Equilibrium on Diversity and Fragility: Civic and Ethical Education Textbooks in Democratizing Ethiopia[1]

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Abstract

In Ethiopia, which consists of diverse ethnic and cultural groups, the maintenance of unity as a country is an issue of serious concern. Civic and Ethical Education (CEE) is considered as an important means to ensure the rule of a fragile-based government, which emerged after a long period of monarchy and dictatorship in the multiethnic society. This paper disentangles the logics of democracy in Ethiopia by analyzing the secondary school CEE textbooks. In these textbooks, democracy is explained in close relationship with the control of power and tolerance. While the development of patriotic citizenship is desirable, loyalty to a particular ethnic group is strictly discouraged. The concept of democracy is also used to condemn the past autocracy, which suppressed the rights of citizens, and to justify the current regime.

Introduction

In 1994 in Ethiopia, after the fall of the military regime, which had been in power since 1977, a new constitution was adopted and the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia was officially established. The process of developing the new school curriculum and the subject of civic education had started even before the official inauguration of the FDRE. In 1993, after two years of discussion, the first curriculum on civic education was introduced. At first, the subject was called Civic Education, but was then renamed Civic and Ethical Education after a curricular reform in 2000.

The ruling political party of democratic Ethiopia, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front, has its origins in a resistance movement of the Tigray population in the northern part of the country. The overthrow of the communist (*Derg*) military regime not only meant the end of military autocracy but also the replacement of the long-lasting Amhara rule with that of the Tigray. Although they are the third biggest group after the Oromo and the Amhara, the Tigray compose only 6.1 percent of the total

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[1] This paper is based on a longer chapter that the author is contributing to a forthcoming book under the consent of the publisher and the editor. The full version will be available as follows: Shoko Yamada, "Domesticating Democracy? Civic and Ethical Education textbooks in Secondary Schools in the Democratization Period of Ethiopia," in James Williams, ed., *(Re)Building Memory: School Textbooks, Identity, and the Pedagogies and Politics of Imagining Community* (Forthcoming, 2012, Sense Publishing).

population of Ethiopia (Government of Ethiopia 2008). On the one hand, the FDRE government has criticized the former regimes for their power dominance and suppression, in contrast to the current government, which is duly entrusted by the citizens to rule. On the other hand, for a government run by a party based on a minority group, it is very challenging to gain continuous and stable support from the public. In fact, there was serious political turmoil after the first full-fledged national election in 2005, and many candidates and supporters of opposition parties were imprisoned for political offences.

A series of governmental interventions to reform Civic and Ethical Education (CEE) have coincided with national elections (2000, 2005, and 2010), which indicates the significance attached by the FDRE government to this subject in maintaining social order and political stability. The subject of CEE has been regarded as an important means to inculcate the ideas of democracy among citizens all over the country so that a democratic representative system is properly maintained, instead of relying on military means to express self-interest. Wide-based support for democracy is indispensable for the federal democracy adopted in Ethiopia, giving a high level of authority to regional governments, which are roughly divided along the lines of ethnic and cultural groups.

The concepts taught in the CEE curriculum are seemingly universal. However, tracing the development of the curriculum and textbooks will provide insights on how democracy, human rights, and other related concepts are modified to fit Ethiopian national perspectives, its own political agenda, and social issues.

This paper will demonstrate how civic education plays its role in supporting the rule of the fragile-based government with fragile, which emerged after a long history of monarchy and dictatorship in the multiethnic society. In the Ethiopian CEE textbooks, the concept of democracy is explained in close relationship with the control of power and tolerance. Such a definition of democracy is uniquely rooted in Ethiopian diversity in culture, history, social life, and the memories of past regimes. To develop patriotic citizenship is desirable, while patriotism to *ethnies* is strictly discouraged. An analysis of the Ethiopian CEE curriculum and textbooks highlights the sensitive balance on which the FDRE government stands, between various powers from international society, diverse ethnic and political groups, and individuals within and outside of the government. The government also struggles to link the abominable past of autocracy and suppression with a bright future of being a productive, tolerant, and competent member state of global society.

