

**COVERING ETHIOPIA:
COMPARISON OF THE ETHIOPIAN NEWS AGENCY
WITH REUTERS**

By

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Declaration

I declare that, **COVERING ETHIOPIA: COMPARISON OF THE ETHIOPIAN NEWS AGENCY WITH REUTERS** is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete reference.

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SUMMARY

This dissertation examines the agendas and frames used by the Ethiopian News Agency (ENA) and Reuters in their coverage of issues and actors of the May 2005 Ethiopian Elections, by employing agenda-setting and framing theories. The study applies quantitative and qualitative methods and examined fifty news stories from each news agency, and forwards five main findings: One, ENA and Reuters differed in setting agendas. While ENA focused on the legitimacy, Reuters emphasised on the killings and arrests of the electoral process. Second, ENA and Reuters differed in their motives to make some actors more salient than others. Third, ENA framed Elections processes as rightful, while Reuters framed them as disfigured. Fourth, ENA framed government parties as visionary and indomitable, and the oppositions as wrongdoers. Contrastingly, Reuters framed the oppositions as victims, and the government parties as brutal actors. And finally, by so doing, both agencies reflected their respective interests.

Key words

Ethiopian News Agency, Reuters, global news agencies, national news agencies, agenda-setting, framing, salience, NWICO, Ethiopia, Ethiopian Elections, Africa, global journalism, ideology, values and stereotyping.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AFP	Agence France Presse
ANDM	Amhara People's Democratic Movement
AU	African Union
CIPs	Complaints Investigation Panels
CRBs	Complaints Review Boards
CUD	Coalition for Unity and Democracy
EBA	Ethiopian Broadcasting Agency
EPLF	Eritrean People's Liberation Front
EPRDF	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front
ETV	Ethiopian Television
EU	European Union
HOF	House of the Federation
HPR	House of Peoples' Representative
HRW	The Human Rights Watch
ICCPR	International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights
MOI	The Ministry of Information
NEB	National Electoral Board
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations

NWICO	The New World Information and Communication Order
OFDM	The Oromo Federalist Democratic Movement
OLF	Oromo Liberation Front
OPDO	Oromo People's Democratic Organization
RCs	Regional Councils
SEPDC	Southern Ethiopian People's Democratic Coalition
SEPDM	Southern Ethiopia People's Democratic Movement
SNNP	Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples
TPLF	Tigray People's Liberation Front
UEDF	United Ethiopian Democratic Forces
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States of America
USEDf	Unity of Southern Ethiopian Democratic Forces
USSR	United Socialist Soviet Republic

CHAPTER 1 BACKGROUND AND AIMS OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

At the dawn of the new millennium, the post modern society, as Thussu (2000:132-148) perceives it, is witnessing the operation of over 2600 media channels with the support of about 300 satellites, reaching nearly 1.5 billion people across the globe. It can be thus argued that the majority of the global citizens learn about and experience the environment beyond their immediate surroundings largely through the global news agencies, such as Reuters. Nevertheless, only a few news agencies, namely the Agence France Presse (AFP), Associated Press (AP), and Reuters, dominate the playing field of the global news exchange (Boyd-Barrett 1998).

For Boyd-Barrett (1998) the concept and development of news gathering and dissemination are highly linked with modern capitalism. The term “news” hence denotes the “reconstruction of ‘information’ as a commodity”. This commodified product is used for facilitating political and trade (economic) communications, as well as consumed for pleasure (mainly cultural). The role of the global news agencies in news gathering and reporting appears to be a contentious subject among media scholars.

The Western world praises the global news agencies for their greater role in the timely reporting of events and globally promoting of dominant liberal concepts, such as democracy and free market. They are also commended for opening up new fronts against state controlled media, which they alleged suffer draconian censorship and interferences by their respective governments (Hachten 1999).

Nevertheless, such an optimistic outlook toward the role of global news media are overshadowed by a number of disputes, when they are evaluated from the perspectives of developing countries and the exponents of the New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO). The issues, which had been largely promulgated in the debates

on NWICO in 1970s and 1980s, emerged from the perception that those who own and utilise the global news system from the West impose an ultimate power to set trivialised agendas for and unfavourably frame the issues of developing nations, and ultimately shape human consciousness accordingly (Boyd-Barrett 1997; McPhail 2002; Thussu 1998:72-73).

