Conceptualizing an African Media System:

An Examination of Media and Politics in the Ethiopian Context

NLA | University College

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Thesis for the Master's Programme in Global Journalism at NLA University College, Kristiansand, Norway

Course Code GJ322

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May 2017

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Abstract

The study of the media's relation with the political system is a burgeoning area of inquiry in comparative media studies. A key framework in this regard is Hallin and Mancini's (2004) *Comparing Media Systems*. This study attempts to conceptualize the Ethiopian media system in comparative perspective based on globally renowned media systems models. More specifically, it asks whether these media systems models are fit to explain the Ethiopian media system and also attempts to identify unique features which should be considered in defining a suitable media system for Ethiopia.

The study was done using a qualitative research approach. Research data for the study was collected through in-depth interviews with 11 purposively selected informants as well as document analysis. The analysis concludes that globally renowned media system models are inadequate to explain the historical development of media and politics in Ethiopia. Even though some features of the Ethiopian media such as a weak media market, low circulation of newspapers, dominance of electronic media, low professionalization, elite oriented press and absence of commercialization resemble elements of the polarized pluralist model, issues such as circulation of newspapers and the relationship between media and politics differ remarkably from the model.

The research has also identified various distinct features that should be considered when defining a functioning media system model for Ethiopia. The nature of media and politics is seen to be influenced by the legacy of the previous regimes, the political history and philosophy of the current ruling party, international influences which have led to superficial liberalization, and underdeveloped media markets and institutions. Based on these factors and together with elements it shares with the polarized pluralist model, the Ethiopian media system can be understood as a media sector in need of development and an institutional environment which continues to be influenced by the ideas of both the past and current regimes, though still being sensitive to changes in the global world order.

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A Note on Ethiopian Names

The names of Ethiopian authors and informants are addressed in this thesis in line with the Ethiopian naming tradition which uses the first name as the primary reference.

Currency

July 2017: ETB 100 = USD 4.29

Abbreviations

ANC	African National Congress
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CPJ	Committee to Protect Journalists
CSO	Civil Society Organization
EBA	Ethiopian Broadcasting Agency
EBC	Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation
EFJA	Ethiopian Free Press Journalists Association
EJA	Ethiopian Journalist Association
ENA	Ethiopian News Agency
ENJU	Ethiopian National Journalists Union
EPA	Ethiopian Press Agency
EPLF	Eritrean People's Liberation Front
EPRP	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party
ETB	Ethiopian Birr
FBC	Fana Broadcasting Corporate
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
FM	Frequency Modulation
MMA	Mass Media Agency
MW	Medium wave
NEBE	National Electoral Board of Ethiopia
NIEO	New International Economic Order
NSD	Norsk Senter for Forskningsdata (Norwegian Center for Research Data)
NWICO	New World Information and Communication Order
OAU	Organization of African Unity
OGCA	Office for Government Communication Affairs
RVOG	Radio Voice of the Gospel
SPLM	Sudan People's Liberation Movement
SW	Short wave
SWAPO	Southwest African Peoples Organization
UK	United Kingdom
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
US	United States
WJS	Worlds of Journalism Study
USD	United States Dollar

Acknowledgements

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1. Background and Problem Statement

The relationship between media and politics is among the heavily discussed areas of study both in political sciences and media studies. While scholars in media and communications consider media as "connective tissue" of democracy having an important role in the political process (Gunther & Mughan, 2000, p.1), scholars in political sciences tend to see media systems "in a context of or even dependence on other social systems, especially the political system" (Schneider, 2002 cited in Engesser & Franzetti, 2011, p. 277). Many scholars seem to support the later idea, arguing that a media system reflects the social and political structure of a society (Engesser & Franzetti, 2011). For instance, Hallin and Mancini (2004, p.8) state that "one cannot understand the news media without understanding the nature of the state, the system of political parties, the pattern of relations between economic and political interests, and the development of civil society, among other elements of social structure".

In spite of a wide acknowledgement of the crucial relationship between the media system and the political system, many scholars believe not enough empirical studies have been undertaken on the issue (Zielonka, 2015; Gunther & Mughan, 2000; Hallin and Mancini, 2004; Engesser & Franzetti, 2011). In fact, attempts to study the relationship between the two suffers from deficiencies such as researchers' lack of an integrated research agenda; lack of researchers' comparative ambition (many prefer single country studies); and the tendency of seeing things mainly from Anglo-America point of view (Zielonka, 2015). In this regard, Engesser and Franzetti (2011) argue that empirical knowledge about the interdependence between media systems and political systems is still rare.

A closer look at comparative studies done on the relationship between media and politics reveals that much of the volume is dominated by frameworks derived from experiences of a limited number of established democracies in North America and Western Europe (Hallin and Mancini, 2004; Gunther & Mughan, 2000; Esser & Pfetsch, 2004; Thussu, 2009). This poses a special challenge in efforts of understanding the relationship between media and politics in

emerging democracies as theorizing on the subject is severely limited. So far, only a few studies have looked at the case of young democracies and they tend to borrow concepts and frameworks from established democracies as springboard (Hallin and Mancini, 2012; Zielonka, 2015).

As the study of similarities and differences in journalism traditions gains massive attention from the academia, "researchers in this area increasingly adopt a comparative perspective" (Hanitzsch, 2009, p. 413). Blumler and Gurevitch (1995) describe comparative analysis as an indispensable, highly demanding but rewarding endeavor when writing about its importance in analyzing political communication. The approach has been systematically used in media and communications research by Hallin and Mancini (2004) in their book *Comparing Media Systems* – a popular work which has provided a framework for comparative analysis of media and politics.

Since then, the study of media systems has become a cornerstone in the evolving field of comparative communication research in explaining commonalities and differences through empirical understanding of variations (Brüggemann et al., 2014). Furthermore, it is vital to come up with typologies of media systems that describe typical patterns of how journalism cultures, media policy, media markets, and media use are connected in a given society (Brüggemann et al., 2014).

Even though Hallin and Mancini's media models were originally intended to explain media in advanced capitalist democracies of Western Europe and North America, the framework is serving as the "point of reference for many comparative studies of journalism and political communication" in other countries (Brüggemann et al., 2014, p.1038; Hallin and Mancini, 2004). To this end, several other scholars have used Hallin and Mancini's media models to conceptualize the media in their respective countries, such as in Poland (Ostrowska, 2012); the Baltic countries (Balˇcytienˉe, 2012); Brazil (de Albuquerque, 2012); South Africa (Hadland, 2012); and Portugal and Spain (Pereira, 2015).

This study attempts to insert the case of the Ethiopian media system into the already expanding body of comparative research to understand the nature of the relationship between media and political system by using the framework developed by Hallin and Mancini. Basically,

the study follows the approach which Hanitzsch & Esser (2012, p. 7) calls "quasi-comparative/implicit comparison", meaning that instead of being entirely comparative in its nature by way of comparing one country's media system with the other, these types of researches are "essentially mono-cultural analyses that place only little emphasis on the comparison itself but use existing typologies or other macro units as a yardstick to interpret and contextualize the single case at hand". Therefore, the study aims to look into Ethiopia's media and political system by using major dimensions of variation proposed by Hallin and Mancini such as the structure of the media market, political parallelism, journalistic professionalism and the role of the state.

Ethiopia takes a unique position among many African countries with its ancient civilization (Levine, 1974), its own calendar and writing system (Getachew, 2003), and for not being colonized by outside forces (Riney, 1998). In the year 1991, the country underwent a major political transition from a communist-based *Derg* government to the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) coalition government. The formation of the ruling EPRDF coalition party was led by Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) which is "informed by a neo-Leninist political model called 'revolutionary democracy'" (Abbink, 2011, p. 596).

Until the early 2000s, journalistic practices in Ethiopia were scantily addressed in academic writing. However, partly because of the beginning of journalism education in many Ethiopian universities, the trend is changing. Over the last decade, several aspects of Ethiopian journalism, inter alia, from journalism routines and cultures (Skjerdal, 2012a) to journalistic ethics (Wolelaw, 2012); and from development journalism (Skjerdal, 2011) to attempts of professionalization (Afework, 2013) and advertising (Wubshet, 2010) have been studied.

Some scholars such as Birhanu and O'Donnell (2015, p. 2) argue that professional journalism has failed to flourish in Ethiopia because of the "structural constraints imposed by the country's long history of authoritarian governments, state-controlled media and repression of journalists". The authors further describe Ethiopian journalism as a "small, poorly paid occupation" in one of Africa's most authoritarian media system. On the contrary, as keenly stated by Terje Skjerdal in his PhD dissertation on Ethiopian media sociology, the situation of

media development in Ethiopia is described as "a continuous interchange between coercion and liberalization" (Skjerdal, 2012a, p. 31).

Regardless of the importance of analyzing and comparing media systems (Büchel et al., 2016), few studies have examined the media system in Ethiopia. While a handful of master's thesis works have used media systems models as a major theoretical framework, Kemal (2013, p. 55), who studied Ethiopian media industry with particular focus on ownership and regulations, aptly concludes that the local situation is "yet to find a suitable model" that can explain the Ethiopian media and its respective environment.

At first glimpse, it appears that the Ethiopian media system fits in with Hallin and Mancini's (2004) polarized pluralist model given the situation of for example a weak media market. However, it requires systematic study to explore major variables and dimensions that could properly define the Ethiopian media system. In this regard, Hallin and Mancini (2012) stress that detailed empirical analysis of systems, i.e. historical and structural contexts, are crucial in any attempts of conceptualizing a media system. Thus, this study attempts to bridge this gap in examining the Ethiopian media system by looking at the relation between the media and the political system. It asks how fit globally renowned media system's models are to explain Ethiopia's media system. Moreover, it also aims to identify features that are peculiar to the Ethiopian media and political system.

1.2. Objective of the Study

The major objective of the study is to conceptualize the Ethiopian media system through carefully analyzing media and politics relations in the country.

1.3. Research Questions

The study aims to answer the following two research questions.

1. How fit are globally renowned media system models to explain the relation between media and their political context in Ethiopia?

2. What unique features of the local society must be taken into account when defining a functioning media system model for Ethiopia?

Chapter Two: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.1.   Comparative Research in Media Studies: An Overview

Comparison is considered as a universal category in human behavior, and the use of comparative methods dates back to the times of Aristotle when he compared *democracy* and *oligarchy* in ancient Greece constitution and state systems (Kleinsteuber, 2004; Norris, 2009). In spite of its early beginning, some writers claim that comparative research was first used as an instrument of systematic research by John Stuart Mill (1806-73) (Kleinsteuber, 2004). Other scholars like Hanitzsch and Esser (2012) hold that the first major comparative work in the social sciences was done by Emil Durkheim (1897) on suicide and social anomie.

Today a lot is being written about the increasing importance of comparative research across different fields such as psychology, sociology, history, political science and humanities (Hanitzsch & Esser, 2012; Livingstone, 2012). Despite considerable attention given to comparative research by funding bodies, policy imperatives, professional associations and publication outlets, researchers such as Livingstone (2003, p. 478) argue that comparative methodology has practically made little advancement in that researchers often find themselves "reinventing the wheel", or worse, repeating the mistakes of others. Partly because its conceptual and theoretical bases are still being developed, scholars have not yet agreed on primary issues such as what counts to be studied in comparative research and even the definition of some concepts (Hanitzsch, 2009). For instance, different labels that are synonymous with comparative research such as 'cross-country', 'cross-national', 'cross-cultural', 'cross-systemic', 'cross-institutional', 'trans-national', 'trans-societal', and 'trans-cultural' are not clearly distinguished (Hanitzsch, 2009, p.414).

In essence, comparative research is defined as a study where "two or more a priori-defined cultural populations are compared at least in one functionally equivalent concept" (Hanitzsch, 2009, p.414). In the field of media and communications studies, comparative research can be understood as "contrasting different macro-level units (like world regions, countries, sub-national regions, social milieus, language areas, cultural thickenings) at one point

or more points in time" (Hanitzsch & Esser, 2012, p.5). This definition is related with the classic conception by Edelstein (1982) cited in (Hanitzsch & Esser, 2012, p.5) which defines comparative research as "a study that compares two or more nations with respect to some common activity". To make it even clearer, Hanitzsch and Esser (2012) posit that for a study to be labeled as comparative, it should have clearly defined purpose of comparison; a clearly delineated macro-level unit of analysis; its object of analysis should be compared with at least one common functionally equivalent dimension, and finally; the proposed object of analysis need to be compared on the basis of a common theoretical framework and by using equivalent conceptualizations and methods.

In comparative research on the international scale, the nation-state is often used as the key unit of analysis and has been regarded as the "unquestioned starting point" (Hepp & Cloudry, 2009, p.32). However, it has also been pointed out that the 'nation' may not necessarily be a proper unit of comparison as it comprises multiple issues rather than self-contained units (Livingstone, 2003, p.479). Because the national-territorial approach tends to ignore issues that can be studied outside the frame such as race, gender, ethnicity and "deterritorialized popular cultures", Hepp and Cloudry (2009. p.32) call for a 'transcultural approach' in comparative media research. However, the nation-state continues to be crucial in the specific fields of media research such as media systems and political economy (p.32). A combination of comparative and national frames has been proposed as a solution to the problem of comparative studies which have used the nation-state as the only unit of comparison (Hardy, 2008). Hallin and Mancini's *Comparing Media Systems* (2004) is one example where this combination is applied. While using 'nation-state' as a unit of comparison, Hallin and Mancini's study at the same time offers other perspectives such as homogenization and convergence in order to see beyond the national frame.

2.2.   Trends in Comparative Research in Media Studies

The past few decades have witnessed increased use of comparative media and communications research (Hanitzsch & Esser, 2012; Hanitzsch, 2008; 2009). These moves are partly reinforced by

the advent of globalization (Livingstone, 2003) and also by the political, economic, technological and cultural transformations in the wake of the end of the Cold War era which created a smooth environment for international exchange between scholars from various corners of the world (Hanitzsch, 2008).

Thomas Hanitzsch (2008; 2009) has proposed a four-stage scheme for mapping the six decades old historical practice of comparative research in media and communication (cf. Hanitzsch & Esser, 2012). The first stage, termed as *The US and the Rest,* encompasses the 1950s and the 1960s and was pioneered by influential American communications scholars such as Daniel Lerner (*The Passing of Traditional Society,* 1958) and Siebert, Peterson and Schramm (*Four Theories of the Press*, 1956). Comparative journalism research of the time was characterized by a strong prevalence of US-centrism and juxtaposition of the *modern West* and the *traditional East*. The paradigm was popular until the mid-1970s when it faded away as other scholars began to realize its ideological bearings (Hanitzsch, 2009).

The second stage, named as *The North and the South* signifies major political processes which happened within the UNESCO and European community. It was a period marked by the proposal of *New International Economic Order (NIEO)* and *New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO)* which resulted from growing recognition of uneven communication flows between the industrialized North and the developing South. Moreover, it was a period that witnessed better integration of the European community in the 1970s (Hanitzsch, 2008; 2009; Hanitzsch & Esser, 2012).

The third stage, or *The West and the West*, indicates the period between the mid-1980s and the late 1990s (Hanitzsch, 2009). The period marks the beginning of methodologically advanced comparative research where scholars became cautious in selecting countries and focused on searching for systematic ways of comparability (Hanitzsch & Esser, 2012). Most studies conducted during this time were limited to European nations.

The West and the Global marks the last and most recent paradigm. It reflects research that focuses on the universal and specific journalistic cultures around the world. Scholars at this level started assessing media systems on a truly global scale and studies have become more collaborative (Hanitzsch & Esser, 2012; Hanitzsch, 2008).

2.3. Why Comparative Research?

Comparative research can be done for different purposes, such as to describe, understand, explain, and predict various phenomena across societies. The process involves comparison based on various dimensions like territorial, cultural, temporal and functional parameters, and this in turn requires the use of different forms of massive data (Hanitzsch & Esser, 2012).

Hanitzsch and Esser (2012) underscore the special benefits of comparative research in establishing generality of findings as it employs the use of research data from more than one context. This in return saves researchers from a 'naïve universalism' or the tendency to make simplistic generalizations from single country studies which could have elements of idiosyncratic contents (Blumer & Gurevich, 1995, p.75). In addition to its wealth of comparative data (Hanitzsch & Esser, 2012), comparative research serves as an effective antidote to "unwitting parochialism" as it helps to understand its own system well by putting it against others (Blumer & Gurevich, 1995, p. 76). This in turn fosters better understanding of our own system, through the capacity to make the *invisible visible* or notice things we did not notice before (Hallin & Mancini, 2004; Blumer & Gurevich, 1995). More importantly, engaging in comparative research helps to foster global scholarship and sustain a global network of researchers across continents (Hanitzsch & Esser, 2012). All in all, comparative research can be done for serving one or more of the following purposes such as:

> [I]mproving understanding of one's own country; improving understanding of other countries; testing a theory across diverse settings; examining transnational processes across different contexts; examining local reception of imported cultural forms; building abstract universally applicable theory; challenging claims to universality; evaluating scopes and value of certain phenomena; identifying marginalized cultural forms; improving international understanding; and learning from the policy initiatives of others (Livingstone, 2003, p. 479).

2.4. Limitations of Comparative Research

In spite of a wide range of comparative studies undertaken in recent years, the progress made in terms of theory development and methodology is limited (Hanitzsch, 2009). For instance, a study that reviewed 151 international comparative communication studies published in six

journals between 1970 and 97 revealed limitations in theoretical development in the examined studies (Chang et al., 2001). Furthermore, the study suggested the need for a better articulation of knowledge and assumption that would offer productive ideas cross-nationally as most of the reviewed studies failed to observe systematic methods that would yield data which are representative of the larger population.

Norris on her part finds that the subfield of comparative political communication:

..has not yet developed an extensive body of literature that establishes a range of theoretically sophisticated analytical frameworks, buttressed by rigorously tested scientific generalizations, common concepts, standardized instruments and shared archival datasets, with the capacity to identify common regularities that prove across widely varied contexts (Norris, 2009, p. 322).

A major problem associated with comparative research lies in its epistemological domain (Livingstone, 2003; Hanitzsch, 2009). Because methodological and theoretical universalism is implicitly assumed in cross-cultural studies, such studies have risks of being done in 'out-of-context measurements' (Livingstone, 2003; Hanitzsch, 2009). These types of 'safari research' which compare others' cultures through the lens of one's own cultural value-systems (Hantrais & Mangen, 1996, cited in Hanitzsch, 2009, p.422) risk undermining differences within one's own system, and the extent of differences may overwhelm meaningful comparison (Blumer, McLeod & Rosengren, 1992, cited in Hanitzsch, 2009).

As noted by Obijiofor and Hanusch (2011), the Anglo-American style of journalism is regarded as model journalism which other cultures will be evaluated against. This becomes a potential problem in comparative research when the same list of western values of journalism, e.g. professional role perceptions, is used to ask journalists across different cultures. In return, this creates a situation of what Hanitzsch (2009, p. 423) calls 'problem of equivalence'. It is therefore important to ensure that proposed concepts have functional equivalence, meaning that they ask for the relevant aspects in a given culture.

2.5.   Studying the Relations Between Media and Politics

Many scholars in media and political communication agree with the fact of interdependence between media and politics (Hallin & Mancini, 2004; Gunther & Mughan, 2000; Zielonka, 2015; Engesser & Franzetti, 2011). A significant number of studies have been conducted using comparative analysis along this line. Some of these attempts are presented below, the most famous of which is the '*Four Theories of the Press*' of Siebert et al. (1956).

2.5.1. Four Theories of the Press

Even though comparative research has existed since the 1800s, its presence in the media and communications field started in 1950s (Hanitzsch & Esser, 2012; Kleinsteuber, 2004; cf. Fardigh, 2010). As Fardigh (2010) writes, the predecessor of the *Four Theories of the Press* came in the 1940s with the US *Hutchins Commission.* The commission's proposal was later confirmed by prominent American communications scholars in a landmark book, *Four Theories of the Press* (Siebert et al., 1956)*.* The book started by asking why the press apparently serves different purposes and why it appears in various forms. To serve these questions, they focus on frameworks such as: the nature of man; the nature of society; the relation of man to the state; and the nature of knowledge and of truth. Moreover, they also used explanatory factors such as, the level of economic and technological resources, degree of urbanization, and socio-cultural dispositions aiming to come up with a particular press theory.

A pillar theme of the Four Theories of the Press holds:

> [T]he press always takes on the form and coloration of the social and political structures within which it operates. Especially, it reflects the system of social control whereby the relations of individuals and institutions are adjusted. We believe that an understanding of these aspects of society is basic to any systematic understanding of the press (Siebert et al., 1956, p.1-2).

In their view, the press is regarded as a dependent variable or as a reflection of social and political structures. It is based on using the above-mentioned frameworks that the authors identified

their dominant theories: the authoritarian, libertarian, social responsibility and soviet communist theories of press.

The authoritarian press posits the press as a servant of the state carrying obligations to supporting policies of leadership. The press is also used to inform the public with information that their ruler's felt they should know. The libertarian theory or free press theory is grounded in the works of John Stuart Mill and regards media as a watchdog of society and advocates for freedom of media from government. On the other hand, social responsibility theory of the press highlights media's obligation and responsibilities to society. The press is an instrument of the communist party in the communist press system (Siebert et al., 1956; Obijiofor & Hanusch, 2011; Ostini & Fung, 2002; McQuail, 1983).

Even though the book *Four Theories of the Press* has been used widely for teaching press freedom (Nerone, 1995; Becker & Vlad, 2009), and offers a method of contrasting different paradigms of press and society (Nordenstreng, 2006), it has also been subject to heated criticism. While scholars like Ostini & Fung (2002, p.42) criticize the book for being "obsolete and inapplicable for contemporary analysis" in the ever-changing media landscape, Obijiofor and Hanusch (2011) write about its ideological biases, methodological weaknesses and ethnocentric arguments.

The book comes at the time when the world was divided into a US and the Soviet blocks in the cold war. To this regard, Nerone (1995) criticizes the book for being built on ideological contestations, making it loaded with propaganda elements of the time. Obijiofor and Hanusch (2011) support this critique, claiming that the book has weaknesses in the theoretical arguments since it mainly emphasizes the ideological differences of the time. Furthermore, Nerone (1995) denounces *Four Theories of the Press* for ignoring media in emerging countries, thereby inaccurately presenting press systems across the world. In fact, even in the media systems which were included, the book did not offer a clear analysis. In this regard, Hallin and Mancini (2004, p.10) state that, "because of the background of the Cold War [and] because it is so preoccupied with the dichotomy between the contending U.S. and Soviet models, *Four Theories of the Press* has little room for the actual diversity of world media systems". Thus, Hallin and Mancini criticize

the book for failing to grasp today's complex media systems, as its scope was so grand that it is almost inevitably superficial" (p.10).

2.5.2. Other Attempts of Classifying Media Systems

As criticisms on *Four Theories of the Press* kept mounting, scholars called for new ideas to account for the development of changing and diverse forms of media (Ostini & Fung, 2002; Hallin & Mancini, 2004; Nordenstreng, 2006; Obijiofor & Hanusch, 2011). As a response to bringing alternative ways of understanding press systems, Hachten and Scotton (2012) proposed five press concepts namely: authoritarian, western, communist, revolutionary and developmental systems. Like the *Four Theories of the Press*, Hachten and Scotton's normative media models are based on a premise that all press systems reflect the values of political and economic systems of the nation. The revolutionary press has its background in the teachings of Lenin, and refers to a concept of illegal and subversive communication through using the press and other media to overthrew governments (Hachten & Scotton, 2012). The developmental concept, on its part, advocates that all instruments of communication must be mobilized for the government to aid the tasks of nation building, fighting illiteracy and poverty, building political consciousness, and assisting economic development. The media are, thus, expected to support the authority rather than challenging it. This concept tends to see individual rights of expression and other civil liberties as irrelevant considering the overwhelming problems of poverty, disease, ethnicity (Hachten & Scotton, 2012).

