The Idea of Transmodern Ethiopia: A Perspective from Philosophy and Ethics of Liberation[1]

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Abstract

Transmodernity is a new philosophical paradigm that transcends the modern foundational ethos and as well differs from the postmodern critique. It is basically a call towards a just social order that gives priority to human life. It is inherently ethical and fundamentally liberational. This work looks into the insufficiency of Modern Ethiopian establishment in attaining an inclusive and pluralist arrangement. It assumes this establishment as a hegemonic totality that marginalizes its others. It argues that the Modern Ethiopian establishment is an ontologic totality that needs to be liberated and transformed. Based on Dussel's Philosophy and Ethics of Liberation, Transmodern Ethiopia is anticipated as an entity that could transcend the Modern and come up with a different arrangement. This would be an ethical arrangement which accepts the other as other. The three principles of Ethics of Liberation (material principle, formal principle and feasibility principle) are used as an ethical framework for the construction.

Key words: *Transmodernity, Liberation philosophy, Analectic, Ethics of Liberation, Modern Ethiopia, Transmodern Ethiopia, Pluriversal polylogue*

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Introduction

Transmodernity represents a philosophical discourse "characterized by radical transformations in the very cultural foundations of the modern ethos" signaling that humanity is "at the threshold of a new age of history given the exhaustion of the premises upon which modernity is founded" (Dussel 2013b:17). The concept of transmodernity is raised by different authors (Magda 1989, 2001, 2004; Ghisi 1999, 2006, 2008, 2010), yet it is well elaborated and explained by Enrique Dussel (1995, 1996, 2002, 2006, 2008b, 2010, 2012). This concept is drawn from his Philosophy of Liberation. Transmodernity can be seen as the application of liberation ethics to history, and to the ethical recognition of the other as a subject of knowledge and culture (Maldonado-Torres 2011). It is neither modern nor postmodern but it is both of them and beyond, hence *trans*.

This work implies a transmodern critique upon modernity. The paper is a critique of the hegemonic characteristic of the Modern Ethiopian state formation and nation building. It is argued that an egoistic incorporating tendency of the *Other* is reflected in both processes. It is this totalizing tendency of the Modern Ethiopian establishment that resulted in asymmetrical relations and unbalanced national discourse. I propose to demonstrate that the national construction of Ethiopia is formed upon the European model of nation-state. Hence, it is an extension of the European modernity project. It has excluded others, being hegemonic just like the Eurocentric modernity that excluded many others in the global context. There are those who, to use Dussel's words, "the structure of their values has been excluded—*disdained, negated and ignored*" (Dussel 2012:42). This predicament needs to be challenged philosophically. An ethical step that accepts the "other as other" should be in place for an acceptable Ethiopia that is shared by all. I shall argue that neither continuing the modernity project nor exercising the postmodern deconstruction, which is an extension of the first, is fitting. Rather a transmodern alternative is argued for.

The essence of proposing Transmodern Ethiopia lies in demarcating a need for a paradigmatic shift in dealing with the current Ethiopia and its people. My thesis calls for a change in approach in understanding the modern state formation, nation building and their consequences. Its significance is that it suggests a philosophy that could transform the

traditional/modern methods and transcend the ways suggested so far in relation to Ethiopia, more specifically Modern Ethiopia. I argue against the totalizing nature of the dominant hegemonic approach followed in state formation and nation building. A transmodern discourse that "rejects all forms of totalizing synthesis" is exercised in this work (Dallymar 2004:10). It underscores a metaphysical ethics that assumes responsibility for the free and liberated Other to suggest Transmodern Ethiopia. This suggestion presupposes liberation. The liberation of Ethiopia itself from its modern construction and the liberation of subjugated others from the hegemonic dominant system.

Transmodernity

Transmodernity could be understood as a new trend that tries to explain things in a different way than modernity or postmodernity does. As Dussel puts it, we are witnessing "a new age where the conditions necessary to sustain human life on Earth demand a transformation in our ontological attitudes regarding nature, work, property, and other cultures" (Dussel 2013b:17). It is "a whole new interpretation of modernity in order to include moments that were never incorporated into the European version …. [It] affirms the essential components of excluded cultures in order to develop a new civilization for the twenty-first century" (Dussel 2002:223-24). It is not a linear projection which takes us from (pre)modernity via postmodernity to transmodernity; rather, it transcends modernity in that it takes us trans (Sardar 2004). Transmodernity involves a critical approach towards modernity and a welcoming of hybridization in society, as it is mainly used as a term in politics, economy, and religion (Ghisi 2010). "It is a liberation theory and practice that underscores the necessity to negate the modern system of marginalization and subjugation by developing a solidaristic-critical study into the underlying socio-historical realities of the present world through a new approach" (Binyam 2011:2).

Some suggest the upcoming of a new reality that couldn't be addressed by modernity's way of explanation and therefore demand for a new transformation (Rifkin 2005). This may be either because the very nature of the foundations of the modernity project, signaling an "exhaustion of the premises upon which modernity is founded", or it may be because of the emergence of new cultures and life outlooks that demand the change in the

philosophical discourse that could explain them and the world around. The latter is what Dussel characterizes as the "irreversible uprising of universal cultures excluded by modernity (and [even] postmodernity)" (Dussel 2002:237). Others look critically at the project of modernity itself: its hegemonic Eurocentric nature and monolithic stance that marginalizes, oppresses and disregards many others is taken as a point of departure. Therefore they suggest a reconstruction of the concept and history of modernity not from within but from the exterior perspective, from the victims. This reconstruction calls for what Dussel calls "analogic reasoning: reasoning from outside the system" (Cole 2005:91). Both explanations infer the need for change and reconsideration in the ethos of modernity. Dussel gives much emphasis to the second line of argument. He furthermore suggests what he calls a transmodern way-out.

For Dussel, transmodernity "is a new liberation project with multiple dimensions: political, economic, ecological, erotic, pedagogic, religious" (Dussel 2000:474). Transcending a hegemonic and marginalizing tendency of modernity, transmodernity is born from emerging potentiality of other cultures omitted and suppressed by Western culture and Modernity. He explains: "From this omitted potentiality and altering 'exteriority' emerges a project of 'trans'-modernity, a 'beyond' that transcends Western modernity (since the West has never adopted it but, rather, has scorned it and valued it as 'nothing') and that will have a creative function of great significance in the twenty-first century" (Dussel 2002:221). It is a civilizational project that transcends modernity. It is a call for new "civilization based on an absolute respect for life in general, and that of the human in particular, in which all other dimensions of existence must be reprogrammed on the basis of the postulate of "perpetual life" (Dussel 2008a:116).

