



The Politics of Representation: Anoole and Menelik II Statues in Focus

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine how Anoole and Menelik II statues serve as sites for both reproduction and re-articulation of historical relations of power in the Ethiopian polity. Theory of representation is used as theoretical framework, and in-depth interview, textual and document analysis have been employed as tools to generate data. Four non-government magazines (Addis-Guday, Lomi, Inqu, and Jano), and official documents from Oromia Culture and Tourism Bureau and Addis Ababa City Government were selected and analyzed qualitatively. In-depth interview was also employed with seven participants from academic and political spheres to triangulate the textual analysis. The result of the study reveals that there is historiographical contradiction, architectural contention and political contestation over the representation of Anoole and Menelik II statues in the Ethiopian polity. There are also three dominant and competing perspectives (Ethiopianist, Correctionist, and an incumbent government view) regarding the representations of both statues as the process of political power struggle in Ethiopia. Lastly, the study makes suggestions as to how the competing and contradictory narratives about Anoole and Menelik II statues could be reconciled in a way that might reduce tensions over their representations.

Keywords - Anoole Statue, History, Menelik II Statue, Politics, Representation;

Axereeraa

Kaayyoon qorannoo kanaa bakka bu'iinsaafi agarsiisa hariiroo aangoo garee siyaasa Itoophiyaa siidaaleen Aanolee fi Minilikii mul'isan qaaccessuudha. Yaaxinni bakka bu'umsaa (representation) akka kallattii qaaccessaatti, afgaaffiifi, sakatta'i ragaalee barreeffamaa akka meeshaalee funaansa ragaatti hojiirra oolfamaniiru. Barruuleewwan dhuunfaa afur (Addis Gudday, Loomii, Inquu fi Jaano), ragaalee barreeffamaa Biiroo Aadaafi Tuurizimii Oromiyaa fi Bulchiinsa Magaalaa Finfinnee filachuun bifa akkamtaatiin qaaceffamaniiru. Afgaaffii namoota baruu-barsiisuu fi siyaasaa keessa jiran toorba waliin taasisuun ragaa barreeffamaan argaman tumsa akka tahanitti faayidaarra oolaniiru. Bu'aan qorannoo kanaa waldiddaan seenessuu, walitti buiinsi kuulaa(boca) siidaa fi siyaasaa gareewwan siyaasaa Itoophiyaa gidduu akka jiru mul'isi aaxxaa siidaalee Aanoleefi Minilikii ni agarsiisa. Gama walmorkii hariiroo aangoo biyyittiin yoo ilaalamu, ilaachota waldorgoman gurguddoo sadiitu mul'atu (Leellisa Itoophiyummaa, Sirreessummaa fi kan mootummaa angoorra jiruuti). Qorannoon kun, dhumarratti yaadoleen siidallee kana bu'uureffachuun waldhiitaniifi waliin morkan irratti kallattii furmaata araarsaa ta'eefi rirriittaa jiru tasgabbeessuu malu eereera.

Jechoota Ijoo – Siidaa Aanolee, Seenaa, Siidaa Minilikii, Siyaasa, Bakkabu'iinsa

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1. Introduction

The present Ethiopia has passed through three different political ideologies from Monarchical period to the FDRE. The modern Ethiopian Empire building began by Tewodros II (1855-1868) and end by Menelik II (1886-1913). Menelik II pursued his imperial policies of modernization and centralization. He undertook military conquests to expand his territory, particularly, to the southern and western parts of the country. Finally, he incorporated different ethnic groups, either peacefully or forcefully, into the modern Ethiopian empire. After emperor Menelik II, *Lij* Iyasu ruled the country from 1913-1916. Then, *Ras* Tafari Mekonnen officially came to power in 1928 and took his baptismal name Haile Silasse I in 1930. During these reigns, Ethiopia followed and practiced the monarchism political philosophy (Bahru, 1991; McClellan, 1978; Marcus *et.al*, 1994).