During the 1960s, several of the developing nations, which shared similar ideological and economic stances, formed a power block (Group of 77) that had a strong voice in support of the ideals of NWICO. According to Stevenson (1994:9), this power block argued that the media corporations from the West have left least developed countries (LDCs) synonymous with natural and man-made disasters with their efforts for development rarely noted. For LDCs, the current world communication system has been perceived as an outgrowth of prior colonial patterns. Reuters, as a Western-based news agency, too could not escape the blame of LDCs from misrepresentation. It was to correct these imbalances, that NWICO was needed, and therefore believed to provide a way of removing this vestige of colonial control. The discourse of NWICO had been such a point of contention since its inception in 1970 that the Western block could not easily escape its implications (McPhail 2002:8,177-179,196), until the new political order, which heralded the victory of the capitalist ideology over the socialist one, emerged in 1989. The Western block has since been vigorously opposed to any such a plan, lest it would bring increased interference with the press, and eventual reduction of market share and profitability.

The paths taken to enforce the ideals of NWICO have however laid the frameworks for many developing countries to establish regional and national news agencies. Many of these national and regional news agencies have been reporting on issues and actors, often in a perspective different from that of the Western news agencies. According to Paterson (1998), these news agencies focus more on developmental and state-related issues, rather than on celebrities and sensational events. The Ethiopian News Agency (ENA), too, as a leading government-owned

national news agency in Ethiopia, has been said to predominantly reflect the interests and values of the ruling party, and the government (Bonsa 2002). The ruling party and the government have been evidently characterised by their advocacy for developmental journalism and being critical of the Western media for depicting Ethiopia in negative lights.

1.2 AIMS OF THE STUDY

With reference to the introduction (Section 1.1), it can be argued that, while reporting of issues and actors of the May 2005 Ethiopian Elections, both ENA and Reuters set agendas and used frames from different perspectives. These divergent perspectives, in turn, reflected the respective socio-political, economic interests and ideological¹ foundations of the two news agencies.

The applications of agenda-setting and framing in the news reports comprise far-reaching consequences for the socio-political, and economic relations that any country forges with the outside world at regional and global levels. As was reflected in the debates of NWICO, the global media systems are criticised for putting forward the agendas of the developed nations, while trivialising the developing countries'. While the global media systems depict developed nations positively; they largely portray developing countries as tainted. By doing so, the global media have never been free from the criticism of being an instrument of the Western world in the distribution of political and economic powers across the world (McPhail 2002).

On the other hand, the local media systems in many developing countries have been attacked by many media scholars for being increasingly a propaganda machine of incumbent governments (Paterson 1998). It is therefore worthwhile to identify the agendas and frames used by media systems in order to understand what and how political powers and interests have been justly or unjustly distributed to media users. To do so, the dissertation examines the news reports of Reuters and ENA and attempts to identify and compare the agendas and frames they employed, while covering issues and actors of the dramatic as well as contested

Ethiopian National Elections, the voting day of which was on May 15, 2005.

The purpose of this study can therefore be summarised as, first, to examine the age-old perception of many of the developing nations and scholars that the trans-national media trivialise their agendas and frame their issues and actors in a manner that advance their ideological and national interests of developed nations. Second, to look into the perception of many communication scholars that numerous media systems in developing countries suffer from direct government interventions, relegating them to mere propaganda apparatus. To this effect, using the agenda-setting theory, the dissertation determines and compares the contents (what were covered) and focuses of, as well as the frames (how they were covered) used by the two news agencies: ENA and Reuters, while covering issues and actors of the May 2005 Ethiopian Elections.

1.3 THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In light of the theories of agenda-setting and framing, it can be argued that the agendas and frames that Reuters employed in its coverage of the issues and actors of the May 2005 Ethiopian Elections were vastly different from those utilized ENA. In doing so Reuters reinforced the view that the Western news agencies negatively stereotype the developing countries. Contrastingly, it can also be argued that ENA, as mouthpiece of the ruling party and the government, reported issues and actors of the May 2005 Ethiopian Elections in such a way that they reinforce the stands and views of the ruling party.

In view of such arguments, the dissertation therefore raises the following two research questions for examination:

- What issues and actors had ENA and Reuters made salient, and how were they different from each other in their coverage of the May 2005 Ethiopian Elections?
- How had issues and actors of the May 2005 Ethiopian Elections been framed by ENA and Reuters and how were they different from each other in this respect?

1.4 THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

The examination of these research questions is predicated mainly on the theories of agenda-setting and framing. As notable media effect theories, agenda-setting and framing paradigms provide for the theoretical frameworks through which the degree of salience and portrayals can be examined (Fourie 2001).

