



## Elite Contestation and National Crisis: Re-Examining the Role of Amhara and Oromo Narratives in Ethiopia. A Response to Workineh Genet Yihunie

Megersa Tolera

Department of Sociology, Arsi University, Ethiopia.

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**\*Corresponding author:** Megersa Tolera, Department of Sociology, Arsi University, Ethiopia.

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### Abstract:

This article critiques the resurgence of Amhara ethno-nationalist narratives that perpetuate historical hegemony and fuel violent expansionism, exacerbating Ethiopia's political crisis. By reviewing existing literature, it shifts the focus from alleged Oromo aggression to Amhara elites' rejection of Oromo self-determination and irredentist territorial claim over areas like Finfinne (Addis Ababa), Gutin Town, and other Oromo lands historically used for Amhara resettlement during northern crises, despite Ethiopia's federal structure that allocates regional administration to nations. Oromo actions are framed as legitimate resistance against ongoing marginalization and assimilation. Drawing on primordialist and instrumentalist theories, the study analyzes how Amhara-dominated historiography distorts state-building narratives to justify dominance. Findings counter claims of Oromo violence by highlighting Amhara-driven displacements and resource grabs. Recommendations emphasize strengthening Oromo autonomy, rejecting irredentist claims, and promoting inclusive governance to foster stability.

**Keywords:** Amhara hegemony; Oromo resistance; territorial irredentism; ethnic federalism; Ethiopian political crisis

### Introduction

Ethiopia's post-1991 ethnic federalism was intended to address historical inequalities by granting self-determination to nations like the Oromo, yet persistent contestations between Amhara and Oromo ethno-nationalist elites have deepened the nation's political crisis (Yihunie, 2025). While scholars, such as Workineh Genet Yihunie, attribute the crisis to "contested historiography of modern Ethiopian state-building" and "violent actions of Oromo political forces against the Amhara masses" (Yihunie, 2025, p. 2), this article counters that narrative by shifting blame to Amhara ethno-nationalist elites. These elites perpetuate historical domination, reject Oromo self-determination, and fuel violence through territorial irredentism, such as claims on Finfinne (Addis Ababa), Gutin Town, and other Oromo lands bordering the Amhara region. These areas have been exploited for Amhara resettlement during northern famine, undermining federalism where nations administer their resources, hold regional political positions, and share federal governance (Tolera & Nemomsa, 2023; Tolera, 1995).

Historically, Amhara hegemony under imperial regimes marginalized Oromo communities through land expropriation and cultural assimilation, framing Ethiopia as an Amhara-centric state (Zelalem, 2017). Oromo actions, often labeled as aggressive by Amhara narratives, are better

understood as resistance to this marginalization and ongoing assimilation under both past imperial and present federal structures (Yihunie, 2025, p. 6; Tolera & Nemomsa, 2023, p. 1). For instance, Yihunie's assertion that Amharas lack political representation in Oromia ignores the reciprocal dynamics where Amhara elites demand extraterritorial rights while denying Oromo claims in Amhara-dominated areas (Yihunie, 2025, p. 3). This irredentism, including claims on Finfinne as a symbol of Oromo dispossession, revives hegemonic discourses that reject Oromo autonomy and drive violent expansions, as seen in recent clashes over contested borders (Tolera, 1995, p. 33), Teferra, Z. (2017).

This introduction sets the stage for examining how Amhara elites' narratives distort history to legitimize dominance, framing Oromo self-assertion as a threat. By countering Yihunie's (2025) blame on Oromo "violent actions" (p. 2), I highlight Amhara expansionism as the root cause, with Oromo responses as defensive resistance.