Due to several internal and external problems, the monarchy period ended and the last monarchical emperor, Haile Silasse I, disposed by *coup d'état* and the Derg military junta which followed socialism political ideology came to power in 1974. Mengistu Hailemariam emerged as the undisputed leader of the *Derg* (committee in Amharic) after the Provisional Military Administration (PMAC) was done away with. However, due to a wide-scale drought, and a massive refugee problem, the resistance movements spearheaded by the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF), the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), and the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) finally brought down the military junta and established the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) on May 28, 1991 (Aalen, 2002; Bahru, 1991; Marcus, 1994; Merera, 2003; Turton *et.al*, 2006).

In these consecutive regimes, political actors constructed several statues that represent and strengthen their regime in various parts of the country. Among several statues built in Ethiopia, the issues of Anoole and Menelik II statues have been the points of controversy among the people. The statue of Emperor Menelik II which is located at Addis Ababa in front of St. George Cathedral church was erected for the good deeds of emperor Menelik II in 1930 by emperor Haile Silasse I. On the other hand, Anoole memorial monument was erected during the incumbent government at Hetosa, Arsi Zone, Oromia Region, on 6 April, 2014 as a tribute to the Arsi Oromos who were the victims of Emperor Menelik II's war of conquest in the 1880s. Thus, both Anoole and Menelik II statues serve as representations of the historical and socio-political phenomena of the reign of Emperor Menelik II. Therefore, it is important to examine how these two statues define and redefine the political narratives of modern Ethiopia political history.

2. Rationale of the Study

There are several reasons for societies often to erect statues. For example, people erect statues for spiritual significance, commemoration of different patriots, heroes and heroines, transmission of mythical histories, representation of nation or nationalizing-state, preservation of cultural heritage, beautification of cities and legitimization of authority. Predominantly, statues have been used as weapons in the political battle after 19thc, and different politicians have contested for victory through co-opting, creating, altering, ignoring or removing particular monuments. Politicians have been engaged in such symbolic dialogue with each other and with the public so as to gain prestige and legitimacy (Jonson, 1966; Forest and Johnson, 2001).

In Ethiopia, with the coming to power of the EPRDF in 1991, different new statues have been erected to signify various historical occurrences in view of preserving them for the

posterity. In doing so, the normative narratives of the already existing monuments are being deconstructed and rearticulated as a result of which these symbols have essentially become sites of elite contestations over the right interpretation of the Ethiopian history. Such representational struggle is best exemplified by the way various elite groups are advancing contradictory historical narratives in relation to the statue of Emperor Menelik II and the newly erected Anoole statue. The controversies over the two statues emanate from contradictory readings of the nature of the modern Ethiopian state and the role of elites who had spearheaded the nation building project in the modern Ethiopian history. This being the case, the present study needs to explicate the unraveling politics of representation as reflected in the two juxtaposed statues which chronicle about the reign of emperor Menelik II in the Ethiopian history.

3. Objective of the Study

The general objective of the study is to examine how Menelik II and Anoole statues serve as sites for both reproduction and re-articulation of historical relations of power in the Ethiopian polity. The study specifically attempts to:

- Examine the normative historical narratives Menelik II statue has promoted in the Ethiopian polity;
- Investigate how the Anoole statue deconstructs the naturalized historical narratives about the reign of Menelik II as symbolized by latter's statue;
- Describe how the two statues' contradictory historical representations of the reign of Menelik II serve as manifestation of power struggle between elites in the Ethiopian polity.

4. Theoretical Framework: Theory of Representation

Representation is a complex process through which meanings are produced and exchanged among members of a culture. It includes the use of language, sign and image which stand for or represent something (Hall, 1977). Hence, statues are symbols which carry meanings that are communicated and interpreted among the society who has common cultural background. Accordingly, Anoole and Menelik II statues are symbols that reflect the historical narratives which are related to power in Ethiopia. The narratives revolve over these statues as what statues symbolize may not necessarily be static. Several contradictory interpretations often emerge at different focal points. This dynamic and unstable change over the statues' representation often comes from the struggle for 'power'. Thus, the concept of politics of representation focuses on the issues of power and control over one's own self and its representation and reproduction by others.