The analysis below is based on CEE textbooks, syllabus, and policy documents used in senior secondary schools (grades 9-12), which have been issued since 1993 when this subject was first introduced by the FDRE government. Fourteen secondary school textbooks and syllabuses from three different periods are examined (see Appendix A). Since there is no such thing as a central depository of textbooks, the list of textbooks I obtained is not comprehensive. Still, they are a fair representation of the main trends across different periods of curricular reforms. For the secondary level, textbooks developed by the government are written and taught in English. CEE as an independent

subject is taught from grade 5, while teachers of grade 1-4 are expected to allocate 25% of the period allotted for environmental science to CEE instruction (Ministry of Education 2006, 11). The curriculum and textbooks are developed by the federal Ministry of Education; there are no alternatives published by other bodies. However, the translation of textbooks is the responsibility of regional governments. Since local languages often have no equivalent terms for democracy, rights, duties, and citizenship, there is considerable space for discretion via the translation itself. Moreover, in Ethiopia, the languages of instruction are diverse at the primary level. Since the upper secondary enrolment is only about 15% (Ministry of Education 2009), focusing on this level does not give the overall picture of CEE education in Ethiopia but is suited to capture the intentions of the central government especially when the analysis is on the teaching materials instead of teaching practices in the classrooms.

I have also interviewed the authors of the textbooks that were published in 2010 (revised versions of 2002 textbooks), and several officials in the curriculum department of the Ministry of Education. Because there are only a handful of officials and authors involved in this process, to maintain anonymity, I will sometimes avoid referring to the organizations to which they belong, although it may damage slightly the credibility of the argument.

The major analytical method used for this study is discourse analysis. At the same time, I have also attempted to quantitatively demonstrate the timeline change of the textbooks after democratization.

The Political History of Ethiopia and the Context of Civic and Ethical Education

The history of the Ethiopian monarchy is said to trace back to the 2nd century B.C. From the beginning of the 20th century, when there had been active nationalist movements in African nations, Ethiopia was seen as a symbol of African unity because of the belief that African civilization started in Ethiopia (Casely-Hayford 1911). Along with such proud memories, however, the post-WWII history of Ethiopia has seen much political turmoil. Two consecutive regimes were overthrown after a series of peasant uprisings, student uprisings, and military coups: the imperial government in 1974 and the *Derg* military government in 1991.

While a detailed history does not seem to be relevant to CEE in today's Ethiopia, most of the CEE textbooks provide quite extensive explanations about popular resistance. In the Ethiopian context, the struggle against those who abuse power underscores various justifications for adopting democracy. The reference to the history of resistance seems to serve two objectives: one is to demonstrate that the desire and struggle for democracy and basic human rights have their roots in Ethiopia too, and are not just transplanted from European or other societies. Another objective is to foster the sense that the current government is what people won from their past repressive rulers, and that peasants

from various parts of the country with various cultural and ethnical backgrounds rose up in mutual desire. The Grade 12 CEE textbook *The History of Ethiopia's Struggle for Equality*, which was published in 2003, states at the beginning of the section:

> The quest for the protection and guarantee of democratic and fundamental rights are neither foreign nor recent to the peoples of Ethiopia. Ethiopian history has abundant examples of struggles waged by Ethiopian peoples for their right to equality. The majority of individuals who participated in this important historical process of struggle are not necessarily educated elites. In fact most of them were ordinary peasants who were disenchanted with the political system either because they were denied their right to self-governance or were abused by the government's mismanagement and misrule. The new constitutional democratic system is the result of this critical role played by the Ethiopian people (p.41).

As soon as the transitional government was established by the EPRDF, it started drafting the constitution. In Ethiopian CEE textbooks, the constitution is mentioned everywhere: in the text, in case studies and/or in discussion questions. As a constitutional democratic state, it may be natural to relate all issues of legitimacy, rights, and duties to the statements in the constitution. However, it would not be clear to all learners and teachers why the constitution legitimately guides the country. Therefore, the most recent 2010 version of the textbooks explains the process of drafting and adapting the constitution, including the people that were consulted throughout the country, even at the village level:

> The FDRE's constitution preparation was wide and all encompassing, and was based on the noble values of democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights. The salient constitutional issues were discussed through the land at Kebele (village) level and decisions reached. These decisions were forwarded to the Constitution Drafting Commission appointed by the Transitional Government. A Constituent Assembly was then duly elected, whose only task was to go through the constitutional draft and finalize it. This Constitution was approved by the 538 members of the Constituent Assembly on 8 December 1994 (CEE G12 2010, 17).

The political situation has been unstable since the new regime came into power, and the federal government pivots on a sensitive balance between centrifugal forces of sub-national groups, and control and solidarity as a single unitary state. It could easily turn to autocracy for which the EPRDF government criticizes former regimes while claiming their legitimacy as the elected government. The EPRDF has inherited the government structure of one-party autocracy from the *Derg* regime, which blurs the line between bureaucracy and politics.