Martin and Chaudhary (1983), cited in Obijiofor & Hanusch (2011), on their part proposed a three-typed media model, namely: western, communist and third world media system. On the other hand, Altschull (1995), cited in Obijiofor & Hanusch (2011) divided world press systems into another three types: market, communitarian and advancing press systems. Altschull was interested in bringing alternative paradigms instead of revising the *Four Theories of the Press*. He believes that in all of these systems, the media are agents of those who exercise political and economic power (Nordenstreng, 1997).

Merrill and Lowenstein (1971), cited in Nordenstreng (1997), revised the *Four Theories of the Press* and proposed four other press philosophies: the authoritarian (negative government control); the social-centralist (with positive government control); the libertarian (without any government control); and the social-libertarian (minimal government control). Likewise, Campbell (2003) identified four typologies while explaining the functions of newspapers in African societies. the vanguard press (1940s-1960s) features the use of newspapers as agents of political change. Newspapers of the time "pursued the goals of African nationalism, agitating for reforms and, ultimately, political independence" (Campbell, 2003, p.32). The subservient press (1970s-1980s) indicates a situation where many state-controlled newspapers were used as exponents and practitioners of development journalism. Here the press is used to promote positive news aimed at nation building and economic development. The press as reinforcing agent (1980s-1990s) indicates the use of newspapers as champions in the process of political change and democratization. Finally, the clandestine press designates the use of newspapers prepared and distributed secretly to challenge state authority. Clandestine newspapers arguably gave rise to independent African newspapers. Some examples of clandestine press existed in Côte d'Ivoire during the 1970s and 80s. This kind of press is similar to underground press or guerilla journalism (Olorunyomi, 1998).

In addition to *Four Theories of the Press*, McQuail (1983) introduced two other theories: the development media theory and the democratic participant theory. The idea of a 'development media model' was inspired by discussions by UNESCO that gave greater attention to matters related to developing countries (McQuail, 1983). A key reason for the development media theory is related with the "fact of some common conditions of developing countries that limit the application of other theories or that reduce their potential benefits" (McQuail, 1983, p.94). Furthermore, it was remarked that people not only noticed the absence of a developed mass communication system in developing countries but also understood the inability of the formerly proposed *Four Theories of the Press* to conceptualize media in the region. As a result, a set of expectations and normative principles of mass media which deviate from both the capitalist and communist camp were identified. The proposed principles are incongruent with communication needs of the region and stress the potentially positive role of the media for

development, as well as autonomy and cultural identity of a nation. Democratic participant theory is related with development media theory in its emphasis on society and reflects media in developed liberal societies (McQuail, 1983).

In conclusion, most of these media models are normative in their nature. Because of their normativity, these models lack explanatory power as they only attempt to "prescribe than describe social phenomena using an empirical basis for inquiry" (McQuail, 1983; Ostini & Fung, 2002, p.45). Moreover, they tend to focus on the structural factors and widely ignore micro-level factors such as issues which have to do with individual journalists (Ostini & Fung, 2002).

2.6.   Theoretical Framework of the Study

Theoretical frameworks are integral aspects of any scientific research work. As Williams (2003, p.32) writes, a theory is a "logical proposition or set of propositions about relationships between phenomena". This thesis aims to find out how fit globally renowned media systems models are to explain the relations between media and their political context in Ethiopia. In doing so, it also identifies unique features of the local society that must be taken into account in defining a functioning media system model for Ethiopia.

Of the different ways of explaining the relationship between media and their political context, the study has decided to mainly use the media system model developed by Hallin and Mancini as its starting-point. The main rationale for choosing Hallin and Mancini's media systems model is that it allows for a systematic study and deep analysis of media system in a particular context. As stated by Hallin and Mancini (2004), the field of communication in general and the study of journalism in particular have a strong tendency of being normative in nature. This is exemplified by the models discussed in the previous section, proposed by different scholars such as Campbell (2003), Hachten and Scotton (2012), Martin and Chaudhary (1983), and Siebert et al. (1956). By being normative, these models particularly focus on reflecting "what journalism *should be* [rather] than to analyze in detail what and why it *is*" (Hallin & Mancini, 2004, p.13). Moreover, Hallin and Mancini's media systems models are preferable for their importance in providing rich ways to analyze the historical development of the press and the reasons why

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the media in a particular society plays certain roles and functions. Also, Hallin and Mancini's framework is currently – by far – the most quoted study in the area of media systems analysis in the global research literature.

2.6.1. Hallin and Mancini's Framework for Studying Media and Politics

Hallin and Mancini's (2004) *Comparing Media Systems* aims to determine the relationship between media and politics through comparative analysis of 18 countries in Western Europe and North America. The authors selected these countries by using "most similar system design" (p.6). The systematic approach helped them to solve one of the usual problems associated with comparative research, namely the problem of "many variables, with few cases" (Lijphart, 1971 quoted in Hallin & Mancini, 2004, p. 6).

The authors start their work by fiercely criticizing *Four Theories of the Press*, especially for its shallow analysis on the relations between media and politics and its simplistic view of media as a dependent variable. Consequently, Hallin and Mancini (2004, p. 10) wish it a "decent burial" as they introduce their own model of media systems analysis. Because Hallin and Mancini claim that the arguments of the *Four Theories of the Press* were entirely normative in their nature, they were more interested in empirically analyzing the historical development, and the role and the nature of media's relations with social institutions (Hallin & Mancini, 2004).

In doing so, Hallin and Mancini identify three 'models of media and politics' namely the polarized pluralist, the democratic corporatist and the liberal media models. To arrive at these models, the authors use four major dimensions: development of media market, political parallelism (media`s links with political/social institutions), journalistic professionalization, and the role of the state, together with other key political characteristics like state-society relations and patterns of government. While media market, political parallelism and nature of state intervention indicate media's relation with their economic, social and political environments, the professionalization aspect describes internal rules and norms of media institutions (Voltmer, 2012). Hallin and Mancini (2004, p.11) note that the proposed models are 'ideal types' in which individual countries only fit to the models roughly. Significant variations can be noticed between

countries that are grouped under the same model. For instance, the American, British, Canadian and Irish media systems are grouped in the same liberal model in spite of their heterogeneities since the authors were interested not in the "classifications of individual media systems, but the identification of characteristic patterns of the relationship between system characteristics" (p.11). Moreover, they state that their media system models are not 'homogeneous', meaning that they are "characterized by complex coexistence of media operating according to different principles" (p.12). They also indicate that their models should not be seen as 'static' systems but as systems in a continuous process of change. In this regard, the authors use North's (1990) concept of 'path dependence', meaning media institutions evolve over time; and in each step of their evolution past events and institutional patterns inherited from the earlier periods influence the direction they take (cited in Hallin & Mancini, 2004, p.12).

2.6.1.1.   Dimension 1: Development of the Media Market

Hallin and Mancini (2004) use the structure of the media market as a key dimension of variation in their framework. As part of this dimension, the authors look at the historical development of mass circulation of newspapers together with other important factors such as nature of newspapers, their relations with audiences, their role in a wider process of social and political communication, the nature of readership, and the literacy rate in a country. This dimension, in other words, primarily deals with the printed press.

Significant differences were observed among the researched countries. High rate of newspaper circulation is registered today in countries which developed a mass circulation press in the late 19th century (e.g., Norway with 720 newspaper copies sold per 1000 adults) compared with those who got mass circulation newspapers in the early 20th century (e.g. Greece with 78 and Portugal with 82 copies per 1000 adults).

Related with differences in circulation rates, newspapers in southern Europe were not profitable enterprises compared with their North European counterparts. Thus, some South European papers began to be subsidized by political bodies, but it jeopardized their professionalism. Furthermore, while newspapers in South Europe were addressed to a small,

elite, urban, politically active and educated audience, Northern European newspapers were addressed to a mass public and were less political in their content. Today, newspapers in Southern Europe generate a horizontal process of debate and negotiation among elite readers, unlike the vertical role of communication between political elites and ordinary mass audience in North European countries (Hallin & Mancini, 2004).

Related with difference in the circulation rates, newspapers in southern Europe were not profitable enterprises as their North European counterparts. This has led some South European papers to be subsidized by political bodies jeopardizing their professionalism. Furthermore, while newspapers in South Europe were addressed to a small, elite, urban, politically active and educated audience; Northern European newspapers were addressed to a mass public and were less political in their content. Besides, newspapers in southern Europe serve as horizontal process of debate and negotiation among elite readers unlike the vertical role of communication between political elites and ordinary mass audience in North European countries (Hallin & Mancini, 2004).

Differences in gender among newspapers readers is another element studied in the media market (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). While difference in gender of readerships is low in Northern Europe and North America (e.g. 1% in Sweden), huge differences are witnessed in South European countries (e.g. 35% in Portugal). According to the authors, this huge difference boils down to two reasons: 1) the historical differences in literacy rates, and 2) differences of functions of the media. Reading habit among women readers is less developed in Southern Europe because newspapers in this region are highly politicized and women have historically been excluded from politics.

The structure of media market can be seen from other perspectives such as by looking at whether there is a separation between sensationalist mass press or quality press (e.g. as Britain); or variations in the balance of local press (US, Canada, Switzerland), regional/national press (as in Britain, Austria, Italy, Spain) or a combination of both (as in Scandinavia, German, France) (Hallin & Mancini, 2004).

However, the use of media market as dimension of variation is not without its criticisms. For instance, it is unclear how the sensationalist press co-exists with quality papers in the same

media system, e.g. in the UK. Besides, it is also not clear how the use of quantitative indicators of the media market which are limited to the press can explain wider issues in a media system where there are diverse types of media. Moreover, it is difficult to use this dimension in situations with dominant electronic media and of course in situations where the press is underdeveloped. In fact, the use of circulation rate as measurement of the media market becomes an inadequate indicator in the times of online newspapers, in societies with shared copies or 'rent a read' cultures, and in systems where the oral tradition is prominent (El-Richani, 2016).

2.6.1.2. Dimension 2: Political Parallelism

Political parallelism is Hallin and Mancini's (2004) second dimension of variation in comparing media systems. Basically, it indicates "the extent to which the media system reflects the major political divisions in society" (p. 21). History tells that journalists played different roles in politics at different times. For instance, a political journalist with a role of influencing public opinion was typical in the late 18th and early 19th century until it gave way for another kind of journalist with a more neutral role in political communication. Hallin and Mancini argue this move could be attributed to the development of the commercial press or even to the development of journalistic professionalism.

However, as argued by Hallin and Mancini (2004) the issue of neutrality is a deeply contested matter since "[n]o serious media analyst would argue that journalism anywhere in the world is literally neutral" (p. 25). This takes the whole discussion into looking at the extent of the connection between actors in media institutions and political parties. Hallin and Mancini (2004) took the original idea of political parallelism from Seymour-Ure's (1974) classical concept of party press parallelism, meaning the "degree to which the structure of the media system paralleled to that of the party system" (cited in Hallin & Mancini, 2004, p. 27). They modify Seymour-Ure's one-to-one party press parallelism into a more inclusive and broader concept of political parallelism. The authors argue that even though 'one party one media' form alignment

(e.g. as in Denmark in the early 20th century) is not common today, media can still be identified at least with general political tendencies if not with political parties.

In doing so, Hallin and Mancini (2004) forward six ways in which political parallelism in the media can be traced. This can be done through checking the content of the media, i.e. the extent to which media content reflects certain political orientations in their reports (e.g. in Germany the *Frankfurter Allgemeine* is right of center, while the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* is left of center). It can also be observed with media's organizational connection with institutions such as trade unions, churches, cooperatives, and political parties etc. Other ways to notice political parallelism in a media system include the "tendency for the media professional to be active in political life" and also the "tendency in some systems for the career paths of journalists and other media personnel to be shaped by their political affiliations" (Hallin and Mancini, 2004, p 28). This especially makes sense as journalists in some systems prefer working for a media organization because the institution has a political interest which they share; or because their organization wants to balance the representation of different political tendencies; or even they join the institution hoping to get a good future in politics. Furthermore, political parallelism can be seen in the partisan media choice of audiences, and in journalistic role orientations and practices.

Hallin and Mancini (2004) also discuss the concepts of internal and external pluralism which are the two ways that media systems handle diversity of political loyalties and orientations. Whereas external pluralism is defined as "pluralism achieved at the level of media system as a whole," internal pluralism describes "pluralism achieved within each media outlet or organization". The argument here is that systems with external pluralism will eventually have high political parallelism (pp.29-30).

Hallin and Mancini (2004, p.30) observe variations on the governance of public broadcasting systems in relation to underlying differences in "degree and form of political parallelism". Thus, they identify four basic governance models, namely the government, professional, parliamentary/proportional representation and civic/corporatist models. The government model denotes state broadcasting controlled by the government or the political majority. This was a common early phase of broadcasting in many European countries and still is in Spain, Portugal and Greece. The professional model aspires to insulate political control out

of broadcasting and is well exemplified by the BBC (UK). Broadcasting governance is divided among political parties by proportional representation in the parliamentary model. According to the corporatist model, broadcast governance is distributed among different 'socially relevant groups' such as political parties, trade unions, religious associations, business associations, ethnic associations etc. However, as stated by de Albuquerque (2013), any analysis of political parallelism presupposes a competitive political system where political cleavage is clear enough to be reproduced by the media, as well as the existence of a stable and noticeable relationship between media and political agents that allows observers to identify patterns of interaction.

2.6.1.3.   Dimension 3: Journalistic Professionalization

Hallin and Mancini's third dimension of variation, professionalization, is one of the most debatable concepts in journalism (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). The concept has been subject to frequent development and reinterpretations. The issue of professionalism poses a problem in journalism as it has no such a systematic body of knowledge and there is a loose link between professionalism and formal training.

Despite the fact that journalism has not achieved professionalism in its complete sense as found in, for example, medical science (Hallin & Mancini, 2004), the authors have chosen three ways in which professionalism can be seen in journalism. These include journalistic autonomy (or a concept related with control over work process), existence of distinct professional norms (such as ethical journalistic principles, or practical routines, e.g. elements of newsworthiness), and the issue of public service orientation (reflected with existence of mechanisms of journalistic formal or informal self-regulation).

In spite of journalism's aspiration to professionalize itself, a sociological definition of the profession has never been a comfortable fit (Singer, 2003). For one, journalism neither has entrance requirements nor a discrete body of knowledge as required by professions. At the same time, as Singer (2003) emphasizes, its commitment to public service and also its demand for practitioner's expertise could make it a profession. The writer further point out that not every scholar in media studies has a favorable view towards professionalism. In fact, some scholars

have argued against professionalization. For instance, Glasser (1992) fears professionalism for stifling diversity; Merrill (1974), cited in Singer (2003) thinks professionalism would reduce journalistic autonomy by forcing the subordination of individual ideas to those of a group; Soloski (1989) sees professionalism as an economic method by news organizations to control the behaviors of journalists; and still other writers like Birkhead (1986), cited in Singer (2003) see it as standard and justification for that control.

Related with professionalization, Hallin and Mancini (2004) introduce the concept of instrumentalization which refers to the control of media by outside actors such as politicians, social groups and economic actors that seek political influence. It is usually argued that in situations of low level of professionalization, media houses can be instrumentalized as journalists will lack autonomy, guided by political instead of journalistic criteria, and finally serve these particular interests rather than functioning as public trust. However, Hallin and Mancini also underline that media can be instrumentalized by commercial purposes, especially with advertising.

2.6.1.4.   Dimension 4: The role of the state

The role of the state in shaping a media system or state intervention is the last dimension of variation proposed by Hallin and Mancini. The premise here is that states play differing roles in different media systems throughout the world. According to them, such variations in the role of the state in different media systems as owner, regulator and funder of media are "rooted in more general differences in the role of the state in the society" (p. 49). In this regard, scholars have made distinctions of different roles of states, between groups such as liberal democracies and welfare state democracies (Hallin & Mancini, 2004), well-established democracies and emerging democracies (Zielonka, 2015), democratic and non-democratic political systems (Gunther & Mughan, 2000), consensus vs. majoritarian democracies (Lijphart, 1999), and even among liberalism, statism and corporatism (Katzenstein, 1985).

A clear distinction between different agencies can be observed in the legal and regulatory framework such as media laws and policy (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). Little state

involvement in the media system is the characteristic of a liberal state. Unlike America's restricted role of the state in the media, the European tradition is known to depend on more active state intervention. In the European case, media are partly regarded as a social institution where states are responsible not only for its funding (subsidies) but also for its regulation, making sure the media system functions properly. Press subsidies can appear both directly as financial subsidies and indirectly through tax cuts or other rewarding mechanisms. By doing so, the state checks the quality of political pluralism, democratic life, national language and culture. In the European tradition, the state also regulates political communication, for example by banning political advertising on television and limiting the length of the political campaign period which would be against the US First Amendment. In fact, the list goes on to other types of state intervention such as media laws and policies governing access to information, defamation, libel, privacy, hate speech, media ownership and concentration, political communication and broadcast content, among others (Hallin & Mancini, 2004).

Hallin and Mancini (2004) argue that a weak state role can be attributed either to a deliberate policy favoring market forces or a failure of the political system to establish and enforce media policy. Moreover, significant differences are also observed between media systems when it comes to state ownership of media outlets such as agencies, newspapers and other forms of media.

Hallin and Mancini's use of 'role of the state' or 'state intervention' as a dimension of variation has been criticized by scholars. For instance, Hadland (2012) claims that Hallin and Mancini focus mainly on positive forms of state intervention as opposed to coercion which is widely common in young democracies. Even though many countries in Africa have approached democracy by liberalizing mass media, "several governments continue to employ coercive state apparatus to combat differing opinions or criticisms from the media" (Tettey, 2001, p.16). Hallin and Mancini's focus on more positive aspects of state intervention is understandable considering the western context of their study. Nevertheless, coercive forms of intervention such as corporal punishment, debilitating media laws and state intimidation are also prevalent in emergent democratic countries of Africa (Tettey, 2001) and need to be addressed in discussions of state intervention.

2.6.2. The Three Media Models

Hallin and Mancini (2004) aim to determine the relationship between media and politics through analyzing media systems based on the above-mentioned key dimensions. By so doing, they find patterns which identify three models of media and politics namely: the liberal model (North Atlantic), the democratic corporatist model (North European) and the polarized pluralist model (Mediterranean). The following pages will introduce these models of media and politics.

2.6.2.1.   The Polarized Pluralist Model

The polarized pluralist model is presented by five countries in Hallin and Mancini's study – France, Portugal, Italy, Spain, and Greece. They all belong to Southern Europe, and are characterized by "integration of media into party politics" (Hallin & Mancini, 2004, p.11). This region differs from Northern Europe and North America in its late development of liberal institutions such as capitalist industrialism and political democracy.

Because of the historical existence of landholding aristocracy and an absolutist state, the political spectrum in these countries remained wider and differences were sharper. As a result, strong party presses were inherent in the early 20th century as they were considered as a "means of ideological expression and political mobilization" (Hallin & Mancini, 2004, p.90). Unlike countries in Northern Europe and North America, commercial media never fully developed in this region until the 1970s and 80s because economic and political conditions for the media market were non-existent. Thus, newspapers in Southern Europe have a weak commercial foundation which often leads them to be dependent on "the state, political parties, the church, wealthy private patrons", jeopardizing their professionalization and development as autonomous institutions (Hallin & Mancini, 2004, p.90). For instance, a strong party press and media linked to the church were inherent in Spain, Italy and France. This model is characterized by a small but elite-oriented press which mostly targets the erudite, theologians, university professors, and the scientific community. Moreover, gender differences are visible between male and female readers in this model. Historically, this is mainly a result of media's closeness

with politics (females participated less in political activities in these countries) and high rate of female illiteracy which was for example 70% in Spain in 1887 (Ortiz, 1995) and 60% in Italy in 1870 (Vincent, 2000).

Freedom of the press and the development of commercial media industries in this model generally came late. Due to the historically divided political spectrum in Southern Europe, media were strongly politicized. Commentary-oriented or advocacy journalism was inherent in Greece, Italy and France as a result of existing high political parallelism. It was common for Italian newspapers to take an activist role, "mobilizing their readers to support political causes and participate in political events" (Hallin & Mancini, 2004, p.103). While newspapers in Greece were tied with either the state or parties as political instruments, a mix of both ideological and apolitical papers existed in France.

Journalism in Southern Europe has its origins from literature and politics (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). As a result, newspapers in the region valued writers, politicians and intellectuals rather than journalists. For instance, journalism and the military have been used as means to joining a career in politics in Spain. Even though there were journalists and trade unions in these countries, they were often affiliated with politics (e.g. Spain and France). However, relatively stronger journalist unions that undercut political lines existed in Greece, Italy and Portugal. All in all, formal journalism education developed late in Southern Europe compared to North European countries.

Just as in other social life, the role of the state in the media system was larger in the Mediterranean countries (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). The state in these countries has played a mix of roles ranging from a mainly authoritarian tradition of intervention to a democratic tradition of welfare state in some manner. Speaking of its authoritarian history, French law, for instance, used to give the state the right to seize publications from the 1950s up to the early 1970s. In Greece, similarly, journalists are persecuted for defamation against public officials, or offenses against religion.

The state also owns massive shares of media (including commercial media) in South European countries (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). Even though the strength of the welfare tradition in the media is not as strong as in democratic corporatist countries, due to lack of resources, lack

of political consensus and clientelist relationships, state subsidies exist in different forms in Southern Europe too. Both direct and indirect subsidies (tax break and reduced utility rates) were given to economically marginal newspapers in Italy and France. In addition to this, subsidy to individual journalists is common in France (e.g. 30% tax reduction; free admission to national museums) and in Italy (e.g. cheap train tickets; better pension and health benefits). Subsidies are somewhat weak in other Southern European countries and appear in the form of reduced postage transportation rates and subsidies for training and technological modernization in Portugal, government advertising in Spain, and soft loans in Greece (Hallin & Mancini, 2004).

2.6.2.2. The Democratic Corporatist Model

This model is characterized by a historical coexistence of partisan media with strongly developed mass circulation of the press and a high degree of professionalism. This model represents North European states such as Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Austria, Switzerland, Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands. Countries in this model have a history of strong party newspapers and media connected to organized social groups such as churches and trade unions (high political parallelism), and yet this has coexisted with high professionalization of journalists with "high degree of consensus on professional standards of conduct, a notion of commitment to a common public interest, and a high level of autonomy from other social powers" (Hallin & Mancini, 2004, p.145).

Even though there are individual differences among countries in the democratic corporatist media model, the development of print media was linked to a growing literate middle class which by itself was reinforced by the ambitions of protestant reformation that every person should "learn to read and see with their own eyes what God bids and commands in his Holy Word" (Johansson, 1981, pp.156-157). Later, mass literacy accelerated in Northern Europe as a result of industrialization and growth of market institutions.

Countries of this model are also known by active state involvement in the media sector and yet coexisting with strong protection of press freedom (Strömbäck, Ørsten & Aalberg, 2008). These are also countries that gained early development of press freedom and had

freedom of speech and publication constitutionalized early (e.g. Sweden in 1776; Norway in 1814; Netherlands in 1815; Germany in 1874) (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). In this media system, mass media are seen by the state as social institutions which the state has responsibility for. Thus, most of the countries in this model except Denmark, Germany and Switzerland have direct press subsidies, while indirect subsidies are common in all of them.

2.6.2.3.   The Liberal Model

Hallin and Mancini grouped media in the United States, Ireland, Canada and Britain within the liberal media model which is generally characterized by an early development of press freedom, relatively high circulation of the press, limited role of the state, high journalistic professionalism, dominant commercial press and low political parallelism (Hallin & Mancini, 2004).
Commercial media developed early in this region partly because the commercial bourgeoisie depended on the use of media for information about "trade, navigation, technology, and politics", which played a central role for the development of the first newspapers (Hallin & Mancini, 2004, p.90). Countries in this region are known with lower involvement of the state in the media. The role of the market and private institutions is larger and has contributed to the development of commercial media industries.