5. Methods and Materials

The study employed descriptive qualitative research design to examine the politics of representation of Anoole and Menelik II statues through analysis of their historical narratives that are related to power. Informants from academic, political and Oromia Culture and Tourism Bureau were used as primary data sources. First, these domains and, then, the participants from these domains were selected through purposive sampling method. Accordingly, from academic domain, three participants from three departments (History, Political Science and Fine Arts) were selected to get professional explanations on the history, socio-political and design of both statues. From the political domain, three

participants from OPDO, AEUP and Blue Party were selected as they had different political narratives on the political representations of Anoole and Menelik II statues. Lastly, one participant from Oromia Culture and Tourism Bureau was also purposively selected to get relevant information about the purpose of Anoole statue construction.

In addition, Official documents and magazines were used as secondary data sources. With this regard, official documents from Oromia Culture and Tourism Bureau, and Addis Ababa City Government Office, and four (4) currently closed down private magazines (*Fact*, *Inqu*, *Addis Guday*, and *Lomi*) were again purposively selected since they have given high coverage on issue of Anoole and Menelik II statues. To get the necessary information from both aforementioned sources of data, in-depth interview, document and textual analysis were employed as the main data gathering tools. Qualitative approach was used to analyze the data on the political representation of Anoole and Menelik II statues in the Ethiopian polity.

6. Result and Discussion

6.1. The Normative Historical Narratives about Menelik II Statue

The major historical narratives of Menelik II statue revolves around the commemoration of emperor Menelik II contributions for the modern Ethiopia. These contributions can be seen from three different perspectives.

First, the emperor made series of military conquests to the southern and western parts of the country and built the modern Ethiopian Empire. This expansion process is taken as the major contribution of emperor Menelik II in the modern Ethiopian history. However, it should be noted that the process of building an Ethiopian empire was made in two different ways: peaceful and forceful. The emperor took both peaceful and forceful measures in order to make different independent kingdoms subjugate their powers. For instance, Kawo Tona of Wolaita subjugated his power under coercion while Abba Jifar of Jimmaa and Kumsaa Morodaa of Wallaggaa peacefully submitted and maintained some of their powers.

Second, Menelik II made a great war to expand his territory, Shewa and lastly built the modern Ethiopian Empire in 1889. The Emperor gained victory over Fascist Italy in defending the Ethiopian territory from colonization. Thus, an equestrian statue of Menelik II was built to commemorate the battle of Adowa. Several scholars (Getachew and Paulos, 2005; Marcus, 1994; Markakis *et al*, 2011) also stated the battle of Adowa which is one of emperor Menelik II's heroic deeds to keep the sovereignty of Ethiopia from fascist Italy.

Third, emperor Menelik II did a lot to modernize the Ethiopian empire. With this regard, as informants from history department said, Menelik II is considered as the first emperor who introduced different modern technologies and built infrastructures in the country. Specifically, different communication technologies like telephone, telegraph, postal service, and infrastructures such as electricity, railways, hospital, school and bank were constructed in Ethiopia during the reign of Menelik II. Besides, the country had begun the use of money in the commercial transaction. As a result, scholars (Kebede, 1928; Bahiru, 1991; Tekletsadik, *et.al* 1983) see emperor Menelik II as the father of modernization in Ethiopian history.

The normative narratives of Menelik II statue, therefore, emphasize the contributions of emperor Menelik in building an Ethiopian empire. Particularly, equestrian statue of Menelik II constructed to commemorate the battle of Adowa which was regarded as a historic battle for black Africans. The statue was pulled down in 1936 by the order of Benito Mussolini

and was hidden somewhere so that the humiliating defeat of the Italians by Ethiopians at the Battle of Adwa could be forgotten. However, in 1941 when the invaders were ousted by the Ethiopian patriots and allied forces, the statue restored to its original place (Bahiru, 1991; Mirror of Addis Ababa, 1950; Addis Ababa city administration, 2005).

After that, every year the anniversary of the battle of Adowa has been celebrated until today in Ethiopia though the ceremonial practice has varied in the three consecutive regimes. During the monarchial period, the battle of Adowa was celebrated through laying wreath on the statue after attending mass at St. George Cathedral. In the *Derg* regime though the celebration took place through laying a wreath on the statue, the attendance of church services did not take place as the regime's ideology did not recognize religion. Again, in the EPRDF period, the celebration of Adowa anniversary has continued in different forms although there is an ambivalent feeling towards the commemoration.