This works well when the government tries to achieve a target intensively. A telling

example of such top-down practices is the adult literacy campaign during the *Derg* regime. According to an informal source, in many rural communities, the failure of an individual to attend adult literacy classes might have meant exclusion from all community activities, a fate that most people dare not choose (Yamada 2007). In some ways, today's political atmosphere in the local communities is not dramatically different to the *Derg* period. Since the ruling party and the bureaucracy are closely linked, the orders of the bureaucracy may be taken as party orders, and vice versa. The message of the government to promote a multi-party democracy is twisted, because at the village level, the presence of the EPRDF is dominant and closely linked with the government itself.

In Ethiopia, there have been general elections in 1995, 2000, 2005, and 2010. While not all parties participated in earlier elections, facing criticism from the international community and election observers for an unclear election process, the government declared they would make the election fully open. There were many campaigns and public debates by candidates from opposing parties before the election, and public interest increased. As discussed below, there have been various efforts to promote CCE so as to inculcate the notion of democracy and foster the proper attitude and behavior of citizens as voters. Even with these efforts, after the election, the opposition parties claimed there was fraud on the part of the government in counting the votes and many EU observers reported examples of state institutions supporting the EPRDF campaign (EU Election Observation Mission 2005, 2, 25). The results showed that the EPRDF won 59 percent of the vote. Protests against the results began on November 1, 2005, and prompted more than 60,000 arrests. According to the international media, Ethiopian police massacred 193 protesters during the violence (BBC News 2006).

Compared to the turmoil after the 2005 election, the latest election in 2010 was relatively peaceful but the opposition was still not completely free (BBC News, May 25 and May 26, 2010). The FDRE government is still criticized for its control over the campaign process and for the manipulation of votes.

Development of the Curriculum of Civic and Ethical Education

Characteristics of Three Curricular Periods

After the change of regime, the first curriculum of Civic Education was announced in 1993. The process started with the Grade 9 curriculum that was enacted in 1996. Other grades of secondary school followed year after year until 2000. Since there are time lags between the announcement of the curriculum and the authoring and publishing of textbooks, the publication years of the textbooks do not correspond to the year of curricular change. Some of the textbooks published around 2002-2003 seem to confuse the order of the curriculum, while those purportedly published in 2003 apparently follow the organization of the chapters in the first curriculum, and those of 2002 follow the revised curriculum.

As indicated in Appendix A, there are three major periods of curricular change. The first period is, of course, when the subject was introduced. According to the first curriculum, the mission of Civic Education is to:

> help students into competent Ethiopian citizens endowed with a global and human outlook, strong and democratic national feelings and sense of patriotism; to develop democratic values and the culture of respect for human rights; to manifest firm stand for truth and for the well-being of the peoples of Ethiopia as well as for equality, justice, and peace; to understand, apply, and uphold the Constitution" [sic] (written on the first page of syllabus 1-3).

The key terms that will be the core values in later curricula—for example, patriotism, rights, equity, justice, peace, and the Constitution--are already mentioned at this initial stage. However, the adaptation of the stated objectives of the textbooks has not been articulated yet. First of all, while the second and third curricula adapted spiral teaching methods along core values—revisiting the same topic at each grade with a gradual increase in conceptual depth—the earliest curriculum picks up one topic in one chapter without linking to what is learned in other parts of the textbooks or at different grades. For example, in the first curriculum, at Grade 11, there is a chapter on the constitution that explains the history of constitutional democracy in the West and the process of developing the Ethiopian Constitution. In Grades 9, 10, and 12, no clear effort is made to link other issues with this chapter in Grade 11. Similarly, Grade 12 textbooks start with an extensive explanation of the importance of teaching civic education from sociological, economic, and political-science perspectives, which looks very abrupt and abstract. Overall, the textbooks are filled with abstract knowledge of imported concepts with limited adaptation to the learners' background and the Ethiopian context. During this period, the annual teaching periods allotted for this subject number 60-65 at the secondary level, which constitute about 2 weekly periods (out of 35) in the current official timetable.