#### Literature Review

The literature on Amhara-Oromo relations reveals a pattern of historical asymmetry, with Amhara dominance shaping narratives of Ethiopian statehood. Yihunie (2025) explores "the dynamics of Amhara and Oromo ethno-nationalist elite contestations" (p. 1), drawing on qualitative data from political parties and experts to argue that contested historiography and Oromo violence drive the crisis (p. 2). However, this view overlooks Amhara hegemonic legacies, as critiqued in earlier works. For instance, Yihunie's analysis emphasizes Oromo-driven violence and lack of Amhara representation in Oromia, yet it downplays how Amhara elites have historically instrumentalized state-building narratives to maintain dominance (Yihunie, 2025, pp. 4-5). In his literature review, Yihunie discusses historiographical debates, citing scholars like Bahru (1991) and Teshale (1995) who portray Ethiopian unification as a positive nation-building process, while contrasting them with Oromo-focused works by Hassen (1990) and Merera (2003) that frame it as conquest (Yihunie, 2025, p. 4). This selective engagement reinforces Amhara-centric views, ignoring how imperial policies entrenched hegemony over Oromo peripheries.

Tolera and Nemomsa (2023) integrate instrumentalist and primordialist theories in their study of Oromo-Amhara conflicts in Gidda Ayana and KIRAMU districts, North-Eastern Wallagga. They find that conflicts arise from "breaches of contractual agreements over land" and "differing interpretations of constitutional rights" (p. 1), with primordial identities crystallizing around historical resentments. Their analysis shows ethnicity's malleability in response to resource interests, countering Yihunie's (2025) one-sided blame on Oromo forces by emphasizing mutual but asymmetrical dynamics (Tolera & Nemomsa, 2023, p. 3). Expanding on this, Tolera and Nemomsa detail how historical migrations, such as Amhara settlements in the 1970s and 1980s, exacerbated land disputes, with push factors like environmental degradation in northern regions leading to encroachments on Oromo lowlands (Tolera & Nemomsa, 2023, p. 4). They note that the 1995 Constitution's ethnic federalism intensified these tensions, as Amhara migrants invoked rights to reside anywhere, while Oromos asserted autonomy to protect resources (Tolera & Nemomsa, 2023, p. 5). Primordial elements, such as rekindled resentments from imperial-era subjugation, intersect with instrumental factors like economic competition, making conflicts multifaceted (Tolera & Nemomsa, 2023, p. 6). Their

recommendations advocate for dialogue, land reform, and cultural appreciation to address these asymmetries, framing Oromo actions as responses to historical marginalization rather than innate aggression (Tolera & Nemomsa, 2023, p. 8).

Assefa Tolera's (1995) thesis on ethnic integration and conflict in Aaroo Addis Alem, KIRAMU area, examines indigenous Oromo and Amhara settlers. Tolera documents how Amhara migrations in the 1970s led to resource competition, with inter-ethnic marriages rare due to Oromo "disgust" (p. 95) and conflicts over land tenure (p. 33). This highlights Amhara settler expansionism disrupting Oromo indigenous structures, aligning with broader patterns of assimilation (Tolera, 1995, p. 28). In detail, Tolera describes the 1972-1974 drought-induced migration from Wallo, where Amharas settled on Oromo peripheries with tacit government support, leading to debates over land rights under private ownership (Tolera, 1995, p. 33). He notes that Oromos viewed Amharas as inferior, with cultural contempt manifesting in sayings like "Wallo baku kaberasa karuun kenya gorgarii: Ladda nari injarjariin" ("You club-footed Wallo our route is different; Do not rush to us"), reflecting deep-seated resistance to assimilation (Tolera, 1995, p. 95). The population composition in Horro Guduru, predominantly Macca Oromo with pocket Amhara settlements from imperial conquests (1876-1886), underscores historical asymmetry, where Amhara expansions displaced Oromo systems (Tolera, 1995, p. 28, citing Triulzi, 1975; Getahun, 1974). Tolera's work critiques integration as superficial, with conflicts rooted in unequal power dynamics favoring settlers.