6.2. The Deconstructive Historical Narratives about the Reign of Menelik II as Represented by Anoole Statue

Menelik II and his soldiers with modern firearm fought and lost many battles to conquer Arsii Oromoo during the process of building modern Ethiopia. The war took almost five years (1882-1886) and ended with the defeat of Arsii Oromoo at Azule 6 September 1886 (Ezekiel, 2014). Hence, the deconstructive theses about the reign of Menelik II emanates from the Menelik war of conquest and its consequences.

The major deconstructive thesis that is reflected by Anoole statue on the reign of Menelik II emphasizes the abolishment of the *Gadaa* system. *Gadaa* is uniquely democratic political and social institution that governs the life of every Oromo from birth to death (Gadaa, 1988). It is an example of traditional African form of democracy that it is lately registered by UNESCO in 2016. Menelik II and his army, however, did not simply bring the *Gadaa* system to an end. Arsii Oromoo fought and defeated Menelik force many times as *Gadaa* was the source of their courage and strength. Thus, the emperor forces planned a new strategy that helps them to eliminate *Gadaa* system for once and for good from Arsi Oromo. As official document from Oromia Culture and Tourism Bureau (2006) shows, it was the period of Arsii *Gadaa* power transition, '*Roobalee*' to '*Birmajjii*' when Menelik II and his soldiers lastly decided to end the *Gadaa* system. This last war (September 6, 1886) was designed by *Ras Darge* in the name of making peace at Anoole. As informant from Oromia Culture and Tourism office says:

Anoole was a symbolic site of Arsi power and what is reverently referred to as 'Arsooma', a custom by which the Arsi Oromo made laws, deliberated on war and peace, elected their leaders and settled their inter and intra-clan disputes. It is the superglue that held the Arsi tightly together.

After the Arsii Oromoo gathered at Anoole, the Menelik army surrounded the people and proposed two options; either to accept the Menelik rule or to sacrifice their life to maintain their *Gadaa* system. After a long controversy, the Arsii Oromoo decided that to accept the Monarchy rule, but governed and administer by their *Gadaa* system. As Baxter, Hultin and Triulzi (1996) also stated, the conquest of Abyssinians over the indigenous Oromoo people suppressed the Oromoo socio-political system, *Gadaa*. This shows the *Gadaa* system is inseparable from the life of Oromoo. It is difficult for Oromoo people to be detached from *Gadaa* like change or remove skin. The Arsoi Oromoo lost their life and body part for the continuity of *Gadaa* system.

The second deconstructive narrative emphasizes on long-lasting psychological damage of Arsii Oromoo during Menelik II war of conquest. Emperor Menelik II and his army made an inhumane act at the last war of conquest to traumatize the Arsii people not to resist again. They mutilated the hands of men and breasts of women of Arsii people in order to make them lose the audacity and become psychologically weak to fight back. As document from Oromia Culture and Tourism office (2006) also mentioned,

The act of hand and breast mutilation happened at the end of war in 1886. Ras Darge and Menelik's army ordered those in attendance at the "peace" gathering to enter a narrow pass one by one. Then, the right hands of all male and the right breasts of the women were cut off. The mutilated hand and breast also tied to the neck of the victims. This act happened to frighten the Arsi people who defeated Menelik II army for several times (Translated).

Thus, the mutilated hand and breast holding statue was built to portray what exactly happened at Anoole. However, the act of mutilation is one of the points of controversy. As *Inqu* (April, 2006.Vol.2, No.29) and informants from opposition parties (AUEP and Blue Party) mentioned, the mutilation of hands and breasts is false and popular history. On the other hand, informants from OPDO and Oromia Culture and Tourism Bureau strongly opposed the fictitious history of Anoole amputation. In fact, political actors pronounce the modern Ethiopian history from the agenda of their political manifesto.

However, Arsi oral history is full of cold-blooded massacre and mutilation at Anoole. This history had been told and retold by grandmothers and grandfathers for generations. Several scholars (Greenfield, 1965; Alamayo, 1901; Holcomb and Ibssa, 1990; Keller, 1995; Abbas, 1995; Mekuria 1996; Sorenson, *et.al*, 1993) also witnessed the atrocious act of Menelik II army made on Arsi, Bale, Harar, and southern parts of the country during the conquest process.