Agenda-setting can be described as a process through which certain issues and actors are made more significant than others. McQuail (2000:426) explains that mass media provide a relative attention to issues and actors in news coverage by influencing the rank order of public awareness of issues and attribution of significance, which, in effect, could influence public policy making. And this means, the examination of agenda-setting can offer an explanation of why information about certain issues, and not others, is available to the public; as well as how public opinion is shaped and why certain issues are addressed through policy actions while other issues are not.

Like the agenda-setting theory, the framing theory also provides an explanation about the critical role the media can play in influencing human perception of issues and actors of events. The framing theory highlights that media urge users to think in a certain way about the content they disseminate. In this sense, framing is not about facts but rather about the meaning it imposes on the reported facts. Framing therefore arranges a set of information in a certain way so as to impose a definite meaning on it.

Agenda-setting and framing techniques are thus used in this dissertation as a paradigm for investigating, identifying and understanding how and why ENA and Reuters had portrayed the issues and actors of the May 2005 Ethiopian Elections.

1.5 METHODOLOGY

The methods of quantitative and qualitative content analysis were applied to examine the research questions. While the examination of the salience of issues and actors of the May 2005 Ethiopian Elections involved mainly a quantitative approach, the framing of issues and actors called for the

qualitative approach. Fifty randomly sampled news reports of ENA and Reuters, which were wired in the post-Elections period, were examined. The May 2005 Ethiopian Elections were the focus of this dissertation, as these Elections constituted significant socio-political and economic implications at national and regional levels. Reuters, as a prominent global news agency, and ENA, as a national counterpart to Reuters, were selected on the ground that they would lend realistic opportunities for the examination of the research questions, as they had been the major news agencies in the Ethiopian context, including the May 2005 Elections.

1.6 OVERVIEW OF THE DISSERTATION

The various aspects of the research topics are dealt with in six chapters. The second chapter briefly discusses the theoretical foundations of the dissertation, wherein the agenda-setting and framing theories and their effects on media users are discussed. It also briefly highlights the factors that influence objective reporting and Ethiopia's experience in the global media system. The third chapter deals with the socio-economic and political contexts in which the May 15 Ethiopian Elections took place, and the outcomes of the May 2005 Ethiopian Elections. This chapter also compiles some facts about ENA and Reuters, with descriptions of their historical milestones. The fourth chapter is dedicated to the methodology, wherein the methods of data collection, sampling and analysis are outlined. The fifth and six chapters present the examination of the news reports, as well as the findings and concluding remarks, respectively.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS OF THE STUDY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This dissertation posits that there exist agenda-setting and framing roles of the mass media on local and global scales. Such understandings call for theoretical frameworks, such as agenda-setting and framing, in order to explain why and how mass media have been playing such roles. In other words, the agenda-setting and framing theories have been among the notable effect theories developed by communication scholars in the examination of media contents. McQuail (2000) says these two theories provide for the frameworks through which the degree of salience and framing of issues can be examined and explained. In this regard, the concept of agenda-setting and framing can be said to have long been a component of political communication theory, particularly in the study of election coverage.

Communication scholars, who examine the agenda-setting and framing influence of the news media, focus on various public and political issues. Some believe that the media deemphasize certain issues, some with light coverage, and many rarely mentioned or totally neglected. By influencing media users to focus on selected agenda and think in a certain way, the news media are thought to be engaged in what may be called an indirect distribution of political power among societies, wherein few are bestowed with, some are interceded in and many are excluded from such power (Van Dijk 2000). This far reaching implication works toward explaining why the theories of agenda-setting and framing constitute an important place in the study of media communication.

This review, therefore, confers a special focus on the agenda-setting and framing theories as relevant theoretical concepts in examining news reports of the two news agencies. The review also briefly looks into the effects of agenda-setting and framing, as well as the factors that influence

objective reporting, as well as Ethiopia's experience in the global media systems.

2.2 AGENDA-SETTING THEORY

The concept of media agenda-setting has long been part of the communication theory, although the term itself is fairly of recent phenomenon. Brosis and Weimann (1996:561) indicate that this theory originated in early the 1960s through Bernard Cohen, who believes that media cannot be successful by telling people all the facts in every context, but rather selectively report. Tedesco (2005:187) however, sees an earlier origin of the theory and argues that scholars, at least, had been reflecting the idea of the agenda-setting role of the mass media since the publication of the book, *Public Opinion*, by Walter Lippman in 1922. Lippman, who was a newspaper columnist at that time, argued that humans' views of reality are entirely contingent on the information available to them (Peterson 2002:249).