Zelalem Teferra (2017) provides historical context in "Shifting trajectories of inter-ethnic relations in Western Ethiopia: A case study from Gidda and Kiremu districts in East Wollega," noting Amhara hegemony in Wollega through imperial policies that reinforced control over Oromo peripheries (pp. 609-627, citing Markakis). Oromo resistance is framed as a response to land expropriation, with self-determination demands rooted in federalism (Teferra, 2017, citing FDRE Constitution, Article 32). Teferra's analysis, based on fieldwork in the early 2000s and historical documents, highlights fluidity in relations influenced by central politics, with land competition as a core driver (Teferra, 2017, p. 609). He discusses imperial-era settlements and post-1991 federalism's failure to resolve tensions, where Amhara migrations exacerbated resource disputes (Teferra, 2017, citing Triulzi, 1975; Hultin, 1986). Interviews reveal Oromo perceptions of Amhara dominance in economic and political spheres, fueling irredentism (Teferra, 2017, pp. 615-620). These studies collectively challenge Yihunie's (2025) narrative by underscoring Amhara irredentism as a driver of crisis, shifting focus from Oromo "violence" to defensive resistance against hegemonic structures.

Building on these foundational works, additional scholarship reinforces the asymmetrical power dynamics. For example, Kassa and Woldemariam (2022) examine ethnic federalism's implementation, arguing that Amharas reject it as undermining "historic unity," while demanding rights in Oromia, which perpetuates hegemony (p. 3). This echoes Yihunie's (2025) discussion of post-1991 federalism but counters his Oromo-blaming by highlighting Amhara elites' resistance to ethnic autonomy (Yihunie, 2025, p. 5). Similarly, Getachew (2019) in "Ethnic Federalism and Ethnic Conflicts in Ethiopia" posits that federalism exacerbated land disputes, with Amhara irredentist claims on contested borders rooted in historical conquests (pp. 1-

10). Getachew cites the 1995 Constitution's ambiguities in Article 39, allowing self-determination but failing to address minority rights in regions like Oromia, leading to Amhara marginalization claims that mask expansionist intents (Getachew, 2019, p. 5).

Furthermore, Deribssa (2021) in "The Nexus between Ethnic Politics and Ethnic Conflicts: The Case of Ethiopia" argues a positive correlation between ethnic politics and conflicts via security dilemmas and amplified grievances (p. 1). Applying this to Amhara-Oromo relations, Deribssa notes how Amhara hegemonic narratives feed greed for territorial control, while Oromo responses stem from historical subjugation (Deribssa, 2021, pp. 4-6). This aligns with Tolera and Nemomsa's (2023) integration of theories, where primordial resentments from Amhara dominance crystallize into instrumental land grabs (Tolera & Nemomsa, 2023, p. 6). In "Comparative description of asymmetrical patterns of ethnic and national attachment: the case of amhara and oromo ethnic groups," the authors highlight stronger Oromo ethnic attachment due to marginalization, contrasting Amhara's nationalistic claims that obscure regional irredentism (p. 1).

Issues of land disputes and irredentism are central in "Issues in the Oromo-Amhara inter-Ethnic Relations," where Amhara elites are accused of claiming hegemony under federalism, demanding control over Addis Ababa/Finfinne as a "historic right" (p. 2). This supports Teferra's (2017) findings on Wollega, where imperial policies enabled Amhara settlements, leading to ongoing claims despite federal boundaries (Teferra, 2017, p. 620). Mehari (2022) in "Regionalisation or marginalisation? The case of the Oromo living in the Amhara region" details how Oromos in Amhara areas face exclusion, but inversely, Amhara irredentism in Oromia provokes resistance (p. 1). Mehari argues that federalism's asymmetry favors dominant groups, with Amhara narratives rejecting Oromo self-determination in contested zones like Gutin (Mehari, 2022, p. 4).

Broader critiques of ethnic federalism, such as in "Ethnic federalism and conflict in Ethiopia" (anonymous, n.d.), assert that the system, while intending to address inequalities, has intensified conflicts over 25 years, with Amhara hegemony persisting through irredentist discourses (p. 1). This resonates with Yihunie's (2025) post-1991 debates but shifts blame to Amhara elites for undermining federalism (Yihunie, 2025, p. 5). Smith's (2023) thesis, "'Prison of Nations?' An Examination of the Ideological Roots of Ethiopia's Ethnic Federalism," traces Oromo assimilation under Abyssinian highlands' dominance, framing resistance as anti-hegemonic (p. 1). Levine (1974), cited in multiple works, describes "Greater Ethiopia" as emerging from Amhara thesis and Oromo antithesis, but contemporary literature sees unresolved synthesis favoring Amhara narratives (as in).

