



## The Last Post-Cold War Socialist Federation: Ethnicity, Ideology and Democracy in Ethiopia (Federalism Studies)

By Semahagn Gashu Abebe



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After the fall of the Berlin wall and the disintegration of the former USSR and Yugoslavia, it has widely been assumed that socialist federations have become a thing of the past. Ethiopia's ethnic federal system however is essentially a socialist federal system based on the notion of the 'right to self-determination of nationalities' and a Marxist-Leninist organization of the state and party. This book assesses the Ethiopian ethnic federal system from the perspective of the principles of socialist federations and other Marxist oriented policies pursued by the ruling Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). Exploring how the application of these ideological principles has impacted on the structure and function of the Ethiopian federal system, the research examines the ways in which these ideological policies of the ruling party affect national consensus, protection of human rights, the rights of minority groups, separation of power principles and the relationship between the federal and regional governments. It also explores the extent to which ideological principles have had an impact on the democratization process, rule of law and in building up institutions such as parliamentary democracy, the judiciary, the media and civil society organizations in the country. Approaching the Ethiopian federal system from the perspective of the fundamental ideological principles of the party in power allows a deeper insight into the structure and function of the ethnic federal system.



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#### Review

'A splendid analysis of the ideological principles of the TPLF/EPRDF that govern Ethiopia's ethnic federalism. Semahagn lucidly explains the Marxist-inspired concepts of self-determination of nationalities, democratic centralism, revolutionary democracy, the development state model, and the party evaluation mechanism that are so facilely used to justify the FDRE Government's glaring deficits of democracy and abuses of human rights.' Theodore M. Vestal, Oklahoma State University, USA

#### About the Author

Dr Semahagn Gashu Abebe is a Research Scholar at the Institute of Human Rights, University of Connecticut, USA. He has widely published on federalism, constitutional law and human rights in the context of sub-Saharan Africa.

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