflict divided the ESM as both peasants and politicians fought over who should regulate how land is used and distributed by the regime or the peasants. The leaders of the most powerful ESM groups contained Marxism-Leninism and alleged the fight against the Lordly rule, and later the Derg

class interests. In 1974, other organization leaders arose and took the view that nationalism was at its utmost. Throughout the Derg rule, the numerous class-oriented political groups like Meison, the EPRP, and the Ethiopian People's Democratic Alliance (EPDA), known as the Ethiopian Democratic Union (EDU), were conflicting and debilitated by the régime, and ethnic based rebellions movements collaborated to establish the Coalition of Ethiopian Democratic Forces (COEDF), the opposition during the Derg regime (Moges Zewiddu Teshome, 2022).

Most of the political groups and armed conflict in the countryside got support from territories or ethnic groups comprising the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (TPLF), the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF), the Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF), and the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) coordinated their army to overthrow the Derg regime. The EPLF has fought for the liberation of Eritrea from Ethiopian rule, the TPLF, originally started fighting for Tigrayan sovereignty, however, and altered its goal within the wider Ethiopian state. The OLF members were supporting an independent 'Oromia'. Their vision of success increased during the 1984-5 famine as the Derg used food aid and relocation for political drives, isolating large segments of the population. This was true in the Oromo regions where the relocation of a large number of people increased the burden of local communities, as in the Assosa region (Moges Zewiddu Teshome, 2022). Thousands of peasants were isolated by the Derg's negligence in famine management. While they managed to recuperate from the attacks, the northern fighters emerged with better international reliability as a result of their capable management of aid. Ethnicity was preferred by opposition groups in the countryside as a sign of political attachment, and the present parties began their functioning as ethnic rebellious groups during the Derg era, which included the Eritrean, Tigrayan, and Oromo Liberation Fronts (Moges Zewiddu Teshome, 2022).

4.2.2. Establishment of the Ethiopian Reconciliation Commission

The establishment of the Ethiopian Reconciliation Commission (ERC) became essential for the country's desire for reconciliation and harmony suggested for a long time. Diverse opposition parties, researchers, and human rights advocates have raised this frequently. However, the idea was not accepted by the political party-EPDRF in power that argue, as there is no ethnic group or public in conflict for which the reconciliation is required (ERC establishment Proclamation

Legislative History, 2018). Diverse politicians and researchers argued that the EPDRF discarded the national negotiation and settlement.

This is witnessed by internal dislocation of millions in diverse parts of the country (International Crisis Report on Ethiopia, 2019). As opposed to EPDRF's ethnic based policy, the new Prime Minister, Abiy Ahmed (Dr.), came up with a policy of accepting a protracted forbidden view of national harmony and negotiation. Thus, the establishment of the ERC was established as part of the régime reform for national unity, democracy, and protection of human rights. It is presented from the introduction to the ERC Proclamation based on the fundamental explanations and to(ERC establishment Proclamation Legislative History, 2018: (a) realize the negotiation, truth and impartiality by resolving prolonged fights among Ethiopians resulting from social and political conflict; (b) find out and determine the characteristics, cause and aspect of the recurring gross violations of human rights; uphold settlement and advance the beliefs of esteem and realize human rights in the laws of Ethiopia;(c) establish the victims forum to be heard and create enabling environment for offenders to reveal and admit their the offence they did as a way of compromise and to attain long-lasting peace; (d) carryout the investigation and unveil the truth of the foundations, grounds and magnitude of fight, consequently take suitable actions, make commendations for enduring peace and stop forthcoming and its repetition (ERC Establishment Proclamation, 2018). The goals of the ERC include “maintaining peace, justice, national unity and consensus and reconciliation among Ethiopian Peoples” (Article 5 of the ERC Establishment Proclamation, 2018).

4.2.3. Features of the ERC in the Light of Factors Determining the Effectiveness of TCS

How the upper decision-making and executive bodies select or leave office is central to the success of TCs. The one assigning the executive body determines the role of the TCs. At the higher decision-making level, the ERC has two key structures that include the Head and the Deputy Head of the Commission (Articles 8 and 9 of the ERC Establishment Proclamation, 2018). The Head, Deputy Head, and other members of the Commission are recommended by the Prime Minister and appointed by the House of Peoples Representatives (Article 4(2) of the ERC Establishment Proclamation, 2018).