Modernity is criticized for its egoist, hegemonic and oppressive tendencies. Eurocentric modernity subjugated and marginalized many of its others and created what is commonly described as center-periphery. Dussel asserts that it is "essentially bound up with an egotistical assumption of the right of mastery and domination" (Alcoff 2012:62). Therefore transmodernity calls for liberation from what it calls totalizing system and transcending it from the perspective of its others. "The worldwide liberation project of transmodernity differs from a universal, univocal project that

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seeks to impose violently upon the Other following: European rationality, unilateral machismo, and white racism, and which conflates occidental culture with the human in general" (Dussel 1995:138).

The universality claimed by Modern philosophy, starting from Descartes and later revised and retained in Kant and Hegel, exposes its totalizing nature that engulfs the Other under the Same. Alcoff explains this phenomenon as:

> For Dussel, epistemic reflexivity in European modernity is less about putting one's own beliefs on firm grounds, as the story of Descartes is endlessly taught, than about deflating all possible reasons to listen to the other, or to accept the authority of others, or to consider alternative approaches different than those I myself have produced: the knowing *I* is imagined to be both universal arbiter and neutral or perspectiveless observer and as such need not give an account of its own prejudgments or accord presumptive authority to others. (2012:63)

Dussel is not optimistic like Habermas to assume the 'unfinished project' of Modernity. He is not also satisfied with the postmodern critic. He considers it as a continuation and a reaction from within modernity itself. Transmodernity suggests a reconstruction from modernity's exteriority. It is important to note that "exteriority" doesn't signify negativity. It is a positivity that comes from other cultures which are distinct from the West (Dussel 2002). It designates that values that emanate from other cultures different from the center (of Modernity) have significance. Hence transmodernity represents a radical transformation from the current status built by modernity without using the postmodernist deconstruction. It is a new interpretation of modernity that is constructed from a different perspective. Dussel writes:

> I seek to overcome modernity not through a postmodern attack on reason based on the irrational incommensurability of language-games. Rather, I propose a transmodern opposition to modernity's irrational violence based on the reason of the

Other. I hope to go beyond modernity by discovering as innocent the so often denied and victimized other face of modernity. (Dussel 1995:137)

Transmodernity is a multicultural engagement that addresses all cultures of the world. It has what Dussel calls a transmodern pluriversality which is "(with many elements similar in common: European, Islamic, Vedic, Taoist, Buddhist, Latin American, Bantu, etc.), one which is pluricultural, and engaged in a critical intercultural dialogue" (2012:50). Since it has the potentiality of including other modernities and collaborating with others, including European modernity, Alcoff characterizes it as having "both inclusivity and solidarity" (2012:65). Transmodernity realizes "solidarity, which is analectic, analogic, syncretic, hybrid and mestizo". This has the ability to unify "center to periphery, woman to man, race to race, ethnic group to ethnic group, class to class, humanity to earth, and occidental to Third World cultures" (Dussel 1995:138).

Transmodernity while giving credence to other cultures and civilizations, tries to seek answers for different problems in a way that could fit into different contexts and cultures. It is an endeavor towards attaining a humane earth by overcoming modernity's predicament. It proposes a future which is "multicultural, versatile, hybrid, postcolonial, pluralist, tolerant, and democratic (but beyond the modern liberal democracy of the European state)" (Dussel: 2002:236). It also challenges a unilateral teleological trajectory for history and development (Dussel 1995, 2000, 2002). World history shouldn't be presented with the pretention of single European center. It takes an assignment of setting the world history without a single center by suggesting the inter-regional centers that existed through different historical periods.

Dussel and the Foundation of Ethics
Dussel's Appropriation of Livenas' *Ethics as First Philosophy*

Levinas is recognized for his introduction of the concept of *Other* and presenting a severe criticism on the ontological assumptions of *Being* in the traditional Western thought. Through his concept of *alterity* (otherness, radical exteriority) he argues how the *Other* brings the *I* into question and calls for responsibility by breaking the solipsism of the *I* in the modern

philosophical thought. Generally speaking, his philosophical insights could be considered as a radical criticism to the essence of Western ontological narrative which emphasizes totality and unity at the expense of multiplicity and particularity. He challenged this tradition which is apt to reduce, absorb or appropriate the other into its own structure and consumes it into its own, the *Same*.

He brings a new perspective on subjectivity by surpassing the ontological realm and suggesting an ethical dimension for the *I* and *Other* relationship. But his subjectivity "is not the subjectivity of Descartes, Kant, Husserl, or even Kierkegaard; it is not any form of egoism, or self-reflexive subjectivity, nor a kind of authentic subjectivity focused on death (as in Heidegger)" (Moran 2000:343). Levinas condemns the reduction of the *Other* into the *I* at all. His subjectivity is the one with ethical predisposition. It transforms the egoist tendency into inescapable responsibility towards the *Other*. His subject is the one whose ambition is not to grasp, control, comprehend the *Other* but to listen and respond to the call of the *Other*. It is a subject who is held in hostage and failed in the grip of the other human. The ethics he proposes is:

> A calling into question of the Same - which cannot occur within the egoist spontaneity of the same brought about by the Other. We name this calling into question of my spontaneity by the presence of the other *ethics*. The strangeness of the Other, his irreducibility to the I, to my thoughts and my passions, is precisely accomplished as a calling into question of my spontaneity, as ethics...... *And as a critique precedes dogmatism, metaphysics precedes ontology*. (Levinas 1991:43 emphasis added)

As it is just forwarded, he emphasizes this notion of 'ethics before ontology', not the traditionally known ethics which is derived from ontology. This 'ethics as first philosophy' is highly related with Dussel's liberation philosophy. This notion of 'ethics before ontology' has important implications in locating the source for ethics, or the 'ought'. For Levinas, this is a primordial happening that comes before reason. It originates when

we come in contact with the Other who makes us morally obliged towards her. For him, the world is a social world before it is a world at all.

By endorsing ethics as first philosophy and adopting the philosophy of the *Other* from Levinas, Dussel has gone far in appropriating and transforming it. It should be well emphasized that Dussel developed it in a way that could guide to what should be done next. Hence, Liberation philosophy is entailed with political philosophy which is not there in Levinas' thought.

Following Levinas, Dussel separates ethics from ontology or more correctly brings ethics ahead of ontology. Ontology, he emphasizes, gives way to metaphysics (apocalyptic epiphany of the other) (Dussel 1985). Here by metaphysics he refers to the ethico-metaphysical exteriority of the *Other* that revealed herself to the ontologic *I*. He makes this distinction clear in his Philosophy of Liberation. "Ontology is phenomenology; it is a logos or a thinking about what appears (the phenomenon, the *Being*) from the foundation (*Being*)" Dussel writes (ibid: 58).

