The Effect of Tigray People's Liberation Front Ethnic Federalism on Ethiopian Democratic Uncertainty and Political Violence

Hailegiorgis Biramo Allaro

Arba Minch University, College of Agricultural Sciences, Department of Agricultural Economics, Ethiopia.

Corresponding Author: *Hailegiorgis Biramo, Allaro, Arba Minch University, College of Agricultural Sciences, Department of Agricultural Economics, Ethiopia. Email: hailegiorgisbiramo@yahoo.com*

ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the effect of Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) ethnic federalism on Ethiopian democratic uncertainty and political violence. Democracy is more than just a set of specific government institutions which rests upon a well - understood group of values, attitudes, and practices - all of which may take different forms and expressions among cultures and societies around the world. Federalism (dispersal of power) suggests that if it is to work best needs to be complemented by the rule of law, democracy and the culture of human rights in particular which focus on the institutional principles accommodating ethnic diversity. It includes the constitution, legislation and other established practices that regulate the management of ethnic diversity. Federalism is not a panacea for all challenges of ethnic diversity. The instigated Ethnic federalism in Ethiopia is the "divide and rule strategy" of the TPLF system, which weaken interregional and interethnic cooperation and aggravated conflict that led to crack-down unity over cross-cutting issues such as religion, common historical experiences and national feelings to increase the vulnerability and risk of interethnic conflict and national disintegration. Thus, it is only federalism in a structural sense; top-down policy directions control lower level activities and challenge regional autonomy which minimized the power of regional states to provide contextual local decisions. Therefore, Ethiopian should contest to evade the colonial trick ethnic federalism system which was implemented to plant division among ethnic groups so as to institutionalize and facilitate rule by the TPLF and its politically affiliated groups.

Keywords: *Democracy, Ethnic federalism, Ethiopia, political violent, state formation.*

INTRODUCTION

Ethnicity often plays a role in defining and structuring conflict. Civil wars between ethnic groups constitute a substantial part, if not the majority of all wars since the late 1950s, and the share of ethno-nationalist civil wars has risen steadily over the last seven decades (Wimmer and Min 2006). Since the end of the cold war, conflict between ethnic groups has increasingly received academics" attention (Gellner 1983, Horowitz 1985, Huntington 1993a and Wimmer 2002).

However, the role that ethnicity plays in motivating and structuring civil wars remains an unsettled question, particularly due to the fluid nature of ethnic groups and their endogenous development during conflict. In 1991, following the collapse of military rule, the Tigray People" s Liberation Front (TPLF) established Federal system creating largely ethnic-based territorial units, claiming that they have found a formula to achieve ethnic and regional autonomy, while maintaining the state as a political unit. The TPLF ethnic federal system is significant in that it provides for secession of any ethnic unit. The secession clause is one of the most controversial issues in public discourse in Ethiopia and its diaspora communities today. Opponents of ethnic federalism fear that it invites ethnic conflict and risks state disintegration. Accordingly, the Ethiopian state faced the same fate as the USSR and Yugoslavia due to lack of government" s real commitment to self-determination and democracy put into practice. Thus, the federal state is a de facto one-party state in which ethnic organizations are mere satellites of one ethnic organization, the Tigray People" s Liberation Front (TPLF), the leading unit in the ruling coalition, the Ethiopian

People''s Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). This implies that in Ethiopia the federal exercise is as yet another colonial trick, which advocates "decolonization." However, TPLF pointed out that ethnic federalism has maintained the unity of the Ethiopian people's'' and the territorial integrity of the state. Therefore it is important to examine objectively whether ethnic federalism is a viable way of resolving conflict between ethno nationalism and state nationalism. Now that the ethnic federal experiment is almost three decades'' old in Ethiopia, it is possible to make a cautious evaluation of its impact on democratic uncertainty and political violence in Ethiopia.

The History of State Formation in Ethiopia

The history of state formation in Ethiopia is a source of profound, even bitter contention. At one extreme, pan-Ethiopian nationalists contend that the state is some 3,000 years old. According to this perspective, well represented by Gashaw (1993), the Ethiopian state has existed for millennia, forging a distinct national identity. Ethiopian nationalism is a historically verifiable reality, not a myth. It has successfully countered ethnic and regional challenges. A more sensible image of Ethiopia would be as a historically evolved (non-colonial) empire-state.

The ancient Ethiopian state, short-term contractions in size notwithstanding, expanded, over a long historical period, through the conquest and incorporation of adjoining kingdoms, principali ties, sultanates, etc., as indeed most states in the world were formed. The declared objective of the framers of ethnic federalism was to transform the empire-state into a democratic state of ethnic pluralism in order to ensure that no ethnic community would find it necessary or desirable to secede. Adopting the French model, modern Ethiopian governments attempted to forge cultural homogenization through state centralization and one-language policy during most of the 20th century.

In the span of a century, three forms of ethnic social engineering have been attempted in Ethiopia. The first social engineering was designed by Emperor Menelik (1889-1913) but significantly elaborated by Emperor Haile Selassie (1930-36, 1941-74). It attempted to create a unitary state on the basis of cultural assimilation, using Amharic as the sole language of instruction and public discourse and Abyssinian Orthodox Christian culture as the core culture of Ethiopian national identity. This effort was in keeping with the pan-Ethiopian nationalist perspective. Cultural and structural inequalities typified imperial rule, with ethnic and regional discontent rising until the revolution of 1974 overthrew the monarchy. The policy of assimilation into mainstream Amhara culture provoked some subordinated ethnic groups into initiating ethnic movements in various regions of the empire-state. The second ethnic social engineering (1974-91) was the military government's attempt to retain a unitary state and address the "national question" within the framework of Marxism-Leninism. To address the latter, it set up the Institute for the Study of Nationalities in 1983. Based on the Institute's recommendations, the military regime created twenty-four administrative regions and five autonomous regions within the unitary form of state, but no devolution of authority was discernible.