The third deconstructive narrative over the reign of emperor Menelik II emphasizes the economic crisis of Arsi people. As an informant from Oromia Culture and Tourism Bureau says, "Menelik II and his soldiers exploited the Arsii Oromoo's natural resources, took a large number of cattle and made them slave labor on their own land." Stressing this, Alamayo (1901: 349) also argues, "During the protracted war of conquest and the pacification that lasted for several decades, vast amounts of property belonging to the conquered people was confiscated or destroyed, and millions of head of livestock were looted." Hence, the Arsi people became economically weak and dependent on the Menelik army who already controlled their resource.

6.3. Architectural Contentions of Anoole and Menelik II Statues

I. The Symbolism of Menelik II Statue

An equestrian statue of Menelik II is one of the three monuments first erected in Ethiopia. As informant from Fine Art department explains, Menelik II statue is the second erected statue in the country. The statue below portrays Emperor Menelik II in his coronation robes riding glamorously on his horse *Abba Dagneu* looking to the north where the victorious battle of Adwa took place (Mirror of Addis Ababa, 1950; Addis Ababa City Administration, 2005).



Figure 1: An Equestrian Statue of Menelik II at 'Arada Giorgis', Addis Ababa

As an informant from Fine Art department explains, Menelik statue is a kind of an equestrian statue which portrays a rider mounted a horse. The crafting of an equestrian statue began at Greece and mainly erected in the monarchical period. During this period, horses were used for war purposes, and equestrian kinds of statue were constructed for the commemoration of kings and their victory. Similarly, Menelik II statue was erected in Ethiopia to commemorate both the military and civic achievements of emperor Menelik. With this regard, the statue of Menelik depicts the regime and the victory of the emperor over European colonizers.

An informants from Blue Party and *Inqu* (April 2006, Vol 6) magazine mention, an equestrian statue of Menelik is a symbol of liberty, victory and freedom for all Ethiopian and other black people. The statue epitomizes the Ethiopian people heroism and patriotism for the rest of the world. However, the depiction of Menelik II statue has been deconstructed as it could not be an inclusive and representative of all ethnic groups particularly affected by the conquest of emperor Menelik in the process of building the modern Ethiopian empire.

II. The Symbolism of Anoole Statue

Anoole statue was built in Hetosa, Arsi zone, Oromia region on April 6, 2014 as a tribute to the Arsii Oromoo harshly by the conquest of Menelik II. The design of Anoole statue, *mutilated hand holding mutilated breast*, directly depicts the mutilation of Arsii Oromoo's right hands of men and right breast of women during Menelik II war of conquest. Connotatively, the word '*Right*' symbolizes the '*Moral*', '*Ethics*', '*Ownership*', and '*Victory*'. The design depicts the maltreatment of Menelik army.



Figure 2: Anoole Memorial Monument at Arsi Hetosa, Oromia Region

Therefore, Anoole statue is seen as symbol of freedom or independency from past domination of the imperial system. The statue also has similar connotation with other statues constructed in African countries which are epitomizing their freedom and/or independence after the end of colonization. In addition, document from Oromia Culture and Tourism office (2006) and informant from OPDO mentioned that Anoole statue depicts the ‘Unity’ and ‘Courage’ of Arsi people to fight against any external power that undermines its socio-political system.

However, the design of Anoole statue was the main cause of discord among the elites over the representation of the reign of Menelik II in the Ethiopian polity. As informant from Fine Art department explains, “When horrific histories are depicted artistically through statues/monuments, artists should transform, not translate the history like photographic form” (personal interview, 10 April 2015). *Jano* (April, 2006.Vol.2, No.29) and *Lomi* (April 2006, Volume, 102) magazines also mentioned the design of Anoole statue as if it inculcates vengeance than preaching forgiveness, tolerance and peaceful coexistence among the society. Opposing this, informant from OPDO argues that Anoole statue is the direct depiction of the fact. Hence, reshaping the design of Anoole statue from its current portrait is perceived as the reformation of the history. History, whether good or bad, should be known by and taken as lesson by the coming generation.

6.4. The Political Views on Anoole and Menelik II Statues in Ethiopian Polity

Based on the historical and architectural representations of Anoole and Menelik II statues, three competing and contrasting political ideologies have been reflected in Ethiopian polity.