Ontology is the thinking that expresses *Being* assuming others as *non-Being*. Due to its totalizing nature it is able to think of only itself. Others are excluded and avoided. This dominant totality only moves, if it does so, in a rotating manner creating its own image dialectically. There will be no novelty that it could offer. The values that the system produces will be naturalized and become a norm that others could be evaluated and in consequence categorized as outside, alien: *non-Being*. Any discovery of new *being*s is evaluated under the values and norms of the given system. Ethics derived from this system can only reflect the same values that are within the system. Everything is reconstructed vis-à-vis the existing system and incorporated into it and hence becomes part of the same system. That is why Dussel characterized ontology as "the ideology of ideologies" (1985:15). As Irvine puts it, "the net result is self-discovery, self-unfolding—and that process is ontology" (2011: 611). This making of totality as the only possible substance makes the possibility of any alterity negligible.

Dussel emphasizes that every hermeneutical and existential, or ontological totality is totalitarian, belligerent and martial. It makes no difference to approach such a system dialectically. We will remain in self-reflection and domination of the system itself. Dussel writes:

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Ontology is to think the foundation, the ground, of the Being of a ruling Totality. The project (the Heideggerian ontological *Entwurf*) of the ruling system justifies the oppression of the oppressed and the exclusion of the Other. …. From the interpellation of the Other, and as a response to the other, the affirmation of the Other as other is the origin of the possibility of the negation of the dialectical negation. (Dussel 1996:82)

It is this self enclosure that needs to be abated. It is an enclosure to the *other* and to oneself that could only repeat itself dialectically. The enclosure is opened through its encounter with the *Other*; when it confronts the *Other* which is beyond its boundary. From the metaphysical exteriority the *Other* brings *I* into question. The *Other* is revealed to and announces that she is a radical *Other* that will not be totalized into the *I*. She makes the *I* hostage and forces to take responsibility towards her.

Philosophy of Liberation "tries to formulate a metaphysics—not an ontology" (Dussel 1985:15). Metaphysics, for Dussel contrary to ontology, "is to know how to think about *Being* from the exteriority that judges it" (Dussel 1985:58). It is this way that we could see the system that totalizes everything from metaphysical exteriority. It is looking at the reality beyond the horizon of the system. It underscores the consistent affirmation of the exteriority of the other. "To affirm exteriority is to realize what is impossible for the system (there being no potency for it); it is to realize the new, what has not been foreseen by the totality, that which arises from freedom that is unconditioned, revolutionary, innovative" (ibid: 160).

This is to challenge the assumption and the system that considers *Being* sovereign; to defy the call that justifies the given system. "To do this it is necessary to deprive Being of its alleged eternal and divine foundation; to negate fetishist religion in order to expose ontology as the ideology of ideologies; to unmask functionalisms ... and to delineate the sense of liberation praxis" (Dussel 1985:15). The word fetish refers: taking it for granted without challenging and preventing it from any critics or challenge. When we think from exteriority, the Other is revealed. Dussel termed this revelation as *epiphany*. It is this way that ontology gives way to metaphysics. Hence, "liberation is not a phenomenal, intra-systemic action;

liberation is the praxis that subverts the phenomenological order and pierces it to let in a metaphysical transcendence, which is the plenary critique of the established, fixed, normalized, crystallized, dead" (ibid:58-59). By maintaining a metaphysical exteriority it transcends the system beyond appearance or mere phenomenon. This is the beginning of liberation. As this appearance calls the *'I'* of the system to be responsible and accept *the other as other*, it is declaring its freedom.

Here every person, every group or people, is always situated 'beyond' (ano-) the horizon of totality. That is why the method is referred to as *analectics*[3]. The analectical procedure goes beyond the totality and transcends it. "To break free of their coercion and subjugation, we must open ourselves to the other from the standpoint of the other. We must think, hear, see, feel, and taste the world from the standpoint of the other. This is the analectical moment" (Dussel 2003:6). It is with this analectic method that humanity gets its distinctive character and nobility: "The analectical refers to the real human fact by which every person, every group or people, is always situated 'beyond' (ano-) the horizon of totality. Negative dialectic is no longer enough. The analectical moment is the support of new unfoldings. The analectical moment opens us to the metaphysical sphere (which is not the ontic one) (ibid:158).

In general, Dussel proposes a transcendental thinking that pierces into any totalization. He argues for a new way of thinking what could be called trans-ontology. This is a genuine metaphysics that calls *Being* into question. Thinking this way, by breaching the self enclosure of ontology and thinking *the other otherwise than Being,* is thinking *ethically*. And therefore ethics becomes the first philosophy that precedes ontology. The analectic method results in ethics which is before ontology. It is this ethics that emerges from exteriority that the philosophy of liberation tries to formulate: ethics that could be the first philosophy, *prote/prima philosophia*.

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[3] *Analectic* is a new approach suggested by Dussel. A method that proposes a *metaphysical ethics* that could be assumed to be the first philosophy, *prima philosophia*. This method presupposes the revelation of the *Other* which challenges any egoist *I* and renders it responsible.

Dussel's Ethics of Liberation

Taking the *Other* as a foundation and asserting ethics as first philosophy, Dussel develops a practical ethics with content. He calls this ethics as Ethics of Liberation. The main concern of this ethics is standing for the victims of the global neoliberal capitalism and European hegemony in the global context. Nevertheless, the theoretical underpinnings propounded provide ethical framework for individuals, communities, and cultures excluded from dominant forms of cultural, social, economic and political reason. It shows how it could be argued for the poor, the marginalized and the oppressed in a rigorous philosophical manner. Henceforth, I will discuss the three principles of Ethics of Liberation. The first one is *The Material Moment of Ethics* or Practical Truth. This is the ethics of content. Dussel distinguishes between '*material*' with an '*a*' and '*materiel*' with an '*e*'. The first one stands for content, matter, essence which is opposed to form-formal, while the second one means 'of physical matter', which is opposed to mental or spiritual. This ethics is the ethics of life (Dussel 2013a:55). He declares that: "the ethics of which I speak is human life. By "human" we should understand the life of the human *Being* at its physical-biological, historical-cultural, ethical-aesthetic levels, including even the mystical-spiritual level, and always within a communitarian horizon" (ibid:434). This principle which claims universality is the principle of "the obligation to produce, reproduce, and develop the concrete human life of each ethical subject in community" (ibid: 55). Here the production, reproduction and development of human life never signify the physical aspect of life only. It is not only to indicate actions like eating, drinking, sexual gratification, healthy bodily life etc. They also incorporate "cultural, scientific, aesthetic, mystical and ethical" aspects too (ibid: 438). Therefore this principle underlines that human life should be cherished, cared for and should not be endangered. The ultimate goal of all cultures, ethical systems, and political establishments should be nurturing the human life which is the eventual aspiration that every human engagement needs to achieve. This human life is not a mere "concept, idea, or an abstract or concrete ontological horizon. Nor is it a 'way of life' ". It is "a mode of reality". It is "a pre-ontological point of departure of ontology" itself (ibid: 434).