An informational style of journalism with its neutrality stance in politics has been prevalent in all the countries except in the British press which is still characterized by external pluralism as the press fairly "mirror divisions of party politics" (Hallin & Mancini, 2004, p. 208). Journalistic professionalism is relatively higher among the liberal countries as journalism developed into a "distinct occupational community and social activity and standards of its own, rooted in an ideology of public service, and with significant autonomy" (p.217). In North America professionalism has been viewed in relation with the notion of objectivity.

Formal professional organizations have been lesser in this model than in the democratic corporatist model (e.g. Ireland has no news council or press complaints council; nor does USA[1]). Some variations can in fact be seen among the four countries grouped under this model, as parts

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[1] Except the Minnesota Press Council, established in the 1970s

of the media industry in Britain, Ireland and Canada have common features with some other European countries.

2.7. Extending Hallin and Mancini's Framework to New Democracies

Media's relation with politics is among the expanding areas of inquiry in comparative media and communications research. This study, however, is widely dominated by experiences of established democracies (Hallin & Mancini, 2004; Gunther & Mughan, 2000; Esser & Pfetsch, 2004; Kelly, Mazzoleni & McQuail, 2004). Only little analytical and systematic approach has been devised to understand the relationship between media and politics in new democracies, despite the common view that media in new democracies manifest several distinct characteristics when compared with those in established western democracies (Voltmer, 2008). As many of these new democracies come transitioning either from communist oligarchy, military dictatorship or one party dictatorships, each of them manifest its own system of media development. For instance, because media were considered as a "key instrument for the political mobilization and re-education of masses" in communist systems (Voltmer, 2008, p.29), they faced unprecedented challenges as they delve into commercialization and withdrawal of communist governments' subsidies. The media came from a situation where they were ideologically oriented and had highly politicized content (Voltmer, 2008).

In East Asia and Africa, media were tied to goals of overcoming poverty and underdevelopment. These authoritarian developmental states used strong state bureaucracy and closer ties with the industry to push for development (Voltmer, 2012). In East Asia in particular, the media were part of the state-center industrialization project and were under strict control of governments. The usual journalistic professionalism is not found in this region as journalism is garnered by Asian values deeply embedded in Confucian values like social harmony, deference to authority, and discipline (Voltmer, 2008).

The issue of media in one party dictatorships in Africa is even more complex (Voltmer, 2008). It has been argued that the media play a marginal role in the power structure of African dictatorships because of their limited reach and elitist content and thus could not become a

driving force towards democracy (Domatob, 1991, cited in Kasoma, 1995). However, scholars like Imanyara (1994 cited in Kasoma, 1995) and Louw and Tomaselli (1994) challenge the above idea by citing decisive roles played by independent media towards African democratization and facilitating social dialogue. According to them, even though the African press has been small in size and limited in reach, it addressed the most politically active and influential people who played a decisive role in shaping their country's political destiny.

In general, the media in new democracies of Africa are faced with multifaceted challenges resulting from weak infrastructure, a fragile institutional setting, corruption, legacy of colonialism and underdevelopment (Voltmer, 2008), and with low standards in the media themselves too (Kasoma, 1995; 1997). Kasoma (1997, p.297) has argued that while African governments have continued to suppress the independent press through mechanisms of economic strangulation and draconian government regulations, "the independent press in Africa has in many cases invited the wrath of governments by practicing irresponsible journalism", such as the use of newspapers as political opposition, bad advocacy journalism and overuse of anonymous sources.

The experience of scholars who have used Hallin and Mancini's media systems models to fit the media in their respective countries outside of the western hemisphere has indicated several limitations of the framework. To begin with, the scope of their dimensions as 'high or low' or 'strong or weak' is imprecise, and in some cases media systems in new democracies might go beyond what is included in the category (Voltmer, 2012). For instance, media markets in developing countries might go far below the low range ascribed to the polarized pluralist model. The problem becomes even bigger when we consider high level of illiteracy, underdeveloped consumer markets, inadequate technology, and high inequality or divide between segments of the population. Some media systems are characterized by extreme inequality which is reflected in their media markets that some parts of the population are excluded from public communication while the rest, usually the urban population, are no different from the industrialized west. To this regard, Voltmer (2012) argues that when classifying a media system, one has to consider not only the average degree of development but also the variance with in the system as a defining element of models.

Moreover, the kind or specific nature of the dimension has its own effect on the boundary and meaning of the resulting models (Voltmer, 2012). For example, the present conceptualization of the dimension of 'state intervention' includes both its nature and degree. To this end, there is a big difference in 'high degree of state intervention' between a situation where it is used to ensure quality programing and a situation where the aim is increased government control over the media. In the same way, there are differences in the elements of political parallelism since the usual ideological distinctions of 'left or right' or 'liberal or conservative' make little or no sense in new democracies. Thus, the concept of political parallelism falls short of explaining the nature of political conflicts in new democracies (Voltmer, 2008; 2012). Other divisions or group interests such as ethnicity, religion, language, race, class, immigration, culture, regional affinities or clientism shape political contest (Voltmer, 2008; 2012; Hadland, 2012; Balˇcytienˉe, 2012). Moreover, as de Albuquerque (2012) suggests, a competitive political system and institutionalized relationship between the media and political agents are essential for any discussion of political parallelism.

Even though Hallin and Mancini's media models started with heavy criticism of normative media models, their models also tend to be normative when they are taken to other media systems. While it is true that the models indicate "conceptual devices designed to describe the relationship between media and politics" in the western media context (de Albuquerque, 2012, p.74), a subtly different definition of a 'model' appears when Hallin and Mancini (2004, p.6) write that "the media models that prevail in Western Europe and North America tend to be the dominant models globally". At this level, the term 'model' has a normative meaning rather than a descriptive and analytical one (de Albuquerque, 2012, p.75). Furthermore, as Hadland (2012, p.96) notes, trying to apply Hallin and Mancini's media models to new democracies is both a "daunting and ambitious task". Hadland argues that "South Africa is a poor fit for any of the three models, a square peg faced by three round holes" as the media and political systems in the country are diverse (p. 111). In addition to the imprecise nature of the scopes in the dimensions of variation, it has been claimed that Hallin and Mancini's framework has overlooked several system differentiating factors such as country size, history, market size, media concentration, ethnic/linguistic structures, situation in small states, and the

legal tradition which all could have potential impact in shaping the media system (McQuail, 2005; Humphreys, 2010; Pupis, d'Haenens, Steinmaurer & Kunzler, 2009, cited in Hardy 2012; Voltmer, 2012; de Albuquerque, 2012; Hardy, 2012). Moreover, the framework is also criticized for its problem in operationalizing the components of the proposed dimensions (Norris, 2009, p.333). Because of its descriptive nature, it mainly provides a "general overview [rather] than attempting to operationalize each of the four dimensions with empirical indicators". Thus, some of their dimensions of variation are hard to measure. For instance, "it remains unclear how we operationalize 'political parallelism' in terms of how far partisanship of the mass media reflects the party system" as it requires systematic analysis of data that could classify the partisan basis in the media (Norris, 2009, p.333).

Voltmer (2012) concludes that the trajectories of the past alongside the (re-) interpretations of institutions make unlikely for the media outside of the western world to fit to the western media models. Thus, classifying media systems of non-western or new democracies into one of the three models leads to "conceptual overstretching" and "disguises the broad variations of constellations" (Voltmer, 2012, p.244). Therefore, "new and hybrid forms of political communications are emerging that blend liberal ideals of a free press with the trajectories of the past, indigenous values and the constraints and experiences of the tradition" (Voltmer, 2008, p. 23). Thus, Hallin and Mancini's models only lay a framework for analyzing media systems in other cultures and can trigger researchers to expand and refine the analytical categories (Voltmer, 2012).

Chapter Three: Methodology

3.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the chosen methodology of the research. Mainly, it contains information about research philosophy, data collection tools, fieldwork experience, data analysis techniques, and ethical considerations in the research. As Dawson (2007) writes, the research methodology indicates the overall chosen approach to a topic and describes issues like potential constraints, dilemmas and ethical choices in the research. This study attempts to examine the Ethiopian media system by scrutinizing the historical development of the relationship between media and politics in the country by using Hallin and Mancini's framework as a starting point (cf. 2.6). Thus, it asks how globally renowned media systems models are fit to explain the relationships between media and politics in Ethiopia. In line with the rationale of Hallin and Mancini, the Ethiopian media situation is examined using four dimensions: media market, professionalization, political parallelism and the role of the state in the media system. The study also goes a step further by identifying unique features which should be considered in defining a functioning media systems model for Ethiopia.

3.2. Qualitative Research

Debates between the two dominant traditions of qualitative and quantitative research are well established. On a general level, qualitative and quantitative approaches have philosophical roots in the naturalistic and positivist philosophies respectively (Newman & Benz, 1998; Jensen & Jankowski, 1991; Wimmer & Dominick, 2011; Gunter, 2000). While qualitative research reflects individual phenomenological perspectives (existence of multiple realities and multiple explanations), quantitative studies emphasize a common reality that people agree on (Newman & Benz, 1998).

This research examines the Ethiopian media situation using the frameworks of media systems models. Moreover, it probes how these media models are fit to explaining media and

politics relations in Ethiopia. To this end, the study follows a qualitative research tradition through data collected using different techniques such as in-depth interview and document analysis.

Even though qualitative research can be heterogeneous in its conception, Jensen (2002) identifies three of its distinctive features. First, qualitative research deals with the concept of meaning making, which points to the importance of studying how people and societies give meaning to different social phenomena (cf. Stokes, 2003; Wimmer & Dominick, 2011). The second aspect of qualitative research holds that "meaningful actions should be studied, as far as possible, in their *naturalistic contexts"* (Jensen, 2002, p. 236), or, in the words of Wimmer and Dominick (2011, p.48), "to view behavior in a natural setting". Jensen's third common element relates to the interpretive role of the researcher. This master's thesis is conducted using a qualitative research tradition because it allows the researcher not only to drive meaning from different analyzed documents and in-depth interviews, but also helps to understand phenomena in its natural setting. As part of studying naturalistic contexts, I decided to interview experienced journalists who work both in state and private media. This enhances the effort to learning the full context of the subject under scrutiny and aims to increase the researcher's depth of understanding of the phenomena that are being studied.

3.3. Fieldwork in a 'State of Emergency'

The data for this study were gathered in a month's time between 18th December 2016 and 22nd January 2017 in Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian capital. The fieldwork in Addis Ababa was done with frequent incidents of fear and insecurity because of the nationally-declared state of emergency in Ethiopia since October 9, 2016[2]. In the year 2015/2016, Ethiopia experienced crackdowns with frequent protests which resulted in the killing of hundreds of people according to human rights groups (Human Rights Watch, 2016). Following that, a new *Command Post* was established by the Ethiopian government to control the security of the country. Granted with nearly unlimited

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[2] The nationally declared state of emergency was extended by an additional four months in March 2017.
http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/03/ethiopia-extends-state-emergency-months-170330110807086.html

rights, the *Command Post* can do arbitrary arrests and sudden security check-ups at the time of choosing. The situation has become further tense as the *Command Post* has criminalized persons who write, share and distribute information about the protest in any media, including social media platforms, which many concerned Ethiopians do.

I initially planned to take photographs of my fieldwork experience, in addition to, interviewing respondents. However, I learned this was not an easy task when I was questioned by a far standing federal police officer during my attempt to take photographs of the building of Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC).

Having lived and studied in Addis Ababa, I knew the location of most of the newsrooms I visited during the fieldwork in advance. This helped me to interview a total of 11 informants in a short period of time. In my previous experience as a student of Addis Ababa University, many Ethiopian journalists lack willingness to participate in interviews with student researchers (especially if the research entails long survey questionnaires). This is probably not surprising given the nature of their work with busy schedules and tight deadlines. However, I experienced a somewhat different scenario this time. Most of the people I approached for an interview were cooperative. I believe this is something appreciable.

It is clear that the recent state of emergency has resulted in felt increased insecurity for many Ethiopians. However, the state of emergency did not seem to have influenced the confidence of journalists to agree to be interviewed. This could be because many of them were experienced journalists and media managers who serve as opinion leaders in the media sector in Ethiopia. Yet, I asked for informed consent of the interviewees and explained the purpose of the interview before the session began and of course before I started to record the interview with my phone. Almost all the interviewees agreed to be attributed with their names in the research, except one EBC journalist who asked me to use his data anonymously.

3.4. Data Collection Tools

The data for the study were collected through in-depth interviews and document analysis.

3.4.1.   In-depth Interviews

Interviews are one of the most widely used methods of data collection in media and communication research (Jensen, 2002). Of different types of interviews, the in-depth style is particularly helpful in gaining deep understanding through asking broader and open-ended questions which will be answered in the respondents' own words (Jensen & Jankowski, 1991; Wimmer & Dominick, 2011; Gunter, 2000).

Undertaking in-depth interviews is a preferred approach to grasp the context of the analyzed documents and to get a fresh look of the Ethiopian media landscape. To this end, I interviewed a total of 11 key informants, composed of journalists with good experience in Ethiopian journalism as well as a government official in the media sector and a politician/government minister. The informants include Tamrat G.Giorgis, Managing Editor of the *Fortune* newspaper; Woldu Yimesil, CEO of Fana Broadcasting Corporate (FBC); Melaku Demise, Managing Editor of *The Reporter* Newspaper (Amharic version); Tiguest Yilma, Managing Editor of the *Capital* newspaper and Chair of the Ethiopian Media Council; Negusu Wodajnew, Editor-in-chief of the *Addis Zemen* newspaper; Groum Abate, Editor-in-chief of the *Capital* newspaper; an anonymous veteran journalist at the Ethiopian Broadcast Corporation (EBC); Wondwossen Mekonen, Freelance journalist and leader of Ethiopian Free Press Journalists Association (EFJA*)*; Bekele Muleta, Director of the *Ethiopian News Agency* (ENA); Dr. Negeri Lencho, Communication Minister at the Ethiopian   Office for Government Communication Affairs (OGCA); and Dheresa Terefe, media development director at the Ethiopian Broadcasting Authority (EBA).

Participants for in-depth interviews were chosen using purposive sampling. I purposively chose to interview experienced journalists because they can better provide information that is historically rich in addition to explaining the current situation. This approach is useful to the study because it helps to bring a longitudinal perspective to inform both the current situation and the historical development of the media. I took notes while doing all of the interviews. The notes were transcribed in different thematic areas and analyzed by grouping along the four major dimensions of Hallin and Mancini (2004).

Basically, I asked journalists to reflect their views towards different questions revolving around the development of the media market, professionalism, political parallelism, and the role of the state or state intervention. For the most part I asked them open-ended questions. The answer they provided have been analyzed in the study together with different documentary data, for example on circulation figures. I also asked them follow-up questions for details.

This method of data collection proved useful because it helped me gain an insider's look into different matters of the Ethiopian media landscape. Even though I also initially planned to interview the former media policy-maker Shimelis Kemal, it was not possible because the person no longer works for the office where he served for many years and it was impossible to locate his current status.

3.4.2.   Document Analysis

Document analysis is a key method of data collection in empirical studies. Bowen (2009, p.27) defines document analysis as "a systematic procedure of reviewing or evaluating documents – both printed and electronic (computer based and internet –transmitted) material". Undertaking a document analysis thus requires examination and interpretation of data "to elicit meaning, gain understanding and develop empirical knowledge" (Bowen, 2009, p. 27).

The importance of documentary sources has been relatively overlooked in most qualitative work in the social sciences (Prior, 2003; Jensen, 2002; McCulloch, 2004). Even though documents such as feature films, government reports, policy documents, regulations, executive memos, pictures, emblems, electronic documents etc. are potentially valuable, they are often neglected or regarded as secondary, marginal and subsidiary evidences (Jensen, 2002; McCulloch, 2004). However, scholars affirm that documentary sources are equally important sources of data for research (Jensen, 2002; Prior, 2003; Denscombe, 2007; Iorio, 2004; Stokes, 2003; McCulloch, 2004). In fact, documents of any sort are helpful to researchers to "uncover meaning, develop understanding, and discover insights relevant to the research problem" (Merriam, 1988, cited in Bowen, 2009, p.29).

To get the best out of these sources, scholars like McCulloch (2004) argue that the use of documentary material should be treated with care as it needs the ability to get between the lines and requires advance planning. This entails following basic analytical procedures of document analysis such as finding the documents, making sense of them and synthesizing data into contexts (Bowen, 2009).

To this end, document analysis has been done in this thesis to gain insight on the nature of the legal framework of the Ethiopian media such as laws, regulations, national media policies and other issues. For instance, I analyzed important documentary sources such as media laws and proclamations to inform the study from a legal perspective and get a full picture of laws. Particularly, I reviewed documents such as *the 1992 Press Law*; *the 2008 Proclamation to Provide for Freedom of Mass Media and Access to Information* (dubbed 'the media law'); national media policy documents-entitled *Basis and Directives for a Developmental and Democratic Philosophy of Our Media Operation* (EPA, 2008) and *the 2015 Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia's Developmental and Democratic Mass Media Policy*. Moreover, I have also consulted proclamations such as the 2009 Anti-Terrorism Proclamation and the 2012 Telecom Fraud Offense Proclamation by specifically focusing on parts which deal with media and journalists. Similarly addressed in this way are the constitutions of three regimes of Ethiopia with the focus of describing the content of these documents.

Access to data on different aspects of Ethiopian media such as revenues, advertising shares and others was one of the biggest challenges I faced in this work. To alleviate this problem, I used internal memos and letters accessed from EBA to generate data about circulation of newspapers and the number of newspaper titles in Ethiopia. However, even these kinds of data are sporadic and are only found for a limited period of time. Additionally, I also took data from previously conducted studies, monographs and the recent *Worlds of Journalism Study* survey about different issues of Ethiopian journalists.

3.5. Data Analysis

As Marczyk, DeMatteo and Festinger (2005) write, data analysis in most types of research involves preparing data for analysis, analyzing data and interpreting the data. As mentioned above, this study examines the Ethiopian media system based on globally renowned media systems models. Thus, data from interview respondents and document analyses were scrutinized based on the four categorical dimensions of media market, professionalization, political parallelism and state intervention. To do so, gathered data were prepared, analyzed and interpreted while at the same time drawing similarities and differences in the data set.

3.6. Terminology

The Broadcasting Proclamation (2007) formally classifies three types of Ethiopian media: public media, commercial media and community media. Informally, however, a number of terms are used in the discussion of the Ethiopian media, such as 'state media' vs. 'government media'; 'private media' vs. 'commercial media'; and also 'independent media'. However, I decided to mostly use the term 'state media' over 'government media' because, as Skjerdal (2012a), writes, the former is a common term in global research literature. This is also a common term that the theoretical framework of the study uses. Similarly, I chose to use 'private media' over 'commercial' or 'independent media' to emphasize on ownership rather than financial or independence issues. I also share Skjerdal's (2012a, p.96) keen observation of the Ethiopian government's recent nomenclature of state media as 'public service media', which could be problematic in global media theory as the Ethiopian case does not fully correspond with the values of public service traditions.

3.7. Ethical considerations

Because personal data of interviewees are stored on a computer, necessary notification to NSD (Norwegian Center for Research Data) was done before the start of the actual data collection process. Therefore, the study was conducted after a full permit was granted by NSD. Moreover, all the data obtained from respondents were recorded after asking for their consent. I assured confidentiality of the data obtained from the interviewees which I am responsible to keep.

Chapter Four: A Brief History of Politics and Mass Media in the Ethiopian Society

4.1. Introduction

It seems imperative to provide a brief history of politics and mass media in the Ethiopian society before examining Ethiopia's current media system based on the framework of global media system models. This will be followed by a chapter that examines the Ethiopian media system using the said framework.

4.2. Overview of the Ethiopian Political System

The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, 1,104,300 km2, is located on the Horn of Africa (CIA Factbook, 2007). In the year 2015, Ethiopia's population was estimated to reach 99.4 million (World Bank Data, 2015). The nation of Ethiopia can be seen as a 'mosaic of peoples' with more than 84 different ethnic groups having their distinct cultures (Alem, 2003). Major Ethiopian ethnic groups include Oromo (34.4%), Amhara (27.0%), Somali (6.2%), Tigray 6.1%, while others make up 26.3% of the population (CIA Factbook, 2007). Ethiopia became a landlocked country bordered with six countries following its separation from Eritrea in 1991. With its reported fast growing but poor economy, the country is "a major player in the Horn of Africa" (Abbink, 2006, p. 179).

An extensive body of research recognizes the central role of warfare in the process of state and nation formation (Clapham, 2001). It is believed that Ethiopia got its current shape through processes of nation building projects by Ethiopian kings aiming to create a unified and single Ethiopia since the mid-1800s (Stremlau, 2004; Vaughan, 2011). However, this history of Ethiopian state formation is a heatedly debated subject at home (Alem, 2003). Some have claimed that the formation of Ethiopia as a nation-state passed through stages of "assimilation

of others to Amhara cultures[3]" (Stremlau, 2004). This idea is mostly entertained by ethnonationalist groups that claim that "*Abyssinia* (today's central and northern Ethiopia, the historic Ethiopian polity) colonized roughly half of the territories and peoples to form a colonial empire-state in the last quarter of the 19th century" (Alem, 2003, p.9). For this group, Ethiopia is historically formed through conquest and incorporation of adjoining kingdoms, principalities, and sultanates. Yet, "a more sensible image of Ethiopia would be as a historically evolved (non-colonial) empire state" (p.9).

Even though attempts to reform, modernize and centralize the Ethiopian polity can be traced back to the times of Emperor Tewodros I, Yohannes IV, Menilik II or even further (Vaughan, 2011), a more consolidated work of homogenization through state centralization and one language policy was done by emperor Menilik II, who annexed the South regions to the '*Abyssinian empire*' (1889-1913) (Alem, 2003; Stremlau, 2014). This was further consolidated by Emperor Haile Selassie, who not only annexed Eritrea to the collective Ethiopian national identity (Stremlau, 2014), but also elaborated the idea of a unitary state through cultural assimilation (Alem, 2003). These frustrations resulting from cultural and structural inequalities gave rise to the 1974 revolution that overthrew one of the oldest monarchies in the world (Alem, 2003). The military or *Derg* government (1974-1991) attempted to retain the unitary state but re-structured the nation with several socialist state engineering measures under commission to establish the *Party of the Workers of Ethiopia* (COPWE) (Vaughan, 2011). Since 1991, Ethiopia has been ruled by a TPLF-led EPRDF coalition government, which came to power after defeating the communist *Derg* in a nearly two decades long fierce struggle (Stremlau, 2014).

4.2.1. The Current Party System

The political landscape of Africa dramatically changed in the early 1990s as the wave of democratization (aka. *Third Wave of Democratization*) removed the old one-party authoritarian regimes and replaced them with more competitive and multi-party systems (Huntington, 1991; De Walle & Butler, 1999). However, the development and nature of party systems in Africa has

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[3] The Amhara people of Ethiopia were the source of many former Ethiopian kings.

been quite different from theories and experiences of established democracies (Manning, 2005). For instance, "instead of cross-cutting cleavages and flexible pluralism, there is political polarization and a certain fixity of cleavage lines" (p.708). Furthermore, pluralism is limited in these party systems because of the challenges of state building, predominance of state involvement, very limited private sector, and limited opportunities of emergence of alternative power centers outside the state etc.