To avoid prejudices, the selection by the legislative body gets better when appointing the commissioners based on impartiality and a sense of balance in political representatives and

ethnic groups in the country. However, in the present Ethiopian situation, it is hard to trust leaving the entire selection to those who hold such positions in the parliament, and the Prime Minister could bring unbiased representation and public backing. Because the governing party (EPRDF) has governed the Ethiopian Parliament, to which the Prime Minister belongs. The usual practice is observed when the parliament endorses what is recommended by the Prime Minister. It is unlikely that the members of the parliament will make the vital checkup over the recommendations of the Prime Minister on the commissioners to be appointed. Furthermore, the ERC Establishment Proclamation does not make available the criteria to appoint the commissioners, in which case the parliament had agreed to wholly select 41 persons to the ERC membership, presented by the Prime Minister (Parliament, 2019). The current Ethiopian parliament is simply approving what is presented by the Prime Minister, which was observed when the former Prime Minister, Haile Mariam Desalegn, was appointed as a Commission Member. Various grave human rights violations were committed when Haile Mariam was leading the country. This brings uncertainty on the impartiality of the general work of the Commissions (ERC Establishment Proclamation, 2018).

What is important in the establishment of the ERC is that the new Prime Minister is heading the entire process of the country's transformation. Therefore, in total, the commissioner's membership the individuals was drawn from different faith groups, opinion leaders, intellectuals, artists, players, writers, specialists, humanitarians, politicians, and chiefs, among others. Although Ethiopia is severely divided by different backgrounds, the ERC work could be dependable in attaining the overall objectives of the Commission.

Removing the ERC head and deputy head is a key issue to be seen about their selection for the complete success of TC. The ERC establishment proclamation is totally quiet on deposing the head or deputy head of the commission. It does not say anything about the grounds for deposing them from their positions. However, the ERC proclamation makes the commission responsible to the Prime Minister (Article 3(4) of the ERC establishment proclamation, 2018). That is, the commissions are accountable to the same person who recommended them (Article 4(2) of the ERC Establishment Proclamation, 2018).

4.2.4. Powers and duties of the ERC

The objectives of establishing the ERC are to uphold reconciliation, fairness, and national compromise and thus ensure among Ethiopian peoples (Article 5 of the ERC Establishment Proclamation, 2018). To realize these objectives, the ERC is delegated with the following powers and duties to: (i) proclaim its work; make every person or body to present his/her thoughts; (ii) make its work available and shared by using technology equipment; organizing workshop; (iii) identify ethics and values on which national understanding should be created by making debate with groups; (iv) make investigation to find out causes of the conflicts and human rights violations by in view of political, social and economic circumstances, victims and offenders; (v) take or order to get any records or evidence from the regime or anybody which the commission require for its effort excluding those given lawful guard as private for national security; vi) visit foundation of any establishments and receive the copy of any material and records found during its visit; vii) collect evidence by conducting individual or a group interview either in underground or in an exposed way to the public; order the existence of anybody through bid and require to give his announcement through pledge; (viii) subject to the circumstances get support from police in executing its duties; (ix) inform the public or the administration organs about the decisions got through the investigation as appropriate; and x) undertake the settlement among peoples to slight the variation and bring consensus(Art 6 of the ERC Establishment Proclamation, 2018).

Powers and duties vested in TC permit examination into all rights abuses, including physical and economic violence. TC becomes careful to the greatest extent in significant cases during its examination. It has powers such as order, examine, appropriation, and the mechanism to work out such powers like a necessary financial plan. During the course of its investigation, TC invites the public to generate a reliable report (Art 6 of the ERC Establishment Proclamation, 2018).

4.2.5. Ensuring security and cooperation from the incumbent government

The ERC is vested with the power to order and appropriate (Article 6(5)). To make these powers more realistic, the ERC has the power to get support from police, subject to the circumstances (Art 6(8) of the ERC Establishment Proclamation). Additionally, everybody in Ethiopia is lawfully required to collaborate with the ERC to respond to any legitimate queries essential to support the commission to embark on its tasks. The police duty is to ensure that the commission

workers accomplish their duties without security fears. The limitation section of the ordering powers of the commission states “that information that is given legal protection as confidential for the sake of national security” (Article 6(5) of the ERC Establishment Proclamation). The Commission might encounter the confrontation that it has no power to see this, because the information has to be kept secret.

4.2.6. Availability and control of budget

Obtainability and managing the budget by the TC is the center for effectively accomplishing its tasks, in which case the Commission employs staff, carries out a comprehensive inquiry, and accordingly generates a wide-ranging actual report. The government is expected to allot the ERC budget (Art 16 of the ERC establishment Proclamation).