The second is *Formal Morality* or *Intersubjective Validity*. This principle is about the validation of the first one. This one sets a principle for

procedural aspect of the moral consensus (Dussel 2013a:108). This principle states the necessity of communication among equals to decide how to implement the material principle. To put it other way, "the ethical function of the basic norm of formal morality is that of grounding and applying in concrete terms the norms, ethical judgments, decisions, normative statements and different moments of material ethics" (ibid:141). This principle implies the validity of the first one. Without it "ethical decisions have no communitarian and universal 'validity'. What they have, instead, could be an effect of egotism, solipsism, or violent authoritarianism" (ibid). It should be noted that truth and validity are co-determining. There will be no truth without validity and no adequate validity without truth. A truth may be defended if it only could qualify a consensus among the participants. By the same token, intersubjective agreement among the community of communication could not be of value if it hasn't any material truth (Marsh 2000:55). The proposal of ethics of liberation is that the intersubjective moral criterion of validity needs to be defined in relation to and with the agreement of the criterion of practical truth of producing, reproducing and developing a human life. With regard to the involvement of those affected for the decision, Dussel is in agreement with the suggestion of discourse ethics as put forward by Karl-Otto Apel and Jürgen Habermas. His disagreement is "in their tendency to reduce truth to validity, the material principle to the moral principle and, thus, not to distinguish adequately the material principle from the moral principle" (ibid: 56). In short, this principle makes incumbent upon the members of a community of communication to debate and communicate a given material truth in order to produce, reproduce and develop the human life and as well the communication ought to be symmetrical. If any form of exclusion happened in a given situation from the members in the communication, the excluded party would no longer be part of it. Therefore, the validity of the moral claim is threatened and hence its goodness claim is lost.

The final one is the third principle that needs to be incorporated to qualify the "goodness claim" of the Ethics of Liberation. It is termed as *Ethical Feasibility*. This entails the synthesis of the above two from the perspective of feasibility of both. It needs to take the contextual situations and the outcomes of its achievement into consideration (Dussel 2013a:158-9). It involves reflecting on the appropriate means to achieve the proper

goals using instrumental reason and the best way of convincing to choose proper means and ends through strategic reason. This is performed from the stand point of the two former principles: material and formal, applying the ethical reason. Therefore, feasibility is assessed through the application of instrumental-strategic reasoning framed by the bounds of material and formal principles as to its capability to establish a concrete social good to produce, reproduce and develop human life. This principle in short, puts a structural boundary on how, when, where, and with what means to achieve the claimed good. It outlines "under what circumstances, with ethical feasibility a norm, act, institution, or system operates with a 'goodness claim'" (ibid: 196). Therefore, natural laws in general and human laws in particular are taken into consideration to reach to the aspired ends towards the good. This means that possibility is indispensable for feasibility.

To sum up, the grounding of an ethics of liberation before it reaches to the level of its critical and liberatory stage should transverse at least three moments. The *ethical-material* moment which set normative statements on grounded judgments of fact which have a practical truth claim; the moral-formal moment which fulfils the intersubjective moral validity through the symmetrical communication of the parties involved; and finally the *ethical-processual moment of possible feasibility* that denotes the possibility any norms, acts, institutions, or for that matter systems of ethics qualifying *Being* feasible. "All three come together as a "goodness claim," a claim that holds that something is true (i.e., coheres with the continuation of life), is valid (is agreed to by all affected), and could actually work out well (is feasible)" (McAfee 2013:2).

Modern Ethiopia and Its Ethical Liberation
Hegemonic State Formation and Nation Building
Even if Modern Ethiopia[4] was formed as a nation state, it is very straightforward to claim that the nation building is yet to be completed. As Gebru notes, "Ethiopian leaders have been far less successful in nation

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[4] Some make distinction between the ancient Abyssinian state of two or three millennia and the modern state of Ethiopia emerging in the second half of the 19th century (See Markakis 2003:1). Without delving into the continuity-discontinuity issue between the two, my work deals with the later.

building than in state creation and consolidation" (Gebru 1996:29). The present day Ethiopia, modern multi-national empire state, is formed in the second half of the 19th century as a result of the incorporation, assimilation and accommodation of different ethnic, religious and cultural groups. From 1875 to 1898, Menelik's expansion gave Ethiopia almost the size now it has (Perham1948; Lewis 1993; Aalen 2002; Keller 2005). Bahru writes: "it was the unification of these two parts [North and South] in the second half of the nineteenth century that gave birth to modern Ethiopia" (2002). Different lines of argument are forwarded by different writers from their respective standpoints to explain the above inclusion. We have different narrations to expose the process. In general, three opposing interpretations emerge in characterizing this process: (re)unification, expansion and colonization (Aalen 2002; Alem 2003; Bach 2014; Merera 2011; Mesay 2015). Accordingly each represents the process as nation building, as national oppression or as colonization respectively. The first consider it as a legitimate restoration of lost territories which once belonged to Ethiopia and see no injustice in the course (Zewde 1975; Solomon 1993; Admassu 2010). The second interpretation implies the imposition of a culture, religion and language upon the adjoining and pre-existing kingdoms, principalities, and sultanates of the different peoples and the injustice is categorized as oppression (Lewis 1993; Merera 2003; Alem 2003; Mesay 2015). The colonial thesis assumes it as a colonial conquest that forms a colonial empire-state (Dolal 1992; Gemetchu 1997; Asafa 1998).

We do have a variety of rhetoric and contentions among these interpretations and even within the respective categories. Looking into the arguments, it is possible to take for granted the intricate nature of the process. However, it should be underlined that the state was formed by Menelik bringing together different groups that had their own identity, culture, and language. The process resulted in the imposition upon those groups another culture, religion and language (Clapham 1969; Getahun 1974; Markakis 1974; Abebe 1994; Messay 1999). Moreover, the history of the oppressor was considered to be the history of the country without giving much recognition to the oppressed (Teshale 1995; Gebru 1996; Clapham 2002b).

Without delving into many of the issues, it is possible to point out the three ideological manifestations in the state creation process: Orthodox

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Christianity, Amhara cultural ethos and Ethiopian unity Shewa at its center (Merera 2003:60). It is not within the scope of this work to discuss the historic developments that created it and the different debates that revolve around. Nevertheless, it is possible to conclude that the 'making' of the Ethiopian state is achieved with "unequal terms in many major ways" resulting in the "existing asymmetrical relations". Furthermore, the complications it resulted in called for its 'remaking' which is not yet achieved (Merera 2009).