It is argued that the role of other groups such as civil society, labor unions and church is paramount in shaping the functioning of democracy (De Walle & Butler, 1999). Nevertheless, the impact of these groups in Africa's democratization process is low. Because of the absence of formal links between parties and organized groups, no labor or party affiliated with some form of group emerged out of these movements in Africa. In general, African party systems are characterized by weak organizations, low level of institutionalization and weak links with the society and are faced with multitudes of other challenges. They are profoundly affected by institutional legacies of previous regimes with strong single parties. Besides, political parties are distinguished more by cultural and ethno-regional identities than by clear policy stances thereby contributing to low legitimacy of parties and high level of ethno-regional polarization among party systems.

Even though many countries join the competitive multiparty politics camp, only few cases are mentioned to be following paths to democracy. Quite a number of them sustained a single party or one party era (Manning, 2005). De Walle & Butler (1999) call these countries 'pseudo-democracies' as they are marked by a controlled move to multi-party politics and manipulation of electoral politics for personal gains.

The Ethiopian political system seems to fit to De Walle and Butler (1999) and Manning's (2005) characterization of African party systems. Even though post -1991 Ethiopia saw significant political institutional building and emergence of a public ethos of democracy, it has a "high ingredient of rhetoric not backed by practice" (Abbink, 2006, p. 174). The country undertook a major political change to ethnic federalism in 1991 with the fall of the communist government. Unlike the previous regimes of Ethiopia, the incumbent government favors 'ethnic identity' as a basis of politics. Ideologically, the new system is informed by a neo-leninist political

model called *revolutionary democracy* (Abbink, 2011; Stremlau, 2014; Vaughan, 2011). The ideals of revolutionary democracy revolve around its emphasis on key role of the central party to set policies and agendas (Stremlau, 2014; Vaughan, 2011). It favors group rights and consensus over individual; and also prefers a "populist discourse" to gaining direct connection between leadership and the mass while reducing negotiations with other elite (Stremlau, 2014, p.244).

Three types of political parties can be identified in Ethiopia. These are: parties belonging to the EPRDF coalition[4], EPRDF affiliated parties[5], and opposition parties. These political parties enjoy varying levels of freedom in the country. Pausewang et al., (2002, p.13) took George Orwell's popular expression, 'all animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others' to describe this unequal treatment of political parties in Ethiopia. The state of opposition parties is weak and deeply divided. A total of 47 political parties participated in the 2015 election in a surprising situation where the ruling EPRDF (together with affiliate parties) won 100% of all the 546 parliamentary seats (NEBE, 2017). Studies indicate that opposition political parties in Ethiopia face increasing suppression such as restriction of political space, intimidation of members and supporters and routine surveillance by government (Dessalew, 2014).

4.3. The Nature of Mass Communications in the Traditional Ethiopian Society

Ethiopia has a millennium old writing tradition using the Geez alphabet, which today has limited use in the country (Getachew, 2003). Books which were written in the Ethiopian language of Geez imported from Europe had also been in use in the classical Ethiopia since the 16th century (Meseret, 2013; Getachew, 2003).

The country, however, has a scant tradition in freedom of expression and public debates which are key concepts in mass communications (Getachew, 2003; Levine, 2008). In describing the situation, Getachew (2003) states:

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[4] Tigrayan Peoples Liberation Front (TPLF); Amahara National Democratic Movement (ANDM); Oromo People's Democratic Organization (OPDO); and Southern Ethiopia Peoples' Democratic Movement (SEPDM).
[5] These include The Somali people's Democratic Party (SPDP); The Bensishangul Gumuz Peoples Democratic party (BGPDP); The Afar National Democratic Party (ANDP); The Gambela People's Unity Democratic Movement (GPUDM); The Harari National League (HNL); and The Argoba People Democratic Organization (APDO).

Freedom of expression in the sense of any person being free to say whatever he or she wishes to about any subject is not part of the tradition of Ethiopia. Debate and discourse have similarly been nonexistent...What we know today as democracy and equality between citizens is nonexistent in traditional Ethiopia (Getachew, 2003, p. 561).

Basically, Getachew's view indicates the absence of values of freedom of expression and public debate in the traditional Ethiopian culture. In explaining the reasons, Levine (2008) states that an active public were not possible in Ethiopia due to old habits of deference to authority and the resulting huge gaps between lower publics and the kings.

Mass communication is understood as a universal phenomenon, where different societies have their own system even though with varying forms and levels (Meseret, 2013). Despite the absence of active public and modern mass communication mechanisms (Getachew, 2003, p. 562), some forms of public expression of opinions exist in traditional Ethiopia. These include: the *Azmari* (the wandering band that expresses collective grievances through music); the *Alkash* (a paid mourner who provokes weep among mourners and sometimes sends critical verses aimed at public bodies); the *Iregna* (the shepherd, with their unlimited freedom of expression are taken as a 'barometer' for measuring public perceptions); the *Bahitawi* (religious fathers who are free to speak their mind for their holiness); and *Abetuta* (collective method of speaking to leaders through chosen elders). Through using *Abetuta* elders in groups express any opinion they have on leaders, which they do not normally do individually.

Apart from the above listed forms of public expression in the traditionally restrictive Ethiopian society, indigenous forms of mass communication systems can still be identified. For instance, *Dagu* communication is one type of a traditional system of mass communication in the Afar region in the North-Eastern part of Ethiopia. *Dagu* communication works as travelers in the area meet on road, and pause for a *Dagu* (news), which is a system of news exchange among people (Gulilat & Skjerdal, 2008). Through *Dagu*, people get access to any issue of public interest such as weddings, funerals, news, battles, missing cattle, safety of the road etc. It has some unwritten but defined regulation which entails a system of punishment called *Mada'a* for potential misuse (Gulilat & Skjerdal, 2008; Meseret, 2013). Technically speaking, *Dagu* could not

fulfill some basic characteristics of modern mass communication such as large audiences, but any message in a *Dagu* system is believed to reach 300-700 kms within 2-3 days' time (Gulilat, 2006; Gulilat & Skjerdal, 2008; Meseret, 2013).

Awaj Negari (Offcial Herald) was one of the other earliest forms of mass communication by the state during Emperor Menilik II and served until the early times of Emperor Haile Selassie (Getachew, 2003). This system had been widely used by Ethiopian emperors to send public messages to their people. It occurred as a team of messengers from the royal court were carrying *Negarit* (something like a drum), beating the Negarit while one of the members steps out of the tower and cries '*Awaj, Awaj, Awaj'* (translated as '*hear ye, hear ye, hear ye'*), and people gather to get the information. A similar means of traditional mass communication is *Iya Gafo*, which has been used by the Oromo people of Ethiopia (Meseret, 2013, p. 4; Getachew, 2003). While some of these forms of mass communication are recognized in academic literature as forms of journalism, others are not. Some of these forms of mass communication can be related with what Skjerdal (2012b, p. 640) calls "journalism based on oral discourse".

4.4. A Short History of Mass Media in Ethiopia

4.4.1. Media from Emperor Menilik II to Emperor Haile Selassie I

As indicated above, Ethiopia has an old writing system (Meseret, 2013; Getachew, 2003). Nevertheless, modern mass media by way of "industrialized production and multiple distributions of messages" (Turow, 2009, p. 17) failed to materialize in the country until the 19th century. Newspapers first came to Ethiopia only around 1900 (Skjerdal, 2012a; Shimelis, 2000; Meseret, 2013; Aadland & Fackler, 1999; Røe & Aadland, 1999; Getachew, 2003). This was at a time when the vast majority of the population was illiterate, except for members of the clergy and the royalty. The exact name of the first Ethiopian newspaper is not definitively known (Skjerdal, 2012a; Shimelis, 2000). Yet, the beginning of modern journalism in Ethiopia is attributed to Emperor Menilik II who was known for his "great fascination with western civilization" (Meseret, 2013, p.10). As part of his modernization attempt, the Emperor

introduced modern schools, hospitals, postal services, telecommunications, banks, railway, electricity, etc. (Meseret, 2013). Newspapers appeared for the first time in the country during this period. Even though the question of the first Ethiopian newspaper is unsettled, documents indicate the existence of the following publications during the time. These are: 1) A health issue periodical named *Le Semaine d'Ethiopie*, which is believed to have been established in 1884, 1888, 1890 or 1896, or possibly by the name *Le Semeur d'Ethiopie* by a Franciscan missionary (Skjerdal, 2012a; cf. Shimelis, 2000); 2) a government affiliated newspaper named *Aemro* ('intelligence'), which was deemed to start in 1901 or possibly 1895, 1900 or 1902 (Skjerdal, 2012a); 3) satirical poems of Blatta Gebre Egziabheir Gila Mariam which were estimated to have been published before 1900 (Skjerdal, 2012a; Meseret, 2013; Shimelis, 2000); 4) and handwritten exaltation sheets of Desta Mititke who was Menilik II's penman by the title *Ye Beir Dimts* ('The Voice of Pen') that circulated around 1896 (Meseret, 2013).

Of the four newspapers, some writers recognize *Aemro* as the first Ethiopian newspaper (Meseret, 2013; Shimelis, 2000). For instance, Meseret (2013) gives more credit to *Aemro* as the first Ethiopian newspaper because he claims that other publications such as *Blatta* Gebre Egziabheir's satirical poems and Desta Mititke's *Ye Beir Dimts* lack the qualifications of 20th century newspapers due to their archaic method of duplication and segmented audience's choice that only targeted the nobility. Similarly, Shimelis (2000) regards *Aemro* as the first Ethiopian periodical since the other two had problems related to ownership and suffer from lack of conclusive evidence. According to Skjerdal (2012a, p. 10), whichever of them are taken as Ethiopia's first newspaper, "each of them emphasizes features which have characterized Ethiopian journalism from various degrees ever since". Thus, Ethiopian journalism is marked by international influence as evidenced in *Le Semaine d'Ethiopie*, government allegiance (e.g. *Aemro*), and political criticism (*Blatta* Gebre Egziabheir's papers).

Ethiopia's classical newspapers can be seen into two ways: foreign-owned and local (royal) ownership (Meseret, 2013). While foreign-owned newspapers were published by missionaries and colonialists, royal newspapers were indigenous publications published in the political center (Addis Ababa) rather than in peripheries such as Eritrea. Stark distinctions can also be seen between the two types of publications. Both colonial and missionary newspapers

were written with embedded missions of 'civilizing' and 'proselytizing' the Ethiopian public (Meseret, 2013, p.16). However, royal newspapers were mainly written for praising the emperor and helping to maintain the status quo. Another difference between foreign and indigenous royal newspapers was in their aimed audiences. While the former targeted any member of society who could read and write, the latter were written and circulated only for members of the nobility and royalty (Meseret, 2013).

Radio came to Ethiopia in 1935, a year before the Italian occupation in 1936. However, it lived only for one year as Ethiopian journalism in general was interrupted by the Italian occupation for about five years (Shimelis, 2000; Skjerdal, 2012a). During the Italian occupation, liberation forces started to publish underground papers like the biweekly *Bandirachen* (later renamed *Sendeq Alamachin*) (Shimelis, 2000). During this time, liberation forces destroyed radio transmitters to deter the propaganda spread by the occupiers. Yet, Italians continued to communicate propaganda using radio and the remaining press products (Skjerdal, 2012a).

Post-liberation Ethiopia saw significant expansion in the print media. It was in this period that long lasting media such as *Addis Zemen* (meaning 'new era' to signify the return of the exiled government in 1941), *The Ethiopian Herald* (1943) and *Ethiopian News Agency* (1943) were founded. The period was also unique to Ethiopian journalism in that it was the time when Ethiopia got dailies for the first time (*Addis Zemen* and *The Ethiopian Herald* both became dailies in 1958 (Shimelis, 2000; Skjerdal, 2012a). Furthermore, the *Addis Ababa Voice of Ethiopia* radio was established with local staff unlike the previous times (Skjerdal, 2012a). The first television signals began in Ethiopia in May 1963 with closed circuit transmission of the official founding of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) (Skjerdal, 2012a; Meseret, 2013).

During this time, newspapers and magazines were run with the supervision of *Press and Information Bureau* (Meseret, 2013). As a result, censorship was rampant; in fact, stories were mostly written to praise the emperor. Protocol news was the main type of news, reporting mostly on the daily routines of the emperor. Journalists had to exercise self-censorship trying to understand how the emperor might interpret their story to avoid putting themselves in danger. Post-publication censorship had been practiced during the time. For instance, printed newspapers were burned before reaching the readers.

4.4.2. Media under the Revolution

The fall of the Haile Selassie regime was perceived by many Ethiopians with a great deal of hope of seeing a better Ethiopia (Meseret, 2013). However, this did not materialize as the *Derg* government turned out to be another round of oppression with several means of repressions introduced to Ethiopia. This was faced with a massive opposition mainly from the 'intelligentsia' and triggered city-based guerilla fighting between the *Derg's* faction and the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP). With a hidden aim of dispersing the opposition, the government introduced a two-year compulsory national service called *Idget Behibret* (Development through Cooperation) where all high school and university students were sent to educate rural communities.

Ethiopia saw a moment of both 'golden' and 'dark' days of journalism within this same regime. During the first 18 months of the regime (1974-1975) the *Derg* "allowed people to express their views freely among themselves as well as through media" (Meseret, 201, p.185). These golden days of journalism discontinued the previously rampant censorship and allowed criticism of the old regime and presentation of draught victims in the media (Skjerdal, 2012a). Nevertheless, things changed as the government introduced a new decree (March 1975) that gave a list of activities that were deemed to be allowed only by the government (Meseret, 2013). These included the running of large-scale printing and publishing companies, the operation of print and broadcast media, and services like postage and telecommunications. Furthermore, all the media outlets were nationalized and were forced to be used for propaganda purposes (Meseret, 2013; Skjerdal, 2012a).

This brought a distressing time in Ethiopian journalism as it witnessed fierce measures such as deportation of foreign correspondents in 1975, the return of a more severe form of censorship in 1976, and introduction of several newsroom restrictions (Skjerdal, 2012). In fact, a censorship department was formally established under *Ministry of Information* to control the contents of books, films, plays and music that contravened the Marxist ideology and public morality (Meseret, 2013). The *Derg's* repressive measures shut down several publications (e.g. *Menen Magazine, Addis Reporter, Addis Soil, Ethiopian Mirror* and *Al-Wahdan*) of the old order

that were not under the control of the government. Moreover, the *Derg* also banned newspapers which were owned by organs of different political factions or parties for being counter-revolutionary. These papers included *Democracia*, *Lab Ader* ('The Proletariat') and *Ye Sefiw Hizb Dimts* ('Voice of the Broad Mass') (Meseret, 2013).

In general, the *Derg* used all the state media for political strategy, "as [an] arm of government propaganda in political, economic and social spheres" (Meseret, 2013, p.186). These nationalized media were dissolved under the press division of the *Ministry of Information*, losing their budgetary and internal affairs autonomy. This made them become highly partisan under the veil of serving as "the voice of the oppressed people of Ethiopia" (p.186). Since these media were re-structured to inform, educate, mobilize, and organize broad masses, some gains were achieved in the national literacy programs which were even recognized by UNESCO in the early 1980s (Meseret, 2013).

Amharic language was a dominant medium for both print and broadcast media (Skjerdal, 2012). Only a few publications published in other languages as for example *Hibret*, a daily newspaper in Tigrigna, and *Bariisaa*, the only newspaper in Oromigna, (Meseret, 2013). The print media mix of the time included: three dailies (*Addis Zemen*, *The Ethiopian Herald,* and *Hibret*), party papers like *Serto Ader* (The Worker), and ideological papers like *Yekatit* (February), *Marxsawi Re'Iyot* (The Marxist Ideology-originally founded by Prague based organization named World Marxist League) and *Meskerem* (September) (Meseret, 2013).

The *Derg* regime understood the special importance of the broadcast media (especially radio) for reaching the Ethiopian masses. After naming it *Voice of Revolutionary Ethiopia* (VORE), the *Derg* restructured radio into two organs: National Service and External Services. While the national service worked to mobilize the public for revolution, the external service handled the nationalized radio which formerly belonged to *Radio Voice of the Gospel* (RVOG). This organ targeted international listeners from Africa, Middle East, and Europe by transmitting in six languages (English, French, Amharic, Arabic, Afar and Somali). As with the print media, the language used in radio broadcasting was predominantly Amharic. Programs were produced in Tigrigna and Oromigna, which are other major local languages in the country. However, as part of the skillful dissemination of propaganda information, the *Derg* transmitted important events

and proclamations in several local languages. For instance, ousters of the emperor and important announcements such as the land reform (1976), nationalization of urban housing (1976), the formation of All-Ethiopian Peasants Association (1977), change of currency (1978), national military service (1982) and the formation of national workers party of Ethiopia (1984) were transmitted in 12 to 15 local languages (Meseret, 2013). Television played a similar propaganda role to that of radio. Initially, the government replaced journalists of the old order believing they were "too westernized to fit" the socialist ideology (Meseret, 2013, p.205).

The inherent ideology of the time made the *Derg* establish alliances with socialist governments and movements (Skjerdal, 2012). As a result, the regime gave free airtime to different African liberation movements even though lack of transmission equipment was a huge challenge at home (Meseret, 2013). To this end, a total of four hours free of charge airtime were given to Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) from December 1978 to independence in 1980 (Skjerdal, 2012; Meseret, 2013), and also to African National Congress (ANC) in South Africa (Skjerdal, 2012; Meseret, 2013), Southwest African Peoples Organization (SWAPO) in Namibia (Meseret, 2013), Sudan People's Liberation Movement in 1984 (SPLM), and two Somali factions (Meseret, 2013).

The daily working routines of journalists were filled with fear of political officials. In fact, any simple journalistic error was regarded as sabotaging the revolution (Meseret, 2013). Not only were ordinary journalists not allowed to read international news outlets, but deviant journalists could get executed (Skjerdal, 2012). Journalists of the time could only report on a selected number of few issues. One of the respondents in this study, a journalist from EBC who worked during the *Derg* regime, remembers, "journalists were expected to report only about the daily routines of the *Derg*, and teach the idea of socialism. Some of the frequent stories were related to criticizing and trivializing both earlier feudal systems and opposition groups who were in armed struggle" (anonymous, EBC, personal interview, December 26, 2016). This leaves the most pressing issues, like famine, not to be reported in state media. The journalist adds:

> In 1976 E.C. I was regional manager in Wollo region for the news agency. When 12 regions (*Awrajas* in Wollo, Tigray and Eritrea) were stricken by a famine, we were not able to report that. However, unfortunately there was a lot of reporting about the 10th annual celebration of the *Derg* where the whole Addis Ababa was decorated for the holiday. And you can see how

bad/dangerous journalism we had (anonymous, EBC, personal interview, December 26, 2016).

In general, journalism during the *Derg* regime was filled with maximum level of censorship which put journalists into fear and intimidation. The *Derg's* system reconfigured media with the values of socialism that media content should reflect it.

4.4.3. Media in the Current EPRDF Regime

The end of 1980s was a period of fierce struggle in Ethiopia between two rebel groups: Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) and Tigray Peoples Liberation Front (TPLF) on the one side and the military *Derg* government on the other. This struggle came to an end with the rebel groups winning several decades of fighting in May 1991. While the EPLF controlled Eritrea, the rest of the country was taken by TPLF. A few months before taking office in Addis Ababa, TPLF forces took the initiative of establishing a coalition party, the EPRDF, composed of several ethnically based parties (Meseret, 2013). A Transitional Government Charter of Ethiopia was soon drafted and presented on July 22, 1991. Article (1) of the charter guarantees fundamental rights such as freedom of expression, religion, association and peaceful protest.

The country undertook several changes in the new political system. For instance, the previously unitary system of government was reconfigured into ethnic federalism (Meseret, 2013). According to Skjerdal (2012a), the period after EPRDF marks a significantly different arena of media in Ethiopia in terms of formal media policy and openings for independent journalism. Ethiopia got the first press law during this period (in 1992). This law officially abolished censorship in Ethiopia. The government made the *Ministry of Information* the official spokesperson of the nation (Meseret, 2013). Later, in 2008, it was renamed as *Office for Government Communication Affairs* (OGCA). This move has been made to make all government media organizations directly accountable to the House of Peoples' Representatives.

Ethiopia got considerable liberalization and media independence in the new regime. This was witnessed by a growing number of private media houses being opened until 1996. However, the situation began to change as the government started to use the 1992 press law to intimidate

journalists. This was followed with the demise of newly established media outlets and wave of journalists in exile. Later on, a number of these media folded for different reasons such as financial challenges and government pressure (Shimelis, 2002).

Around the year 2005, the private media sector showed another round of vibrancy with unprecedented openness of outlets for opposition political parties. However, this did not last long, following repressive measures in the aftermath of the election. Severe forms of repressions were common experience for journalists in the post-election period. It resulted in long term detention of several journalists and opposition politicians. Furthermore, quite a number of media outlets were closed (Skjerdal, 2012a). As media development during this era showed characteristics of volatility, "there is not a single conception that could adequately describe the developments in the Ethiopian media environment since the arrival of the current government in 1991" (Skjerdal, 2012a, p.17). To this end, Skjerdal (2012a) develops an interesting schema to understand media development after the coming of EPRDF. Accordingly, it started with liberalization of policies (1991-92), followed by proliferation of private publications (1992-96). Many of these publications were established by veteran journalists of the previous regime thereby having hostile relations with the ruling government. This was followed by another phase of clampdowns (1996-99), marked by detentions of journalists, restrictions on newspaper distribution, harassment of people reading newspapers –partly because of provisions of the press law. This period marked the first wave of exiling journalists and closure of a number of publications. A new mass media license registration and control department under the Ministry of Information and Culture was introduced in 1999. A period of consolidation and renewed diversity stepped in between 1999 and 2005 known by the government's softer attitude towards the private press with more attention going to the Ethio-Eritrean war. Some of today's stable private newspapers also come in this period. There was also a period of vibrancy in 2005 both with high circulation of newspapers and opening for opposition parties to take part in televised debate. Yet, this got into another turn of 'post-election set back' (2005-07) with polarization of the press between the ruling government and opposition parties (p.24). This was followed by detention of journalists and opposition party members, violence, and closure of publications.

Again, a new period followed with revitalization and softer relations between the government and the press until a return of renewed coercion in 2010-12 (Skjerdal, 2012a)

In 2014 alone, ten independent bloggers and journalists were arrested. Furthermore, authorities filed lawsuits against six publications on charges of encouraging terrorism, which resulted in the fleeing of 16 journalists in exile. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) (2015), Ethiopia is named the fourth most censored country in the world. CPJ's report indicates that the Ethiopian government systematically cracked down on remaining publications as it prepared for the May 2015 elections through arrest of journalists and intimidation of printing and publishing companies, indicating continuation of renewed coercions on the media.

Chapter Five: Analysis of the Ethiopian Media System

5.1.   Introduction

In the previous chapter, an attempt was made to give an overview of the history of the Ethiopian media and political system. Following up on that, this chapter examines the Ethiopian media and political system based on Hallin and Mancini's (2004) four dimensions of variation.

5.2.   The Media Market in Ethiopia

The development of the media market is one of Hallin and Mancini's dimensions of variation among different media systems. The authors looked at the development of the media market together with other system differentiating factors such as the nature of newspapers, their relationship with their audiences, their societal role in political communication and the level of literacy rate in the country. More specifically, the authors focused on the development of the mass circulation press taking circulation rate as a main indicator of the media market. This part first examines the Ethiopian media market and towards the end asks the theoretical relevance of the dimension and sub-dimensions to explaining the Ethiopian case.

5.2.1.   Print media

As discussed in chapter 4, Ethiopia got its first newspaper around the year 1900. With a few exceptions, the Ethiopian media have been used as mouthpieces of governments (Aadland & Fackler, 1999). The size of the newspaper market has been remarkably small. The first newspapers had a circulation of 20-200 copies (Meseret, 2013). These newspapers came at the time when much of Ethiopian population was illiterate. Furthermore, the first newspapers came in a society marked with scant tradition in freedom of expression and public expression of opinion due to an old habit of deference to authority and huge gaps between the lower public and the kings (Levine, 2008; cf. 4.3).