The second phase started with the curricular reform of 2000. In this period, the government tried to shift the focus from memorizing imported concepts of democracy and rights to formulating values in the minds of students. Eleven values were selected that frame the textbooks for all grades. Regardless of the grade, textbooks have eleven chapters titled: (1) building a democratic system; (2) the concept of rule of law; (3) equality; (4) justice; (5) patriotism; (6) responsibility; (7) industriousness; (8) self-reliance; (9) saving[i]; (10) participation; and (11) the pursuit of wisdom. From this time, the name of the subject changed to Civic and Ethical Education. The added content was geared more toward character development and moral education as an individual, rather than understanding the

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[i] "Saving" is a broad category which covers from thriftiness of individuals to the national tax revenue and environmental conservation. In contrast to the values which are directly related to the democracy and tightly organized, the chapters on the values such as "saving", "self-reliance", "pursuit of wisdom", and "industriousness" are more closely related to moral behavior of individual citizens and touch upon diverse issues from economics, environment, to international relations.

system for governance and legislature. The break between the first curriculum and second curriculum was clear in the sense that the curriculum developers themselves seemed to have gone through a paradigm shift. Educated in the period of the socialist military regime, it could not have been an easy transition from a Marxist-Leninist perspective to capitalism and democracy. As I demonstrate below, the explanations in the textbooks often slip into Marxist logic which strangely but naturally co-exists with other parts of the texts. However, the struggle over the adaptation of foreign concepts is settled dramatically in the textbooks in the second phase. At the same time, the messages that authors want learners to internalize appear most obvious in the textbooks of this phase. Some topics, such as environmental protection, drug abuse, and farmers' resistance movements occupy a disproportionately large space, while other issues such as gender equality are referred to fleetingly.

Compared to the break between the first and second phases, the third phase is not so distinct from the second phase. The basic framework of the 11 values is maintained and the change is not so much in the content and principles, but rather in the ways of presenting ideas and teaching. Although there had been efforts to improve the curriculum, there were critical comments from teachers and educational administrators themselves, such as: the textbook overemphasizes theoretical knowledge and factual learning; too much content to be covered in the available time; the language level is too high; and the textbooks are not well connected to students' real lives (Huddleston 2007, 2, 7-8). Moreover, the first full-fledged national election was to be held in 2005 and citizens had to be prepared to play the citizenship role properly and orderly. In 2004, CEE was made an examinable subject throughout the education system, from primary level up to entering university. The teaching periods were also increased from 60-65 to 90 periods per year (Ministry of Education 2006, 3, 11). The textbooks introduced various approaches for interactive learning, such as case studies, discussion questions, and photos/drawings, in addition to conceptual explanations and memorization.

During my visit to Ethiopia in August 2004, the Federal Ministry of Education was conducting a training program for regional educational officials in charge of CEE to enhance the understanding of the principles and contents of the subject. The resource person for this training program was a consultant dispatched by the British Council. Although it was beyond the sphere of formal school CEE, the government also subsidized national and international NGOs to conduct activities aimed at raising civic awareness, such as community sensitization on democracy and equality of law, citizens' rights and duties, and tolerance for people with different interests and backgrounds. Visual materials like posters were produced for illiterate constituents.

The Process of Developing the 2010 Civic and Ethical Education Textbooks

In the academic year starting from October 2010, a new set of CEE textbooks were introduced. In terms of content, they are basically the same as the earlier versions (T7-10

in Appendix A) but are printed in color and with more visual materials to make them more attractive and interactive. The 2010 revision of textbooks was conducted under the technical and financial support of the General Education Quality Improvement Program (GEQIP) with assistance from the World Bank and other bilateral donors (Ministry of Education 2007). GEQIP is a wide-ranging program to improve the quality of general education in Ethiopia. After the drastic growth of enrolment, similar to other developing countries, the low quality of education was identified as the next issue to be tackled because it could not be improved in tandem with the expansion of the system. Therefore, major donors working in the education sector took part in this program in various roles. There are five components: assessment, teacher education, monitoring and evaluation, management, and curricular reform. CEE textbook revision was financed within the component of curricular reform. Other than CEE, science (physics, chemistry, general science) and English textbooks for secondary education were revised at the same time. Unlike textbooks of other subjects, which were authored and printed by the contractors who won the international open bidding, the authorship of the CEE textbooks was retained in the hands of Ethiopians. Only the printing was contracted out, to an Indian company.

Throughout the post-democratization period, the CEE curriculum and textbook development process have been decided by a small group of people. There are names which one encounters often when one talks about CEE in Ethiopia and they have been at the center of the decision-making process throughout. In this sense, one can say that the ministry controls the content and process of curricular development and textbook authoring of this subject.