I. Ethiopianist (Extreme Pan-nationalist) View

Ethiopianist (Extreme Pan-nationalist) view is the oldest view in the Ethiopian nationalism that has been dominantly articulated by the Amhara and Tigray elites. This view sees Ethiopia as the country which had a long political history and ancient society welded by its history and devotion to Christian faith. This ideology has hegemonic discourse that considers Ethiopia as one ethnic, one language and one religion state, and through this it intends to create strong Ethiopian nationalism (Markakis, 2012; Vaughan, 2003; Clay and Holcomb et al, 1986).

Thus, the Ethiopianism political view reveres the normative historical narratives about the reign of Menelik II that is embodied in Menelik II statue. As an informant from Blue Party says, “The statue of Menelik II represents the political achievement of emperor Menelik II in the process of building the contemporary Ethiopia. In this process, Menelik II made internal and external wars and showed strong leadership and strong unification process” (Informant from Blue party, 2006). As a result, an Ethiopianist view argues that Menelik II statue is a symbol of great Ethiopian nationalism and emperor Menelik II was the political architect for the creation of sense of strong nationalism among the Ethiopian people during his reign. Hence, Ethiopianism view considers the statue of Menelik II as the symbol of unity, patriotism and victory.

On the other hand, an Ethiopianist view condemns the construction of Anoole statue that deconstructs the reign of Menelik in the Ethiopian polity. In this regard, *Addis Guday* (Vol. 8, No.214, April 2006) and *Inqu* (Vol. 6, No.116, April 2006) mentioned that Anoole statue is a symbol of disintegration and distortion of Ethiopian nation. It initiates revenge among victims and perpetrators. In addition, informant from AEUP says, “Anoole statue encourages ethnicity than nationality. The intention of ethnicity negatively affects the Ethiopian strong nationhood and creates animosity among the major ethnic groups” (Informant from AEUP, 2006). Consequently, this view opposes the deconstructive thesis rearticulated over the reign of Menelik II that is represented by Anoole statue and considers Anoole statue as an emblem of radical racist and secessionist’s political ideology.

II. Correctionist (Extreme Ethno-nationalist) View

The correctionist (Extreme Ethno-nationalist) view has emerged to deconstruct the extreme pan-nationalist (Ethiopianism) view and construct the corrective political narratives in the political history of modern Ethiopia. This view considers the Menelik war of conquest as the process of colonization. As Greenfield (1965) also stated, Menelik II conquest of Arsii Oromoo had the same in common as colonialists from Europe did in other parts of Africa. The correctionist view firmly stated that Menelik II army took part in the scramble for Africa by competing with other European countries along Ethiopia’s borders. A document from Culture and Tourism Bureau (2006) also asserts that the conquest of Menelik II is seen as internal colonization for the conquered people. As a result, the conquered ethnic groups need to undergo decolonization like other African countries colonized by western colonial empire. This political view is predominantly pronounced by elites from the conquered ethnic groups by Menelik II army. Consequently, it supports the construction of strong ethno-nationalism.

With this regard, the Anoole statue is seen as a site for the construction of the sense of ethno-nationalism and deconstruction of the normative narrative of Ethiopianist view in the Ethiopian polity. This is due to the fact that the correctionist view sees the reign of Menelik as an exclusionist and the oppressed and marginalized groups need to have the right to self-determination. As participants from OPDO and Oromia Culture and Tourism Bureau say, the construction of Anoole statue is an outcome of the contemporary Ethiopian political system (ethno-linguistics based federalism). Hence, Anoole statue is considered as site for strong ethno-nationalism.

According to correctionist view, Anoole statue represents the resistance and scarifies of Arsii Oromoo towards any unfair, injustices and inequalities happened on Oromoo people. Thus, the Anoole statue is seen as one way of correcting the hegemonic political discourses over the reign of Menelik II and reconstructs political narratives in the current Ethiopian

political geography as a quest for comparative political power. On the contrary, statue of Menelik II is seen as a symbol of colonization. Thus, this view strongly argues that the statue of Menelik II should be deconstructed and condemned.

