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**Conversions and Transformations:  
Missiological Approaches to Religious Change**

**“From the Istifinites to the Pentecostals:  
Counter-cultural dissidents movements and their suppressions in Ethiopia”**

*Dr Tibebe Eshete*

The Istifinites were early religious reformers who insisted that salvation comes by grace through faith in Christ in the 15 century prior to the rise of the Protestant Reformation. The movement was severely suppressed by the Ethiopian monarchs though there are few who claim lineage to it today. They were viewed as a threat to the religious and political order of the day. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church (EOC) lost the chance for a spiritual renewal.

The Pentecostal movement of the 1960 was a spontaneous outburst that mainly captured the rising social force, the educated youth in colleges and high schools. Most of its members came from the EOC tradition. The mass and sudden exodus of the new intelligentsia into the new movement was also seen as a threat to the status quo and hence subjected to suppression. Unlike the Istifinites the movement took its own momentum and became a robust force in the spread of the evangelical faith in Ethiopia.

In this paper, I will use the notions of dissidence and counter culture to situate the two movements in historical contexts to suggest that the tensions between mainstream culture and "marginalized" movements are indications of the absence of a democratic culture and arguably inimical to the advance of fresh thinking and progress.

*Dr Tibebe Eshete*

Michigan State University: Assistant Professor in the History department and Department of Religious Studies

Email: tibebees@msu.edu