In 1979, the regime initiated a mass National Literacy Campaign in 15 Ethiopian languages. At the same time as it was making these and related efforts (e.g., in legitimating ethnic folk music and dance) in the direction of cultural pluralism, the regime waged a military campaign against ethno-nationalist armed groups. In the last decade of its rule, ethnic based opposition organizations had intensified their assault on the military government and ethnic nationalism became a major factor in the demise of the centralizing military regime.

The previous two social engineering attempts had failed by 1974 and 1991, respectively. The third ethnic social engineering (1991-present), under investigation here, is the EPRDF government's attempt to maintain the Ethiopian state on the basis of ethnic federalism as well as cultural, language and political autonomy at regional and sub-regional levels. Ethno nationalist movements grew immensely during military rule. Apart from the Eritrean nationalist movements, the major ethnic organizations included the TPLF, Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), and Afar Liberation Front (ALF); minor organizations included Islamic Oromo Liberation Front (IOLF), Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF), and Ogadeni National Liberation Front (ONLF). Ethno nationalist organizations posed the gravest threat to military rule and to the unity and territorial integrity of the country. Indeed, it is the TPLF/EPRDF, and to a lesser extent, OLF, Afar and Somali movements that, in collaboration with the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF), brought down the military regime.

TPLF, OLF, and WSLF had sought secession prior to the collapse of the military junta. They were willing to come together to forge a new constitutional arrangement they could all live with probably because they had come to realize that secession was not a viable option. At the same time, however, a secession provision had to be made a part of the compact, if only to justify the sacrifices they had called upon their mobilized constituents

To make during long years of struggle. It is likely that at least one or perhaps more ethno nationalist movement(s) would not have joined a federal arrangement if secession were not constitutionally recognized. The ideological antecedents of TPLF/EPRDF"s ethnic federalism project can be traced to Marxist-Leninist ideology and its conception of "the national question." The project followed the example of the USSR and Yugoslavia.

The Evolution and Structure of Ethnic Federalism in Ethiopia

Despite the horrific experience of interethnic conflict and disintegration in the former USSR and Yugoslavia federations, federalism is still popular for reconciling unity and diversity under a single political system. In the USA, Switzerland, Canada and Australia, federalism and political decentralization contribute to regional stability by sharing power with the lower levels of government to decide on their own affairs (Teshome and Záhořík, 2008). In contrast to these cases some scholars (e.g. Kymlicka, Osaghae and Mamdani in Teshome and Záhořík 2008) argue that ethnic federalism accentuates ethnic conflicts, facilitates secession, and eventually leads to the disintegration of countries. It could overemphasize centrifugal forces at the expense of centripetal ones as shown practically in the Soviet Union (1991), Yugoslavia (1991) and Czechoslovakia (1993) where federalism failed to prevent countries from disintegration. Erk and Anderson (2009) also mention the long-term effects of self-administration in promoting ethnic consciousness that strengthens distinctiveness, feelings of in-group and out-group and providing institutional backup for competing nationalists to eventual secession.

Sub-Saharan Africa is the scene of a quarter of the world's conflicts (Conflict Barometer, 2014). Most of these conflicts are intrastate and currently occur in Central and Eastern Africa. In Sub-Saharan Africa three coup attempts were recorded in 2014 (Conflict Barometer, 2014).

Even though it characterizes many African countries, communal conflict is not common in most of modern multi-ethnic societies (Shoup, 2007). In the most ethnically diversified African country, Nigeria, conflicts are strongly rooted in ethnic differences, arising among the national majority Hausa-Fulani peoples and Yoruba-speaking peoples of the southwest and Igbo (Ibo) peoples in the southeast. The tension between the Southern Christian and Muslim north has been also significant. Ethno-racial politics and regionalism are also part of the recent history of South Africa (Dickovick, 2012). In Africa, the persistence, exacerbation and intensity of ethnic tension and conflict is mainly caused by ethnicization of state institutions, and ethnic client elism where different groups fight to place their own representatives in key political and economic positions (Jinadu, 2007).

In response to such dynamic intrastate confrontation, some African countries, such as South Africa, Nigeria and Ethiopia have adopted a federal system. However, still all forms of intrastate conflict including identity-state struggle, and communal conflict are prevalent and terrible. The persecution and expulsion of out-group members also become common in many African states (Teshome and Záhořík, 2008). Thus, African countries are still challenged to find governance system conducive for diversity management safeguarding both group rights and individual liberties (Mengiste ab, 2011). The EPRDF-spearheaded multiethnic coalition convened a national conference in July 1991, and quickly established the Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE) under a transitional charter. Twenty-seven political groups participated in the charter conference. According to the preamble of the transitional charter, "self-determination of all the peoples shall be [one of] the governing principles of political, economic and social life" henceforth. It underlined the need to end all hostilities, heal (ethnic) wounds, and create peace and stability. The transitional charter affirmed the right of ethnic groups to self-determination, up to and including secession (Article2) and provided for the establishment of local and regional governments "on the basis of nationality" (Article 13). It also stipulated that "the Head of State, the Prime Minister, the Vice-Chairperson and Secretary of the Council of Representatives shall be from different nations / nationalities" (Article 9b).