4.2.7. Report, recommendation, and dissemination strategies

This is the stage of preparing a complete supposition as to the inclusive fact that has been revealed, comprising the list of accountabilities and actions that should be taken to pay for the committed abuses and prevent the reappearance of the same in the forthcoming. The ERC is accountable to society and the government administration to present the conclusions reached through the scrutiny (Art 6 of the ERC Establishment Proclamation, 2018). It is mandated to unveil the reality of the causes, grounds, and magnitude of the fight and thus take the correct actions and for the execution of recommendations regarding permanent peace and prevent the upcoming reappearance of a similar incident (Para 4 to the Preamble of the ERC Establishment Proclamation, 2018). The ERC provides that general fact to be conveyed through a extensive contribution of the whole concerned persons and groups through organizing workshops, public debates, organizing a scene for victims heard and offenders reveal their offences and admit their actions (Articles 6(1)-(3) and Para 3 of the Preamble to the ERC Establishment Proclamation, 2018).

The latest examination report of TC conclusions has to be distributed and published to the whole public. The report should be available to every concerned person in the country. It should be transmitted through the local languages so everybody can comprehend. The ERC establishment proclamation gives the opportunity to include the public in the examination and trials.

Furthermore, it suggests that the society and responsible structures have to be informed of the findings and decisions of ERC, though the establishment proclamation is entirely quiet about various report dissemination mechanisms.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY

5.1. Manifestations and Characteristics of Conflicts in South Africa and Ethiopia

5.1.1. South Africa

The conflicts in South Africa have been fundamentally shaped by the apartheid regime, a legally institutionalized system of racial segregation and discrimination that was formally established in 1948 and persisted until the early 1990s (Thompson, 2014). This system was built upon centuries of colonial racial hierarchies but became systematically enforced through a series of oppressive laws designed to entrench white minority rule while economically and politically disenfranchising the Black majority (Posel, 2001).

5.1.2. Apartheid Legislation and Social Control

The apartheid state implemented a series of laws that rigidly classified and controlled the population. The Population Registration Act (1950) mandated racial categorization into White, Black, Colored, and Indian groups, which dictated every aspect of life, including residency, employment, and education (Posel, 2001). The Group Areas Act (1950) forcibly relocated non-White populations into segregated townships, often demolishing vibrant multiracial communities like Sophia town in Johannesburg (Lester et al., 2000). These townships were deliberately underdeveloped, lacking proper infrastructure, sanitation, and economic opportunities, reinforcing cycles of poverty (Seekings & Nattrass, 2005).

The pass laws required Black South Africans to carry identity documents (dompas) restricting their movement, making it illegal to reside or seek work in urban areas without state permission (Lodge, 2011). Violators faced arrest, deportation, or forced labor, creating a system of institutionalized migrant labor that fractured families and suppressed Black urbanization (Wilson, 1972). Meanwhile, the Bantu Education Act (1953) ensured that Black children received an inferior education designed to prepare them only for manual labor, perpetuating economic subjugation (Kallaway, 2002).

5.1.3. State Violence and Resistance Movements

The apartheid regime maintained power through extreme state violence. The Sharpeville Massacre (1960), where police killed 69 unarmed protesters opposing pass laws, marked a turning point, leading to the banning of liberation movements like the African National Congress (ANC) and Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) (Lodge, 2011). The Soweto Uprising (1976), sparked by the imposition of Afrikaans in Black schools, saw hundreds of students killed, further galvanizing global anti-apartheid solidarity (Hirson, 1979).

Underground resistance intensified, with the ANC's armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), engaging in sabotage campaigns (Ellis, 2013). Simultaneously, the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM), led by Steve Biko, emphasized psychological liberation and grassroots mobilization before Biko's 1977 murder in police custody (Mangu, 2012). The state retaliated with mass detentions, torture, and assassinations, documented extensively in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) reports (1998).

5.1.4. Economic Exploitation and Post-Apartheid Challenges

Apartheid's economic policies entrenched deep inequality, reserving skilled jobs for Whites while suppressing Black wages (Wolpe, 1972). Post-1994, the ANC government introduced affirmative action (Black Economic Empowerment, BEE) and social grants, yet structural inequalities persist, with high unemployment (over 30%) and radicalized poverty (Seekings & Nattrass, 2005). Land dispossession remains unresolved, as less than 10% of farmland has been redistributed since 1994 (Hall, 2004), fueling frustrations and occasional xenophobic violence (Neocosmos, 2010).

5.2. Ethiopia

Ethiopia's conflicts are deeply rooted in ethnic nationalism, centralized authoritarianism, and regional power struggles, evolving through distinct historical phases (Zewde, 2001).