Today, one can distinguish two types of newspapers in Ethiopia: publicly funded (state owned) and privately owned (Ward, 2011). A century after the first newspaper made its debut, Ethiopia's progress in newspaper publishing is not that satisfying. In the past few years, the situation of newspapers has dramatically lowered in terms of both titles and in size of circulation. By December 2016, there were only 13 newspaper titles: nine privately owned (two of them sport) and four state owned newspapers. There are also seven private magazines on the market that write about health, culture and arts, and political, economic and social affairs (see table 2). The total circulation of these publications owned by the private media was around 72,000 (see tables 1 & 2). The number of titles is much lower than the number during the early times of private media in early 1990s. For instance, there were about 129 newspapers and 42 magazines in Ethiopia around the year 1999 (Røe & Aadland, 1999). Most of the newspapers are concentrated around the capital Addis Ababa. The newspapers are published in various languages, though predominantly in Amharic and English.

Table 1. Private Newspaper Titles and Circulation Figures

No	Title of the newspaper	Language	Period	Content	Circulation
1.	League Sport	Amharic	Weekly	Sport	1325
2.	Sendeq		Weekly	Political, economic and social affairs	2000
3.	Reporter	Amharic	Bi-weekly	Political, economic and social affairs	11,725/11,166
4.	The Reporter	English	Weekly	Political, economic and social affairs	5,000
5.	Addis Admass	Amharic	Weekly	Political, economic and social affairs	7,900
6.	Capital	English	Weekly	Political, economic and social affairs	5,500
7.	World Sport	Amharic	Weekly	Sport	2,200
8.	The Daily Monitor	English	Daily	Political, economic and social affairs	1,206
9.	Fortune	English	Weekly	Political, economic and social affairs	7,000
Total					55,022

(Source: EBA, December 2016)

Table 2: Private Magazine Titles and Circulation Figures

No	Title of the magazine	Language	Period	Content	Circulation
1.	Medical	Amharic	Weekly	Health and Psychology	3,350
2.	Qum Neger	Amharic	Bi-Monthly	Culture and Arts	2,000
3.	National Construction	Amharic	”	Construction	4,600
4.	Ethiopian Business Review	English	Monthly	Business and Commercial and	3,000
5.	Ye Habesha Wog	Amharic	Weekly	Political, economic and social affairs	3,000
6.	Jiret	Amharic	Bi-monthly	Political, economic and social affairs	1000
7.	Gize	Amharic	Bi-monthly	Political, economic and social affairs	1,000
Total					17,950

(Source: EBA, December 2016)

In the year 2002, Shimelis Bonsa identified three major problems related with establishment, growth and survival of newspapers in Ethiopia. These were pressure from restrictive provisions in the 1992 press law, economic constraints, and professional and ethical constraints. He wrote that:

> In developing countries like Ethiopia, newspaper publishing is not an attractive business proposition given the multiplicity of problems such as: shortage of capital for investment, ever increasing printing and newsprint costs under conditions of scarcity and foreign exchange control, paucity of advertising and sales, and absence of trained and experienced staff for technical and editorial production and management (Shimelis, 2002, p.196).

Some of the aforementioned challenges of newspapers of the 1990s seem to have transcended to this date. Even though some of today's newspapers such as *The Reporter*, *Capital* and *Fortune* have achieved better financial stability, newspaper publishing is still not an attractive business in Ethiopia. In this regard, Groum Abate, editor-in-chief of the *Capital* newspaper says that newspapers still generally struggle with globally increasing cost of printing, lack of advertisements, and different forms of threats from the government using media laws and other

types of legislations such as anti-terrorism legislations against journalists (Groum Abate, editor of *Capital*, personal interview, January 2, 2017).

Shimelis (2002, p.196) also wrote that newspaper circulation in the country is "hindered by low literacy rate, high poverty, lack of motivation and established channel of distribution". Surprisingly, after fifteen years, the circulation of newspapers has not improved. While the factors outlined by Shimelis Bonsa are again valid, some interviewees stress more the nature of societal makeup. Tamrat G.Giorgis of the *Fortune* newspaper claims that the issue of low circulation of newspapers is more related with the fact of "the Ethiopian society not being a reader society". Tamrat further explains the case with an example saying:

> For the purpose of this conversation, let's say the population of Addis Ababa is around 4 million[6]. Let's say half of them are either illiterate or are not in a newspaper reading age. This gives us two million. Out of these let's say, half of them have no interest to reading newspapers or have no culture of reading at all. This again gives us one million. And still let's say half of them neither have time to read nor money to buy newspapers. This gives us 500,000! By this calculation, at this time we should have gotten at least 500,000 people who read newspapers only in the capital Addis Ababa ... Therefore, what this tells me is that the Ethiopian society is an oral society. By oral society, Ethiopians prefer to listen and talk; than to read and write to get information. It is not about whether they can read or not. Culture of reading; be it newspapers or any general text is not embedded in the Ethiopian society's making (Tamrat G.Girgis, managing editor of *Fortune*, personal interview, Dec. 29, 2016).

Basically, Tamrat's argument revolves around the fact that the Ethiopian reading culture is low and the society has a different choice of media consumption which is clearly not newspapers. In fact, some studies have confirmed Tamrat's idea. According to an audience survey study by Ward and Selam (2011) newspaper readership is very low in the country and is concentrated in larger cities. According to the study, print media are found among the least (the seventh) important sources of information for Ethiopians while radio, television, words of mouth, community media, church/mosque and mobile take the first top six. The survey also indicates higher newspaper readership among men than women. Similarly, another audience survey

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[6] Addis Ababa's current population is thought to be around 4 million. https://unhabitat.org/books/ethiopia-addis-ababa-urban-profile/

study conducted by EBA (2013) also named newspapers as the fourth source audiences choose to get information from after television, radio, and internet[7]. The reason that television was chosen as the first source of information could partly be explained by the fact that the study was conducted only in Ethiopia's capital Addis Ababa where there is better access to television.

Newspaper subscription is not a common way of reading newspapers in Ethiopia. EBA's (2013) survey shows that only 32.7% of respondents buy the newspapers they read (and they are mainly bought on the street, not through subscription). The majority of readers get newspapers by renting from vendors or 'rent a read' (35.2%), office subscriptions at work places (30.4%), libraries (17%), and borrowing from other people (6%).
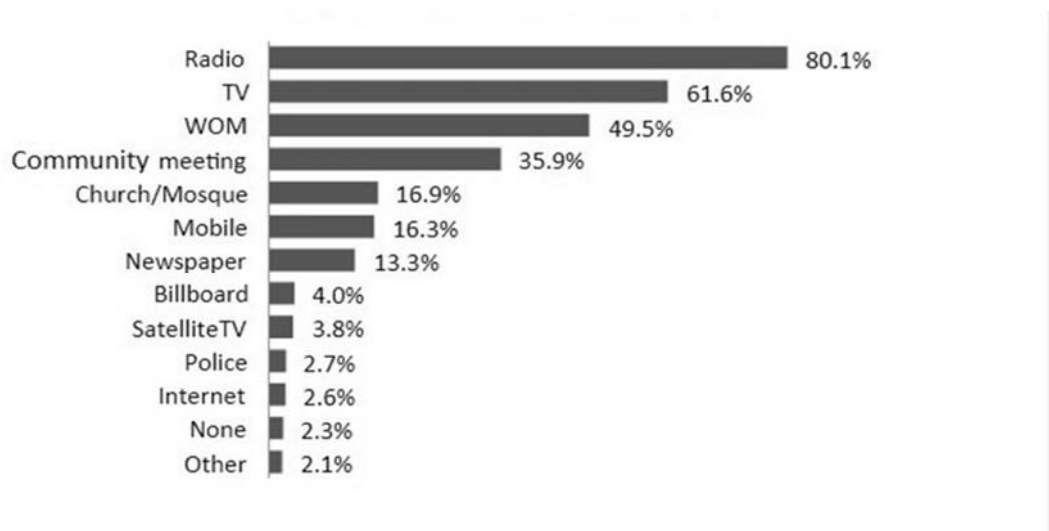
Graph 1: Media consumption of Ethiopian audiences (Source: Ward & Selam, 2011, p. 10)

Studies show that a small press market leads to a weakened role of newspapers as a vertical means of communication between the political elites and citizens, and lead them instead to operate more as horizontal communication devices between the political world and other elites (Pereira, 2015). In a similar way, the role of Ethiopian newspapers as vertical communication

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[7] The study was conducted in Addis Ababa with a total sample of 2650 respondents. According to the survey, 62.0% of the respondents chose television as their source of information. This was followed by radio (56.3%), and Internet (43.3%). Only 36.9% of the respondents chose newspapers as their source of information. Surprisingly, about 21.2% of them get information from other people confirming the value of interpersonal communication in an oral society.

between political elites and ordinary citizens seems to be very limited considering their small reach only in big cities leaving out a large section of the agrarian population that doesn't read and write. However, the role of Ethiopian newspapers in the horizontal process of communication between the political world and other elites seems valid. The editor-in-chief of *Capital*, Groum Abate, thinks in the same way. Speaking about his own newspaper, he says:

> I don't think we have such a good impact on the Ethiopian public because we know that our newspaper can't reach the public. We also know that most of our readers are policy makers, embassies, government officials, and a few business people (Groum Abate, editor of *Capital*, personal interview, January 2, 2017).

This indicates that the role of Ethiopian newspapers in the horizontal process of communication between the political world and other elites seems valid as newspapers are addressed to elite readers. As Skjerdal (2012a, p.45) argues, it would be a mistake to underestimate the influence of publications based on circulation size for two reasons. One is that a single newspaper in Ethiopia can be read by 30-40 people in what can be called a "rent a read" culture (Curnow, 2011). The other is that because newspapers reach the educated, urban and decision making segment of the population, they constitute a crucial arena for exchange of ideas.

Ethiopian newspapers have historically had a weak advertising base. The problem can primarily be related with the lack of commercial industries that need to advertise products, and a poor culture of advertising (Woldu Yimesil, CEO of FBC personal interview, December 28, 2016). Government ministries or offices are important sources of advertisement for the print media (Ward & Selam, 2011). Adding to the problem, the existing advertising market is not only small but also concentrated. Groum Abate of *Capital* says, "Newspapers hardly get advertisements if they do not have good network with government offices or companies" (Groum Abate, editor of *Capital*, personal interview, December 29, 2016).

A number of the interviewed journalists blame the state for not fairly distributing state advertising among media. Even though the new Communication Minister Dr. Negeri Lencho is not sure if there are clear mechanisms where state advertising is distributed among different

media, he agrees with the importance of following a fair mechanism of treating media outlets. The minister says:

> I believe there should be a fair system where government offices can choose news media for transmitting their advertisements … If these government offices choose media outlets simply because the chosen media write favorable or positive articles about their office, it should be changed. But it can be okay, if they choose media outlets based on their audience reach that can meet their organizational goals. Yet, we should investigate how government bodies prioritize some media over others (Negeri Lencho, Minister at OGCA, personal interview, January 22, 2017).

It is worth noting that newspapers risk being instrumentalized by these bodies in exchange for advertising opportunities. Some newspapers can be prioritized over others because there are no clear rules as to where the state place advertisements. In a 2011 survey, about ten newspapers reported operational loss while eight others reported profits (Ward, 2011). In this regard, some studies indicate that starving media of advertisements is one of the mechanisms used by African governments to impair mass media (Tettey, 2001).

5.2.2. Unstable Environment for Newspapers

The Ethiopian media landscape can be characterized as unstable. Quite a number of publications have come and gone. For instance, 364 publications were registered by Ethiopian Broadcasting Authority from Feb. 2009 to Dec. 2016. Out of these, a great deal of them failed to start publishing after being registered. Others quit publishing because of their own reasons (Dheresa Terefe, Media Development director, personal interview, December 23, 2016).

According to respondents, one of the reasons for the short stay of publications is that some of the publications failed to conduct a good feasibility research. As Woldu Yimesil of FBC says, journalism is a sensitive business which requires adequate planning, market research and enough financial background that can survive continuously increasing costs.

Still other newspapers like *Feteh* were suspended by the government when it attempted to publish the late PM's health condition (Birhanu & O'Donnell, 2014). As Wondwosen Mekonen, president of an inactive journalist association named *Ethiopian Free Press Journalists' Association*

and former editor of several newspapers remembers, many of the first private publications were established by journalists who were fired from the state media by the EPRDF government for political reasons (Wondwossen Mekonen, president of EFJA, personal interview, January 17, 2017). These journalists, once axed for being labeled as "sympathizers of the Derg" (Meseret, 2013, p. 236; Stremlau, 2012), opposed the new political arrangement of EPRDF through their sensational reporting. This later strained their relationship with the government. As Woldu Yimesil of FBC remembers, such unhealthy relationship with government harmed private media outlet's access to public information. As a result, many of them were forced to base their articles on secondary and anonymous sources which in return has trapped them in recurrent accusations of defamation (Woldu Yimesil, CEO of FBC personal interview, December 28, 2016). In the early times of privatization in the 1990s, many private media journalists emphasized sensational reporting rather than serious coverage and then folded after a short-lived stay in the market (Skjerdal, 2013).

5.2.3.   Broadcast Media

The broadcast media in Ethiopia were only privatized on 23rd July 2007 with the *Broadcasting Services Proclamation No: 533/2007*. It had been solely controlled by the state for many years. The state both at federal and regional level own the largest share of electronic media in Ethiopia. As can be seen in the below graph no 2, the state at both levels owns a total of four MW/SW radios, 22 FM radios and nine television stations (see appendix 1 for the complete list of these media). Besides, government administrative bodies or *Woredas* and state universities have also a total of 44 community radios.

Even though commercial broadcasting was only allowed after 2007, it has become successful within ten year of privatization. Currently, a total of 21 FM radios, two MW/SW national radios and three television stations have got licenses from EBA. So far, however, none of private television stations has started airing programs. (See appendix 2 for the complete list).

Chart data (Graph 2):

Region	Radio MW/SW	Radio FM	Television
Federal State	1	2	1
Oromia MMA	1	1	2
Dire Dawa MMA	0	1	1
Amhara MMA	1	5	1
Debub MMA	0	9	1
Tigray MMA	0	1	1
Harare MMA	0	1	1
Somali MMA	1	1	1
Benishangul Gumuz MMA	0	1	0
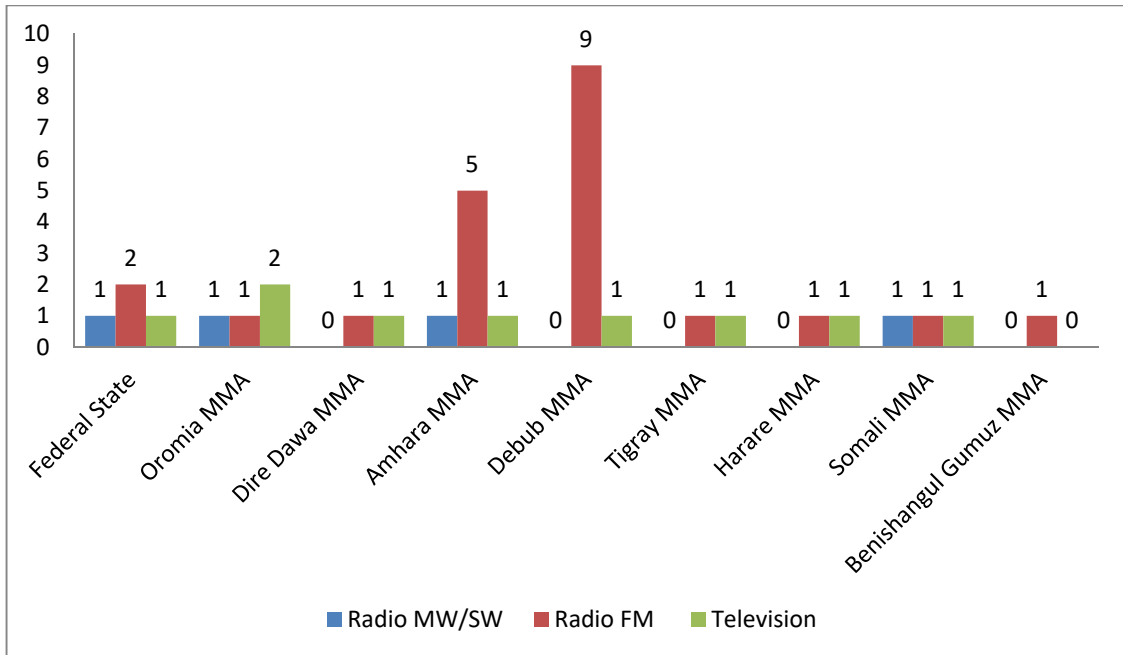
Graph 2: State owned media or 'public service broadcast media' in Ethiopia (Source: EBA, December, 2016).

Recently, commercial companies like FBC also appear as competitive giants in the electronic media business. In December 2016, FBC alone had 12 FM radios in five regions of Ethiopia: Addis Ababa, Oromia, Amhara, Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples and Tigray. The company transmits in six languages: Amharic, Oromigna, Tigrigna, Somaligna, Wolaytigna, and Afarigna. Nevertheless, such development of FBC might not be surprising considering its significant connections with the ruling government. It is important to keep in mind that the company had been allowed to broadcast all over the country in its national radio when commercial media were not even privatized in the country. It started as revolutionary media during the struggles of TPLF in 1986[8]. It also became one of the three private media houses that got television license in 2016 according to data from EBA. According to its CEO, Woldu Ymesil, currently FBC is one of the many profitable commercial broadcast companies in Ethiopia.

Television was solely owned by the state until the regulatory body recently awarded three television licenses for private companies[9] (EBA, December 2016). The Ethiopian

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[8] According to data from EBA (2016), FBC got license as commercial media in 1998 Ethiopian Calendar (2007 GC).

[9] The three private televisions are: Arki Television, Fana Television and Walta Television.

government's move towards privatizing television is seen by some respondents like Woldu Yimesil of FBC as forcefully coming from the emergence of satellite transmission (Woldu Yimesil, CEO of FBC personal interview, December 28, 2016). According to Woldu, the government changed its mind to privatizing television because satellite broadcasting allowed transmission of diaspora made programs to the Ethiopian public. As a result, it became worthless to prohibit licenses for private companies at home.

Now the question is, does the development of the Ethiopian media landscape fit in with any of Hallin and Mancini's (2004) descriptions of media markets? The answer is both yes and no. As critiqued in chapter two, Hallin and Mancini's proposed dimensions are both broad and imprecise in their scope. For example, it is not precisely clear what 'high' or 'low' circulation figures mean when they discuss circulation of newspapers. Nevertheless, in global terms, the Ethiopian print media market must be placed at the lowest end of the continuum. However, as discussed by Voltmer (2012, p.244), classifying non-western media systems into one of Hallin and Mancini's framework soon leads to "conceptual overstretching" and "disguises the broad variations of constellations". Voltmer further argues that high illiteracy, underdeveloped consumer markets, inadequate technology and high level of inequality between segments of the population can make the media market go far below what is stated in the polarized pluralist model. Furthermore, Voltmer also remarks that classifying media markets should consider variances between segments of the population rather than merely looking at the average degree of development. The existing market for newspapers in Ethiopia is very small because of multitudes of aforementioned factors such as poor economy (low circulation, lack of good start-up capital, high printing costs, low advertising base, absence of commercial industries), pressure from government (use of repressive laws, lack of subsidies), high illiteracy, and low societal consumption of newspapers. As a result, a mass circulation press never really came to Ethiopia. In this context, it becomes evident that the Ethiopian print media market is much less than in countries belonging to the polarized pluralist model.

Hallin and Mancini (2004, p. 24) argue that difference in "mass circulation newspapers is naturally accompanied by differences in the relative roles of print and electronic media". Thus, the mass public relies on electronic media in countries where mass circulation press is absent

(e.g. Southern Europe). The Ethiopian case seems to correspond with this situation, as the electronic media are named as the most important source of information for the Ethiopian public (EBA, 2013; Ward & Selam, 2011). Another factor which Hallin and Mancini brings to the analysis of media markets is gender differences. The researchers noted higher gender differences among readerships in Southern Europe than in the areas for the two other models. This also seems to be the case in Ethiopia. Even though a detailed analysis of gender differences is not available, studies indicate that the Ethiopian newspaper readership is more male dominated (Ward & Selam, 2011).

Hallin and Mancini also differentiate media systems based on the nature of newspapers and their wider societal role. While newspapers in Southern Europe are addressed to elite readers catering for a horizontal process of debate, newspapers in Northern Europe and North America are addressed to a mass public in a vertical process of communication between political elites and the ordinary public. It can be said that the role of Ethiopian newspapers in the vertical process of communication is limited when we consider that most newspaper reach only the major towns. This is due to different factors such as high illiteracy and limited distribution in rural parts of the country (Ward & Selam, 2011). However, despite their low circulation, Ethiopian newspapers are read by the educated, urban and decision making segment of the population, thereby serving as a crucial arena for exchange of ideas (Skjerdal, 2012a). These newspapers served as a space for elite negotiation at least in the early periods of liberalization (Stremlau 2014). Thus, it can be argued that Ethiopian newspapers have a better role in the horizontal communication process of debate and negotiation than in the vertical process of communication between political elites and ordinary mass readers.

Some features of the Ethiopian media such as weak media market, low circulation of newspapers, dominance of electronic media, elite oriented press, absence of commercialization etc. roughly resemble characteristics of the polarized pluralist press. However, some differences are also observed. For instance, economically weak newspapers in the polarized pluralist model often depend on the state, political parties, church or wealthy patrons. This, however, is not mainly the case in Ethiopia as most of these organizations are not strong. Furthermore, the political system of the nation does not permit the development of strong organized social

groups. Media ownership by political parties and religious organizations became prohibited with the 2007 broadcast law. Thus, as will be explained below, though political polarization is inherent in the Ethiopian media, opportunities for flourishing of strong political parties are not present in the system.

Overall, this shows that any of Hallin and Mancini's models of the media market is a loose container if it should fit with the weak Ethiopian media market. As critiqued in the literature review, the use of the media market and its particular focus on the mass circulation press turns out to be an inadequate unit of measurement to describe a media system in a situation with largely dominant broadcast media. The same holds true for the Ethiopian case. Moreover, the approach's focus on circulation of newspapers is not a timely unit of measure for a media system like the Ethiopian where newspapers are shared rather than subscribed to. On a wider basis, it is also not a practical unit of measure in the generation of online newspapers (El-Richani, 2016).

5.3. The Role of the State

The role of the state or state intervention is another of the four dimensions of variation proposed by Hallin and Mancini (2004). They argue that variations in the role of the state such as an owner, regulator and funder of media are "rooted in more general differences in the role of the state in the society" (p, 49). Limited involvement of the state in the media system is regarded as a move towards a more liberal state. Yet, they also note that a weak state role can also be attributed either to a deliberate policy favoring market forces or a failure of the political system to establish and enforce media policy. Other sub-dimensions of state intervention identified by Hallin and Mancini (2004) include: patterns of regulatory frameworks (market vs. interventionist approach), media laws and policies, and press subsidies and ownership of media outlets. However, as critiqued in chapter two, Hallin and Mancini's proposed forms of state intervention focus on the more positive aspects of state intervention than the coercive measures found in many African countries (Hadland, 2012). The examination of the Ethiopian media and political system by using this dimension reveals tendencies of strong state intervention. In Ethiopia, the state is the largest owner of media outlets. The state also funds a number of these media outlets.

At the same time, the same state plays a role as media regulator. It drafts media laws and other legislation related to ownership, regulation and access to information. However, as will be explained in more detail in the following part, the form of state intervention is slanted towards a more coercive than moderate approach.