III. An Incumbent Government View

An incumbent government came to power in 1991 overthrowing the *Derg* military junta; the federal system was introduced to resolve different ethnic groups' tensions and conflicts in Ethiopia. Many scholars (Vaughan, 2003; Hashim, 2010; Merera, *et al*, 2003) also argue that federalism is a solution to the problem of governing multi-ethnic and multi-religious states which have been plagued in inter-communal conflicts and tensions. It creates peaceful coexistence among societies who have distinct culture, religion, language, and socio-economic preferences. Thus, the federal system based on ethno-linguistic introduced to meet the interest of multi-ethnic groups in Ethiopia. In relation to this, the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) (Article 39, sub-article 2) has guaranteed that "Every nation, nationality and people in Ethiopia has the right to speak, to write and to develop its own language; to express, to develop and to promote its culture; and to preserve its history" (Constitution of the FDRE, 1991). EPRDF has been arguing for the role of Ethiopian federalism to administer multi-ethnic groups in the country and thereby resolving the conflicts and tensions among the different ethnic groups found in Ethiopia.

With this regard, an incumbent government (EPRDF) considers Anoole statue from the perspective of giving recognition for the past ethnic tyranny to maintain better and stable political environment. As participants from OPDO says,

In the process of nation-building, facts should not be denied whether they are good or bad. Unless consensus are made on the past history, it is difficult to step forward as a nation. Therefore, the political agenda of Anoole statue construction is giving recognition for the Arsi people who suffered a humiliating defeat of the 'Neftegna' system. In doing so, the statue plays a significant role in the process of creating an integrated society through educating them from the past experience, not to repeat it again in the future.

Thus, Anoole statue is taken as an exemplary site for fighting the political tyranny of monarchical system as favor to democracy and good governance among the Oromo people and the nation as well. The statue is seen as an emblem of ethno-linguistics based federalism in contemporary Ethiopian political system. On the contrary, *Inqu* (April 2006, Volume 6, No. 116, p.6) and *Addis Guday* (April 2006, Volume 8, No.214, p.14) magazines mentioned that Anoole statue is the space of political friction among the major ethnic groups in the country, and the huge money for the construction of Anoole statue was taken as government extravagance when the country is in the rampant economic situation and the society has the problem of infrastructural services.

According to the participants from OPDO and Oromia Culture and Tourism Bureau, construction of Anoole statue currently has two basic contributions. First, it benefits the society who lives nearby socially, economically and psychologically. Second, as the statue has its own museum and research center, it gives an opportunity for scholars to explore and investigate untouched issues about Oromo for the rest of the world.

7. Conclusions

This study investigates how statues of Anoole and Menelik II serve as sites for both reproduction and re-articulation of historical relations of power in the Ethiopian polity. The study found that an equestrian statue of Menelik II and Anoole memorial monument are the faces of one coin in the history of building the modern Ethiopia. Specifically, both statues reflect the good and bad historical incidents took place during the reign of Menelik II. The historiography, architectural symbolism and political representations of both states are the points of controversy in the Ethiopian polity. The normative historical narratives (heroism and patriotism of Ethiopians showed at the battle of Adwa) revolve around Menelik II statue deconstructed by Anoole memorial monument which depicts the inhumane act (mutilation of right hand of men and right breast of women) emperor Menelik made on Arsi people.

Besides, three contrasting and contesting political ideologies (extreme pan-nationalist, extreme ethno-nationalist and incumbent government) have been reflected on the political representation of Anoole and Menelik II statues in the Ethiopian polity. With this regard, extreme pan-nationalism view considers the statue of Menelik II as the symbol of unity, patriotism and victory, but condemns the construction of Anoole statue for it is being thought to negatively affect the unity and strong nationhood of Ethiopia. On the other hand, the extreme ethno-nationalist view claims that the Anoole statue is a way of correcting the hegemonic political discourses over the reign of Menelik II and asserts that the statue of Menelik II is a symbol of colonization. The incumbent Government also sees Anoole statue as representation of the monarchical political tyranny and the strong resistance of Arsi Oromo.

Lastly, the study concludes that the controversies over Anoole and Menelik II statues emanate from lack of national consensus. Therefore, the study urges the government to work hard in building national consensus in the country to minimize the disparity among different ethnic groups over the representation of different media texts like statues.

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