The charter conference established an 87 member Council of Representatives (COR),

comprising "representatives of national liberation movements, other political organizations and prominent individuals" (Article7). The COR acted as the national parliament for the two-and-half-year transitional period. EPRDF had the largest voting bloc with 32 seats, followed by the Oromo Liberation front (OLF) with 12 seats. The radical departure from the unitary policies of the two previous regimes provoked immediate opposition from pan-Ethiopian nationalists. At the other extreme, the OLF bolted out of the transitional government in June 1992 and abandoned its participation in the upcoming district and regional elections, charging election fraud on the part of EPRDF and complaining that the provision for ethnic and regional autonomy enshrined in the Charter was not faithfully implemented.

In April 1993, EPRDF, which has ethnic constituents in (and rules) Tigray, Amhara, Oromia, and Southern regional states, ousted five Southern political groups (the "Southern Coalition") for expressing sympathy with opposition groups meeting in Paris. Thus, by the time the constitution was crafted in 1995, EPRDF"s ethnic federal design, as well as its political legitimacy, was already under challenge in some critical quarters.

The transitional COR established a Constitutional Commission to draft a constitution. It later adopted the draft and presented it for public discussion. Then, a Constituent Assembly ratified the federal constitution in December 1994, which came into force in August 1995.

The constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia starts with the words: "We the nations, nationalities, and peoples of Ethiopia." This phrase indicates that all the ethnic groups as collectivities, rather than individual citizens are, in principle, the authors of the constitution. Thus, Ethiopia's ethnic federalism is federalism based on ethnic communities as the constituent units and foundations of the federal state. Comprising a preamble and eleven chapters, the constitution covered separation of state and religion, transparency and accountability of government, human and democratic rights, structure of the federal and regional states, and division of powers.

Although Ethiopia is a multiethnic state, the preamble affirms that the Ethiopian peoples, "in full and free exercise of [their] right to self-determination" strongly commit themselves to build one political community and one economic community based on their common interests, common outlook, and common destiny (italics mine). These clauses were inserted in the preamble, after a long debate, in order to underscore the need for political and economic unity among the constituent ethnic groups and regions. The Ethiopian Ethnic federalism was based on two important components of ethnic federalism: language pluralism, and regional autonomy.

Language pluralism is important because it was one of the factors that created profound alienation for ethnic groups for whom the dominant culture-cum-language was not their own, and because it is one indicator of pluralism in multiethnic societies. The regional autonomy subsection indicates specific ethnic and regional rights included in accommodating perceived demands of major ethnic groups.

Federalism: Dispersal of Power

Federalism, a term that sprouted from the Federalists, is the idea that the governmental sovereignty is divided between the central governing national authority, and another political unit, such as states. There are many different types of federalism including dual federalism, cooperative federalism, horizontal federalism, creative federalism, fiscal federalism, and new federalism among others.

Dual federalism or layer-cake federalism

describes the nature of federalism with provisions for two types of government (the United States, national and state) in which the national government dealt with national defense, foreign policy, and fostering commerce, whereas the states dealt with local matters, economic regulation, and criminal law. This type of federalism is also called layer-cake federalism because, like a layer cake, the state's" and the national governments each had their own distinct areas of responsibility, and the different levels rarely overlapped.

Cooperative federalism or marble-cake federalism

Federalism over much of the last century has more closely resembled a marble cake rather than a layer cake as federal authority and state authority have become intertwined.

The national government has become integrated with the state and local governments, making it difficult to tell where one type of government begins and the other types end. State and local governments administer many federal programs,

for example, and states depend heavily on federal funds to support their own programs.

Horizontal federalism/regulated federalism

Refers to the ways state governments relate to one another. States often compete or cooperate on many different issues, from environmental policy to economic development. One state, for example, may lower its tax rate in order to attract businesses away from other states. States have a great deal of leeway in how they behave toward one another.

Creative Federalism or picket fence

Is that the federal government determined the needs of the states and provided services for them. In this case, the federal government works directly for the states, and caters to their needs. This involves common planning between the federal and state governments to achieve goals that work for the states. These days, creative federalism seems to have been diminished by cooperative federalism.

Fiscal federalism

Is the type of Federalism in which the money bag controls everything (e.g. American Congress). It gives massive amounts of power as it is responsible for the American treasury. It can therefore limit the budget of any other political department it does not believe is working towards the best interest of America.

New Federalism

Was created in response to the power the state governments lost due to the enforcement of civil rights which returned rights to the local and state governments and turned federal government powers over to the lesser governments. When free people choose to live under an agreed constitutional framework, it may be implemented in various ways. Some democracies have unitary administrations. Another solution is a federal system of government- power shared at the local, regional, and national levels. The United States, for example, is a federal republic with states that have their own legal standing and authority independent of the federal government. Unlike the political subdivisions in nations such as Britain and France, which have a unitary political structure, American states cannot be abolished or changed by the federal government. Although power at the national level in the United States has grown significantly, states still possess significant responsibilities in fields such

as education, health, transportation, and law enforcement. In turn, individual U.S. states have generally followed the federal model by delegating many functions, such as the operation of schools and police, to local communities.

The divisions of power and authority in a federal system are never neat and tidy - federal, state, and local agencies can all have overlapping and even conflicting agendas in areas such as education and criminal justice - but federalism can maximize opportunities for the citizen involvement so vital to the functioning of democratic society.