5.2.1. Pre-20th Century: Feudal Fragmentation and Imperial Expansion

The Zemene Mesafint ("Era of the Princes," 1769–1855) saw Ethiopia fragmented among rival warlords until Emperor Tewodros II (1855–1868) attempted centralization (Marcus, 2002). Menelik II (1889–1913) expanded the empire through conquest, subduing the Oromo, Sidama, and Somali regions, often through violent assimilation (Bahru, 2002). His victory at Adwa

(1896) against Italy preserved independence but entrenched an Amhara-dominated feudal order (Tibebu, 1995).

5.2.2. Haile Selassie (1930–1974): Modernization and Repression

Haile Selassie's reign combined modernization (e.g., Ethiopia's first constitution, 1931) with autocratic rule (Clapham, 1988). Resistance emerged from Eritrean separatists (after forced federation in 1952) and Oromo peasants oppressed by the landlord (gabbar) system (Markakis, 1974). The 1974 famine exposed state neglect, triggering the Derg's Marxist coup (Keller, 1988).

5.2.3. The Derg (1974–1991): Red Terror and Civil War

The Derg regime, led by Mengistu Haile Mariam, launched the Red Terror (1977–78), executing tens of thousands of opponents (Tareke, 2009). Forced villagization and agricultural collectivization worsened famine, culminating in the 1983–85 catastrophe (de Waal, 1991). Simultaneously, ethnic rebellions erupted:

- The Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) fought for independence.
- The Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) led a coalition (EPRDF) to overthrow the Derg in 1991 (Young, 1997).

5.2.4. EPRDF Rule (1991–2018): Ethnic Federalism and Authoritarianism

The EPRDF implemented ethnic federalism (1995 constitution), dividing Ethiopia into nine ethnic-based regions (Aalen, 2002). While granting self-rule, this fueled ethnic tensions, as groups competed for land and resources (Vaughan, 2011). The TPLF dominated the coalition, marginalizing the Oromo and Amhara, who protested from 2014–2018 (Abbink, 2017).

5.2.5. New Reform and Crisis (2018–Present)

Abiy Ahmed's reforms (e.g., freeing political prisoners, peace with Eritrea) won a Nobel Prize (2019) but alienated the TPLF (ICG, 2020). The Tigray War (2020–22) saw mass atrocities, famine, and 600,000+ deaths (de Waal, 2021). Despite a 2022 ceasefire, Oromo-Amhara clashes and Somali-Oromo border conflicts persist (HRW, 2023).

In general, South Africa's conflicts centered on apartheid's racial capitalism, leaving enduring economic and spatial inequalities (Mamdani, 1996). Ethiopia's struggles stem from competing

ethno nationalisms under centralized and federal systems (Turton, 2006). Both nations exemplify how colonial and post-colonial state structures can perpetuate division, requiring inclusive governance to achieve lasting peace.

5.3. Comparative Analysis of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and Ethiopia's Post-EPRDF Reconciliation Efforts

5.3.1. Focus on Truth-Telling and Historical Acknowledgment

The foundational principle of both South Africa's TRC and Ethiopia's post-EPRDF reconciliation process was the imperative of truth-telling as a prerequisite for national healing. The South African TRC (1995-2002), chaired by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, established an unprecedented model of public truth-telling where both victims and perpetrators of apartheid-era violence were given platforms to testify (Tutu, 1999). These public hearings, broadcast nationally, served not only as cathartic spaces for victims but also as mechanisms for establishing an official historical record of human rights violations (Wilson, 2001).

In Ethiopia, the post-2018 reforms under Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed similarly emphasized truth-telling, though through different institutional mechanisms. The establishment of the Ethiopian Reconciliation Commission in 2018 and the subsequent National Dialogue Commission in 2022 sought to address historical grievances spanning decades of authoritarian rule (ICG, 2023). However, Ethiopia's truth-telling process has faced significant challenges due to the ongoing Tigray conflict (2020-2022) and persistent inter-ethnic violence, which have complicated efforts to establish a comprehensive historical record (de Waal, 2021). Unlike South Africa's relatively consolidated political transition, Ethiopia's reconciliation process has been conducted amidst active conflicts, fundamentally altering its dynamics.

5.3.2. Justice and Accountability: Balancing Amnesty and Prosecution

Both nations grappled with the delicate balance between restorative and retributive justice. The South African TRC's innovative approach offered conditional amnesty to perpetrators who fully disclosed their crimes, while reserving the right to prosecute those who failed to cooperate (TRC Report, 1998). This resulted in high-profile cases like that of apartheid-era police commander Eugene de Kock, who received amnesty for some crimes but remained imprisoned for others (Gobodo-Madikizela, 2003).