It is however largely accepted that, despite some scholars who have dwelled on agenda setting since Lippman, it was the landmark empirical study of Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw, who are considered to be pioneers of this theory, that provided concrete evidence on the occurrence of agenda-setting in media texts (McQuail 2000; Tedesco 2005). According to media scholars (e.g. Hugel, Degenhardt & Weiss 1998:191; Kiouisis & McCombs 2004:36), the theory was derived from the study of McCombs and Shaw that took place in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, where the researchers surveyed 100 undecided voters during the 1968 presidential campaign on what they thought were key issues and measured that against the actual media content. The ranking of issues was almost identical. The conclusions matched their hypothesis: The mass media positioned the agenda for public opinion by emphasizing specific topics. Since the debut of this empirical study, communication scholars have made great efforts to conceptualise and map out the various aspects of the agenda-setting paradigm.

2.2.1 Defining the concept

"Agenda" is a set of issues that are communicated in a hierarchy of importance at a point in time (Dearing & Rogers 1996:1-3). The hierarchical importance of such issues, as McQuail (2000:426) explains, is made possible by providing a relative attention to issues and actors in news coverage by influencing the rank order of public awareness of issues and attribution of significance. This, in effect, may influence the processes and outcomes of a public policy. Fourie (2001:304) too interprets agenda-setting as "the dynamics to news coverage: the spectrum of viewpoints, symbols and questions that are selected to construct the news and the way they are ranked or accorded legitimacy". All these expressions imply the omission of certain issues and actors, as well as the overemphasis of others in a given news report with a view to establishing a particular way for media users to think about reality. In doing so, some issues and actors are made to get preferential treatment or emphasis, or distortion from the news media. It is therefore plausible to adapt the definition of McQuail (2000), which states that agenda-setting is the creation of public awareness and concern of salient issues by the news media.

According to McQuail (2000), the agenda-setting thesis underlies two basis assumptions: (1) the press and the media do not reflect reality; they filter and shape it; (2) media concentration on a few issues and subjects leads the public to perceive those issues as more important than others. Shaw and McCombs (1977) also say that the concept of agenda-setting often subsumes many similar ideas. They provide two examples to clarify this inference: the concepts of status-conferral and stereotyping, which both deal with the salience of objects or attributes, and are related to agenda-setting. Status-conferral is referred to as the ability of the media to influence the prominence of an individual in the public eye. On the other hand, the concept of stereotyping concerns the prominence of attributes, such as: All Ethiopians are prone to famine! All French men are romantic! According to Shaw and McCombs (1977), status-conferral and stereotyping usually reduce a wide range of differences in people to

simplistic categorisation, and transform assumptions about a particular group of people into realities. As a result, they perpetuate social prejudice and inequality, which are often very difficult to be redressed by the affected groups. These have however been criticised as invalid characterisation of objects because of their overemphasis on a few selected traits of a certain subject.

2.2.2 The processes of agenda-setting

Dearing and Rogers (1996) classify the agenda-setting process into: “basic” and, “second level” or “attribute agenda-setting”. Basic agenda-setting is defined by them as a process through which certain issues and actors become more salient than others by mass media. The attribute agenda-setting process, according to Takeshita (1997), is defined as the special characteristics and traits of issues and actors. For each issue or actor, he said, there is an agenda of attributes because when the media and the public think and talk about an issue or actor, some attributes are emphasised, while others are left out. He further says that attribute agenda-setting, by a closer attention to the specific content of mass media messages – including the tone of those messages – provides a more detailed understanding of the pictures in media users' heads and of subsequent attitudes and opinions grounded in those pictures. Though the agenda of attributes is classified by some scholars as another aspect of the agenda-setting role of the mass media, McCombs, Shaw and Weaver (1997), however, equate this role with that of framing.

According to Dearing and Rogers (1996:8), salience is the key aspect of agenda-setting and defined it as the “degree to which an issue on the agenda is perceived as relatively important”. This salience on the media agenda tells media users what issues to think about. Research studies on the agenda-setting process suggests that the relative salience of an issue on the media agenda determines how the public agenda is formed, which, in turn, influences the considerations of policymakers. Control of the

choices available for action is therefore a manifestation of power, as policy makers only act on those issues that reach the top of the policy agenda.