DEMOCRACY

Definitions of Democracy

Democracy, which derives from the Greek word demos, or people, is defined, basically, as government in which the supreme power is vested in the people. Democracy may be a word familiar to most, but it is a concept still misunderstood and misused at a time when dictators, single-party regimes, and military coup leaders alike assert popular support by claiming the mantle of democracy. Yet the power of the democratic idea has prevailed through a long and turbulent history, and Democratic government, despite continuing challenges, continues to evolve and flourish throughout the world.

In some forms, democracy can be exercised directly by the people; in large societies, it is by the people through their elected agents. Or, in the memorable phrase of President Abraham Lincoln, democracy is government of the people, by the people, and for the people. Freedom and democracy are often used interchangeably, but the two are not synonymous. Democracy is indeed a set of ideas and principles about freedom, but it also consists of practices and procedures that have been molded through a long, often tortuous history. Democracy is the institutionalization of freedom.

In the end, people living in a democratic society must serve as the ultimate guardians of their own freedom and must forge Their own path toward the ideals set forth in the preamble to the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights: Recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice, and peace in the world.

Characteristics of Democracy

Democracy is more than just a set of specific government institutions; it rests upon a well

understood group of values, attitudes, and practices all of which may take different forms and expressions among cultures and societies around the world. Democracies rest upon fundamental principles, not uniform practices with the following core characteristics.

- Democracy is government in which power and civic responsibility are exercised by all adult citizens, directly, or through their freely elected representatives.

- Democracy rests upon the principles of majority rule and individual rights. Democracies guard against all-powerful central governments and decentralize government to regional and local levels, understanding that all levels of government must be as accessible and responsive to the people as possible.

- Democracies understand that one of their prime functions is to protect such basic human rights as freedom of speech and religion; the right to equal protection under law; and the opportunity to organize and participate fully in the political, economic, and cultural life of society.

- Democracies conduct regular free and fair elections open to citizens of voting age.

- Citizens in a democracy have not only rights, but also the responsibility to participate in the political system that, in turn, protects their rights and freedoms.

- Democratic societies are committed to the values of tolerance, cooperation, and compromise. In the words of Mahatma Gandhi, Intolerance is itself a form of violence and an obstacle to the growth of a true democratic spirit.

Two Forms of Democracy

Democracies fall into two basic categories, direct and representative. In a direct democracy, citizens, without the intermediary of elected or appointed officials, can participate in making public decisions. Such a system is clearly most practical with relatively small numbers of people - in a community organization, tribal council, or the local unit of a labor union, for example - where members can meet in a single room to discuss issues and arrive at decisions by consensus or majority vote. Democracies rest upon the principle that government exists to serve the people. In other words, the people are citizens of the democratic state, not its subjects.

Because the state protects the rights of its citizens, they, in turn, give the state their loyalty. Under an authoritarian system, by contrast, the state demands loyalty and service from its people without any reciprocal obligation to secure their consent for its actions.

The Culture of Democracy

Human beings possess a variety of sometimes contradictory desires. People want safety, yet relish adventure; they aspire to individual freedom, yet demand social equality. Democracy is no different, and it is important to recognize that many of these tensions, even paradoxes, are present in every democratic society.

CONFLICT AND CONSENSUS

There is a paradox between conflict and consensus. Democracy is in many ways nothing more than a set of rules for managing conflict. At the same time, this conflict must be managed within certain limits and result in compromises, consensus, or other agreements that all sides accept as legitimate. An overemphasis on one side of the equation can threaten the entire undertaking. If groups perceive democracy as nothing more than a forum in which they can press their demands, the society can shatter from within. If the government exerts excessive pressure to achieve consensus, stifling the voices of the people, the society can be crushed from above. There is no easy solution to the conflict-consensus equation. Democracy is not a machine that runs by it once the proper principles are inserted. A democratic society needs the commitment of citizens who accept the inevitability of intellectual and political conflict as well as the necessity for tolerance. From this perspective, it is important to recognize that many conflicts in democratic society are not between clear-cut right and wrong but between differing interpretations of democratic rights and social priorities.

Education and Democracy

There is a direct connection between education and democratic values: in democratic societies, educational content and practice support habits

Democratic governance

This educational transmission process is vital in a democracy because effective democracies are dynamic, evolving forms of government that demand independent thinking by the citizenry. The opportunity for positive social and political change rests in citizens" hands. Governments

should not view the education system as a means to indoctrinate students, but devote resources to education just as they strive to defend other basic needs of citizens. In contrast to authoritarian societies that seek to inculcate an attitude of passive acceptance, the object of democratic education is to produce citizens who are independent, questioning, yet deeply familiar with the precepts and practices of democracy. People may be born with an appetite for personal freedom, but they are not born with knowledge about the social and political arrangements that make freedom possible over time for themselves and their children. Such things must be acquired. They must be learned. Learning about democracy begins in school; it continues throughout a life of civic involvement, and curiosity about the many kinds of information accessible in a free society.

Society and Democracy

Democratic constitutionalism is ultimately the foundation by which a society, through the clash and compromise of ideas, institutions, and individuals, reaches, however imperfectly, for truth. Democracy is pragmatic. Ideas and solutions to problems are not tested against a rigid ideology but tried in the real World where they can be argued over and changed, accepted, or discarded. Democracy demands coalition building which is the essence of democratic action. It teaches interest groups to negotiate with others, to compromise, and to work within the constitutional system. By working to establish coalition, groups with differences learn how to argue peaceably, how to pursue their goals in a democratic manner, and ultimately how to live in a world of diversity. Self-government cannot always protect against mistakes, end ethnic strife, guarantee economic prosperity, or ensure happiness. It does, however, allow for public debate to identify and fix mistakes, permit groups to meet and resolve differences, offer opportunities for economic growth, and provide for social advancement and individual expression. Thus, a free man, when he fails, blames nobody. It is true as well for the citizens of democracy who, finally, must take responsibility for the fate of the society in which they themselves have chosen to live.