Ethiopia's approach has been more inconsistent. The initial post-EPRDF period saw the prosecution of numerous TPLF officials on corruption and human rights abuse charges (HRW, 2019). However, the Tigray war introduced complex accountability challenges, with allegations of atrocities committed by all sides (de Waal, 2023). Unlike South Africa's centralized process, Ethiopia's accountability mechanisms have been fragmented across different regional jurisdictions and military tribunals, leading to accusations of selective justice (ICG, 2023).

5.3.3. National Healing and Social Cohesion Strategies

The TRC's emphasis on "ubuntu" philosophy - the African concept of shared humanity - became a cornerstone of South Africa's reconciliation efforts (Tutu, 1999). Public reconciliation ceremonies, such as the famous encounter between victim Ginn Fourie and her daughter's killer, demonstrated the potential for interpersonal forgiveness (Gobodo-Madikizela, 2003). The TRC's religious undertones, with their emphasis on confession and redemption, resonated deeply in South Africa's Christian-majority society.

Ethiopia's reconciliation efforts have been more secular and institutionally focused. The National Dialogue Commission has attempted to address ethnic grievances through structured negotiations (Abbink, 2022). However, the persistence of ethnic violence, particularly in Oromia and Amhara regions, has severely tested these efforts. Unlike South Africa's relatively unified civil society engagement, Ethiopia's reconciliation process has been hampered by deep political polarization and competing nationalist narratives (Vaughan, 2018).

5.3.4. Public Participation and Civil Society Engagement

South Africa's TRC benefited from an exceptionally robust civil society sector that had developed during the anti-apartheid struggle. Organizations like the Black Sash and the South African Council of Churches played crucial roles in facilitating victim testimony and monitoring the process (Wilson, 2001). The TRC's public hearings were extensively covered by the media, creating a national conversation about transitional justice.

In Ethiopia, civil society participation has been more constrained. The Charities and Societies Proclamation (2009) had severely restricted NGO operations before the reforms (HRW, 2018). While some restrictions were lifted post-2018, the government has maintained tight control over

reconciliation initiatives, particularly following the Tigray war (ICG, 2023). Media coverage has been more limited and controlled compared to South Africa's experience.

5.3.5. Reparations and Economic Justice

The TRC's reparations program, though criticized for its limited scope, established important precedents. Approximately 22,000 victims received individual reparations of about \$3,700 each, while community reparations included memorials and educational programs (Seekings, 2006). However, the failure to adequately address economic apartheid, particularly land inequality, remains a lasting criticism (Mamdani, 1996).

Ethiopia's approach to reparations has been even more limited. Beyond symbolic gestures like the release of political prisoners, there has been no comprehensive reparations program. The destruction caused by the Tigray war would require massive reconstruction efforts that have been slow to materialize (de Waal, 2023). Both cases demonstrate how economic justice often becomes the most challenging aspect of reconciliation processes.

5.3.6. Institutional Reforms and Structural Change

South Africa's post-TRC reforms included constitutional changes, police reform, and the establishment of new human rights institutions (Gibson, 2004). While imperfect, these created durable mechanisms for addressing past injustices. Ethiopia's reforms have included constitutional reviews and attempts to reform the security sector, but these have been overshadowed by the Tigray conflict (ICG, 2023).

5.3.7. Long-term Impact and Lessons

Twenty-five years after the TRC, South Africa continues to grapple with its legacy. While it succeeded in preventing large-scale violence, economic inequality remains stark (Seekings & Nattrass, 2005). Ethiopia's process is much younger and occurring in a more challenging regional context. The ongoing conflicts suggest that reconciliation efforts may need to be more decentralized and regionally specific than South Africa's model.

In general, while both processes share common goals of truth, justice, and reconciliation, their different contexts have produced markedly different outcomes. South Africa's TRC benefited from a more conclusive political transition and a stronger civil society. Ethiopia's efforts occur amidst ongoing conflict and deeper ethnic divisions. The comparative analysis suggests that

successful reconciliation requires not just truth-telling mechanisms but concomitant political settlements and economic transformation. Both cases underscore that reconciliation is generational work that extends far beyond formal commissions or dialogues.