The agenda-setting process, as Dearing and Rogers (1996:1-3) illustrate it, is an ongoing competition between proponents and opponents of issues to gain the attention of media professionals, the public and policy elites. Thus, it offers an explanation of why information about certain issues, and not others, is available to the public; how public opinion is shaped and why certain issues are addressed through policy actions while other issues are not. A single example, which is relevant to Ethiopia, illustrates the concept of agenda-setting.

The Ethiopian famine presented by BBC's Michael Buerk, in October 1984, stunned the world and evoked the most implausible responses (Tornau 2006). Because of the investment of resources, the BBC and Buerk became the proponents of the famine by taking it as an important issue worthy of news attention and public concern. Buerk's recurrent attention to the issue by itself represented a certain power by him and his organisation to influence the global society and the policy decision process. The visual power of the news influenced the editor's decisions about the relative importance of the famine story in relation to other possible news stories.

So much so, the famine news, when broadcasted, influenced millions of people and nations in a variety of ways, and, as a result, helped to raise money and influenced policies and legislations. What is more, other media outlets also gave the famine prominent news coverage across the globe. Within a few weeks time, the very real but little known famine problem of Ethiopia was transformed into the "famine" issue and climbed to the top of the agenda in many parts of the world. The famine issues further continued to dominate for some time, as the proponents/opponents of the problem were able to generate some new and yet timely and related issues. For instance, the causes of the famine were begun to be seen in

light of the Cold War rivalries, as Ethiopia was, then, a socialist country with close ties to the former USSR (Tornau 2006).

2.2.3 Research issues in agenda-setting

In recent years, the agenda-setting research studies have grown far beyond their original domains. The agenda-setting research studies, according to McCombs (2005:544-550), currently encompass five distinct areas: Basic, attribute, psychology, sources, and consequences of agenda-setting effects.

- Basic agenda-setting research studies focus on the function of the media in reporting key public issues and actors;
- The attribute agenda-setting research studies mainly concentrate on the variety of characteristics and traits of issues and actors that the media describe. When the news media talk about issues and actors, some attributes are emphasised, others are mentioned only in passing;
- The research studies on psychology of agenda-setting examine the significant differences in the responses of media users to the media agenda;
- Communication scholars engage in the research works of the sources of the media agendas, examine the responsible body that sets the media agenda. This inquiry is concerned largely about the pattern of news coverage, the norms and traditions of journalism, the daily interactions among news organisations themselves and the continuous interactions of news organisations with numerous sources. Inter-media agenda-setting is thus one aspect of this inquiry;
- The research studies on the consequences of agenda-setting effects have been dominant areas of examination for communication researchers, as the salience of issues and actors have significant consequences on people's attitudes and opinions.

Dearing and Rogers (1996:5-6) also note that research traditions exist for the public agenda, the media agenda and the policy agenda, of which the latter is the interest of this dissertation.

- Public agenda is the public's hierarchy of issues at a certain point in time. For instance, citizens may lobby for legislation to force the airline industry to ban smoking on all flights. This invites two types of research studies: hierarchical and longitudinal. While the former investigates the main issues on the public agenda at a certain time, the latter examines the rise and fall of one or few issues over time;
- Policy agenda-setting study is concerned about policy actions that emanate from the application of the public agenda or media's role as an agenda setter. For instance, city governors may ban all smoking in restaurants, the policy of which may spread out to other places;
- The media agenda, as explained earlier, deals with the salience of issues and actors by the media, and the implications this salience brings to life on media users.

The agenda-setting paradigm is one of the growing theoretical frameworks, which has invited a number of communication scholars. As shown in the following section (2.2.4), the agenda-setting theory has been vastly employed to examine the role the media play in shifting the attention of media users in many public and political issues, including elections. The online medium (the Internet) is also becoming an interesting area to explore the extent to which the agenda-setting paradigm is potentially applicable in study of the influence of online contents on the users.

2.2.4 Examples of research studies within the agenda-setting paradigm

A few examples, from the very recent studies, can briefly illuminate the areas and applications of media agenda-setting research studies. Vincent (2000), in his study of the coverage of Kosovo bombing and related events as reported by nine different US media systems, identifies that the coverage of the bombing of Kosovo by international news agencies was

so limited that the media could not sustain the issues as significant agenda in comparison to the actual harm on the ground, and often peppered with potential bias. Werder (2002) seems to distinguish a strong relationship between media position and audience recognition of issues, while studying the coverage of leading news publications in the United Kingdom (UK) and Germany of the Euro currency's introduction. Similarly, using agenda-setting and framing theories, Inoue and Patterson (2007) study the perceptions of the US media on Japan during the 1990s, and found out that the US press was presenting the relationship in a negative light, which prompted the negative perception of Japan in the US community.