Textbook authors are selected by the Ministry. I have interviewed three of the four authors of the most recent secondary school CEE textbooks. They are all academics teaching CEE courses at college level. In March 2007, when a team of British consultants organized a workshop for the textbook authors, there were about 50 participants (Huddleston 2007, 7), of which 16 were called by the ministry as possible authors of the textbooks. There were several meetings held before the final team of authors was decided, and each time, the number of participants decreased. The people who remained were academics from different disciplinary backgrounds, such as political science, anthropology, economics, and ethics.

As mentioned earlier, the content of the textbooks is basically the same as the earlier textbooks. A major effort was directed to make the textbooks more interactive and attractive for learners. Each section of the new textbooks begins with a few lines of brief description of the section/chapter, followed by a case study. To appeal to learners, the case study is related to the real experiences of students as much as possible. At the end of the chapter, there are exercises to ensure the learners' understanding.

Throughout the process of revision, two British consultants were involved who "helped [the authors] by giving feedback and comments while traveling back and forth between the U.K. and Ethiopia." One of these consultants is listed as an editor of the textbooks (the description of this section is based on an interview with the authors).

While there was strong control by ministry officials regarding curricular content and overall direction, at the technical level, the ideas of foreign consultants were also involved. The influence of having foreign experts' perspective was not only in the colorful, interactive presentation of the textbooks, but was also noticeable in the content and way of presenting ideas (see below).

Analysis of Secondary School Textbooks in Civic and Ethical Education

This section highlights the unique interpretations and logic regarding constitutional democracy shown in the Ethiopian CEE textbooks. All the collected textbooks were used for the qualitative analysis of the content. In addition, I counted the pages allotted to different themes in the grade 12 textbooks of three periods, T-3, 6, and 10 in Appendix A. This second type of analysis examines the historical development of the textbook content and pedagogy quantitatively. Due to page limitations, most of the findings presented below are based on the qualitative analysis only. Those from the second type of analysis are also referred to occasionally.

Individualism and Treatment of Gender and Ethnicity

A clear break between the textbooks in the first period and the second and third periods is the reference to individuals. Many questions are addressed to "you", "your local community", "your class", and "your school". This tendency is especially clear in the 2010 textbook. Also noticeable are references to women and not only men. In the chapter on community participation, there is a case study of a community gathering in a southern Ethiopian village, together with a photo. According to the description, the major issue raised by the community members was the low school attendance rate among girls (CEE G12 2010, 135). In other sections, the Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association (EWLA) is given as an example of a civic participation channel (CEE 12 2003, 142; 2010, 136). The 2010 textbook also uses one whole page for pictures of women from different ethnic groups in the section on "unity in diversity". Such usage of pictures is not indispensable to convey the content of these chapters, but an effort is made to promote the value of gender equity in various ways. In addition to the supplementary usage of female images, there is a separate section about affirmative action for women in the textbooks of the latter two periods. For example, in the grade 12 textbooks, the explanation of affirmative action occupies a growing number of pages, from 2.2 in 2003 to 3 in 2010. The 2010 textbook has a case study on female enrolment in Addis Ababa University and a photo of female university students.

In contrast to the obvious efforts to treat women equally, there is a reluctance to refer to specific ethnic groups. Aside from the historical explanations of popular resistance or in the section on unity in diversity, it is rare to see a particular ethnicity named. In 2003, there were some hints to demonstrate Tigray supremacy. As in other CEE textbooks

after the 2ⁿᵈ curricular period, the 2003 textbook for grade 12 uses a large space (6 pages) to give an overview of the history of popular resistance. The last major movement was the *Woyane* Movement, which was initiated by the Tigray Peoples Liberation Front (TPLF). According to the text, the *Woyane* Movement integrated demands raised in peasant uprisings that occurred in various parts of the country, and systematically targeted the problems in the areas "liberated" from *Derg* rule. The TPLF was particularly good at empowering women. Out of 6 pages on resistance history, 1.5 pages are allotted to the *Woyane* Movement and the achievements of the TPLF:

> We take the *Woyane* Movement as overarching political movement. … One major difference between the Bale and *Gojjam* peasants uprising on the one hand and the *Woyane* Movement in Tigray on the other is that the latter has encouraged a remarkable level of women participation. … In liberated areas, TPLF raised the minimum age for marriage into 18 years old. Moreover, it made dowry voluntary; it tried to guarantee women a secure entitlement over properties; it guarantees women's right over equitable divorce arrangement and attempted to raise the provision of education to women. …
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> (CEE G12 2003, 44-45)

Such parochialism was mostly eliminated in the 2010 textbook. Instead, the 2010 textbook has more photos of the lives and faces of different groups of people as examples of cultural diversity. The 2010 textbook became less a site to express the views of the curriculum developers and textbook authors, and includes less political teaching and learning materials. Complicated theoretical explanations were already reduced in the 2003 textbook, and even more so in 2010. The information is far less dense and explanations were given in simple language. Such pedagogical changes are exactly what the 3ʳᵈ curricular reform was meant to accomplish (Huddleston 2007, 7-9).