5.4. A Detailed Comparison of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and Post-EPRDF Reconciliation Reforms in Ethiopia

5.4.1. Historical and Political Context

The South African TRC emerged after the fall of apartheid (1948–1994), a system of institutionalized racial oppression. The transition to democracy in 1994, led by Nelson Mandela and the African National Congress (ANC), required a mechanism to address past atrocities while preventing further conflict (Tutu, 1999). The TRC was a negotiated compromise between the apartheid regime and liberation movements, aiming to facilitate national healing.

In contrast, Ethiopia's post-EPRDF reforms followed decades of authoritarian rule under the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), which governed from 1991 to 2018. The EPRDF implemented ethnic federalism, which exacerbated ethnic tensions and led to human rights abuses (Aalen, 2011). Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's reforms (2018–present) sought to transition Ethiopia toward democracy, addressing ethnic conflicts, releasing political prisoners, and initiating national dialogues (Abbink, 2020). Unlike South Africa's structured TRC, Ethiopia's reconciliation process has been more decentralized and politically driven.

5.4.2. Mandate and Scope

The South African TRC had a clear mandate under the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act (1995) to investigate human rights violations (1960–1994), grant amnesty in exchange for truth, and recommend reparations (Boraine, 2000). It focused on politically motivated crimes, emphasizing restorative justice through public confessions and victim testimonies.

Ethiopia's post-EPRDF reconciliation lacks a singular, formalized body like the TRC. Instead, it involves multiple initiatives:

- Political reforms (e.g., unbanning opposition groups, freeing political prisoners).

- Judicial reforms (e.g., prosecuting some former officials while granting amnesty to others).
- National dialogues to address ethnic grievances (Gudina, 2021).

Unlike the TRC, Ethiopia's approach is broader, targeting systemic governance issues rather than solely past abuses.

5.4.3. Structure and Implementation

The TRC was highly structured, with three main committees:

1. Human Rights Violations Committee (documenting abuses).
2. Amnesty Committee (granting amnesty for full disclosure).
3. Reparation and Rehabilitation Committee (recommending victim compensation) (Hayner, 2001).

Public hearings were televised, ensuring transparency and national engagement.

Ethiopia's process has been less centralized, involving:

- The Ethiopian Reconciliation Commission (2018) which lacked the TRC's legal authority.
- Regional peace initiatives (e.g., local elders mediating ethnic conflicts).
- Legal reforms (e.g., revising anti-terrorism laws used to suppress dissent) (Tronvoll & Hagmann, 2012). This decentralized approach has led to inconsistencies in justice delivery.

5.4.4. Approach to Justice and Accountability

The TRC prioritized restorative justice, offering amnesty to perpetrators who confessed, while allowing prosecutions for those who did not (Wilson, 2001). This approach emphasized truth-telling over punishment, though critics argued it allowed some perpetrators to evade justice (Mamdani, 1996). In Ethiopia, the approach has been mixed:

- Restorative measures: Releasing political prisoners, promoting inter-ethnic dialogues.
- Retributive justice: Prosecuting high-profile figures (e.g., Tigrayan leaders post-2020 conflict).

This dual approach has faced criticism for selective justice, where some groups perceive bias in prosecutions (Human Rights Watch, 2021).

5.4.5. Public Engagement and Transparency

The TRC's public hearings were a hallmark of its process, allowing victims and perpetrators to testify openly (Krog, 1998). Media coverage ensured nationwide participation, fostering a collective reckoning with apartheid's legacy. Ethiopia's reconciliation has been less transparent:

- National dialogues have been criticized for excluding key opposition voices (International Crisis Group, 2022).
- Limited media access to conflict-resolution processes.

This lack of inclusivity has weakened public trust in the reforms.

5.4.6. Reparations and Institutional Reforms

The TRC recommended:

- Individual reparations (financial compensation, educational support).
- Symbolic reparations (memorials, community rehabilitation programs).
- However, implementation lagged, leaving many victims dissatisfied (Ntsebeza, 2000).
- Ethiopia's reforms have focused on systemic changes:
 - Economic reforms (privatization, infrastructure development).
 - Constitutional reviews to address ethnic federalism.

5.4.7. Challenges and Criticisms

South Africa's TRC faced:

- Incomplete reparations, leaving victims disillusioned.
- Criticism of amnesty for apartheid-era perpetrators.
- Structural inequalities persisting post-apartheid (Gibson, 2004).
- Ethiopia's reconciliation struggles with:
 - Ongoing ethnic violence (e.g., Tigray War, Oromo-Amhara conflicts).

- Lack of a unified truth-seeking mechanism.
- Political instability undermining long-term reconciliation (de Waal, 2021).