Media agenda-setting research studies, more recently, have begun to extensively consider how election issues and actors are constructed and prioritised in public opinion since the studies of McCombs and Shaw of the US presidential election in North Carolina in 1968 (Hugel, Degenhardt & Weiss 1998:191; Kiouisis & McCombs 2004:36). Since this first attempt, a large number of published studies worldwide have documented the influence of the news media on issues and actors in elections.

For instance, Asp (1983) studied the agenda-setting roles of the Swedish newspapers and found that the newspapers were the most powerful agenda setters. On many occasions, the agenda of the media and the voters' appeared to be identical. McCombs ([sa]:4-6) mentions that in the various agenda-setting studies conducted on elections that took place in Japan in 1996, Spain in 1996, and Argentina in 1997, congruent to media coverage, voters had selected certain issues and actors as the most pertinent ones. White, McAllister and Oates (2002), in their national survey on how the television agenda influenced voters' opinion of the December 1999 Russian Duma election, also indicate that the national television was influential and by far the most important of all the variables that contributed to voting choices.

As an emerging genre of research studies in agenda-setting, Roberts, Wanta and Dzwo (2002) attempt to study the agenda-setting role of the Internet, specifically the electronic bulletin boards (EBBs). In their analysis of the online media coverage of four issues (abortion, immigration, health care and taxes) in five news media, found that only for abortion did the media have no apparent agenda-setting effect, while the other topics' coverage significantly altered importance ranking.

The research studies conducted in the past few years also seem to confirm the existence of the agenda-setting roles of media systems. Kiousis (2005) explores the relationship between media agenda-setting and public opinion of political candidates in five US elections (1980 to 1996). His findings suggested that media salience of attributes of candidates had been found strongly linked with voters' attitudes and judgements. The study of Kuhn (2005), which examined French television's news focus on the issue of 'insecurite´ in the run-up to the first round of the 2002 presidential election, found that the French television did not set the campaign agenda around this issue. But, the way in which the news coverage was presented did provide objective support for the campaign themes of the two competing candidates. Tedesco (2005:197), who studies the candidate-journalist relationship during the 2004 presidential election, had also uncovered similarities between candidates and media agendas throughout the general election's campaign.

Overwhelmingly, research findings on agenda-setting indicate the powerful role of the media in making particular issues and actors more salient than others. These findings also indicate that not only agenda-setting, but also framing of the agendas for a specific goal has been discerned as the epitome of political power.

2.3 FRAMING THEORY

The concept of framing was first related to the agenda-setting tradition but later expanded to focus on the essence of the issues at hand rather than on a particular topic. In general, this means that media focuses attention

on certain events and then places them within a field of meaning. Therefore, the framing theory highlights that media urge users to think in a certain way about the content they disseminate. In this sense, framing has been not about facts but rather about the meaning imposed on the reported facts. In other words, framing arranges a set of information in a certain way so as to impose a particular meaning on it. Framing is thus an important topic as it is said to be capable of influencing human perception of issues and actors. And for this reason, framing has thus been long used as a paradigm for understanding and investigating communication and related behaviours in a wide range of disciplines, such as psychology, management, economics, health and political communications (Hallahan 1999:206).

Scholars, including Hallahan (1999:209-210), associate the origin of framing, like the agenda-setting theory, with that of Lippman's understanding of human action as a product of the images projected into minds. Some scholars consider Tversky Amos and Daniel Kahneman as the founders of the framing theory, whereas others say that Gail Fairhurst and R. Sarr actually coined the term.

Other scholars also associate the emergence of the framing theory with the work of Erving Goffman and especially to his 1974 book, *Frame analysis: An essay on the organization of experience*. One common element that ties together all these scholars has however been that, contrary to the central concept of rational theory, which advocates that people always strive to make the most rational choice possible, they believe that framing theory assumes that the way something is presented or framed influences the choices people make, and framing is thus the quality of communication that leads others to accept one meaning over another.