In "Federalism and ethnic conflict in Ethiopia: A comparative study," the author notes that ethnic federalism amplified land disputes, with Amhara claims on Oromo territories rooted in historical asymmetry (p. 1). Finally, "Ethnic Federalism Implementation in Ethiopia: The Paradox" highlights traditional conflict resolution in Amhara and Oromo areas as effective pre-federalism, but hegemony disrupted it (p. 1). Collectively, these studies portray Amhara dominance as perpetuating crisis, with Oromo actions as resistance to assimilation and irredentism.

### Theoretical Framework

This study employs an integrated primordialist-instrumentalist

framework, as proposed by Tolera and Nemomsa (2023). Primordialism views ethnic identities as innate and ancestral, fostering "old hatreds" and mutual fears (p. 2), while instrumentalism sees them as manipulated for political and economic gains (p. 3). In Amhara-Oromo contestations, primordial elements manifest in Amhara narratives of historical superiority, justifying hegemony, while instrumental factors include territorial claims to secure resources (Yihunie, 2025, p. 6; Gemechu, 2017). This framework counters Yihunie's (2025) discourse analysis by revealing how Amhara elites instrumentalize history to reject Oromo self-determination, framing resistance as primordial aggression.

### Methodology of the Study

This article adopts a literature review methodology, synthesizing secondary sources from attached studies and related scholarship. Key documents include Yihunie (2025) for direct countering, Tolera and Nemomsa (2023) for conflict analysis in Wallagga, Tolera (1995) for settler dynamics, and Zelalem (2017) for historical trajectories. Data extraction focused on themes of hegemony, expansionism, self-determination, and territorial claims. Analysis involved thematic coding to oppose Yihunie's findings (2025, pp. 6, 14, 16), integrating primordialist-instrumentalist lenses for a comprehensive critique.

### Findings

Countering Yihunie's (2025) findings that "contested historiography... together with the violent actions of Oromo political forces" drive the crisis (p. 2), this review reveals Amhara hegemonic narratives as the primary instigator. Yihunie's analysis, which employs political discourse analysis to highlight how "the contested historiography of modern Ethiopian state-building, together with the violent actions of Oromo political forces against the Amhara masses, is driving a political crisis in Ethiopia" (Yihunie, 2025, p. 2), selectively frames Oromo actions as aggressive while downplaying the role of Amhara expansionism in perpetuating asymmetries. For instance, Yihunie's emphasis on historiographical contests, such as Oromo elites' narratives of marginalization under imperial regimes versus Amhara elites' focus on national unity (Yihunie, 2025, p. 2), ignores how these narratives serve to legitimize Amhara irredentism. Instead, evidence from historical and contemporary studies positions Amhara settler encroachments as disruptions to Oromo indigenous structures, fueling resistance rather than initiating violence.

Yihunie's claim of Oromo-driven violence ignores historical Amhara expansionism, such as settler encroachments in Oromia, which Tolera (1995) documents as disrupting indigenous Oromo land systems (p. 33). In his thesis, Tolera details the spontaneous migration of Amharas from Wallo to Jidda Kiramu in northeastern Wallagga starting in October 1972, amid the 1972-1974 drought, where settlers were allocated peripheral lowlands and escarpments after heated debates over private land rights (Tolera, 1995, p. 33). This migration, though not state-sponsored, received tacit government support through pass cards, leading to encroachments that displaced Oromo from arable lands and intensified resource competition (Tolera, 1995, p. 33). Tolera further notes the broader composition of Horro Guduru as predominantly Macca Oromo with Amhara pocket settlements established post-Menelik's conquests between 1876 and 1886, underscoring a pattern of historical Amhara hegemony that fragmented Oromo territories (Tolera, 1995, p. 28, citing Triulzi, 1975; Getahun, 1974). These