International Dependency

While the main text of the textbooks has become less political over time, non-explanatory parts such as discussion questions, case studies, or review questions sometimes demonstrate rather strong views. Regarding their relationship with the outside world, the Ethiopian CEE textbooks tend to be critical. For example, the 2003 textbook for Grade 11 highlights a case on intellectual property rights. An Ethiopian professor at an American university found a traditional Ethiopian plant, which has been used as a detergent, to be useful in melting through clogged water pipes, and registered a patent. This plant was the product of hybridization by a local population. The text says:

> Have you ever asked yourself what repercussion international intellectual property rights may have on local communities in Ethiopia? Here we will talk about a well-

known Ethiopian plant – *endod* and attempt to show you how unfair distribution of wealth through intellectual property rights negatively affects local people who seem to be far from the influence of globalization. …

(CEE 2003 G11, p. 81)

The textbook authors might have also wanted to tacitly criticize the Ethiopian professor who sold the knowledge—which farmers of his country of origin transmitted through generations—for commercial purposes. Patriotism is a complicated matter in itself.

Regardless of the changing nature of the textbooks, a critical attitude towards colonialism and globalization is persistent. Although Ethiopia was proud of not being colonized, it is not happy about the current treatment of less developed countries in the international order, which the textbook authors attribute to colonialism and exploitation. The tone of argument often gives a flavor of Marxism, which was supposed to be thrown away together with the *Derg* regime. In fact, the textbooks after the second curricular periods have a chapter on "dependency" in relation to self-reliance. Across different grades and years of publication, this section is filled with the perspective of dependency theory, which is closely linked with the neo-Marxist binary of the exploiter and the exploited.

Although 2010 textbooks are less reproachful, they say that poor countries tend to depend on wealthy countries, which makes it difficult to have an equal relationship. Since they are weak in international politics, it is the powerful countries that tend to set the norms of international trade, finance, and other interactions. Instead of directly stating their views, the recent textbooks ask many questions to students: for example, "How can you, as self-reliant and independent citizens, help to minimize the dependency of Ethiopia on developed countries?" (CEE 2010 G12, 111); and "What value does the WTO bring to developing countries? How do you think it affects Ethiopia's trade? Can Ethiopia's trade benefit from the principle of comparative advantage?" (Ibid, 121). The authors are inherently critical of the free trade principles, which seem to force poor countries to open their markets for the benefit of developed countries. In the same textbook as the one cited above, students are still told to debate by dividing themselves into two groups with the following perspectives:

(1) Ethiopia should promote only free trade and shouldn't protect its industry from competition from other countries. Competition is good for growth and it should be promoted.
(2) Ethiopia is a poor country and should protect its industries from the outside world. The country is not in a position to open its market and it would harm the country's growth if it does not protect its industries.

(CEE 2010, G12, 122)

A contradiction is apparent, however, when the textbooks touch upon the aid provided from outside of Ethiopia. The textbook authors and editors do not like to be forced to be dependent, but since the country is poor, and as Ethiopian citizens have to ensure everyone will enjoy basic human rights, international society is also responsible for helping poor countries. The 2003 Grade 11 textbook asks students in a rather strong tone, "If rich governments have the obligation to assist and avoid human tragedy associated with lack of access to basic necessities in life, can they defend their tardiness in providing economic and aid (sic) assistance?" (117).

The Contribution of Democracy in Controlling Conflict and Power Abuse

In Ethiopia, democracy and the rule of law are explained in connection with the control of conflicting interests and the abuse of power. As previously mentioned, the current government claims that its authority is granted through democratic elections and the Constitution rules the government. Since the Constitution is developed by the Drafting Commission, which consulted with the people of the whole nation at the district level and was approved by Parliament, rule under the Constitution is considered as rule by the people's will (CEE 2010 G10, 10). The points asserted in the textbooks, in diverse ways, are below:

> Following the rules, the current government prohibits the abuse of power by officials and punishes people who break the rules. Therefore, unlike the earlier regimes that abused their power and forced people to suffer in poverty, the current government has a self-control mechanism in using power. Further, democracy helps to reduce conflict among people with different backgrounds and interests. When people have a good attitude toward citizenship and follow democratic rules, without using the force of arms or physical violence, people can solve conflicts of interest. As such Ethiopia will last as a unified nation while maintaining diversity.