At the dawn of 20th century state creation is completed and nation building, to some extent, started. The nation building strategy started by Menelik was consolidated and elaborated during Haile Selassie's stay in power (1930 -1974) (Aalen 2002; Merera 2003). "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" Alem writes (2003:10). The centralized and controlled nation building with Orthodox Christianity, Amharic language and Abyssinian cultural ethos as manifestations occurred (Wallelign 1969; Merera 2003; Vaughan: 2003). The consequence was assimilating many groups with diverse religious, cultural and language background into one nation and representing them with unbalanced national ethos. The included groups were not at equal terms from different perspectives. It could be characterized as a policy of assimilation and domination.

The modernization move, political centralization, and nation building in a more ethnocratic base were mentioned to be the three main contributions of Haile Selassie's period (Marcus 1983; Bahru 2002; Merera 2003). All resulted in a full-fledged modern nation with hegemonic tendency and marginalizing potential. This point is well elucidated by Solomon: "During his reign from 1930 to 1974, Emperor Haile Selassie pursued a policy of modernization begun by Menelik II. Modernization is a strong force which can either undermine or forge the bases of nationalism. The policy of the state under Haile Selassie was to create a strong centralized nation" (1993:145).

The nation building also continued in the two successive regimes of the Derg and EPRDF (Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front) with some variation. The nation building during the Derg regime followed its socialist ideology. Accordingly, it made some changes like abolishing

the role of the church in the state (Andargachew 1993; Kiflu 1993; Solomon 1993), land reform (Pausewang 1990) and declared equality for the oppressed ethnic groups through National Democratic Revolution Program (NDRP) (PMAC 1976). Nevertheless, the Derg followed a unitary Ethiopian nationhood that didn't consider the oppressed groups either (Clapham 1989; Dias 2008). Brietzke observes: "In true Leninist fashion and apart from celebrations of local music and dances, Mengistu's style of governance was universalist and unitarist in the extreme; through 'popular' mobilizations, 'the masses' were to be emancipated from their nationalities as well as their class" (1994:3). Mengistu replaced "the monarchical absolutism with military Marxism as the ideology for building the nation" (Aalen 2002). It never considered the oppression and inequality the marginalized groups suffered.

The nation building that is proclaimed after 1991 during EPRDF was expected to bring about radical shift for the marginalized and neglected groups in the regimes that had been before (Abbink 1995; Asmalash 1997; Clapham 2002a). It was meant to free those oppressed and marginalized from the assumed 'prison house'-Ethiopia. It was expected to bring about "the end of an era of subjugation and oppression thus starting a new chapter in Ethiopian history in which freedom, equal rights and self-determination of all peoples" shall prevail (Transitional Charter 1991:1). It even declared "every nation, nationality and people in Ethiopia has unconditional right to self-determination, including the right to secession" (Constitution 1994:18). However it was at its early stage that many observers condemned the vast gap between declaration and application (Mohammed Hassen 1994; Vestal 1994; Ottaway 1995; Leenco 1999).

Furthermore many have discussed the shift that the EPRDF made in its nation building approach to assume the one that was in the older regimes (Jacquin-Berdal & Plaut 2005; Assefa, 2006; Tronvoll 2009). Dias characterized it as "the emphasis on diversity and decentralization (…) was increasingly substituted by the focus on unity and on a revived and more salient centralizing trend" (Dias 2008:208). However, Bach argues that both the assumed "new vision of Ethiopian identity" and the "imperial inherited Ethiopianness" were part of EPRDF's nationhood. What was manifested is "a complex articulation of these two conceptions of Ethiopian nation" using them "as a political and pragmatic tool to grasp and keep power, the

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"multifaceted" nationalism of the EPRDF was adapted and adjusted to new circumstances" even before 1991 (Bach 2014:104,111). This could be related with the extreme centrality manifested in the name of federalism. Moreover, a kind of unionist-nationalism tendency that is manifested with the current regime may also be ascribed to the above explanation.

Therefore the promised egalitarian nation-state was not yet to be born from the years' long established hegemonic empire-state. And hence, Merera (2009) notes that "the ongoing struggles for self-rule and democracy are all part of the 'remaking' of Ethiopia on equal terms" which is not achieved yet.

The Impact of European Modernity on Ethiopian State Formation and Nation Building

Next, I try to explain how European Modernity affected the Ethiopian state formation and nation building making its establishment inherently hegemonic, oppressive and totalizing. It is this inherent modern identification that entails transmodern critique and transmodern liberation to the Ethiopian nationhood. Three points are signified here. The first is that the nationhood model is not inherently 'Ethiopian' because it is a part and an extension of the project of European Modernity. This implies the neglect of Ethiopian otherness. Although the Ethiopian nation hasn't faced a colonial occupation, the nation-state created as of Menelik's time qualifies the nation and nationalism of modernists[5] (Kohn 1945; Kedourie 1960; Gellner1983; Hobsbawm 1990). Hobsbawm's contention that "the basic characteristic of the modern nation and everything connected with it is its modernity" accentuates it (1990: 110). Moreover, the characters of modern state such as its homogenizing nature (Maria 1994; Gellner 1997) and its brutal means to form it and normalizing the "historical error" it went through (Renan 1990) are only few examples among the many that the

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[5] The list includes earlier historians Hans Kohn and Carleton Hayes; 1960s theorists Karl Deutsch, Elie Kedourie, and Ernest Gellner; and as of 1980s Benedict Anderson, Eric J. Hobsbawm, Anthony D. Smith, and again, Ernest Gellner. For the detailed discussion see Őzkirimli (2005): Contemporary Debates on Nationalism: A Critical Engagement; and Jacquin (1999): Nationalism and Secession in the Horn of Africa a Critique of the Ethnic Interpretation.

Ethiopian nation could qualify. Donald Levine argued otherwise to show Ethiopian nationhood before modernity following a perennial reading of history (2011). However, "Levine did not succeed in proving [pre-Modern] Ethiopian nationhood by modernist standard as he set out to do" (Admassu 2010:40). Therefore it is possible to assume it as a legacy of modernity which extended to other parts of the world "through imitation, competition and imposition" (Leenco 2004:43) after it was raised in Europe (Watson 1984). Ethiopia's case meets the first two (imitation and competition) if not the third. Therefore by taking nation-state and nation building as an inherent nature and mark of European modernity, it is possible to make a point to justify that the Ethiopian modern nation-state is modeled on the West. What Nugent called "alien model of a nation-state" for African countries also holds true for Ethiopia (2004:8). Consequently the ontologic nature of European Modernity, which is argued as totalizing in my work, is reflected, shared and transferred to Ethiopia. This point uncovers that Ethiopia, like many other countries, has not been experiencing its own natural course in the process. Rather it adopted a foreign model that needs to be rethought over and replaced if needed. Hence it receives a transmodern critic. That is why I recommend at the end that Modern Ethiopia needs liberation before it assumes a transmodern identity.