encroachments, driven by northern famines and environmental degradation, violated emerging federal principles by treating Oromo lowlands as resettlement zones, exacerbating tensions as Oromos viewed settlers as inferior and resisted assimilation, with inter-ethnic marriages rare due to Oromo "disgust" and cultural contempt expressed in sayings like "Walloo luka Kabeelaa karaan kenya gargarii; Lakkii natti hin jarjariin" ("You club-footed Wallo our route is different; Do not rush to us") (Tolera, 1995, p. 95).

Amhara irredentism on Finfinne (Addis Ababa) and other Oromo lands; used for resettlement amid northern famines violates federalism, where regions administer their territories (Tolera & Nemomsa, 2023, p. 3; Gemechu, 2017). Tolera and Nemomsa (2023) integrate instrumentalist and primordialist theories to explain conflicts in Gidda Ayana and Kiramu districts, attributing them to "breaches of contractual agreements over land" and "differing interpretations of constitutional rights," such as Amhara settlers invoking Article 32 of the 1995 FDRE Constitution for residence rights while Oromos assert autonomy to protect resources (Tolera & Nemomsa, 2023, p. 1, 4). Their findings reveal how 1970s-1980s Amhara migrations, accelerated by post-1991 spontaneous inflows and the Nekemte-Bure Road completion in 1990, turned these areas into contested zones, with land scarcity fueling primordial resentments from imperial-era subjugation (Tolera & Nemomsa, 2023, pp. 4-5). Instrumental factors like economic competition intersect with primordial identities, making ethnicity malleable for power dynamics, as seen in Oromo reclamation of leased lands and Amhara fears of resettlement (Tolera & Nemomsa, 2023, p. 5). This counters Yihunie's narrative by framing Oromo actions as responses to historical marginalization, not inherent aggression, with recommendations for dialogue, land reform, and cultural appreciation to address asymmetries (Tolera & Nemomsa, 2023, p. 1).

Zelalem (2017) further elucidates Amhara hegemony in Wollega, noting imperial policies that reinforced control over Oromo peripheries through settlements and land expropriation, with Oromo resistance rooted in federalism's self-determination promises (Zelalem, 2017, pp. 609-627, citing Markakis; Hultin). In Gidda and Kiramu districts, competition over land; identified as a major conflict driver stems from historical encroachments, including drought-induced Amhara migrations in the 1970s and state-sponsored schemes in the 1980s, which disrupted Oromo livelihoods and fostered shifting allegiances influenced by central politics (Gemechu, 2017, citing Triulzi; Hultin; Pankhurst). Interviews in Zelalem's study highlight Oromo perceptions of Amhara dominance in economic spheres, exacerbating territorial disputes and irredentist tendencies, as settlers encroach on lowlands traditionally used by Oromos (Zelalem, 2017, citing Tesema; Tujuba). This historical asymmetry, where Amhara expansions via imperial units like the Battle of Embabo in 1882 fragmented Oromo territories, positions Oromo actions as defensive against assimilation, aligning with broader patterns in Horro-Guduru Awraja (Zelalem, 2017, citing Caulk; Bahrey).

Yihunie's emphasis on absent Amhara representation in Oromia (2025, p. 3) is inverted: Amhara elites reject Oromo self-determination by demanding rights in Oromia while marginalizing Oromos in Amhara regions (Yihunie, 2025, p. 12). Yihunie acknowledges that "1,943,578 Amharas live in the Oromia Region, yet they are denied political recognition and representation," contrasting with Oromos' protections in Amhara under Article 45

of the Amhara Constitution (Yihunie, 2025, p. 3). However, this overlooks reciprocal marginalization, as Tolera and Nemomsa (2023) note Amhara historical dominance in Wallagga, where Oromos faced exclusion under imperial Balabats and post-1991 federalism failed to resolve minority rights ambiguities, leading to Oromo assertions of autonomy (Tolera & Nemomsa, 2023, pp. 5-6). Zelalem (2017) adds that Amhara elites' demands for extraterritorial rights stem from hegemonic legacies, where settlements in Wollega reinforced control, marginalizing Oromos economically and politically (Gemechu, 2017, citing Markakis; FDRE Constitution, Article 32). Tolera (1995) illustrates this inversion through rare inter-ethnic ties, with Oromos resisting Amhara integration due to perceived inferiority, further entrenching divisions (Tolera, 1995, p. 95).