In general, while South Africa's TRC was a formalized, victim-centered process emphasizing truth-telling and conditional amnesty, Ethiopia's post-EPRDF reforms are more politically driven, combining judicial accountability with national dialogues. The TRC's structured approach provided a model for truth commissions globally, whereas Ethiopia's decentralized efforts reflect the complexities of addressing ethnic federalism and authoritarian legacies. Both cases highlight the challenges of balancing justice, reconciliation, and structural reform in post-conflict societies.

5.5. Lessons Ethiopia Can Learn from South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) for Conflict Resolution

5.5.1. Establishment of a Formal Truth Commission

Ethiopia could benefit from creating a structured truth commission modeled after South Africa's TRC to investigate human rights violations committed during its various conflicts, including those under the EPRDF regime (1991–2018) and the Tigray War (2020–2022) (Hayner, 2011). The TRC's success stemmed from its clear legal mandate, which allowed it to document abuses systematically and recommend reparations (TRC Report, 1998). Ethiopia's current National Dialogue Commission (2022–present) lacks the same level of institutional clarity, operating amidst ongoing violence and political fragmentation (ICG, 2023). A dedicated truth-seeking body with powers to subpoena perpetrators and protect witnesses could enhance accountability (de Waal, 2021).

5.5.2. Victim-Centered Approach

The TRC prioritized victim testimony, allowing survivors of apartheid to share their experiences in public hearings, which fostered national empathy (Tutu, 1999). Ethiopia's reconciliation efforts have been more top-down, focusing on political negotiations rather than grassroots victim narratives (Abbink, 2022). Adopting a victim-centered approach, such as public testimonies from survivors of the Tigray conflict or Oromo protests, could validate suffering and build trust (Mamdani, 1996). For example, the TRC's Human Rights Violations Committee collected over 21,000 victim statements, a model Ethiopia could replicate (Wilson, 2001).

5.5.3. Inclusivity and Representation

South Africa's TRC included multi-stakeholder participation: victims, perpetrators, civil society, and religious leaders (Gibson, 2004). In Ethiopia, ethnic and political factions (e.g., Amhara, Oromo, Tigrayan groups) remain excluded from key dialogues (HRW, 2023). A more inclusive process, perhaps through regional truth committees, could address Ethiopia's diverse grievances (Aalen, 2002). The TRC's gender-sensitive hearings, which highlighted abuses against women, also offer a template for addressing Ethiopia's conflict-related sexual violence (Ross, 2003).

5.5.4. Conditional Amnesty and Accountability

The TRC's amnesty process required full disclosure of crimes, balancing reconciliation with justice (TRC Report, 1998). Ethiopia has vacillated between blanket pardons (e.g., TPLF prisoner releases in 2018) and selective prosecutions, creating perceptions of bias (de Waal, 2023). A transparent amnesty framework—excluding war crimes and crimes against humanity could incentivize cooperation while ensuring accountability (Sarkin, 2004). For instance, the TRC denied amnesty to apartheid police death squads but granted it to lower-ranking officers who confessed (Gobodo-Madikizela, 2003).

5.5.5. Public Hearings and Transparency

The TRC's live-broadcast hearings were pivotal in building public trust (Krog, 1998). Ethiopia's reconciliation has occurred largely behind closed doors, with limited media access (ICG, 2023). Public forums—similar to South Africa's town hall-style testimonies could demystify the process and counter state-sponsored disinformation (Wilson, 2001). The TRC's final report, which named perpetrators and detailed abuses, also set a precedent for transparency that Ethiopia's National Dialogue Commission should emulate (TRC Report, 1998).

5.5.6. Reparations and Restorative Justice

The TRC recommended individual reparations and community rehabilitation programs (Seekings, 2006). Ethiopia has focused on symbolic gestures (e.g., rebuilding Tigray) but lacks a systematic reparations policy (de Waal, 2023). A victim compensation fund, coupled with mental health services and memorials, could address historical wounds (Mamdani, 1996). South Africa's Urgent Interim Reparations (1998–2003) provided immediate relief to 17,000 victims—a model for Ethiopia's post-war recovery (TRC Report, 1998).

5.5.7. Institutional Reforms

The TRC's recommendations led to police reforms and the establishment of land restitution courts in South Africa (Gibson, 2004). Ethiopia's security sector remains unreformed, with militias and federal forces accused of ongoing abuses (HRW, 2023). Ethiopia could adopt judicial reforms (e.g., specialized human rights courts) and ethnic-inclusive governance to prevent future conflicts (Aalen, 2002). The TRC's emphasis on civilian oversight of security forces is particularly relevant given Ethiopia's militarized politics (ICG, 2023).