Democratic Uncertainty and Political Violence in Ethiopia

Ethiopia is a diversified nation with 84 ethnic groups. No single ethnic community in Ethiopia constitutes more than 50% of the country" s population. However, the Oromo and Amhara are the major ethnic groups with significant proportions. Except in a few urban areas such as the capital city of Addis Ababa, most ethnic communities predominantly live in their respective distinct geographic areas (Tewfik, 2010). Most of Ethiopia" s communities are divided by crosscutting cleavages such as religion. The major religions, Orthodox Christianity and Islam, certainly had a moderating role by limiting the intensity of ethnic tensions and conflict (Tewfik, 2010).

The attempt to establish a centralized modern state by Emperor Rewords realized by the successful conquests and expansions of Emperor Menelik II had expanded the kingdom of Shewa and established modern Ethiopia as a unitary and centralized state. This modernization was continued during Emperor Haile Selassie"s (1930-1974) and the Derg"s regimes (1975-1991). However, the central administration of the Derg has faced strong resistance by ethnic liberation movements at the periphery (Tewfik, 2010). Intrastate conflicts were experienced in Ethiopian history between the central government and local governors urging for decentralization and autonomy.

With the victory of national liberation movements over the military regime in 1991, the TPLF and its affiliation designed ethnic federalism following the enactment of the 1994 constitution to solve the problem experienced in the previous centralized unitary administration (Adegehe, 2009). The pseudo federal system of governance was established along ethno-linguistic lines by the transitional government of Ethiopia after the defeat of the Derg regime in 1991. The transitional charter of the transitional government recognized Eritrea's secession and the rights of nations and nationalities to self-administration up to and including succession. The 1994 constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) considers ethnic contradiction as the primary problem in the country's politics and reaffirms ethnic federalism with the right to self-administration for all regional states including the right to secession (Adegehe, 2009). The Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) constitution establishes a federal state structure composed of two distinct entities, the federal state and the regional entities. According to the 1994 constitution, both the federal and regional states establish their own institutional organs, legislative, executive and judicial bodies

and exercise autonomous power within their sphere of influence. It recognizes nine regional states and two city administrations. These include Tigray, Afar, Amhara, Oromia, Somali, BenishangulGumuz, Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples, Gmabela and Harare, and Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa city administrations. Regional states are divided hierarchically into zones, worked as, special-woredas and kebeles. The constitution states that the federal and regional governments are required to respect the power of one another (Art. 50(8)). However, the interference of the federal government on the regional states, and the interference of state organs especially the executive in other organs at both regional and federal state level are tacitly established in the federal constitution and observed in the practical implementation of the ruling government.

The constitution as stated in article 39(2) recognizes the cultural rights of all ethnic groups "the right to speak, to write and to develop its own language; to express, to develop and to promote its culture; and to preserve its history". Regional entities have given an exclusive power to determine their own working language (Tewfik, 2010). Many ethno-linguistic groups become visible and eager to promote their own unique identity either for recovering their values or for political and economic advantage. In principle, in its Article 39(3), the EPRDF constitution also allows the right to self-administration and equitable representation at both the regional and federal levels of government. In contrast to the previous regimes, significant improvement has been shown in power devolution from the central government to the regional states. In spite of the rationality of the federal administration in managing the complex ethno-linguistic diversity of the country and reducing conflicts; ethnic competition and conflicts are still critical challenges in the country. According to the 2013 global peace index report measuring countries" peacefulness, Ethiopia is ranked 38th and 146th in Sub-Saharan Africa countries and worldwide respectively with a 2.63 overall score on a 1-5 scale. The federal structure is responsible for many communal and identity conflicts. These conflicts are associated with issues related to self-determination/secession, the politics of resource sharing, political power, representation, identity, citizenship, ethnic and regional boundaries and others. The drawing of boundaries led to the generation of violent

conflicts among various ethnic groups and almost in all border areas of regional states. Due to the protracted natures of border disputes, the Somali, Afar and Oromia regions established permanent bureaus dealing with border affairs (Adegehe, 2009).

In contrast to Amhara, Oromo and Tigray regions, where a single group constitutes the majority of the regional population, intraregional conflicts have been violent and more widespread in the multi-ethnic regions such as the Somali, Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples region, Gmabela and BenishangulGumuz. The new systems of entitlement introduced as part of ethnic federalism allows access to resources and other regional Opportunities only to those who live in their designated ethnic homelands whereas those who find themselves out of their designated ethnic homelands became non-titular and were denied access to regional resources and opportunities. The narrowed regional and local citizenship to the level of primordial ethnicity frequently led to conflict between the titular and the non-titular groups (Abbink, 2011; Adegehe, 2009).