It is rather surprising to see how often the issue of power is raised. The following quote is just an example of such a statement:

> In the history of the country, Ethiopia has little experience of prevalence of *rule of law*. During the monarchical regime with the absolute power of the emperors, the government and its officials had unchecked powers at all levels. The same was true with the *Derg* regime where there was a gross human rights violation with mass summary execution. Therefore, one can hardly talk about the prevalence of *rule of law* in Ethiopia. It is, thus, with this background that the importance of *limiting the power* of the government is emphasized under the *FDRE Constitution*. … The principle of *rule of law* has a prominent position in the *FDRE Constitution*. *Rule of Law* plays a great role in *curbing the government power*. The fact that the

constitution emphasizes the protection of human rights and freedoms; transparency and accountability of the government and its officials clearly reflect the importance attached to *limiting governmental power* at all levels. Therefore, *limiting the power* given to the federal and regional governments and its exercise is imperative to build the democratization processes in Ethiopia.

<div style="text-align: right;">(Quoted as is; emphasis added by author; CEE 2003 G12, 32)</div>

Ethiopian CEE textbooks in this series discuss at length issues related to patriotism. However, they are careful in distinguishing patriotism under a democratic federation (constitutional patriotism) from parochialism (traditional patriotism). Citing the cases of Gandhi's non-violence movement and Martin Luther King Jr. and Rosa Park's civil rights movement, the textbooks argue that true patriots do not rely on militant means to achieve their goals and are tolerant to differences. The 2010 textbooks preach the ethical behavior of patriots, who should have the qualities of fairness, truthfulness, and courage (CEE 2010 G10, 58; G11, 70; G12, 67). The relationship between patriotism and democracy is explained as follows:

> *Constitutional Patriotism* refers to citizen's strong commitment to, or alignment with, *democracy and human rights*. Patriotism defined as such is different from the old, nationalistic patriotism whereby individuals were simply aligned to narrowly-defined national feelings, and specific cultures and symbols. Constitutional patriotism celebrates multiculturalism and diversity. If you, as a citizen not only acknowledge the existence of people who have different language, color, sex, religion or any other elements but also celebrate and appreciate such difference, you are truly a patriot. This demands *tolerance*, which refer to the ability to acknowledge and appreciate diversity and difference.
>
> … Traditional patriotism…Indeed that is why despite the fact that Ethiopia is the oldest independent state in Africa, its system of governance remained essentially traditional, authoritarian and undemocratic. The none-inclusive nature of the Ethiopian patriotism is reflected in many other ways.

<div style="text-align: right;">(Quoted as is; emphasis by author; CEE 2003 G12, 78)</div>

While condemning parochialism, the textbooks also mention the rise of national pride when seeing Ethiopian athletes winning Olympic medals and a "citizens' responsibility to respect their flag and other symbols, which embody the aspiration of the people" (CEE 2010 G12, 74). They also remind people that the flag not only refers to the national flag but also regional flags, and asks students "What development role do you think a flag plays in Ethiopia and each region?" (Ibid, 73).

In Ethiopia, the FDRE government has, to some extent, to balance between the need to control and unify the country and to demonstrate its sensitivity to diversity and the self-determination of different ethnic and cultural groups. There are many pitfalls for the

government itself in which to fall, as the former regimes did in suppressing public voices, because it is under constant threat of breaking apart and losing its basis of authority. Democracy is a means to justify the current government in contrast to the so-called corrupt former regimes. At the same time, this could be a double-edged sword since it could give the public a chance to fatally attack the government. Due to this fragility, the CEE textbooks appeal to the morality of the learners as good patriotic citizens.

Conclusion

This paper has investigated how the concepts of democracy have been adopted to the Ethiopian Civic and Ethical Education curriculum and syllabus. A comparison of the textbooks of different curricular periods shows that from the first and second periods, the content and approach of defining the values dramatically changed. In the first period, texts were mostly used to translate abstract theories and concepts of democracy without linking this to the background of learners and the situation in Ethiopia. They are written in a detached style, mainly about systems in Ethiopia and other parts of the world, mostly Europe.