The second point to show the impact of European Modernity is their direct involvement during the state formation. European Modernity, manifested through colonial scramble for Africa, played considerable role in triggering and facilitating expansionist and oppressive mode of state formation. The European scramble for Africa and particularly their arrival in the Horn triggered Menelik's expansion to the South. Markak has pointed out that the advance of Western imperialism to the area served as one of the stimulating factors to the expansion. Menelik's message was: "if powers at a distance come forward to partition Africa between them, I do not intend to be an indifferent spectator" (Markakis 1974:2, 24). Furthermore, the involvement of colonial powers in helping the Shewan powers by giving them arms to subdue the Oromos and Southern peoples facilitated the brutal expansion. Their involvement and support have played a great role in the state formation that could have been otherwise. The contribution of European firearms in subduing the southern states is particularly emphasized by many (Holcomb and Sisai 1990; Gebru 1996; Asafa 1993;

Merera 2003). Gebru informs: "… the Ethiopian state attained, more or less its present spatial organization during precisely this period [of European appearance], taking full advantage of European capital and weaponry" (ibid). Considering the above roles we might think of another arrangement in the current demeanor of Ethiopia without the intervention of European powers.

Finally, the Modernizing endeavors by Emperor Menelik and Emperor Haile Selassie through their contact with European powers contributed significantly to the subordination of many groups and resulted in a hegemonic establishment. Merera comments "Modernization was initiated partly to facilitate the 'nation-building' project and partly to catch up with Christian Europe which the Ethiopian rulers sought to emulate" (2003:68). This project continued and consolidated exceedingly during the reign of Haile Selassie (Keller 2005; Adejumobi 2007). He was considered to pursue much of the modernization and nation-building process (Marcus 1983; Bahru 2002). This very act of modernization served in cultural, linguistic and religious domination. Adejumobi righty observed that "the metanarrative of modernity was channeled into Ethiopia" in a way that alienates and marginalizes other cultural, religious and ethnic groups. He writes that it was channeled "through the political center controlled by Amhara, and the notion of progress was mapped onto ethnic differences. As a result, the non-Semitic speaking population was compelled to transform or reconfigure its ethnic and religious identity in order to become modern" (2007:64).

Emulation of the West and the support received thereof helped much in the modernization process. Gebru articulates: "It was European capital and technology that laid down the communication and transportation structure, totally transforming the means of coercion and enabling Ethiopian rulers to centralize, unify and consolidate the state, a pattern unevenly duplicated in the rest of Africa" (1996:27). Especially Haile Selassie[6] "cultivated foreign

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[6] British support in restoration to power after exiled by the Italian occupation and establishing a new modern army, US military aid (200 million USD in twenty years) are notable ones making him one of Africa's leaders who received large amount of arms support. (Sorenson 1993, Keller 2005, Markakis 1974; Marcus 1983). "Up to 1970 Ethiopia had received 60% of all American military aid to Africa" (Markakis 2011:124).

alliances that provided his regime with capital and economic development and arms for his police and military" (Keller 2005:93). At the same time, it was this modernization process that marginalized and disregarded others from having equal access in education (Adejumobi 2007:64), benefiting economically (Bahru 2002:178), even joining the military (Markakis 1974:225) and other modern sectors of state establishment (ibid:251; Merera 2003:66). Therefore modernization, which facilitates the nation-building process, was another name for alienation and cultural and religious subjugation.

From the three points discussed so far, it is possible to conclude the impact of European Modernity on the Ethiopian state formation and nation building. It made possible the incorporation, assimilation and accommodation of different ethnic, religious and cultural groups forcefully. The exclusion, neglect and disregard of different groups was reflected under its hegemonic construction. The very ontologoic and totalizing nature of European modernity also affected the Ethiopian nationhood. It is this very nature that is the main theme of this paper. Therefore the very Modern establishment of Ethiopia needs to be replaced with a transmodern construction which transcends it.

Ethical Framework for the Construction of Transmodern Ethiopia
The totalizing construction of the Ethiopian state formation, nation-building and its respective discourse of nationhood has ontologic essence. This renders it egoist and unethical. It should be transcended with analectical procedure that overcomes it. This could be realized by considering a Dusselian ethics which bases the metaphysical revelation of the Other. Experiencing it through the perspective of the victims, the marginalized groups could reasonably achieve that. "To break free of their coercion and subjugation, we must open ourselves to the other from the standpoint of the other. We must think, hear, see, feel, and taste the world from the standpoint of the other. This is the analectical moment" (Dussel 2003: 6). Metaphysical ethics that is created through the revelation of the *Other* is implied. This is ethics that assumes the Ethiopian Other as its point of departure.

This one is materialized through the three principles of Ethics of Liberation: material principle, formal principle and feasibility principle.

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They are analyzed in a way that could suggest a just ethical foundation for a Transmodern Ethiopia. For any ethical goodness claim should fulfill the three principles. All the three should be in place for the fulfillment of the "goodness claim" for a maxim, act, institution, or system of ethical claim (Dussel 2013a: xvii). Accordingly, we need to have these three fulfilled to have an ethical framework or the construction of a just order, an inclusive system represented by Transmodern Ethiopia.

The material principle defines the goal for which we need to have Transmodern Ethiopia. It is "the obligation to produce, reproduce, and develop the concrete human life of each ethical subject in [Ethiopia]" (ibid: 55). By "human" we should understand the life of the human being at its physical-biological, historical-cultural, ethical-aesthetic levels, including even the mystical-spiritual level, and always within a communitarian horizon" (ibid: 434). Here a comprehensive aspect of human life is suggested. As we need to address the economic aspect to cherish the physical needs, we need also to deal with the aesthetic one to fulfill the psychological needs in the form of art, culture etc. It is based on this noble goal that we need to construct a sustainable Ethiopia. It should be a land or a nation[7] or a territory in which humanness is respected and dignified in every sense of the term. All aspects of human life highlighted above should be taken into consideration: physical-biological, historical-cultural, ethical-aesthetic levels, including even the mystical-spiritual level. In its boundary this goal should be the maxim. In its fold each and every human being should enjoy the essence of being human. The principle should be valorized for all equally beyond their color, religion, ethnicity or social group they belong to.