2.3.1 Defining the concept

Although a theoretically rich and useful concept, framing suffers from lack of a coherent definition. Entman (1993) perceives framing as a "fractured"

paradigm that lacks a clear conceptual definition, given a number of rational definitions suggested by communication scholars. McCombs, Shaw and Weaver (1997) take framing as second-level agenda setting, which tells media users “how” to think about issues and actors. Fourie (2001:305) refers to it as a news angle or interpretive or ideological frameworks from which journalists report an issue within a specific (ideological) framework. In explaining this concept in examples, Fourie says that a single media may decide to report about a person, topic, group or institution in certain way (framing) that may focus only on negative attributes of the subject. The results are, according to him, that the public exposed to such reporting will have a negative perception of the subject reported.

According to Entman (1993:52), to frame is to select some aspects of reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, so as to “promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation”. A review of these interpretations can therefore bring analysis closer to a standard definition of framing, which is suggested by Entman (2004:5): selecting, and highlighting some facets of events or issues, and making connections among them so as to promote a particular interpretation, evaluation, and/or solution.

Entman (2004:6) provides a simple example to illustrate the concept of framing. For the tragic events of September 11, 2001, the problematic effect was of course thousands of civilian deaths from the act of war against the US. Its cause was the Taliban government of Afghanistan and its de facto leaders, including Osama bin Laden. The moral judgement was condemnation of these agents as evil. And, the initial remedies had been war against Afghanistan. Such a role of the media, for Entman (1993), can be understood better as a window or portrait frame drawn around information that delimits the subject matter and, thus, focuses attention on key elements within.

2.3.2 The locations of frames

Entman (1993) suggests four kinds of frames that can be dealt with. In his model, frames can be found in the minds of the communicator and media user, as well as in texts and cultures.

- With regard to the communicator, it is not uncommon that news values, deadlines, news sources, and national, individual and organisational ideologies and values dictate the way journalists report events (Shoemaker & Reese 1991) that force the reporter/editor to shape the news angles. Here, the framers are media personnel.
- Media messages are not received as they are framed by the reporter/editor. They are also interpreted in the minds of media users, based on the stacks of knowledge they have accumulated through years. In this case, the framers are the media users. Although an audience has unique mental schemata, many frames can however be regarded as having a common effect on the majority, if not all, of the people exposed to them. Aware of this fact, opinion leaders, politicians and journalists manipulate media to project their power. Entman (2004) provides a pragmatic example to explain this concept. President George W. Bush, in his speech in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 assaults, said “the deliberate and deadly attacks which were carried out yesterday against our country were more than acts of terror. This will require our country to unite in steadfast determination and resolve...This will be a monumental struggle of good versus evil, but good will prevail”. Repeating this remark on many occasions, the media helped President Bush to unite the nation and win the consent of the US Congress to seriously deal with the cause.
- As Entman (1993) notes, frames reside in media texts in the form of keywords, stock phrases, stereotyped images, et cetera that promulgate certain facts. These frames are conveyed to media users as guidance to processing the information conveyed.

- Culture, as a reflection of values, beliefs and practices, also inform the communicator and the media user, about the foundations through which media frames should be interpreted. For instance, the frames embedded in cultures influence international media communication because journalists reporting on a foreign nation are forced to frame their messages with an eye on cultural frames of their home country.

Despite these four locations of frames, scholars often deal with the first two (McQuail 2000:454-455), of which the media frame is also the focus of this dissertation.

2.3.3 Examples of research studies within the framing paradigm

In the past couple of decades, a number of scholars from various fields had applied the framing paradigm to address research problems and hypotheses. In recent times, many scholars use the framing technique to uncover the different, as well as contrasting perspectives, which media apply to issues and actors in various settings.

One good example in this regard is the study of Entman (1991) on the news reports of the shooting down of the Iranian Airline by the US and the Korean Airline by the former USSR. In this study, Entman applied the framing theory and concluded that the incident caused by the US was covered as a technical error, while the USSR's as a moral outrage, though both incidents had been the result of grave human blunders.

Giffard (1999:340) in his studies on the Beijing conference on women as seen by three international news agencies, including Reuters, confirms the notion that news agencies tend to reflect the political orientation of the countries in which they are based. According to his study, although they provided positive reflections on China, the hosting country, the majority of the reporting was framed negatively. In his study of the frames utilised in the US television news coverage of Korea and Japan, Park (2003) uncovered that the Japanese economy was heavily framed as a rival, while the Korean economy was generally framed as cooperative. Akhavan-Majid and Ramaprasad (2000), in their study of the framing of

the Fourth UN Conference and the NGO Forum in Beijing by the US press, also discerned evidence of an anti-communist as well as an anti-feminist frames, which were an assertion of the dominant values of the US.