5.3.1. Ownership

The state plays diverse roles as the owner of the largest share of Ethiopian media. At federal state level, the state runs the *Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation* (mix of the former Ethiopian Radio and Ethiopian Television). Moreover, regional states run their own mass media agencies[10]. The state is also owner of a number of publications which are published by the Ethiopian Press Agency, and runs the country's oldest news agency, named *Ethiopian News Agency.* Even though these institutions can make some revenue through the sale of advertisements, they are run through public funds. According to Nigusu Wodajnew, editor-in-chief of the state-owned *Addis Zemen* newspaper, the key agenda of state publications is to facilitate development, enhance national reconciliation and ensure public participation. The newspapers are guided by development journalism as a philosophy of their reporting (Nigusu Wodajnew, Editor of Addis Zemen, personal interview, December 29, 2016). Development journalism has been prescribed as an official reporting style in Ethiopian state media since 2008 (Skjerdal, 2011).

5.3.2. National Media Policy

There are different training documents aimed at guiding local journalists in Ethiopia. Two of these can be considered as national media policies and are described in this study. Even though the two policy documents were prepared in different times, they basically have a related content

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[10] Names of regional state mass media agencies include: Oromia Mass Media Agency, Dire Mass Media Agency, Amhara mass media agency, Addis Ababa Mass Media Agency, Debub Mass Media Agency, Tigray Mass Media Agency, Benishangul Gumuz Mass Media Agency (in preparation stage), Harari Mass Media Agency, and Somali Mass Media Agency.

which revolve around the philosophy of 'developmental democratic media'[11], a concept enshrined in the official economic policy of the country as a developmental democratic state.

The first national media policy document is entitled 'Basis and directives for a developmental and democratic philosophy of our media operation' (EPA, 2008). The document sets to present media policy based on the values of the developmental and democratic state. More specifically, the media policy is guided by the development journalism philosophy, based on the reality of a country focusing on nation building and low professional and institutional competence observed in the media system.

The policy contains detailed descriptions of journalism in different systems of government. It also contains bold statements about the Ethiopian media situation. It states:

> There is a very favorable and promising condition that could enable cultivate a media that would support the development and democratic process of this country. However, there are media which do not use this opportunity properly and do not back up the effort for national development as expected" (EPA, 2008, p.4, translated from Amharic).

As the public agenda is towards development, the policy document states, "development journalism philosophy is the suitable direction". Besides, "creating information rich society, opening debate and forum and brainstorming solutions for potential problems are directions of our media" (EPA, 2008, p.20). This direction towards development journalism is mainly done to bring about social change in society. In doing so, greater attention is given to content and media leadership that facilitates change, presenting quality educational programs, by focusing on news stories as opposed to entertainment. The policy document states, "In development journalism entertainment programs cannot be presented for the sake of entertainment. Rather they have to be framed in a way that could initiate better social change" (EPA, 2008, p.21). In general, the media policy document presents development journalism as an appropriate media policy by contrasting it with authoritarian media philosophy on the one hand and liberal media philosophy on the other.

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[11] Developmental Democratic Media' philosophy or the Amharic ልማታዊና ዲሞክራሲያዊ መገናኛ ብዙሃን is by far an Ethiopian invention.

More recently, Ethiopia drafted a related but more comprehensive national media policy document. The document entitled '*Developmental Democratic Mass Media Policy and Strategy of FDRE*' affirms that any media system in any country should follow the societal structure and political economy of the country. This document begins by harshly critiquing ideas such as liberalism, neoliberalism and liberal philosophies of the media.

The document states that the developmental democratic model is in line with the societal needs of the country since it helps to bring social, economic, political and societal justice in the country. To this end, a developmental democratic philosophy of the media is chosen because it supposedly best fits the Ethiopian society marked by poverty, a large population with hand to mouth economy, under developed market forces and weak infrastructures and democratic institutions. It also features some success stories referring to Far East countries such as Taiwan and the Korea.

Thus, the developmental democratic media policy aims to establish a media that nurture a developmental democratic system in the country. Moreover, it has the goal of establishing media which serve as a forum for discussion and peaceful struggle, fight rent seeking ideology, secure equality, function with responsibility and secure the national interest of the country.

Development is also at the center of the media policy document. It says, "Whomsoever owns or runs mass media are expected to address key issues of development, peace, democracy and good governance in the news', features, and discussion forums" (Developmental Democratic Media Policy and Strategy of FDRE, 2015, p. 10). The policy document also contains parts that discuss key challenges or problems of the mass media in Ethiopia such as: absence of a common media policy, absence of transparent editorial policies in the private media, lack of private media houses that focus on development issues, less developed media management, rent seeking tendencies, less developed professional associations etc. In general, the policy document envisions seeing media with high professional ethics and valuing their role of the developmental democratic state.

These national media policy documents are formally applied in media outlets owned by the state. Respondents both from ENA and the *Addis Zemen* newspaper say that development issues take up much of the news reporting in their respective medium. The situation with private

media (especially the press), however, is different as there is no one to control whether they have included development issues or not. However, Dheresa Terefe of EBA claims that the authority follows stricter control of the commercial broadcast media.

5.3.3.   Media Governance

Like many African countries that have transited to democracy, Ethiopia has slowly liberalized mass media since the 1990s. In Ethiopia, the state is not only the owner of media outlets and news agency, but also the regulator of the media. In 2009, the state established Ethiopian Broadcasting Authority (EBA) with the objective of ensuring "the expansion of a high standard, prompt and reliable broadcasting service that can contribute to political, social and economic development and to regulate [at the] same [time]" (Broadcasting Service Proclamation No 533/2007). According to Dheresa Terefe of EBA, the office regularly controls media content (especially the broadcast media), scrutinizing to see that media transmit programs according to the proposals they submitted to the authority. As Dheresa says, in the assessment of licenses, the authority gives more priority to media proposals that focus on areas of public agenda such as development, democracy and peace, which are the core values of Ethiopian media policy (Dheresa Terefe, personal interview, December 23, 2016). This indicates that the authority uses its power to restrict media proposals which are not of interest to the government.

Similarly, Skjerdal's (2013) study on trends in media reforms in Africa finds coexistence of formal liberalization and increased state control. In writing about the Ethiopian case, Skjerdal argues that even though media policies are formally liberalized by way of improved media legislation, better access to public information, and opportunities for private broadcasting; this, however, has coexisted with informal signs of coercion. These informal forms of coercion are done through strategic appointments of regulators, awarding broadcast licenses to groups close to the government, and informal threats on journalists. This is theoretically termed as 'selective liberalization' which in this case means liberalization "found in areas where the risk of losing control with the flow of information is less for the government" (p. 32). Similarly, Birhanu and O'Donnel (2014, p. 2) brought the concept of 'manipulative liberalism' to describe major flaws in

recent "self-serving media reforms" in the strategic use of media law and governance for keeping the interest of the governments. The authors' assessment of regulations indicates that proclamations are used to restrict or deny access to information (government secrecy), to impound publications, and to destabilize journalists.

5.3.3.1. Ethiopia's First Press Law (No. 34/1992)

Ethiopia got its first press law in 1992. This law was drafted in the wake of the new political restructure by the EPRDF leadership aiming to answer the long years of public frustration during the military and feudal regimes. The new regime had guaranteed basic "freedom of conscience, expression, association and peaceable assembly" in its Transitional Period Charter of Ethiopia on 22nd July 1991. In fact, the two previous regimes of Ethiopia, Emperor Haile Selassie's 1955 Constitution (art.41); Derg's 1987 Constitution (art.47) and Article 579 of the 1957 Penal Code of Ethiopia had legislations which guaranteed basic freedom of speech to Ethiopians. However, none of them was practiced because of the situation of a significant disconnect between constitutional rights and practice.

Ethiopia's first press law was seen by scholars as a "positive step forward" in the media arena (Shimelis, 2002, p.184). This can make sense considering the severity of the media situation during the previous regimes. The 1992 bill officially abolished long standing censorship (art. 3). It also gave Ethiopians the right to engage in press activities through passing a process of press registration (art. 5&6). More importantly, the bill gave the right to access to information and secured the right of reply (art. 8&9). All these rights of the press were granted keeping in mind the responsibilities of the press stipulated in article 10, which include penalties ranging from one to three years of imprisonment or fines of 5,000-10,000 birr.

In general, the 1992 press bill was severely criticized until it was replaced by the 2008 *'Freedom of Mass Media and Access to Information Proclamation'*. Main areas of the criticism were related to restrictive clauses about compulsory licensing of media outlets, banning of material which could threaten national safety, prohibition of defamation and false accusation, and options for the authorities to confiscate press products in advance. Even though publications

flourished in the first few years of liberalization, a number of editors and publishers faced challenges from restrictive clauses of the 1992 press law (Skjerdal, 2013).

5.3.3.2. Freedom of Mass Media and Access to Information Proclamation (2008)

In the year 2008, the Ethiopian government introduced a new mass media law which had been heavily debated for several years (Ross, 2010). The new media law, formally called '*Freedom of Mass Media and Access to Information Proclamation 590/2008'*, is based on article 29 of the 1995 Constitution which is described by some scholars as "Africa's most ambitious constitution" for allowing ethnic federalism, decentralization and democratic reforms (Stremlau, 2014, p.231).

The proclamation gives every Ethiopian national the right to publish (art. 5) and own mass media outlets (art. 7). It also allows journalists the right to organize in professional associations of their choice. Article 12 of the proclamation gives details of the right to access to information. Accordingly, every Ethiopian is given the right to seek, obtain and communicate any information held by public bodies. Public relation officers are expected to provide the requested information or provide a written response stating the reason for rejecting the request within 30 working days. Only in case the "office is congested" by too many requests, they can have an additional 30 days. This is criticized by scholars as "a policy that hardly supports the public's right to get information in a timely way" (Birhanu & O'Donnell, 2014, p. 8).

Even though the media law is filled with provisions that give journalists ample opportunities of accessing information, a number of the interviewed journalists for the current study express their concern for the law not being enacted in practice. Woldu Yimesil of FBC says, "even though it is clearly stipulated within the law, individual government authorities do not respect what is stated in the law (Woldu Yimesil, CEO of FBC, personal interview, December 28, 2016). For Woldu, lack of access to information is one of the greatest challenges facing journalism even nine years after it was officially drafted. The situation is true both for private and state media.

Similarly, Melaku Demise of *The Reporter* (Amharic) newspaper shares many journalists' frustration in the search for information. He says, "when journalists ask PR officers for public

data, they usually lag the issue for trivial reasons. It is discouraging to see that the access to information proclamation is only theoretical" (Melaku Demise, Managing Editor of *The Reporter* Amharic, personal interview, December 26, 2016).

The proclamation also includes a long list of exempted information such as data related to third party (art. 16), commercial information of third party (art. 17), confidential information of third party (art. 18), third party notification (art. 19), information that endanger the safety of individuals and property (art. 20), proceedings of law enforcement and legal investigation (art. 21 & 22), defense, security and international relations (art. 23), cabinet documents (art. 24), economic interests and financial welfare of the country and commercial activities of public bodies (art. 25), operation of public bodies (art. 26), and requests that are too broad (art. 27). People who are refused information have a right to appeal to the public relations officer and later to the ombudsman within 30 working days (art. 31). Scholars have criticized this by saying that even though the media law is drafted to set out mass media rights, responsibilities and procedures journalists follow in exercising their right to access and report information held by public bodies, it introduces bureaucratic processes for access to information and implements exemptions that protect the confidentiality of key government documents (Birhanu & O'Donnell, 2014).

Towards the end of the proclamation, it contains rights and responsibilities of the mass media. The right of reply or correction[12] is granted in article 40. More serious and lawful measures on criminal offences and civil damages caused by the media are included in article 41 of the proclamation. For instance, courts can give compensations up to 100,000 birr for moral damages of defamation through the mass media. This is one of the major sources of fear for private media journalists in Ethiopia.

In this regard, Melaku Demise of *The Reporter* newspaper says:

> While it is true that the proclamation gives rights, it also contained contents which are repressive and restrictive to the media....Even though defamation is less common in many countries, this proclamation included a fine of 100,000 birr for defamation of a person who works in a public office. This

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[12] free of charge within 10 days or in the periodical's next issue

makes journalists think twice before writing a story. (Melaku Demise, Managing Editor of *The Reporter* Amharic, personal interview, December 26, 2016).

In fact, former journalism professor of Addis Ababa University and current Communication Minister Dr. Negeri Lencho shares the view that some of the articles of the proclamation are not permissive enough for the media environment. The minister says "Media laws in Ethiopia should not be frightening factors for working journalists. It seems difficult to think about a fine of 100,000 birr as a punishment. It is indeed frightening" (Negeri Lencho, Minister of OGCA, personal interview, January 22, 2017).

A more severe form of restriction is found in article 42 of the proclamation. This article gives the court the right to impound periodicals where the Federal or Regional public prosecutor has sufficient reason to believe that the periodical or a book contains illegal matter which poses a clear and present danger to national security. Penalties promulgated under this proclamation include punishment of 20,000 to 200,000 birr for passing provisions (art. 45). Failing to appoint a responsible editor can give a fine 15,000 birr. However, all these criminal offences shall not be instituted after the lapse of one year for periodicals and six months for broadcasted programs (art. 46).

The bill has been subject to severe criticism from different groups. Media organizations and lobbying groups have opposed several clauses in the law. For instance, excessive punishments for defamation (especially public authorities) are seen as draconian when compared with the international situation (Ross, 2010). As Ross further argues, even though the law does not expressly limit the media's output, some articles like 43(7) protect the government by giving the ability to prosecute journalists for any article about an official.

Ethiopian journalists also face threats from other legislation such as the anti-terrorism legislation and the telecom fraud offenses proclamation which in fact have more severe forms of punishments than the media law (Gagliardone, 2014). Even though the preamble of the anti-terrorism proclamation contains valid reasons for protecting citizens from threats of terrorism, it has provisions which put serious limitations on working conditions of journalists. For instance, article 6 of the proclamation holds that:

Whosoever publishes or causes the publication of a statement that is likely to be understood by some or all of the members of the public to whom it is published as a direct or indirect encouragement or other inducement to them to the commission or preparation or instigation of an act of terrorism stipulated under Article 3 of this Proclamation is punishable with rigorous imprisonment from 10 to 20 years (Anti-Terrorism Proclamation No.652/2009).

Many of the interviewed journalists address the restrictive nature of the anti-terrorism law. For instance, Groum Abate of the *Capital* newspaper says:

I fear the law. For example, if two people join rebel groups and they said that their decision to join these groups was because of the newspaper you published or the article you wrote, you can be accused of terrorism and can get easily jailed. It is as simple as that (Groum Abate Editor of *Capital*, personal interview, December 29, 2016).

It is clear that many of these laws become sources of self-censorship in the media. In fact, many organizations have expressed their concerns with the repressive nature of the anti-terrorism proclamation. For example, Human Rights Watch (2009) criticized the law for being premised on "an extremely broad definition of terrorist activity", endangering wide ranging internationally protected rights and freedoms.

Similarly, yet another proclamation named the Telecom Fraud Offences Proclamation 761/2012 has been criticized by advocacy groups such as Article 19, for its uncertain scope of national security where by putting limitations on national security (CPJ, 2012). Article 6 reads:

Whosoever 1) uses or causes the use of any telecommunications network or apparatus to disseminate any terrorizing message connected with a crime punishable under the Anti-terrorism proclamation No 652/2009 or obscene message punishable under the Criminal Code; or 2) uses or causes the use of the telecom service or infrastructure provided by the telecom service provider for illegal purpose; commits an offence and shall be punishable with rigorous imprisonment from 3 to 8 years and with fine from Birr 30,000 to Birr 80,000 (Telecom Fraud Offences Proclamation 761/2012).

In 2011 alone, more than 100 political activists and journalists were charged with what has been called "vaguely defined terrorism offenses" (Freedom House, 2012). Similarly, *Freedom House* reports that the continued government harassment on opposition and media members has led to the arrest of nine journalists charged under the terrorism law (Freedom House, 2014). In conclusion, some of the aforementioned laws could be used to limit freedom of expression and press freedom in Ethiopia.

In explaining the role of the state in media operations, Hallin and Mancini (2004) argue that variations in the role of the state as owner, funder and regulator of the media are rooted in more general differences in the role of the state in the society. To this end, they differentiate between a restricted role of the state, such as in the US where the private media dominate, and a more active role of the state in democratic corporatist countries with their PSBs and in the strongest form in polarized pluralist societies in the Mediterranean. Furthermore, they argue that a weaker state role can be attributed either to a deliberate policy favoring market forces or a failure of the political system to establish and enforce media policy.

As addressed in chapter two, Hallin and Mancini focus more on positive forms of state intervention than on coercion which are widely common in young democracies (Hadland, 2012). As a result, a different conception of state intervention can be found in these contexts where instead of interferences guided by laws, rules and regulations, authoritarian governments define "red lines" crossed by journalists (Hafez, 2010, p.4). This is in fact a worrying issue because despite being labeled as democracies thereby liberalizing the mass media, many African governments use coercive state apparatus to combat differing opinions or criticisms from the media (Tettey, 2001). A closer look at Ethiopian media landscape reveals the existence of the strongest form of state intervention.

In addition to owning a wide array of media outlets, the state is also a regulator of the Ethiopian media. In doing so, it prepares different legislation and leads and manages the regulatory organs. Theoretically, the Ethiopian media enjoy a considerable degree of legally stipulated freedom though keeping in mind some restrictive provisions. This is in fact true for other laws of the country, including the Constitution. The strength of state intervention is different in its form from that which has been mainly featured by Hallin and Mancini. However,

the nature of regulation shows tendencies of authoritarian states. Journalists are accused of defamation of public officials similar to the situation in Greece. Furthermore, there is a tendency of using anti-terrorism legislations and other legislation to charge journalists. Broadcast media licenses are awarded to individuals with proposals which are in line with core values of official Ethiopian media policy. This issue becomes a big deal in Ethiopia because there is always contention on whether a certain agenda is the public's agenda, the state's agenda, or the ruling party's agenda.

There is also a clear mismatch between what is stipulated in liberal laws and actual practice. Even though the media law has boldly guaranteed access to information, many journalists face challenges of accessing data from government offices. This issue can partly be related to the quality of democracy which is marked with weak state institutions and the powerful presence of an executive body. The strength of the executive body is more visible than the other organs of the government. For instance, journalists have very limited opportunity to formally question the integrity of the executive branch of government that denies access to information, though formal mechanisms of appeal are stated within the law. In this regard, Woldu Yimesil of FBC says:

> Because the executive power is strong in Ethiopia, journalists are unlikely to challenge them. Government bodies can easily attack journalists when a report is written about them. There were several occasions when government bodies have come to our office with arrest warrants to imprison journalists" (Woldu Yimesil, CEO of FBC personal interview, December 28, 2016).

This behavior is also in some way explained by the ideals of revolutionary democracy that emphasize the key role of the central party to set policies and public agendas (Stremlau, 2014; Vaughan, 2011). It seems likely that today's strong executive body is the result of a revolutionary democracy background which is known by the central role of party people. Furthermore, the strongest forms of state interventions (coercions) can also be attributed to the conflict between institutional legacies of the previous regime and the new system. As indicated in chapter four, most of the private media in Ethiopia were established by veteran journalists and politicians of the old system. It is also indicated that these politicians and journalists were fired when EPRDF came to power. As a result, polarization was a key feature of the newly liberalized media as many

opposed pillar policies of the new regime and engaged in sensational reporting. At the same time, people of the new system have not been welcoming to these journalists and media. After all, the new EPRDF administrative unit automatically considers these newly established media as part of the system which they struggled to win. Some scholars write that experiences gained from development of political parties also have its own influence on the media system (Stremlau & Gagliardone, 2015).

5.4. Political Parallelism

Hallin and Mancini (2004) use the concept of political parallelism as the third dimension of variation. They argue that journalists have played different roles in politics at different times. While the role of a political journalist had to give way for a neutral role with the coming of professionalism, no one would argue for full attainment of neutrality in journalism. Therefore, the key issue goes to identifying the extent of the connection between actors in media institutions and political parties. Hallin and Mancini adopt the concept of political parallelism from Semour-Ure's (1974) *party press parallelism* – meaning parallelism between the media system and the party system. To this end, they argue that even though one to one connection between the media and the political system is not common today, political tendencies still persist. They go on identifying multitudes of ways to detect political parallelism, inter alia by studying the political orientation of media content, organizational connections, tendency of media personnel to be active in political life, partisan media's choice of audiences, journalists' role orientations, etc. Hallin and Mancini argue that political parallelism is less significant in the liberal model, more dominant in the polarized pluralist model, and co-exists with commercialization in the democratic corporatist model.

The use of political parallelism as a dimension of variation is in some way criticized for being unclear in operationalizing how far partisanship of mass media reflects the party system because doing this requires systematic analysis of data that could classify the partisan basis in the media (Norris, 2009). Furthermore, de Albuquerque (2013) argues that analysis of political parallelism presupposes a competitive political system in which its political cleavage is clear

enough to be reproduced by the media, and a stable and noticeable relationship between the media and political agents.

5.4.1.   The state and media in Ethiopia

Examining political parallelism in the Ethiopian media system requires a deeper look into the history of media, politics and political parties. As stated in the earlier chapter, Ethiopia undertook a major political transition from the communist *Derg* to the EPRDF coalition in 1991. Until its recent move to developmental state, the ruling party had followed its own unique philosophy called revolutionary democracy, an ideology "partly emerged from a Leninist interpretation of Marx's Proletariat Dictatorship thesis" (Bach, 2011, p. 641; cf. Abbink, 2011; Stremlau, 2014; Vaughan, 2011).

The ideals of revolutionary democracy revolve around its emphasis on the key role of the central party to set policies and agendas (Stremlau, 2014; Vaughan, 2011). It favors group rights and consensus over individual; and also prefers a "populist discourse" to gaining direct connection between leadership and the mass while reducing negotiations with other elites (Stremlau, 2014, p.244). Upon controlling power, EPRDF abandoned the Albanian model and introduced liberal policies. Some attributed this move to the need to gain legitimacy and attract international funds (Bach, 2011). The attempt to gain legitimacy was also done through other mechanisms such as restructuring the civil service and creating new administrative structures, thereby adopting some values of liberal democracy (multiparty democracy and 'free' media). Shortly, private media flourished and became the central forum for the elites and opposition parties to express their dissatisfaction for the new political order (Stremlau, 2014). State-press relations, however, did not continue to be welcoming for most of the part. This can be related with the government's skepticism of the private press as many of the first journalists were senior journalists and politicians of the former regime who opposed the new political arrangement. For instance, the editorial policy of some papers like *Tobiya*, the first private newspaper after the coming of EPRDF, was very clear with its opposition of ruling policies such as ethnic politics and separation of Ethiopia from Eritrea (Price et al., 2009). As indicated in section 5.2.2., such private

media's troubled relationship with the state affected journalists' access to public information, making them write news articles based on anonymous and secondary sources. The practice, however, made many journalists subject to accusations of defamation according to the 1992 press law (Woldu Yimesil, CEO of FBC, personal interview, December 28, 2016). That is why some writers argue that the press was polarized from the very beginning (Stremlau, 2014). The press was seen both as threat to public order and the ruling party's position in national politics (Skjerdal & Hallelujah, 2009). The political arena was marked by visible dichotomy between the dominant EPRDF coalition government and several weak opposition parties.

It is common in western media systems to find media reflecting distinct political orientations (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). However, such conceptualization of media outlets is difficult to find in the Ethiopian context. In this regard, Tamrat G.Giorgis of *Fortune* newspaper says:

> In other countries, there is ideological alignment in media outlets. This alignment can be conservative or liberal; left or right or center left or center right. It is not necessarily related with party loyalty. But, newspapers are not ideologically driven in Ethiopia. It is not possible to characterize if Ethiopian newspapers are left or right by reading the newspapers. Trying to characterize Ethiopian newspapers in such a way can be a great error of judgment (Tamrat G.Girgis, managing editor of *Fortune*, personal interview, Dec. 29, 2016).