The risk of discrimination among regional states with one big majority (Somali, Oromia, Tigray, Amhara and Afar) and regional states lacking such an ethnic majority (BenishangulGumuz, the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State) and regional states of titular minority (Harare) is highly critical. The political rights of those non-indigenous people are undermined and overridden by group rights (Gebremichael, 2012). Following the introduction of ethno-federalism and political manipulation of ethnic identity by local cadres, the relationship among those ethnic groups exposed to confrontation and violence. The involvement of local politicians has been visible after the 2005 national elections in Gida-Kiramu worked in Wollega, where a few thousand Amhara farmers were chased, their land was confiscated and they were forced to take refuge elsewhere (Abbink, 2006). Similarly, the Amhara ethnic group has been evacuated from Guraferda Woreda with the ethnic based self-administration as per the contradicting principles of Ethiopian constitution. Many of the Oromo, Amhara, Tigray and other outsiders have been intimidated and forcefully displaced from BenishangulGumuz and Gmabela regional states as per the principle of self-determination recognized by the EPRDF constitution (Adimassu, 2013). The forced migration of non-residents and subsequent violence of basic human and

democratic rights, death, and confiscation of property were often caused by ethnic competition and confrontation over local resources and political positions. Adimassu (2013) underlined that this political action violates the right to freedom of movement and residence including the right to freedom from forced displacement and evictions mentioned in the EPRDF constitution and civil code, criminal code, and immigration law of Ethiopia. The evacuation of people at different corners of the country mentioned above are caused by ethnic tension and conflict agitated by local politicians aiming at fracturing potential political alliances that might threaten the political supremacy of TPLF. It is claimed that the confrontation between the two dominant ethnic groups (Oromo and Amhara) is highly political and often manipulated as part of the divide and rule tactics of the TPLF, representing 6.1 % of the population. The overriding ethno-linguistic identification empowered by ethnic federalism freezes other forms of identification and association, such as citizenship, occupation, religion, class and gender (Abbink, 2006; 2011).

The deterioration of such cross-cutting cleavages incites ethnic confrontation, conflict and disintegration. The political manipulation of contentious historical relations among different groups as a divide and rule principle of the TPLF/EPRDF government blurred commonalities and aggravated ethnic tensions and confrontation especially among the politically dominant ethnic groups, the Amhara and Oromo people. The TPLF/EPRDF government is being accused of manipulating those cross-cutting cleavages especially religious institutions in weakening united opposition. Recently, religious division and antagonism among the two major religions, Orthodox Christianity and Islam is becoming common. Adegehe (2009) argues that conflict in Ethiopia persists over different systems of administration, including the TPLF/EPRDF regime. However, after the introduction of ethnic federalism, the warfare between the nationalist/secessionist movement groups and the central government transferred to communal/interethnic conflicts which are more devastating and difficult to settle. Tes home and Záhořík (2008) also argue that ethnic federalism has failed to solve ethnic conflicts, still common in regional border areas, resettlement sites and universities, composed of different ethnic groups. Hagmann and Abbink (2011) support the argument that political polarization and ethnic computation have been prevalent for the last three decades, in the

period of ethnic federalism. Abbink (2006) criticizes the TPLF/EPRDF ethnic federal administration as a failed strategy in providing long-term solution for protracted conflicts. He argues that the relative silence of armed conflict between separatists and the central government is not the result of ethnic federalism but rather the result of military suppression.

According to Article 39(1) of the Ethiopian constitution, every ethno-territorial community has "an unconditional right to self-determination, including the right to secession". This article is rationalized by the ruling political leaders as aiming to ensure the confidence of regional entities by recognizing the extreme freedom of self-determination when they feel that their constitutional rights have been violated. However, the practicality of this article is still contentious and debated by different politicians and academicians, and accused for the revival of secessionists at different corners of the country. Teshome and Záhořík (2008) argue that article 39 empowered ethnic-based organizations in the country that have secessionist programs such as the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) and the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) by exercising the right to self-determination.

The conflict between the government and secessionists is still common and has caused the death of government soldiers, secessionists and civilians. Armed secessionists revived, for instance, the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) and the Oromo liberation (OLF) with the failure of ethnic federalism in developing a peaceful inclusive political atmosphere (International Crisis group, 2009; Adegehe, 2009). Currently, Tigrayan People‟s Democratic Movement, Ethiopian People Patriotic Front EPPF; Ginbot 7 Movement for Justice, Freedom and Democracy G7; the Amhara Democratic Forces Movement (ADFM) are some among those who use arms to fight the current ruling government, some of them after the 2005 fraudulent election. The grievance and confrontation of all these armed groups against the current ruling government is an indication of the failure of the ethno-linguistic federal administration in accommodating political and ethnic differences. In Ethiopia, the role of ethnic federalism as a way to check and balance power is insignificant.

The subsequent fraudulent elections and political, military and economic advantage of TPLF and other EPRDF coalition parties over

opposition parties contribute to the existing weak political and democratic institutions supposed to underpin the separation of powers and to control the activities of the executive bodies and the interventions of the federal government in the affairs of the regional states. The right of opposition parties to control the approval of decisions violating their ethnic group is almost nil at all levels of government, federal, regional, and zonal. The rights of minority groups are not protected. The 1994 EPRDF constitution, the backbone of ethnic federalism, does not allow veto power for the minority representatives within or across parties. The checks and balance system among different state organs is weak and much power is vested in the hands of executive organs. Such constitutional deficiencies provide favorable conditions for the ruling party to act above the constitution and suppress democratic principles, thus causing the discrimination, conflict and underdevelopment of certain communities. Policies and implementation strategies are highly centralized where regional states replicate policies from the center (Keller, 2003). Similarly, the International Crisis Group (2009) reports the critical risk of EPRDF centralized apparatus over regional and local autonomy and the extensive patronage system and the use of force for democratization. According to this report EPRDF policies and strategic decisions are imposed on the smallest administrative level, Kebelle, from the federal ministerial offices, most of them occupied by TPLF, representatives of 6.1% of the population. According to Teshome and Záhořík (2008) the administration in Ethiopia is federal only in a structural sense and Abbink (2011) also confirmed their argument that the federal system is nominal, where central control and top-down rule preclude local initiative and autonomy. The right to ethno-national self-determination granted by ethnic federalism provides the opportunity to appoint local government officials from their own ethnic (Hagmann and Abbink, 2011). Such administration affects the quality of the bureaucracy especially in regional states with limited expertise while granting self-administration to dominant ethnic groups created new minorities. This has been particularly acute for Amharas and Gurages, who live in cities and across the country (International Crisis Group, 2009). Ethnically defined administrations violate political liberties, human rights and economic equality (Abbink, 2011).