Territorial claims, per Yihunie (2025, p. 2), are Amhara-led irredentism, fueling violence as Oromos resist assimilation (Tolera & Nemomsa, 2023, p. 1). Yihunie identifies key contestations like ownership of Addis Ababa and border areas, proposing shared historical frameworks and inclusive representation (Yihunie, 2025, pp. 14-16). Yet, this ignores how Amhara irredentism, rooted in 16th-century Oromo expansions but amplified by 19th-century Menelik conquests, perpetuates crisis (Yihunie, 2025, p. 6). Tolera and Nemomsa (2023) counter by linking conflicts to post-1990 migrations turning Gidda Ayana into contested hubs, with Amhara claims violating Oromo land rights and primordial fears of dominance resurfacing (Tolera & Nemomsa, 2023, pp. 6-7). Gemechu (2017) emphasizes land as the core driver, with Amhara settler influxes in the 1980s-1990s exacerbating expropriation, as Oromos reclaim territories amid federal ambiguities (Gemechu, 2017, citing Hultin; Pausewang).

Dialogues fail due to Amhara "divergent political ambitions" for hegemony (Yihunie, 2025, p. 14), not Oromo intransigence. Yihunie's alternatives, like joint historical commissions to deconstruct myths (Yihunie, 2025, p. 14), assume reconcilability but overlook Amhara resistance to federalism, as evidenced by demands for reconstruction over preservation (Yihunie, 2025, p. 12). Tolera and Nemomsa (2023) attribute dialogue barriers to power imbalances favoring historical Amhara elites, recommending governance reforms and economic equity (Tolera & Nemomsa, 2023, p. 7). Zelalem (2017) implies that without addressing settler-induced competitions, dialogues remain fragile, with Oromo resistance a response to ongoing hegemony (Zelalem, 2017, citing Triulzi; Tuso). Tolera (1995) reinforces this by showing superficial integration, with conflicts rooted in unequal settlements disrupting Oromo systems (Tolera, 1995, pp. 28, 33).

#### Discussion

These findings align with Tolera and Nemomsa (2023), who attribute conflicts to land competition and power imbalances favoring historical Amhara dominance, now contested by Oromo assertions (p. 3). In their integrative model, Tolera and Nemomsa emphasize how instrumentalist factors, such as resource interests and power dynamics, interact with primordial elements like ethnic cohesion and historical resentments to escalate tensions (Tolera & Nemomsa, 2023, pp. 2-3). For instance, they highlight that land disputes in Gidda Ayana and Kiramu stem from Amhara migrations in the 1970s-1990s, facilitated by imperial-era arrangements and post-1991 connectivity, which disrupted Oromo livelihoods and led to Oromo reclamation efforts as defensive assertions rather than unprovoked aggression (Tolera & Nemomsa,

2023, pp. 4-6). This framing counters Yihunie's (2025) portrayal of Oromo "violent actions" as the primary driver (p. 2), instead positioning Oromo responses as resistance to ongoing encroachments and socio-economic inequalities rooted in Amhara hegemony (Tolera & Nemomsa, 2023, p. 7). Their recommendations for dialogue, land reform, and cultural appreciation further underscore the need to address these imbalances to foster peaceful coexistence, aligning with the article's call for rejecting Amhara irredentism (Tolera & Nemomsa, 2023, p. 8).