In contrast to the first period, the textbooks of the second and third periods are more interactive and various efforts are made to link the concepts to the issues in Ethiopia, and around the learners. There are a few concepts such as the rule of law, power, patriotism, and tolerance, which frequently appear in various contexts. The FDRE government claims its legitimacy as representative of the constituents authorized through general elections. According to the perspective of the CEE curriculum developers and textbook authors, what differentiates the current government from earlier regimes are the Constitution and regulations, which are discussed and adapted by the people's representatives. While governmental power is legitimized by public elections, the power of the government itself is limited by the rule of law. In Ethiopia, the rule of law is explained as if it is a cage to contain the abuse of power and ethnic conflicts that have been constant sources of insecurity in Ethiopian political history. At the same time, such logic will be practical only when people internalize it and follow it. Thus, CEE has been greatly emphasized as a means to change people's mind.

The Ethiopian version of democracy in the CEE textbooks also retains some flavor of the Marxism of the *Derg* military regime. Rather harsh criticism of the exploitation of Ethiopia and other less-developed countries by industrialized countries is linked to Dependency Theory, which contrasts the exploiter and the exploited.

The analysis of Ethiopian CEE textbooks sheds light on the ambivalence and fragile balance on which the FDRE government stands. In a country like Ethiopia, which has a long history of monarchy and dictatorship, democracy in the sense of individual rights for political participation may remain superficial. People still have memories of social control during the earlier regimes and hesitant to express their political opinions freely. Also, the government is not ready to allow opposition parties to gain popularity beyond

a certain level. Under such circumstances, civic education diffuses the knowledge of principles and system of democracy not for emancipating people but for replacing the old logics of control with new ones. The legitimacy of the rule is linked to the norms of democracy and explained as a triumphant outcome of the resistance and democratization movements. At the same time, the populations it has to govern are as diverse as they used to be and the problematics of control have not changed from the time of the earlier regime. To discourage parochialism and to foster a multicultural but patriotic citizenship, the logic of democracy and the rule of law have also been extended. Expecting a lot to be achieved under the umbrella of democracy, in addition to the repeated emphasis on the linked principles of democracy, rule of law, tolerance, power, and patriotism, the textbook authors appeal to the moral integrity of the learners to be "right" citizens. The ambivalence is not only within the country. In terms of international relationships the FDRE government is often critical of the international order: to them, the order benefits powerful countries at the expense of weaker ones. At the same time, the textbooks argue that it is the duty of global citizens to help poor countries, similar to the duty of national citizens to ensure that all members of society enjoy basic human rights.

The political situation in Ethiopia looks calm now, but various sources of instability still exist. One can say that the CEE textbooks reflect such a sense of insecurity on the part of the government. How the Ethiopian CEE and politics will turn out requires further close observation.

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APPENDIX I: List of Syllabus and Textbooks Analyzed

	Syllabus	**Year**	**Curricular period**
S-1	Civic Education Syllabuses Grade 9	1998	1st
S-2	Civic Education Syllabuses Grade 10	1998	1st
S-3	Civic Education Syllabuses Grade 11-12	1998	1st
S-4	Civic Education Syllabuses G11-12	2000	2nd
S-5	Civic and Ethical Education Syllabuses Grade 12	2005	3rd
	Student Textbook		
T-1	Civic Education G9	1999	1st
T-2	Civic Education G10	2000	1st
T-3	Civic Education G11	2001	1st
T-4	Civic Education G12	2002	1st
T-5	Civic and Ethical Education G10	2003	2nd
T-6	Civic and Ethical Education G12	2003	2nd
T-7	Civic and Ethical Education G9	N/A	3rd
T-8	Civic and Ethical Education G11	N/A	3rd
T-9	Civic and Ethical Education G10	2002	3rd
T-10	Civic and Ethical Education G12	2002	3rd
T-11	Civic and Ethical Education G9	2010	3rd
T-12	Civic and Ethical Education G11	2010	3rd
T-13	Civic and Ethical Education G10	2010	3rd
T-14	Civic and Ethical Education G12	2010	3rd
	Content Flowchart		
	Civic and Ethical Education G9-12	2003	2nd and 3rd
	Student Textbooks from former regime		
	Political Education G11	N/A	Former regime
	Political Education G12	1984	Former regime
	Political Education Unit Question	N/A	Former regime