CONCLUSION

Democracy offers the opportunity to succeed as well as the risk of failure. The promise of democracy is life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Democracy is then both a promise and a challenge. It is a promise that free human beings, working together, can govern themselves in a manner that will serve their aspirations for personal freedom, economic opportunity, and social justice. It is a challenge because the success of the democratic enterprise rests upon the shoulders of its citizens and no one else. If the opposition parties and the TPLF led government do not return to active dialogue on political issues, including transitional government formation, release of prisoners (politician, journalists, and bloggers) and building democratic instructions; the country will experience a return to violence. Thus, the track record of federalism suggests that federalism, if it is to work best, needs to be complemented by certain other processes and structures: the rule of law, democracy and the culture of human rights in particular. It focuses on the institutional principles that federalism specifically makes available for the purpose of accommodating

Ethnic Diversity

Institution and institutional principles i.e., established rules and practices that constitute a state"s response to the challenges of ethnic diversity are critical. It includes the constitution, legislation and other established practices that regulate the management of ethnic diversity. Federalism is not a panacea for all challenges of ethnic diversity. It is submitted that federalism, as institutional device, is not enough to respond to the challenges of ethnic diversity.

A federal design that is constructed to accommodate ethnic diversity must go beyond the traditional institutional features of a federation. It must include non-traditional institutional features of a federation and other non-federal features in order to give full effect to the institutional principles that respond to the challenges of ethnic plurality.

The review indicates that the current Ethiopian ethnic federalism system was instigated to plant division among ethnic groups so as to institutionalize and facilitate rule by the TPLF and its politically affiliated groups. Thus, it is the "divide and rule strategy" of the TPLF/ EPRDF system, which weaken interregional and interethnic cooperation, and aggravate conflict. Accordingly, it led to crack-down unity over cross-cutting issues such as religion, common historical experiences and national feelings to

increase the vulnerability and risk of interethnic conflict and national disintegration. The government is federal only in a structural sense with top-down policy directions to control lower level activities and challenge regional autonomy. The power given to the regional states to deliver appropriate local decisions is minimal.

The conflict is dominant at the lower level in those regional administrations with multiple ethno-linguistic groups. Furthermore, the rights of the minority are not protected; and access to resources and the right of political representation of out-group members, as per the principles of ethno-linguistic self-administration, are often denied.

The illogicality between individual rights and group rights has not been realized which caused protracted conflict in many of multi-ethnic regional states.

This resulted in the ethnic tension and conflict among dominant group whom are often politically manipulated in order to fracture potential political alliances that might threaten the political supremacy of TPLF. Therefore, the principle of power sharing (mutual veto, proportionality and quota) should z common values, cooperation and coexistence.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE FEAT OF ETHIOPIA

Possible policy and diplomatic interventions by international actors, particularly the United States, European Union (EU) and large multilateral donors, are quite important for the feat of Ethiopia. Moreover, domestic policy recommendations are as follows:

Recommencement of routine politics in the country

The trial of the political prisoners is the primary obstacle to the recommencement of routine politics in the country. The international organizations should impose the current TPLF lead Ethiopian government come and discus with all opposition parties on argumentative political topics, including democracy, formation of transitional government, etc.

Formation of Strong, Well-Functioning and Autonomous Democratic Institutions

In federal government formation there should be strong institutions, effective policies and unifying symbols need to be set in place together with an independent and impartial judicial system that ensures the protection of minority rights, the rule of law and the secularity of the state. It also requires new electoral board which must be appointed among major opposition figures which will allow greater opposition party involvement in the composition of the board that will lead toward building trust among political parties. Well-functioning and autonomous democratic institutions are required to facilitate checks and balances and accountability across different organs including the executive bodies and also provide inclusive and contextual decisions that would serve as a venue for diversity management and reduce contradiction and conflict.

Security of civil society and private press

Civil society and the private press are vital in protecting and deepening democracy. However, they have been significantly undermined since the 2005 elections. These sectors should be supported with resources and international pressure to ensure the norms and expectations of transparency and participation.

Rule of law

Governing elites must abide by constitutional rights and responsibilities and perform through institutional procedures and be accountable to their activities.

Institutionalization of the Politics of Accommodation and Democratic Bargaining

Institutionalization of the politics of accommodation and democratic bargaining would reduce ethnic antagonism and promote trust, dialogue, tolerance and recognition of differences, moderation and cooperation as critical engines of coexistence.

Promoting Consociation democracy

Consociation democracy, promoting the political culture of accommodation, can be an alternative mechanism to prevent potential sources of conflict such as unequal and arbitrary distribution of political and socio-economic opportunities.

REFERENCES

[1] Abbink, J. (2006) "Ethnicity and Conflict Generation in Ethiopia: Some Problems and Prospects of Ethno-Regional Federalism", Journal of Contemporary African Studies, 24(3): 389-413.

[2] Abbink, J. (2011) "Ethnic-based Federalism and Ethnicity in Ethiopia: Reassessing the

Experiment after 20 Years", Journal of Eastern African Studies, 5 (4), 596-618.