As indicated in the previous chapter, African party systems are characterized by weak institutionalization. As Manning (2005) states, the development of the party system in Africa is different from established democracies since it is marked with political polarization and fixity of cleavages rather than cross-cutting cleavages and flexible pluralism. Besides, there is limited pluralism because of challenges of state building, predominance of state involvement, very limited private sector, and limited opportunities of emergence of power centers outside the state. This characterization of African party systems seems to describe Ethiopia's political situation as well.

As Woldu Yimesil of FBC says, Ethiopian political parties do not have a developed ideological base which the media can mirror. Furthermore, the state of competitive opposition political parties is weak and deeply divided. Adding to the problem, studies indicate that the

opposition parties face pressure from the government by way of suppression of political space, intimidation of members and routine surveillance (Dessalew, 2014).

Despite the absence of ideological alignment in the media, a number of respondents agree that there are significant alliances between the media and political parties, characterized by a dichotomous relationship between media affiliated to the ruling party (pro-government) and those affiliated to opposition parties. As Communication Minister Dr. Negeri Lencho states, many private media outlets widely reflect a tone of anti-government sentiment (personal interview, January 22, 2017). Woldu Yimesil of FBC on his part identifies three types of political affiliations: media that unconditionally support the ruling government; media that support the government while criticizing its weaknesses; and those wholly opposing the ruling government (Woldu Yimesil, CEO of FBC, personal interview, December 28, 2016). Whichever the divisions can be, the Ethiopian media are divided between government and oppositional parties.

Another way to notice political parallelism is to look at media's organizational connections with political or other types of organizations (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). Basically, Ethiopian media outlets are owned either by the state or by private companies. It is not common to find a visible organizational connection between the media and political parties partly because of the problems mentioned by De Walle and Butler's (1999), such as weak institutionalization of African party systems and absence of formal links between the media and organized social groups. The issue is even more attributed to the fact that media ownership of political parties and religious organizations at all is prohibited by law (Broadcasting Services Proclamation No 533/2007, article 23(3-4). However, despite the absence of visible connections between the media and organized groups, some media houses such as FBC and Walta Information Center were historically established as part of the TPLF struggle and with links to political economy indicating evident but invisible organizational connections with the party. Legally speaking, however, both of them are today registered as commercial media. Yet, Woldu Yimesil of FBC confidently speaks of his media's support of the government and its developmental state policy while at the same time criticizing weaknesses in the government system. He says:

> We follow the principles of the developmental democratic state. We do not
> agree with the mainstream view of journalism that states "it is not news

when a dog bites a man; but it is news when a man bites a dog". We believe we can bring change by educating people. Because poverty is at the maximum peak in Ethiopia, death of Ethiopians has been treated as a normal thing. Construction of roads is not a news in the western world; but it is news for us because we used to have a society that wasn't connected for centuries. Education is normal for western societies but here we have the highest illiterate society who can't read and write to death. So, development issues are news for us. We do all things that would alleviate poverty and bring change in the society. We work in nation building. And yet we also criticize when there are wrong doings in the government (Woldu Yimesil, CEO of FBC, personal interview, December 28, 2016).

The other element of political parallelism proposed by Hallin and Mancini (2004) is the tendency for the media professional to be active in political life. It is clear that getting reliable data on the political attitude of journalists is never easy in a restrictive society like Ethiopia. However, differences were observed among the interviewed journalists concerning participation of journalists in politics. While it is not allowed to become a member of political parties in the *Capital* newspaper, involvement of journalists in political life does not seem to be a worrying subject for the management of *The Reporter.* The managing editor of the newspaper says:

As you know the Constitution gives every person the right to follow any religion or any political ideology. We don't care about which religion or political ideology journalists follow. However, we expect them to be professional in their work by following the journalistic code of ethics. We expect them not to bring their personal political or any belief into their journalistic work. (Melaku Demise, managing editor of *The Reporter*, personal interview, December 26, 2016).

Still a stronger form of journalists' involvement in politics is found in FBC where interested journalists participate in regular meetings concerning the party which they are members of (i.e. EPRDF, the ruling party). However, this is not done by all the journalists as membership is voluntarily.

As the recent *Worlds of Journalism Study* report indicates, most journalists in Ethiopia are found "midway between pro-government and oppositional" (Skjerdal, 2017, p.14). Even though the result can indicate that journalists sympathize partly with the government and partly with the opposition, it is also likely that some journalists use "the centre value as a way to express

that they do not want to expose a political standpoint" (p.14). The particular study indicated a slightly higher proportion of pro-government (22.7%) journalists than oppositional (7.7%). Furthermore, the study found more oppositional journalists in the private media than in the state media. However, differences were also seen in the percentage of oppositional journalists in the state media.
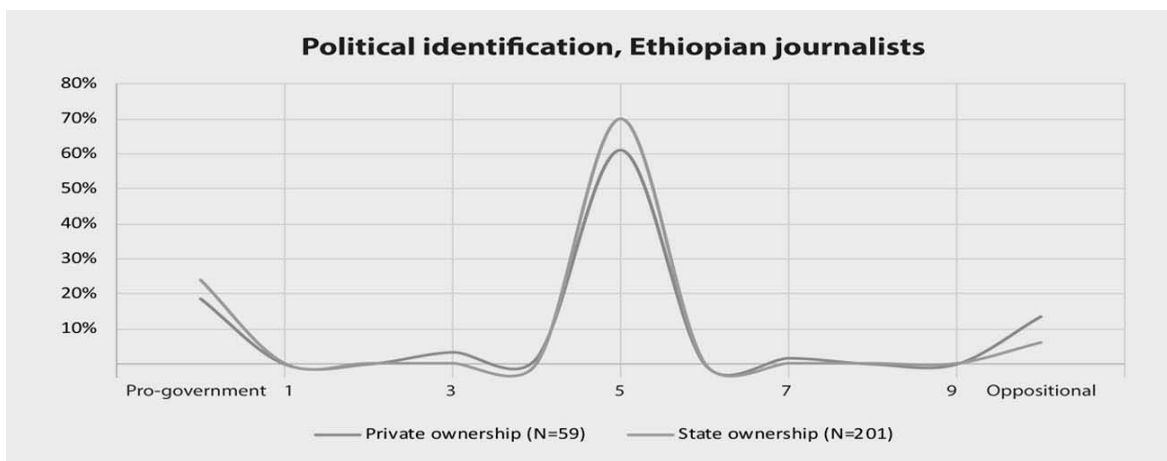
Graph 3: Political Identification of Ethiopian Journalists (Source: Skjerdal, 2017, p.14 WJS)

One of the other manifestations of political parallelism is journalistic role orientations and practices. Media systems with a so-called publicist tradition where influencing public opinion is important have a higher level of political parallelism than journalists where the information-providing role is important (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). It is not practically possible to include a survey of role orientations of journalists in this master thesis. However, the recent *Worlds of Journalism Study* shows that Ethiopian journalists' professional role orientation is marked by strong commitment to national development and government policy (Skjerdal, 2017). Thus, the use of this sub dimension indicates high political parallelism as Ethiopian journalists value the importance of advocacy and social change.

Moreover, analyzing whether media content reflects political orientation is yet one of the other ways to manifest political parallelism in the media system. However, as Norris (2009) states, doing this requires systematic analysis of data that could classify the partisan basis of the media – which surely needs a separate content analysis study. Checking this sub-dimension

within the parameters of this thesis is not possible. A number of studies, however, indicate that the Ethiopian media is marked by polarization between pro-government and oppositional groups (Price et al, 2009; Stremlau, 2014).

To sum up, the Ethiopian media landscape seems to have high political parallelism in its own unique way. Economically weak newspapers of Southern Europe are often dependent on the state, political parties, church or wealthy patrons. However, this is not the case in the Ethiopian local context where most of these social groups are weak. Ideological linkages between the media and political or other groups are not outspoken, but the media still tend to lean either towards the government or the opposition. Moreover, Ethiopian journalists play publicist roles in terms of advocacy and social change as opposed to a neutral role. Furthermore, some tendencies of historical organizational connections of media with political parties have been seen in the media system (e.g. *FBC* and *Walta Information Center*). However, the nature of political parallelism in Ethiopia is different from a one-to-one type parallelism where specific media channels mirror a political ideology or an organized social group.

5.5. Professionalization

The last dimension of variation proposed by Hallin and Mancini (2004) is journalistic professionalization. Even though professionalization in journalism is a debated subject, the authors identify three ways in which journalistic professionalization can be traced. These are journalistic autonomy (control over work process), existence of distinct professional norms, and journalists' public service orientation (Hallin & Mancini. 2004). They also introduce the concept of instrumentalization to denote control of media by outside actors such as politicians, social groups, economic actors etc. Hallin and Mancini argue that in media systems marked by low professionalization, media houses can be instrumentalized because journalists either lack autonomy, or are guided by political instead of journalistic criteria, or even serve particular interests than functioning as public trust. Even though empirical findings are rough, the authors argue for an inverse relationship between political parallelism and professionalization. They maintain that in media systems with high political parallelism, where media organizations are

strongly tied to political organizations and journalists are deeply involved in politics, professionalization is likely to be low. This can be understood in a different way, meaning that the development of journalistic professionalization has eroded political parallelism by diminishing the control of parties and other groups over media.

Local understanding of professionalization, expressed in the interviews, however, is somewhat different from Hallin and Mancini's characterization. By professionalization, many respondents refer to the skills journalists should master in their work. For Woldu Yimesil of FBC, professionalization of a journalist is measured by the "journalist's skill in mastering the ABC of journalists" and "the ability to understand the operating environment, interest of the people, media philosophy, government policy, global issues, culture and political system" (Woldu Yimesil CEO of FBC, personal interview, December 28, 2016).

The first Ethiopian journalist association was *Ethiopian Journalist Association* (EJA), established in 1968 (Meseret, 2013; Skjerdal, 2012a). Following the opening of private publications, another group named *Ethiopian Free Press Journalists Association* (EFJA) emerged in 1993. However, professional journalistic associations in Ethiopia are deeply divided between private and government media journalists (Skjerdal, 2012a). Adding to the problem, these associations face pressure from the government. For instance, Ethiopia's first private journalists' association EFJA was suspended by the government in 2003. The government took the decision for reasons such as the association "didn't have its paperwork in order[13]". Following that, another 'government friendly' association named *Ethiopian National Journalists Union* (ENJU) was established in 2003 (Skjerdal, 2012a, p.203). Membership of journalists towards traditional journalist associations is not well developed. However, in recent years, Ethiopia has witnessed an increase in professional journalistic associations, with special interest associations on environment, gender, health, science, sport, etc. (Skjerdal, 2012a).

Interviewees expressed their limited participation in journalist unions or associations as, they say, "many of them are either inactive or haven't got legal recognition from the government". For instance, Melaku Demise of *The Reporter* newspaper says:

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[13] http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/3261571.stm

> All the journalist associations in Ethiopia are inactive. They are represented only by people who are self-proclaimed as the presidents of these associations. No journalists get involved with them. I personally have not had any contact with any association throughout my life in journalism (Melaku Demise managing editor of *The Reporter*, personal interview, December 26, 2016).

Similarly, Groum Abate of the *Capital* newspaper says that journalist associations are used by individuals who founded them for their own personal benefits.

The most recent attempt to form a press council in Ethiopia was made with the establishment of the *Ethiopian Media Council* on 12th July 2015. The council was established by journalists to self-regulate their activities, with the hope that it "will minimize widespread and often constant government involvement in the media" (Amanuel, 2015, January 15). The council was formed by a team of journalists coming both from the government and private media. This time the government showed an active role in directly participating in the establishment process.

Yet, the media council is critiqued by journalist Wondwossen Mekonen, the president of the inactive Ethiopian Free Press Journalists Association (EFJA), claiming it is run by publishers, not journalists. He says, "the press council is hijacked by publishers... They [the publishers] snatched the journalist association we fought for several years". Wondwossen is more concerned by the fact that the council is run by newspaper publishers instead of journalists who are the "real players" in the profession (Wondwossen Mekonen, president of EFJA, personal interview, January 17, 2017).

 In spite of the government's positive role in the establishment of the council, it did not get legal recognition until December 2016. The recently appointed Communication Minister, Dr. Negeri Lencho, agrees that the legalization process of the council has been too long. The minister promised that legalizing the council is going to be one of his first assignments, saying that "the issue is held between EBA and OGCA" (Negeri Lencho, Minister of OGCA, personal interview, January 22, 2017).

Many interviewed journalists hope that the media council would rescue journalists from unnecessary intimidation of government bodies (e.g. the police) and save them from multiple court appearances. For instance, Groum Abate of *Capital* says, "it was good if the council was

formally established and became functional. It would have saved us from any forceful treatment of government or any other bodies" (Groum Abate, editor of *Capital,* personal interview, January 2, 2017).

Currently, the Ethiopian Media Council faces two key challenges. The first one is from the deeply divided environment among Ethiopian journalists. As Woldu Yimesil of FBC says, "the media environment is not healthy- it is full of dichotomies". As a result, it seems unlikely that Ethiopian journalists eventually have the gut for deliberation among themselves (Woldu Yimesil CEO of FBC, personal communication, December 28, 2016). The absence of press councils indicates lack of consensus on ethical standards in the media (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). The other and perhaps bigger challenge is the issue of financing. As Skjerdal (2012a) writes, some journalist associations faced serious challenges in securing funding because of the 2009 CSO law that "restricts organizations focusing on democracy and human rights issues to receiving no more than 10% of its income from foreign funding" (p.41). The same problem holds for the new council. This makes the existence of the media council unlikely because as some interviewed media managers such as Woldu Yimesil of FBC indicate, their companies might not have enough monetary contributions for the council (Woldu Yimesil CEO of FBC, personal communication, December 28, 2016).

As mentioned above, the interviewed journalists' level of participation in journalist unions or associations is low. In fact, membership of professional associations is low on the country level. As the *World of Journalism Study* indicates, only a small portion (16.3%) of the journalist population are members of professional associations. Furthermore, the study reveals that even though there are more than 15 specialized organizations and organized networks, none of them serves as unions in the sense of "negotiating journalists' income and work conditions" (Skjerdal, 2017, p.8).

Journalistic autonomy, by way of greater control over the work place, is one of the other manifestations of professionalization in the media system. Interviews with state media journalists indicate lower journalistic autonomy in the official media houses. For instance, journalists in *Addis Zemen* (state daily) and *Ethiopian News Agency* (ENA) write news stories in two ways: project news and event reporting. However, some interviewees in *FBC, The Reporter,*

Fortune and *Capital* among the private media houses claim that there is professional autonomy in their newsrooms. This could be related with the fact that some of these interviewed journalists are editors who manage journalists and might not admit that there is lack of autonomy in their newsroom. Yet, it is important to note that autonomy is easier said than practically done. Since Hallin and Mancini's (2004, p.35) focus in discussing autonomy is also on "corps of journalists as a whole", it is better to see the case with broader data. According to the *World of Journalism Study*, Ethiopia is grouped among the countries with the least editorial autonomy with only 47.3% of the journalists claiming to have 'complete' or 'a great deal of freedom'[14] (Skjerdal, 2017, p.15). In conclusion, the Ethiopian media system is marked by low professionalization of journalists as evidenced by low journalistic autonomy, the publicist role (change agent) of journalists, and weak developments in professional associations.

5.6. General Summary and Opening Way for Unique Features of the Ethiopian Media

An attempt has been made to examine the Ethiopian media system based on the dimensions and sub-dimensions of globally renowned media systems models. Hallin and Mancini (2004) aimed to determine the relationship between media and politics in 18 purposively selected countries of Western Europe and North America. They used four dimensions of variation to describe media's relation with economic, social, and political environments as well as with internal rules and norms of the media institutions. In doing so, they identified three models of media and politics – the polarized pluralist model (Southern Europe and Mediterranean), the democratic corporatist model (North Europe), and the liberal model.

This research has attempted to conceptualize the Ethiopian media system. To do so, it started by asking how fit the globally renowned media systems models are to explain the media in a transitional society like Ethiopia. As we have seen, none of the models, with the exception of some resemblance with the polarized pluralist model, is fit to explain the relations between the media and the political system in Ethiopia. This is not surprising considering huge political,

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[14] 66 countries worldwide participated in the Worlds of Journalism Study 2012-16.

social, economic, and structural differences between Ethiopia and the western countries studied by Hallin and Mancini. However, some of the dimensions are sub-dimensions that are likely to have some use also for Ethiopia. This can be because as Blumer & Gurevich, (2000, cited in El-Richani, 2016) point out, the dimensions are drawn from main components at play in any media system. In this regard, Voltmer (2012) sees the four dimensions as universally applicable tools describing media and politics in different contexts.

As El-Richani (2016) writes, Hallin and Mancini's models do not claim to be universal as they are only attempts to categorize media systems in the 'West'. However, a number of scholars from different corners of the world have tried to assess their own media systems towards the models. This has gone to the level that made the original authors 'uncomfortable' (Hallin and Mancini, 2012, p.2). The authors state, "We began to worry that instead of putting *Four Theories of the Press* to rest, our book might become the new *Four Theories of the Press*, with our three models turning into a kind of universal schema to be applied almost everywhere". And true, various scholars have called for caution in attempts of applying the models in local contexts (Khamis, 2008, cited in El-Richani, 2016; Voltmer, 2012).

This takes the discussion of the use of existing media models to become a springboard to understand media in local contexts and attempt to identify unique features of the local society that must be considered in defining a functioning media system model. This study is interested to not only check how fit Hallin and Mancini's media systems models are to explain a non-western media system like Ethiopia, but also understand the relationship between the media and the political system through identifying its unique features. As discussed above, the Ethiopian media are marked by a low circulation press. The development of the print media market is slow because of poor economy, poor advertising culture, pressure from the government, absence of state subsidies, low societal need for newspapers, prevalent oral society, high illiteracy, poor reading culture, etc. The state is the major source of advertising income for many newspapers, but media houses frequently complain about the absence of a fair distribution of advertising. The Ethiopian media market has not yet commercialized. In fact, newspaper publishing is still not an attractive business in the country. The problem of conceptual overstretching is a source of caution towards the use of the dimensions of western media

systems to media systems in non-western contexts. Even though Hallin and Mancini's original conceptions of dimensions of variations are in some way imprecise in their scope, Voltmer (2012, p.244) maintains that classifying media systems of non-western or new democracies into one of the three models can lead to "conceptual overstretching" and "disguises the broad variations of constellations". The same problem holds true for the attempt to use the dimension of media market development to the Ethiopian media system. Even though a number of sub-dimensions of the media market can be applied to explain features of the Ethiopia media, it is not easy to compare Ethiopian low circulation newspapers with newspapers of Southern Europe. For instance, it can seem simply unrealistic to compare the Ethiopian context with a country like Spain which had 155 daily newspapers in 2009 (Pereira, 2015). However, striking similarities have been observed with other sub-dimensions of the media market such as the dominant role of electronic media with the absence of a mass press, gender differences in readerships, elite oriented readerships, and horizontal processes of communication (with limited coverage) which all point to a resemblance between the Ethiopian media system and the polarized pluralist model.

The dimension of political parallelism shall also be treated with some care because of differences in its nature in the Ethiopian local context. The nature of political parallelism in Ethiopia is not based on parallel ideological orientations of newspapers, but exists as support of either pro-oppositional or pro-government camps. Yet again, major tendencies of political parallelism exist in the advocacy and publicist role orientations of journalists who are engaged in social change; historical links of some media outlets with political parties; and participation of journalists in politics. The same is true for the dimension of state intervention as it does not describe the Ethiopian media landscape well unless with some adaptation. Hallin and Mancini emphasize positive forms of state intervention rather than coercion. However, the form of intervention more common in Ethiopia is the coercive kind. This is reflected in application of legislation that restricts the working conditions of journalists. It is important to keep in mind that these forms of coercion coexist with liberal but unpractical regulation that grants freedom and information access for journalists.

It has been indicated that professionalization in journalism is a debated subject. Probed with criteria of media systems models, the Ethiopian media are marked by low professionalization as evidenced by low journalistic autonomy, a publicist role (change agent) of journalists, and weak professional associations. However, data from the interviews suggest a different understanding of professionalization which is related with the knowledge and skills journalists should master in their work. A similar proposal was made by El-Richani (2016) to introduce media content and skills and levels of journalist's education to gauge professionalization.

5.7. Factors that Define the Ethiopian Media System

Like many African countries, Ethiopia transited to democracy in the early 1990s. However, this transition has not turned into a consolidated democracy. Even though some progress has been observed in the political landscape compared with the previous regimes, a significant level of dissatisfaction is common in the political system. Post-election violence in 2005 indicated the fragility of multi-party politics in Ethiopia. Even though many laws and policy documents have considered the importance of vibrant media, a liberal ideal of journalism such as the fourth estate role does not seem to be welcomed in Ethiopia. In general, the relationship between the media and the state in Ethiopia has been influenced by the factors listed in each of the sections below.

5.7.1. Legacy of the Previous Regime

The first generation of private media journalists after 1991 were mostly politicians and journalists of the communist *Derg* regime. Many private media outlets were established by people who were fired from the state media and were labeled as sympathizers of the previous regime (Meseret, 2013). Needless to say, there was a clear difference between these communist trained *Derg* journalists and leaders of the new political order. As indicated earlier, these media opposed the new political order and engaged themselves with sensational reporting. As a result, polarization prevailed in the media system. At the same time the incumbent government

instead of being tolerant to these private media, chose authoritarian tendencies by limiting the space for negotiations and controlling critical voices through various techniques, including the use of media laws and other legislation. In practical sense, the press had been seen both as threat to public order and opposition to the ruling party (Skjerdal & Hallelujah, 2009). Such perception of the media by the state is in itself explained by the second factor, which is political history and philosophy of the ruling body. North's (1990, cited in Hallin and Mancini, 2004, p.12) concept of path dependence is important to mention here. The author states that media institutions evolve over time and in each step of their evolution past events and institutional patterns inherited from the earlier periods influence the direction they take. Moreover, Stremlau and Gagliardone (2015) emphasize that the experiences gained from the development of political parties also have its own influence on the media system.

5.7.2.   Political History and Philosophy of the Ruling Party

As indicated above, the government's forceful treatment of critical media and failure to negotiate with elites in discussing strong forms of state intervention can be attributed to the communication culture of the incumbent (Stremlau & Gagliardone, 2015). The values of revolutionary democracy, which by itself is grounded in Marxist thought, seems to have influenced the Ethiopian media system. Some of the activities of the ruling party such as its move to reduce spaces for negotiation with elites through the mass media; its favor for group rights over the individual; and its interest for a populist discourse for direct connection with the public are reinforced by the ideals of revolutionary democracy (Stremlau, 2014). Moreover, the impact of revolutionary democracy is also reflected in the strong role of the executive branch of the government. For example, even though access to information is legally proclaimed, executive bodies appear as deciding factors in giving or denying information access. Because of their strength, which sometimes is more than the judiciary, journalists have limited options for legally questioning executive organs of the government.

Furthermore, Ethiopia's weak and divided opposition parties which face suppression of political space, intimidation and routine surveillance by the government can also be seen as

resulting from the leading party's scant experience in multiparty politics and democratic culture. The fact that the incumbent government come with fierce armed struggle could be one factor for the ruling party's skewed outlook towards opposition political parties. In this regard, Stremlau and Gagliardone (2015) argue that experiences gained from struggles had profound influence on the media and political system.