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[7] 1. I never assumed nation-state as the only legitimate and acceptable central unit for sociopolitical structure. It is one of the options and any other alternatives could be put on the table. Suggesting a working model for the existing Ethiopian nation couldn't mean accepting it as the only option. If it is to be accepted it needs to be transformed into a transmodern one. 2. Second, I never presumed any geographical territory to be the only valid and single option that could represent Ethiopia. I am making suggestion for any 'Ethiopia' that needs to be established in togetherness. Of course, I have the current Ethiopia in mind because currently it is the one which qualifies the endeavor to live in togetherness. Of course, I will dwell more on the characteristics and peculiarities than territories and forms.

Setting the criterion of practical truth of producing, reproducing and developing a human life is not sufficient. We need to show how this could be valid. This leads us to the second principle: the formal principle. This principle informs the importance of symmetric inter-subjective communication among the parties involved. It insists that the implementation of the material truth should be effected only after rigorous involvement and participation of the peoples of Ethiopia. No party should be excluded for any reason whatsoever. An imposed nationhood or unshared national vision is exclusivist, authoritarian and hence ineffective. Therefore all the peculiarities and details of the Transmodern Ethiopia should be the result of meticulous discussion and debate among her people who agree to rest under her shade. It is an agenda of all who chose to use the Ethiopian umbrella to signify their identity. A transmodern pluriversal polylogue is a scheme that materializes the needed inter-subjective communication.

The third principle puts forward that both (1st and 2nd) be feasible to occur in the particular context of Ethiopia. This demands to take the contextual situations into consideration both in the process and as the outcome of its achievement. For any material truth to come to effect and the inter-subjective communication to be implemented it needs to take for granted the Ethiopian context; Ethiopia with all its characteristic features and defining peculiarities. It is in the very context of Ethiopia that we need to materialize a transmodern paradigm, an ethical togetherness, a profound foundation. The goal we have set in the first principle should have appropriate 'Ethiopian' means that enables it to be achieved. We need to have 'Ethiopian' methods in selecting/deselecting appropriate means and convincing each other towards a workable solution. Within the bounds of the above two principles, feasibility is assessed for its capability to establish a concrete social good to produce, reproduce and develop human life in Ethiopia. It is under this principle that we need to reconcile 'ethical-discursive reason' that denotes what we want to implement in Ethiopia and 'instrumental- strategic reason' that implies the means to achieve that. If the first one is alone, we end up with utopian transmodern Ethiopia that could never be realized and concretized. If the second is not supported by the first, we are having a partial and exclusivist Ethiopia that has never engaged all its parties towards their common good. It is when we make appropriate

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balance that we are to transform the current reality to what we aspire to have: Transmodern Ethiopia.

The "good" represented as a system by Transmodern Ethiopia is a synthesis of three "claims": practical truth claim, validity claim and feasibility claim. It makes human life (with all its dimensions) a "criterion for truth (and falsity)". This is its first principle. To be good it needs the incorporation of the second, formal: "the freedom, autonomy and consensus of subjects, without which it would become a mere vegetable or animal 'reproduction if life,' but not ethical human" (Dussel 2000:273). Both are interdependent and necessary. Their feasibility (effectiveness) is considered in the very context of Ethiopia.

Liberating Ethiopia and Its Others
Since transmodernity implies a "liberating reason", we need to take liberation as a step making towards a transmodern suggestion. Here it is important to demarcate clearly the liberation implied. By liberation we mean freeing from any false universalization and unjust totalization that takes every *other* into its own and considers it to be the *Same*. Liberation is "the act of the oppressed by which they express or realize themselves" (Dussel 1985:62). It is this realization that implies liberation. Liberation is implied in Ethiopia as one among the "concrete levels of the Philosophy of Liberation" (Dussel 1996: x). Liberation put forward is twofold.

It calls for the liberation of Ethiopia from its construction which happened as a result of extension of the global European modernity project and the direct involvement and support of European colonial powers who also took part a bit in its consolidation. Therefore the nationhood needs to be liberated and reconstructed in its own 'Ethiopian' way. This nationhood never recognized the otherness of Africa emphasized by one of its known philosophers Léopold Sédar Senghor (1971:37) in general and the otherness of Ethiopia in particular.

Additionally and more importantly the liberation sought is the liberation of those marginalized others that are not included in the nation building process and hence not recognized in the one-sided national ethos of Modern Ethiopia. As "every oppression has its ideology and each commences when it situates the *Other* in non-being", the Ethiopian nation building considers itself *Being* and considered its others non-Being (Barber

1998:59). It tried to define the nationhood only in its own image by depicting its cultural ethos as Ethiopian. It is this intrinsic nature and characteristic of Modern Ethiopia which is centric and marginalizing that necessitates the liberation. It is this hegemonic and exclusivist nature that dictates the need for liberation.

The victims, the marginalized, the neglected others should be liberated. They are the exteriority of the Ethiopian totality. There are many others which could be majority that are not yet included genuinely. Therefore the liberation needs to address all these people so that an inclusive Transmodern Ethiopia could be established. They need to be liberated from this totality and need to be included as other who will be the integral and essential parts of the new Transmodern Ethiopia. "As one of many historically located social and intellectual projects of analyzing, denouncing, and overcoming oppressive regimes and social structures, whether they are globally hegemonic (neoliberalism) or locally hegemonic (religious fundamentalism and local patriarchies)" Liberation Philosophy is called upon to address the Ethiopian setting (Mingolo 2000:42 emphasis mine).

The Idea of Transmodern Ethiopia
The destiny of the Ethiopian state and its people has been an issue of contentious debate. Many speculations are deliberated including the potential break up/ 'balkanization' of the current state, low possibility of a viable nation state that could last long, or a nation with extensive conflict and poor national consensus (Lewis 1993, Solomon 1993, Muhabie 2015). These projections at least imply for the rethinking or remaking of the current order. Here a practical alternative is suggested that transforms the current status-quo by considering the other's otherness and creating a viable state that could accommodate its entire people.

The real essence of what Conti Rossini conveyed as "museum of peoples" (1928) can only be guaranteed if these peoples are recognized rather than being assimilated or accommodated willy-nilly. A unity which endorses the ethnic, linguistic, religious and demographic diversity could only be sustained if and only if we are able to accept the other as other. This acceptance could be strong and enduring if it has a deep-rooted ethical

foundation. This needs to be worked out to render a new stable Ethiopia with multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-cultural polity.

This work could be considered as a critique of the hegemonic characteristic of Modern Ethiopian nationhood. It is a transmodern critique on the Ethiopian nation state construction couched with a critique of the project of global Modernity. It is fundamentally a philosophical critique of hegemonic construction of Modern Ethiopia. And it is an academic contribution to establish a transmodern metanarrative on a different form or model of ethical togetherness represented by transmodern Ethiopia. European Modernity in general and Ethiopian nation state construction (as a practical manifestation of the former) in particular are the results of an egoist hegemonic *I*. This *I* could only think of itself making "the net result […] Self-discovery, self-unfolding and that process is ontology" (Irvine 2011:611). Hence every *other* becomes part of the same system losing its own identity. This ontology is "the ideology of ideologies, the foundation of the ideologies of the empires, of the center" (Dussel 1985:5).