[3] Adegehe, A. K. (2009) "Federalism and Ethnic Conflict in Ethiopia: A Comparative Study of the Somali and BenishangulGumuz Regions", Doctoral Thesis, Department of Political Science, Leiden University.

[4] Adimassu, Y.G. (2013) "Implication of Ethiopian Federalism on the Right to Freedom of Movement and Residence: Critical Analysis of the Law and the Practice", Master's Thesis, Addis Ababa University.

[5] Conflict Barometer (2014): The Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research, University of Heidelberg, Germany, and http://hiik.de/en/konfliktbarometer/pdf/Conflict Barometer_2014.pdf (Last consulted: 11 May 2015).

[6] Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (1994), http://www.wipo. Int/edocs/lexdocs/laws/en/et/et007e n.pdf (Last consulted: 12 May 2015).

[7] Dickovick, J. T. (2012) "Comparative Federalism in Africa: Implications for Theory", In APSA 2012 Annual Meeting Paper, http:// papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm? Abstract_ id=2 104723 (Last consulted: 11 May 2015).

[8] Erk, J. and Anderson, L. (2009) "The Paradox of Federalism: Does Self-Rule Accommodate or Exacerbate Ethnic Divisions?" Regional & Federal Studies, 19(2):191-202 http://www. tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/135975 60902753388 (Last Consulted: 10 May 2015).

[9] Gashaw Solomon (1993) „ Nationalism and ethnic conflict in Ethiopia" in Young, C. (ed.). The rising tide of Cultural pluralism: The nation-state at bay? (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press) 138-158.

[10] Gebremichael, M. (2012) "Federalism and Conflict Management in Ethiopia: Case Study of BenishangulGumuz Regional State", Doctoral Dissertation, Department of Peace Studies, University of Bradford.

[11] Gellner, Ernest (1983) Nations and Nationalism. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. Online version (cited21July2009): http:// books. Google.Com/books? Id=jl7t2yMfxwIC.

[12] Global Peace Index (2013) "Measuring Peace and Assessing Country Risk", Institute for Economics and Peace, http://www.vision of humanity.org/sites/default/files/2014%20 Global%20Peace%20Index% 20REPO RT.pdf (Last consulted: 12 May 2015).

[13] Hagmann, T. and Abbink, J. (2011) "Twenty years of revolutionary democratic Ethiopia, 1991 to 2011", Journal of Eastern African Studies, 5(4): 579-595.

[14] Horowitz, David Joel (1985) Ethnic Groups in Conflict. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. Online version (cited21 July2009):http://books.Google.com/books? id= 1nC8htP6SE4C

[15] Huntington, Samuel P. 1993a. The Clash of Civilizations? Foreign Affairs 72(3): 22—49. URL (cited 21 July 2009):http://www.Foreign affairs.org/19930601fa essay 5188/samuel-phun ting ton/the-clash-of civilizations.html

[16] International Crisis Group (2009) "Ethiopia: Ethnic Federalism and Its Discontents", Africa ReportNo.153, http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/ media/Files/Africa/horn-of-Africa/Ethiopia Eritrea/Ethiopia%20 Ethnic%20 Federalism% 20 and%20Its%20Discontents.pdf (Last consulted: 13 May 2015).

[17] Jinadu, L.A. (2007) "Explaining and Managing Ethnic Conflict in Africa: Towards a Cultural Theory of Democracy", Claude Ake Memorial Papers No. 1, Department of Peace and Conflict Research Uppsala University, Nordic Africa Institute Uppsala, http://www.oozebap.org/ bibliog./pdf/2011/adele_jinadu.pdf (Last Consul ted: 12 May 2015).

[18] Keller, E. (2003) "Ethnic Federalism and Democratization in Ethiopia", In Horn of Africa, 21:30-43.

[19] Mengisteab, K. (2010) "Diversity Management in Africa: Findings from the African Peer Review Mechanism and a Framework for Analysis and Policy-Making", Geneva: United Nations, Economic Commission for Africa

[20] Governance and Public Administration Division, http://citeseerx.ist.Psu.edu/viewdoc/ downloads? Doi=10.1.1.233.869&rep=rep1 & type=pdf (Last Consulted 11 May 2015).

[21] Proclamation No 111/95 Proclamation to make electoral law of Ethiopia conform with the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Negarit Gazeta, TGE, 54th Year-No 9, Addis Ababa, 23rd February 1995.

[22] Shoup, B. (2007) Conflict and Cooperation in Multi-Ethnic States: Institutional Incentives, Myths and Counter-Balancing, Rutledge.

[23] Teshome, W. and Záhořík, J. (2008) "Federalism in Africa: The case of Ethnic-based Federalism in Ethiopia", International Journal of Human Sciences, 5(2).

[24] Tewfik, H. (2010) "Transition to Federalism: The Ethiopian Experience", In Forum of Federations, Ottawa, Canada, http://www. forumfed.org/pubs/occasional_ papers/OC P5. pdf (Last consulted: 13 May 2015).

[25] Wimmer, Andreas. 2002. Nationalist Exclusion and Ethnic Conflict: Shadows of Modernity. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press. Online version (cited 21 July 2009): http://books.google.Com/ books ?id =Db MA5o4rweoC

[26] Wimmer Andreas and Brian Min. 2006. From Empire to Nation-State: Explaining Wars in the Modern World, 1816—2001. *American Sociological Review* 71(6): 867—897. URL (cited 21 July 2009): http://www.asanet. org/ galleries/default-file/Dec 06ASRFeature.pdf