5.7.3.   International Influence and Superficial Liberalization

As indicated in chapter four, a number of African countries introduced multiparty democracy in the third wave of democratization. This was followed with competitive elections and liberalization of the media in the wake of the cold war era. However, the process was not entirely successful in a number of countries as they failed to create a consolidated democracy. This would include Ethiopia as well. Even though periodical elections are conducted, results are entirely skewed in favor of the ruling party. Similarly, even though various laws and policies show a favorable attitude towards vibrant media, the actual practice in the treatment of critical media has not been permissive. This might also be related with the fact that liberalization of the media, and of course liberalization in other areas such as multi-party democracy, was not reinforced by genuine development and need for a free media or democracy. Some writers argue that these liberalizations come as an attempt to comply with the political needs of the post-cold war period, and to get international legitimacy and assistance (Bach, 2011). As a result, actual liberalization is not observed in the media, indicating superficiality in the degree of liberalization. Studies indicate a situation of selective liberalization in the Ethiopian media context (Skjerdal, 2013).

5.7.4.   Underdeveloped Media Market and Institutionalizations

An analysis of the Ethiopian media system based on global media systems models reveals that the Ethiopian media are characterized by an underdeveloped media market. This is reflected through weak economic mechanisms of the newspaper market, which is hampered by absence

of commercial mechanisms of the media, high illiteracy, low consumerism, low societal need for newspapers, prevalent oral society, poor reading culture, etc.

Ethiopia's political system seems to correspond with what Voltmer (2012) describes as one-party dominance. This system of politics creates hegemonic public opinion as only the ruling party's interpretation of the political situation prevails at the expense of oppositional views which are both marginalized and delegitimized. This can be done through the ruling party's unlimited access to the state media. To this end, the skewed balance between a dominant ruling party and several fragmented opposition parties makes the institutional role and development of civil society, labor unions and other organized social groups improbable. A case in point is Ethiopia's 2009 CSO proclamation, which is one example of the state's lack of interest in cultivating civil society organizations that are equally important to the development of the media and the political system. It is partly because of this that there is limited development of civil society or organized social groups both in politics and the media. The effect of the law is clearly seen as many CSO organizations have ceased to exist (Sisay, 2012). According to Sisay's study, only 43% of CSOs were able to re-register in 2010 because many had their licenses revoked as a consequence of the new law.

5.8. Finally: Fitting to one of the Western Models or a New Model?

Since the book *Comparing Media Systems* made its debut in 2004, it has initiated significant discussion on how the media and the political systems are related. Scholars from different parts of the world have attempted to fit their media systems to one of Hallin and Mancini's models (Ostrowska, 2012; Balˇcytienˇe, 2012; de Albuquerque, 2012; Hadland, 2012; Pereira, 2015). However, the attempts have been criticized by scholars who argue for a need to remodel rather than trying to fit to the proposed models (El-Richani, 2016). Moreover, Voltmer (2012) argue that trying to fit western media models to non-western media systems has the risk of conceptual overstretching and at times may disguise the broad variations of constellations. The problematic nature of fitting to other countries makes even more sense when considering broad historical, cultural, political and other variations coming from the trajectories of the past.

Even though remodeling or adapting media systems based on existing theoretical bases is a suggested method to approach western media systems, volatility of societies and media systems can impede efforts of good modeling of media systems. In writing about CEE countries, Paolo Mancini (2015, p. 26) states that "it is possible to talk of a model if it is stable over time; if specific structures and habits that constitute it persist and overcome different temporary contingencies". As the author argues, models are more durable in their nature.

A closer look on the Ethiopian media environment shows a characteristic of some form of volatility making it difficult to conceptualize the situation in a unified model. Nevertheless, if modeling has to be done, the Ethiopian media system in addition to features it shares with the polarized pluralist media system, can be understood as an underdeveloped media and institutional environment which continues to be influenced by a mixture of historical experiences and philosophies of past and current regimes, while at the same time being sensitive to changes in the global world order.

Chapter Six: Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1. Conclusion

This study attempted to conceptualize the Ethiopian media system based on the theoretical frameworks of globally renowned media systems models. Specifically, it asked how fit these media models are to explaining the relations between the media and the political system in Ethiopia. Additionally, it attempted to find out unique features that must be considered in trying to come up with a functioning media system for the country.

In doing so, the research followed a qualitative research approach. The research was done using data collected through in-depth interviews and document analysis. The interviews were vital for generating qualitative data about different aspects of Ethiopian journalism. These interviews were done with purposively selected experienced journalists, a government officer working in media development, and a politician/government minister. The main reason for choosing experienced journalists was to get historically rich data in addition to explaining the current situation. Moreover, it helps to include a longitudinal perspective to track the historical changes in Ethiopian journalism. Document analysis has also been employed in the study to gain insight on the legal framework of the Ethiopian media. In this regard, important legal documents which indicate the historical development of the media legislation were reviewed. These include Ethiopia's first press law, the improved 2008 mass media law, and national media policy. In addition to this, the study has also consulted other important proclamations that have a bearing on the professional environment for journalists and the media in general. These are the 2009 anti-terrorism proclamation and the 2012 telecom fraud offense proclamation. However, the focus is only on the parts which have direct effects on journalists and the media.

The analysis concludes that globally renowned media system models are inadequate to explain the historical development of media and politics in Ethiopia. Even though some features of the Ethiopian media such as a weak media market, low circulation of newspapers, dominance of electronic media, low professionalization, elite oriented press and absence of commercialization resemble elements of the polarized pluralist model, issues such as circulation

of newspapers and relationship between media and politics differ remarkably from the model. It would for example be unrealistic to compare the circulation size of Ethiopian newspapers with the ones found in France or Spain (two polarized pluralist countries). The local context falls far below what has been described as low ranks in the 'western media systems' on a number of indicators. The case of political parallelism is another dimension where the local context reflects such a difference. For instance, South European newspapers have closer ties with political parties or other organized social groups. For that matter, these groups also own a number of newspapers. Such types of connections are difficult to find in the Ethiopian context. This is mainly because the institutions are in the first place weak and underdeveloped. Furthermore, media ownership of political parties or religious institutions is prohibited. Yet, forms of more or less invisible connections can be seen in some media houses such as *FBC* or *Walta Information Center*.

More similarities with the polarized pluralist model can be seen in other criteria of political parallelism such as the involvement of journalists in politics and professional role perceptions. The Ethiopian context incurs a strong form of state intervention in the media. The nature of this intervention is skewed towards coercion as opposed to state intervention aiming to ensure for example quality programming. The Ethiopian media system also reflects low levels of professionalization when examined against Hallin and Mancini's criteria of professionalization. At the same time, a slightly distinct local understanding of professionalization is observed, focusing primarily on knowledge and skills of journalists. Overall then, several of the dimensions of Hallin and Mancini's media systems models are useful in an analysis of the Ethiopian media system, though some local adaption is also necessary.

The research has also identified various distinct features that must be considered when defining a functioning media system model for Ethiopia. The nature of media and politics is influenced by the legacy of the previous regimes, political history and philosophy of the ruling party, international influence which has led to superficial liberalization, and an underdeveloped media market with an accompanying weak institutional environment. Based on these salient factors, the Ethiopian media can be understood as a media sector in need of development and

an institutional environment which continues to be influenced by the ideas of both the past and current regimes, though sensitive to changes in the global world order.

6.2.   Recommendations

The study of media's relation with the political system is dominated by frameworks derived from experiences of a limited number of established democracies in North America and Western Europe. This master thesis is an attempt to conceptualize the Ethiopian media system based on globally renowned media systems models. However, the research has questioned the theoretical relevance of these media models to the local context and has also attempted to identify salient factors which shape the relationship between media and politics in Ethiopia. The researcher believes that efforts of trying to understand the local context of a media system is crucial and more productive than attempting to fit a country's media into a western media model at any cost. The writer of this thesis believes that additional studies can bring further understanding on the issue under scrutiny. Therefore, the researcher wishes to invite students and scholars to study the topic in more detail to come up with a strong and unified framework for analyzing media and politics in emerging democracies.

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Appendices

State Owned Broadcasting Services/ Public Service Broadcasting Services (App. 1)

№	Owner of Broadcasting Service	Name of Broadcasting Station	Region	Type of Ownership	Year of Est. (* in E.C)	Type of Frequency	Area Coverage	Daily Broadcast in Hr.	Weekly Broadcast in Hr.	Language
1	Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC)	FM Addis 97.1	Addis Ababa	State	1995	FM 97.1	Regional	24 Hrs.	168 Hrs.	Amharic
		Ethiopian Radio	"		1927	SW MW	National	18 Hrs.	126 Hrs.	Amharic, Oromigna, English, Tigrigna, Somaligna, Afarigna, Arabic, and French
		Ethiopian Television	"		1956	VHS VHF	National	24 Hrs.	168 Hrs.	Amharic, Oromigna, English, Tigrigna, Somaligna, Afarigna, Harerigna
		FM 104.7	"		2007	FM 97.6	Addis Ababa and its surrounding	18 Hrs.	126 Hrs.	Arabic, French, English
2	Oromia Mass Media Agency	Oromia Television	Adama & Addis Ababa		2000	VHF 187.75	Regional	Mon- Fri 6 Hrs and Sat.& Sun 9 Hrs.	48 Hrs.	Oromigna, Amharic, English,

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№	Owner of Broadcasting Service	Name of Broadcasting Station	Region	Type of Ownership	Year of Est. (* in E.C)	Type of Frequency	Area Coverage	Daily Broadcast in Hr.	Weekly Broadcast in Hr.	Language
		Oromia Radio Station	Adama		1999	MW	Regional	Mon- Fri 7:30 Hrs and Sat.& Sun 9 Hrs.	67 Hrs. and 10 minutes	Oromigna, Amharic, English
		Oromia FM 92.3			2000	FM 92.3	Adama and its surrounding	Mon-Fri:15:30	76 Hrs and 50Minutes	Oromigna, Amharic, English
		Oromia Television (Stelite)	Oromia	State	19/5/08		Africa, Europe, Asia, Australia, North America	24 Hrs.	164 Hrs.	Oromigna
		Dire Television	Dire Dawa		2000	VHF	Dire Dawa and its surrounding	3 Hrs.	21 Hrs.	Oromigna, Amharic, English
3	Dire Dawa Mass Media Agency	FM Dire 106.1	"		1997	FM 106.1	Dire Dawa and its surrounding	11:00 Hrs.	77 Hrs.	Oromigna, Amharic, Somaligna

№	Owner of Broadcasting Service	Name of Broadcasting Station	Region	Type of Ownership	Year of Est. (* in E.C)	Type of Frequency	Area Coverage	Daily Broadcast in Hr.	Weekly Broadcast in Hr.	Language
4	Amhara Mass Media Agency	Amhara Regional Radio	Amhara	State	1997	MW 0.801	Amhara regional Western Zones and Weredas	9:00 Hrs	63 Hrs	Amharic, Agewigna, Hemtigna and Oromigna
		FM Bahir Dar 96.9			1997	FM 96.9	Regional	6:00 Hrs.	42 Hrs.	Amharic
		Debre Birhan FM 91.4			2002	FM 91.4				Amharic
		Debre Markos FM 91.2			2002	FM 91.2				Amharic
		Gonder FM 88.0			2002	FM 88.0				Amharic
		Dessie FM 87.9			2002	FM 87.9				Amharic
		Amhara Television /Satelite/	Amhara region	State	6/1/08		West Africa, North Africa, Middle East, Europe, North America	18 Hrs.	126 Hrs.	Amharic
5	Addis Ababa Mass Media Agency	FM 96.3	Addis Ababa		1998	FM 96.3	Addis Ababa and its surrounding	18:00 Hrs.	126 Hrs.	Amharic

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№	Owner of Broadcasting Service	Name of Broadcasting Station	Region	Type of Ownership	Year of Est. (* in E.C)	Type of Frequency	Area Coverage	Daily Broadcast in Hr. & minutes	Weekly Broadcast in Hr.	Language
		Addis Television	Addis Ababa		2001	UHF	Regional	6 Hrs. & 30 minutes	44 Hrs & 10 minutes	Amharic
	Debub Mass Media Agency	Debub FM 100.9			1997	FM 100.9	Regional	9 Hrs.	63 Hrs.	Amharic
		Bensa FM 92.3			1998	FM 92.3	Sidama and Gedeyo Areas	6 Hrs.	42 Hrs.	Amharic, Sidamigna and Gedeyogna
6	Debub FM 100.9 Branch Stations	Arba Minch FM 90.9			"	FM 90.9	Arba Minch and its surrounding		42 Hrs.	Amharic, Zeysegna, Gamogna, Goffagna, Burjigna, Korete, Konsogna, Derashegna, Mursegna, Gedichogna, Hoyide, Masule, Ale, Basketo, Kusmay

№	Owner of Broadcasting Service	Name of Broadcasting Station	Region	Type of Ownership	Year of Est. (* in E.C)	Type of Frequency	Area Coverage	Daily Broadcast in Hr.	Weekly Broadcast in Hr.	Language
		Waka FM 94.1			"	FM 94.1	Dawro, Wolayta, Kembata, Tembaro, Konta and its surrounding	6 Hrs.	42 Hrs.	Amharic, Dawroga, Wolaytigna, Kontigna, Kenbatigna and Tembaro
		Bonga FM 97.4			"	FM 97.4	Kaffa and Sheka	6 Hrs.	42 Hrs.	Amharic, Kaffagna, Shakogna, Na'o, Chara and Mezhengir
		Jinka FM 87.8			"	FM 87.8	Debub Omo Zone	6 Hrs.	42 Hrs.	Amharic, Deme, Bena, Tsemay, Ori, Dasenech, Male, Arbore, Bodi, Nyangatom, Hamer
		Mizan FM 104.5			"	FM 104.5	Bench Maji Zone	6 Hrs.	42 Hrs.	Amharic, Benchigna, Shikogna, Dazi, Meinit, Surma

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№	Owner of Broadcasting Service	Name of Broadcasting Station	Region	Type of Ownership	Year of Est. (* in E.C)	Type of Frequency	Area Coverage	Daily Broadcast in Hr.	Weekly Broadcast in Hr.	Language
		Wolkite FM 89.2			"	FM 89.2	Gurage, Silte, Yem, Hadiya, Halaba	6 Hrs.	42 Hrs.	Amharic, Guragegna, Alaba, Hadiya, Siltegna, Yem, Mareqo, Qebena
		Gede'o FM 99.4			"	FM 99.4	-	-	-	-
		Debub Television (Satelite)	South	State	17/5/08		East Africa, North Africa, Middle East, Europe, Australia, North America	10-14 Hrs.	78 Hrs.	Amharic

№	Owner of Broadcasting Service	Name of Broadcasting Station	Region	Type of Ownership	Year of Est. (* in E.C)	Type of Frequency	Area Coverage	Daily Broadcast in Hr.	Weekly Broadcast in Hr.	Language
7	Tigray Mass Media Agency	Mekelle FM 104.4			2001	FM 104.4	Western Tigray, Southern Tigray, SE Tigray, and Mekelle area	15 Hrs.	105 Hrs.	Tigrigna
		Tigray Television /Satelite/	Tigray	State	6/1/08		East Africa, North Africa, Middle East, Europe, Australia, North America			Tigrigna
8	Hareri Mass Media Agency	Hareri FM 101.4			1999	FM 101.4	Regional	6 Tigrigna	42 Tigrigna	Amharic, Oromigna, Harerigna
		Hareri Television			2002	UHF Channel 59	Harer Region and its surrounding	-	-	Harerigna and Amharic
9	Somali Mass Media Agency	Somali FM			2002	99.1 MH	Jigigga and its suroundings	16 Hrs.	112 Hrs.	Somaligna

№	Owner of Broadcasting Service	Name of Broadcasting Station	Region	Type of Ownership	Year of Est. (* in E.C)	Type of Frequency	Area Coverage	Daily Broadcast in Hr.	Weekly Broadcast in Hr.	Language
		Somali Region Television			2002	UHF Channel 39	Somali Region and its surroundings	4 Hrs.	28 Hrs.	Somaligna
		Somali Region Short Wave radio			2007	5.945 MH	National	12 Hrs.	84 Hrs.	Somaligna and Amharic
		Assosa FM			2006	Fm 91.4 MH	Assosa City and its surroundings	-	7 Hrs.	Amharic, Bertigna, Shinashigna and Gumuzigna
10	Benishangul Mass Media Agency	አሶሳ ት/ት በሬዲዮ Assosa Educational radio			2005	1584 KH	Benishangul Gumuz and its Surroundings 200kms			

Commercial Broadcasting Services in Ethiopia (App. 2)

№	Owner of Broadcasting Service	Name of Broadcasting Station	Region	Type of Ownership	Year of Est. (* in E.C)	Area Coverage	Type of Frequency	Daily Broadcast in Hr.	Weekly Broadcast in Hr.	Language
1.	Adey Tinase Entertainment PLC	Sheger FM 102.1	Addis Ababa	Commercial	1998	Addis Ababa and its surrounding	FM102.1	18 Hrs	126 Hrs.	Amharic and English
2.	Zami Public Connection	Zami Radio	Addis Ababa	Commercial	1998	Addis Ababa and its surrounding	FM 90.7	18 Hrs	126 Hrs.	Amharic
3.	Fana Broadcasting Corporate S.C.	Fana Broadcasting Corporate	Addis Ababa	Commercial	1978	National	MW 1080 SW 6180 SW7210	11 hour and 40 minutes	80 hour and 20 minutes	Amharic, Oromigna and Somaligna
	Fana FM 98.1			Commercial	1998	Addis Ababa and its surrounding	FM 98.1	18 Hrs	126 Hrs.	Amharic
	Fana FM Branch Stations	Fana FM 98.1 Jimma		Commercial	2001	Jimma and its surrounding	FM 98.1	18 Hrs	126 Hrs.	Amharic and Oromigna

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Station			Coverage	Frequency			Language
Fana FM 98.1 Gonder	Commercial	"	Gonder and its surrounding	FM 98.1	18 Hrs	126 Hrs.	Amharic
Fana FM 94.8 Haromaya	Commercial	"		FM 94.8	18 Hrs	126 Hrs.	Amharic, Oromigna and Somaligna
Fana FM 96.0 Dessie	Commercial	"	Dessie and its surrounding	FM 96.0	18 Hrs	126 Hrs	Amharic and Afarigna
Fana FM 94.8 Mekelle	Commercial	"	Mekelle and its surrounding	FM 94.8	18 Hrs	126 Hrs	Amharic, Afarigna and Tigrigna
Fana FM 103.4 Shashemenie	Commercial	"	Shashemeie and its surrounding	FM 103.4	18 Hrs	126 Hrs	Amharic and Oromigna
Fana FM 99.9 Wolyta Sodo	Commercial	2004	Wolayta and its surrounding	FM 99.9	18 Hrs	126 Hrs	Wolaytigna and Amharic
Fana FM 96.1 Nekemte	Commercial	2004	Nekemte and its surrounding	FM 96.1	18 Hrs	126 Hrs	Amharic and Oromigna
Fana FM 90.0 Assela	Commercial	2005	Assela and its surrounding	FM 90.0	18 Hrs	126 Hrs	Amharic and Oromigna

No.	Organization	Station	Region	Type	Year	Coverage Area	Frequency	Hours/Day	Hours/Week	Language
"		Fana FM 92.5 Mizan Aman		Commercial	2005	Mizan Aman and its surrounding	FM 92.5	18 Hrs	126 Hrs	Amharic
"		Fana FM 94.0 Debre Birhan		Commercial	2006	Debre Birhan and and its surrounding	FM 94.0	18 Hrs	126 Hrs	Amharic
4.	Dimsti Woyane Tigray PLC	Dimsti Woyane Tigray	Tigray	Commercial	1972	National	MW 1080 SW 6180 SW7210	9 Hrs and 30 minutes	65 Hrs and 10 minutes	TIgrigna, Afarign and Kunamigna
		Dimsti Woyane Tigray FM 102.2	Tigray	Commercial	2002	Mekelle and its surrounding	FM 102.2	16 Hrs	112 Hrs	Tigrigna
5.	Pakonet Media PLC	Afro FM 105.3	Addis Ababa	Commercial	2001	Addis Ababa and its surrounding	FM 105.3	18 Hrs	126 Hrs	English, French Arabic
6.	HH&TY Media and Communications	Abay FM 102.9	Addis Ababa	Commercial	2006	Addis Ababa and its surrounding	FM 102.9	-	-	Amharic

No.	Owner	Station	Location	Type	Date	Coverage	Frequency			Language
7.	Oyaya Multi Media PLC	Bisrat FM 101.1	Addis Ababa	Commercial	2006	Addis Ababa and its surrounding	FM 101.1	12 Hrs	84 Hrs	Amharic
8.	One Love Broadcasting Services PLC	Lucy FM	Addis Ababa	Commercial	17/8/2008	Addis Ababa and its surroundings	107.8 FM	24	168	Amharic
9.	Arki Broadcasting	Arki Radio Station	Addis Ababa	Commercial	08/9/2008	Addis Ababa and its surroundings	97.6 FM		168	Amharic
10.	AD Stellor Trading PLC	Ahadu FM Radio	Addis Ababa	Commercial	3/9/2008	Addis Ababa and its surroundings	94.3 FM		168	Amharic
11.	Arki Broadcasting	Arki Television	Addis Ababa	Commercial	9/2/2009	Ethiopia and World Wide	Satellite		-	-
12.	Fana Broadcasting Corporate	Fana Television	Addis Ababa	Commercial	9/2/2009	Ethiopia and World Wide	Satellite		-	-

| 13. | Walta Information Center S.C. | Walta Television | Addis Ababa | Commercial | 9/2/2009 | Ethiopia and World Wide | Satellite | - | - |

(EBA, December 2016)

*All data on the years of establishment of medium written in this document is in Ethiopian calendar.

List of Informants (App. 3)

No	Name of Interviewee	Media Affiliation	Position in The Media/Organization	Date of Interview
1.	Anonymous	EBC	Anonymous	December 26, 2016
2.	Dheresa Terefe	Ethiopian Broadcasting Authority	Media Development Director	December 23, 2016
3.	Woldu Yimesil	Fana Broadcasting Corporate	CEO	December 28, 2016
4.	Nigusu Wodajnew	Addis Zemen	Editor in chief	December 29, 2016
5.	Tamrat G.Giorgis	Fortune English Newspaper	Managing Editor	December 29, 2016
6.	Tegoust Tilma	Capital Newspaper	Managing Editor	January 2, 2017
7.	Groum Abate	Capital Newspaper	Editor in chief	January 2, 2017
8.	Melaku Demise	Reporter Amharic Newspaper	Managing Editor	December 26, 2016
9.	Negeri Lencho	Office for Government Communication Affairs	Government Minister	January 22, 2017
10.	Bekele Muleta	Ethiopian News Agency	Director	January 20, 2017
11.	Wondossen Mekonnen	President of a journalist association named EFJA	Currently, Freelancer	January 17, 2017

In-depth Interview Guide (App. 4)

A. Media market in Ethiopia:

1. How do you see the development of commercially viable media in Ethiopia?

2. What do you think about the economic base of Ethiopian media outlets?

3. What do you think are the most important challenges facing Ethiopian journalism?

4. Why do you think that newspapers have weak circulation?

B. Professionalization of journalists

1. What are your views towards professionalism or professionalization of Ethiopian journalists?

2. Is it common to find journalists play activist role on some matters?

C. Media and Political parties

1. How do you describe the relationship between media and political parties in Ethiopian landscape?

2. Is it common to find newspapers/media houses affiliated to specific political groups?

3. Is it common to find organizational connections between media outlet with other groups such as political parties, trade unions, or church?

4. Is it common to see journalists to be active members in political parties?

5. How do your media entertain differing political views in news reports?

6. Do you have some agendas of political parties or groups which your media advocate/promote for?

7. Is there any chance that your media could be influenced by any potential bodies?

D. Role of the state

1. How do you describe the role of government in the media sector in Ethiopia?

2. What are your views about different media laws in Ethiopia? What implications do you think they have to the media practice?

3. How do you describe the role of media council in improving Ethiopian journalism?