The critique is directed at the totalizing ontologic nature of this modern construction. It "ought to begin by negating the divinity of the fetishized absolute which negates the possibility of human realization" (Dussel 1996:11). This totality should be approached from exterior to be looked critically and analyzed accordingly. The critical look could never be achieved from within. It should be from the exterior; from the perspective of victims of Modern Ethiopia. Dussel addresses well when he explicates as: "If the dialectical method allows one to be able to approach the foundation of scientific knowledge itself, the fact of approaching the exteriority of the system as totality allows one to be able to reach the maximum possible critical consciousness" (Dussel 1985:179). It is analectic method (not dialectic) that is used to transcend the totalized system because "by dialectics we only produce and reproduce totality" (Dussel 2003:5). It is when we could look at the modern Ethiopian nationhood from the perspective of the marginalized, from exteriority that we could transcend it. It is "only those who can interpret the phenomena of the system in the light of exteriority can discover reality with greater lucidity, acuity, and profundity" (Dussel 1985:170). This is the perspective with which the current Ethiopia could be transformed into a transmodern one. Ethiopia, which is neither the one we used to have, constructed as an outcome of

modern metanarrative, nor that may result through a postmodern theoretical deconstruction (Semir 2009).

Transmodern Ethiopia is the result of deconstruction of the old establishment which marginalized many and reconstruction of a new one with deep ethical consciousness. It necessitates that all dimensions of existence must be reprogrammed on the basis of the postulate of "perpetual life" (Dussel 2008a:116). It is basically an establishment based on ethical foundation. Its ethical standpoint is the metaphysical revelation of the *Other* which obliges to be accepted as a free *Other*. It is established with a goal of producing, reproducing, and developing the concrete human life of each ethical subject in Ethiopia after it has been well communicated and debated within all the parties involved. Contextual situations should be considered so that the outcomes of its achievement could create a concrete social good in the territory**.** Analectic method is used to construct Transmodern Ethiopia. This concept is connoted by the *trans* in the transmodernity to denote its beyond nature; its inherent exteriority. It is "to discover in the transcendental exteriority of the oppressed the actual "presence" of utopia as actual reality of the impossible, which is impossible for the system of domination without the help of the Other" (Dussel 1996:7). That is, Transmodern Ethiopia is very different from the one that could be projected, even in the future, by the extension of Modern Ethiopia. It is beyond (*trans*) the capacity of the horizon, the reach of Modern Ethiopia's conception and destiny. The "take-off point" for Transmodern Ethiopia is the exteriority of Modern Ethiopia. To suggest Transmodern Ethiopia we need to think from outside of the Modern Ethiopian *Being*; this is "to think about Being from the exteriority that judges it" (Dussel 1985:58). This needs to expose the wrong foundations and assumptions on which Ethiopia is constructed. It "is necessary to deprive [Ethiopian] *Being* of its alleged eternal and divine foundation; to negate fetishist religion in order to expose ontology as the ideology of ideologies" (ibid: 15). We need to think radically to imagine a new Ethiopia that may result from the exterior other.

Conclusion

Philosophy is not only engaging in theoretical presuppositions and working on them. It also involves a commitment to the real world and thinking the context. When it does, it needs to be critical so that it could challenge, analyze and correct the status-quo. That is why we affirm that philosophy "is not only to know objects or to have ontic knowledge of the understanding, but it is also an ontological or metaphysical knowledge" (Dussel 1985:181). It is its ability to transcend the given that helps in creating alternatives and suggesting new horizons.

In light of this, this work presents a transmodern perspective to the Ethiopian state and nationhood. Transmodernity is a concept suggested mainly by Enrique Dussel which claimed to be a discourse for a new order. It is a philosophical discourse that asserts a need to make radical transformation on the foundations of ethos of modernity. Nonetheless, it is not a postmodern deconstruction. It is transcending both and synthesizing a new one. Dussel analyzes this concept through his Philosophy of Liberation which applies what he calls *analectic* method. A method that proposes a *metaphysical ethics* that could assumed to be the first philosophy (*prima philosophia*). This method presupposes the revelation of the *Other* which challenges any egoist *I* and renders it responsible.

This thesis is a phenomenological exercise in looking the Modern Ethiopian nationhood from the perspective of the marginalized. It is fundamentally a philosophical critique of hegemonic Modern construction of Ethiopia. And it is a contribution to establish a transmodern metanarrative on a different form or model of ethical togetherness represented by Transmodern Ethiopia. It is a transmodern critique that uses *analectical* method of the Philosophy of Liberation.

The present day Ethiopia, modern multi-national empire state, is formed in the second half of the 19th century as a result of the incorporation, assimilation and accommodation of different ethnic, religious and cultural groups. Moreover, the nation building has been marginalizing so far resulting in the existing asymmetrical relations. The nature of expansion, oppression, and subjugation in state formation and nation building is hegemonic. Furthermore, impact of the metanarrative European Modernity in modeling nation-state and the role played by the European powers through their direct involvement affected the Ethiopian state formation and

nation building making its establishment inherently hegemonic, oppressive and totalizing. Therefore Modern Ethiopia is assumed to be a *totality* that conceals many others within it which are part of its establishment. It is an ontologic *Being* that could only reflect on itself oppressing and subjugating the *Other*. Therefore, this totality needs to be questioned metaphysically from exteriority, from the perspective of the *Other*. It is this inherent modern identification of the Ethiopian nationhood that entails transmodern critique and transmodern liberation.

Liberation is part of and a way towards the transmodern suggestion. Hence, both the Modern Ethiopian construction and its marginalized others should be liberated. The Modern Ethiopian national construction is liberated from its modern underpinning which is not "Ethiopian". And those whose identity and culture have been suppressed with the hegemonic state formation and nation-building need to be liberated from its inherent totality.

The Transmodern suggestion is not privileging one. It is establishing a just order in which no one is especially privileged but all are equally privileged. Transmodern Ethiopia is an ethical establishment. This means it is founded on the basis of the three ethical principles to create a concrete social good. It makes its goal the production, reproduction, and development of the concrete human life of each ethical subject in Ethiopia. It further involves a critical conversation, a pluriversal polylogue, inter-subjective communication among the community of Ethiopians which are ready to involve. Thirdly it ought to be contextually tamed and practically realized. This is what results in a Transmodern Ethiopia which is multicultural, indigenous, versatile, hybrid, spiritual, just, and democratic one.

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