5.5.8. Long-Term Commitment and Education

Reconciliation is a generational process, as seen in South Africa's 20-year implementation gap in land reform (Seekings & Nattrass, 2005). Ethiopia must invest in educational curricula that teach conflict history and tolerance, mirroring South Africa's post-TRC school programs (Cole, 2007). The Nelson Mandela Foundation's dialogue initiatives show how sustained civil society engagement can reinforce official processes (Tutu, 1999).

Ethiopia's reconciliation efforts can draw critically from South Africa's TRC by:

1. Formalizing truth-seeking through an independent commission,
2. Centering victims in public hearings,
3. Balancing amnesty with accountability,
4. Implementing reparations and institutional reforms,
5. Ensuring long-term societal engagement.

However, Ethiopia's unique challenges, ongoing conflicts, ethnic federalism, and weak institutions require context-specific adaptations (de Waal, 2021). By combining the TRC's best practices with local peace building traditions (e.g., Afar and Gedeo reconciliation customs), Ethiopia could forge a more inclusive path to lasting peace (Abbink, 2022).

5.6. Conclusion

The conflicts in South Africa and Ethiopia stem from deeply rooted historical injustices, though their manifestations differ significantly. In South Africa, apartheid's racial capitalism enforced segregation, economic exploitation, and violent suppression of Black resistance. Despite post-1994 reforms like Black Economic Empowerment (BEE), structural inequalities persist, fueling ongoing tensions. In contrast, Ethiopia's conflicts are driven by ethnic nationalism and power struggles, shaped by cycles of centralization and fragmentation—from imperial rule to the Derg's repression and the EPRDF's ethnic federalism. Post-2018 reforms aimed at democratization instead triggered new conflicts, such as the Tigray War and Oromo-Amhara clashes, exposing the challenges of reconciling regional autonomy with national unity.

South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and Ethiopia's post-EPRDF reconciliation efforts pursued healing but diverged in approach and effectiveness. The TRC was a formal, victim-centered process featuring public hearings, conditional amnesty, and reparations recommendations, fostering national reckoning, though its failure to fully address economic justice left many disillusioned. Ethiopia's reconciliation, however, has been more decentralized and politically driven, lacking a unified truth commission. Ongoing conflicts and accusations of selective justice have undermined trust, highlighting the difficulties of reconciliation amid active warfare. Key differences include the TRC's transparency and structured reparations versus Ethiopia's closed-door negotiations and absence of systematic victim compensation.

Ethiopia can draw valuable lessons from South Africa's TRC, including the need for a formal truth commission, victim-centered justice, conditional amnesty, and comprehensive reparations. However, Ethiopia's unique challenges—ongoing violence, ethnic divisions, and institutional weaknesses—demand a tailored approach. Integrating traditional conflict-resolution mechanisms with TRC-inspired structures could offer a more sustainable path to peace. Ultimately, while South Africa's experience underscores the importance of transparency and institutional reform, Ethiopia must balance truth, justice, and stability in a way that addresses its distinct historical and political complexities.

5.7. Recommendations

1. Establish a Formal Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)

Create an independent, legally mandated truth commission with clear powers to investigate human rights violations, compel testimony, and recommend reparations.

Ensure inclusive representation of all ethnic, religious, and political groups to build national legitimacy.

2. Prioritize Victim-Centered Justice

Hold public hearings where victims can testify and perpetrators confess, fostering national acknowledgment and healing.

Provide financial reparations, mental health support, and symbolic reparations (e.g., memorials, apologies) to victims.

3. Balance Amnesty with Accountability

Offer conditional amnesty for full disclosure of crimes, excluding war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Prosecute high-ranking officials responsible for atrocities to uphold justice and deter future abuses.

4. Ensure Transparency and Public Participation

Broadcast reconciliation proceedings live to build public trust and counter misinformation.

Engage civil society, religious leaders, and grassroots organizations in mediation and peace building.

5. Implement Institutional Reforms

Reform the security sector to prevent future abuses and ensure civilian oversight.

Address land disputes, economic inequality, and ethnic marginalization to remove the root causes of conflict.

6. Promote Long-Term National Healing

Integrate truth and reconciliation education into school curricula to foster intergenerational understanding.

Support inter-ethnic dialogue programs and cultural exchanges to rebuild social cohesion.

7. Seek International Support without Dependency

Partner with the African Union, UN, and regional bodies for technical and financial assistance, while ensuring Ethiopian ownership of the process.

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