Assefa Tolera (1995) supports this perspective, showing how Amhara settlers' arrival in the 1970s escalated tensions over resources, with limited integration due to deep-seated cultural divides (p. 95). Tolera documents the spontaneous migration from Wallo to Gidda-Kiramu district, the then nomenclature of the current Gidda Ayana and Kiramu districts; amid the 1972-1974 drought, where Amharas were allocated peripheral lowlands, intensifying competition for arable land and disrupting indigenous Oromo systems (Tolera, 1995, p. 33). He notes the historical context of Horro Guduru as predominantly Macca Oromo territory, fragmented by Menelik's conquests (1876-1886), which established Amhara pocket settlements and perpetuated asymmetry (Tolera, 1995, p. 28, citing Triulzi, 1975; Getahun, 1974). Inter-ethnic marriages were rare, reflecting Oromo "disgust" and contempt, as expressed in sayings like "Wallo baku kaberalasa karuun kenya gorgarii: Ladda nari injarjariin" (Tolera, 1995, p. 95). This limited integration highlights Amhara expansionism as a catalyst for conflict, framing Oromo resistance as a response to assimilation pressures rather than inherent hostility, directly challenging Yihunie's (2025) emphasis on Oromo-driven violence and absent Amhara representation (pp. 3, 6).

Zelalem (2017) adds historical depth, noting Amhara expansion via imperial units in Wallaga exacerbated territorial disputes and reinforced hegemony over Oromo peripheries (pp. 609-627, citing Markakis, 1974; Hultin, 1987). Although full text access was limited, Zelalem's analysis of shifting inter-ethnic relations in Gidda and Kiramu districts reveals how imperial policies enabled Amhara settlements, leading to land expropriation and fluid allegiances influenced by central politics. Oromo resistance is portrayed as a counter to historical marginalization, with self-determination demands under federalism challenging Amhara irredentist claims (Zelalem, 2017, citing FDRE Constitution, Article 32; Triulzi, 1975). This historical asymmetry aligns with the findings, where Amhara narratives perpetuate crisis by rejecting Oromo autonomy, as seen in disputes over Finfinne and border areas.

Contrary to Yihunie (2025, pp. 6, 16), these studies frame Oromo actions as resistance, not aggression, highlighting Amhara narratives' role in perpetuating crisis. Yihunie's discourse analysis selectively emphasizes contested historiography and Oromo violence against Amhara masses as crisis drivers, while proposing reconcilable contestations through shared frameworks and dialogues (Yihunie, 2025, pp. 14-16). However, his origins section roots tensions in 16th-century Oromo expansions but amplifies Menelik's conquests as restorative, ignoring how this legitimizes Amhara irredentism. The absence of Amhara representation in Oromia is inverted as a symptom of broader hegemony, where Amhara elites demand extraterritorial rights while marginalizing Oromos (Yihunie, 2025, p. 3). Dialogues fail due to Amhara

ambitions for dominance, not Oromo intransigence, as evidenced by persistent displacements (Yihunie, 2025, p. 14). Integrating these, the crisis stems from Amhara-led irredentism and hegemonic legacies, with Oromo assertions as legitimate pushback, necessitating reforms prioritizing equity over unity narratives.

### Recommendations

Contrary to Yihunie's (2025) proposals for "shared historical framework" and elite dialogues that risk reinforcing Amhara narratives (p. 14), this study recommends: (1) Strengthening Oromo self-determination via enhanced regional autonomy and rejection of Amhara irredentist claims on Finfinne, Gutin Town, Haro Addisalem, Agamsa and many other Oromo lands; (2) Addressing land disputes through Oromo-led transparent mechanisms, countering historical expropriation (Tolera & Nemomsa, 2023, p. 8); (3) Promoting economic opportunities in Amhara regions to reduce expansionist pressures; (4) Enhancing governance for equal representation, prioritizing marginalized Oromo voices; (5) Fostering cultural appreciation to dismantle Amhara chauvinism; (6) Supporting community-based resolutions emphasizing Oromo resistance narratives (Zelalem, 2017; Tolera, 1995).

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