Other examples may shed more light on the power of media framing. Jin Yang (2003), using a frame analysis technique, compared the way in which the Chinese and US media covered the 1999 NATO air strikes in Yugoslavia. He found that both framed the event on the basis of their national interests. As a result, the Chinese newspapers framed the air strikes as an intervention of Yugoslavia's sovereignty, whereas the US newspapers framed the air strikes as a humanistic aid to Albanians in order to stop the ethnic cleansing initiated by Serbians. A narrative analysis of the US press coverage of Slobodan Milosovic and the Serbs in Kosovo by Vincent (2000) also suggests that the Serbs were frequently framed as evil and terrorists and Milosovic as dictator, crazy and irresponsible leader.

Aqtash, Seif and Seif (2004), in the examination of the media framing of the Palestinian children and the Intifada (the Palestinian uprising), also seemed to confirm the assumptions that both issues had very little media coverage and had not been presented in such a way that media users could understand the actual issues that the children and the Intifada had been beset in. Segvic (2005), in view of framing theory, examined how the three Croatian newspapers differed in their presentation of the Croatian government from 1990 through 2000. The study suggested that there were significant differences among the newspapers in framing the government; one newspaper framed the government as antagonist, another as protagonist and the third newspaper as a combination of the two. Alozie (2006), who studied African news media's coverage of the 2003 invasion of Iraq, found that, congruent to the views of the majority of the African leaders, the media had been opposed to policies and efforts intended to initiate military action of the US against Iraq.

In relation to political elections, a large number of studies on framing have been documented. A few of these recent studies grant a glimpse of how researchers apply this paradigm in election settings. Missika and Bregman (1987), in their detailed research studies on the framing by the French media of the 1986 presidential election, claim to have discerned two principal conclusions: one, the mass media played an important role in framing the campaign by negotiating with political forces over the choices and controversies in such a way it gave a meaning to the vote after the election. In this case, the media were the tools for the simplification and summary of the controversies. Second, the public was not observing the game as a passive spectator. Similarly, Choi and Becker (1987) noted that newspaper reading increased voters' ability to discriminate between the issue positions and images of candidates in the Iowa, the US, gubernatorial election held in 1986, and which, in turn, increased confidence in voting decisions.

Applying a framing theory, Reta (2000) explores how the US media covered the 1994 South African national election and found that the media had been reflecting US democratic values. Additionally, Reta indicates that while De Klerk was portrayed as liberator, consummate politician, reformist and a man of insight, Mandela was characterised as a man of forgiveness and patience, hero and black liberation leader, symbol of nationalist and consensus builder. Gan, Teo and Detenber (2005) also compare two national newspapers' from Singapore and France on the coverage of the 2000 US presidential election and found that they applied two contrasting frames, which suggested a link between journalistic ideology and framing. They discern that both papers used the horserace frame frequently, at the expense of issue coverage.

In general, it can be said that, given the studies, salience and framing of media texts seem to be a usual practice among journalists in a variety of contexts ranging from issues of economics to elections. It is thus important to note two essential aspects of agenda-setting and framing. First, they are inescapable. As government and media policies, as well as other political,

economic and cultural ideologies and values often govern the works of editors and journalists, agenda-setting and framing are at work each time anyone crafts a message. Second, they are consequential. As noted by Price, Tewksbury and Powers (1997), activating some ideas, feelings and values instead of others, the media contents encourage particular trains of thought about political phenomena and actors and lead media users to arrive at more or less predictable conclusions.

2.4 THE EFFECTS OF SALIENCE AND FRAMING

There is little doubt that the strong influence agenda-setting and framing of media contents poses on media users have invited media scholars to dwell on potential implications on individuals' perceptions and behaviour, particularly on those people living in the Third World.

According to Price et al (1997), media frames, by emphasising some aspects of an issue or actor over others, activate certain kinds of knowledge within people, and this in turn affects the trains of thought and behaviour of media users. Price et al (1997) posit that attitudes and behaviours are usually governed by cognitions, such as by what a person knows, thinks and believes. The salience of issues and actors in the mass media is thus linked to the formation, shaping and/or priming of opinions by the audience. For instance, with the increasing salience and framing of public figures in the news, more people move away from a neutral position and form an opinion about these persons.

Shaw and McCombs (1977) outline the layers through which the agenda-setting effects work in the human mind. These layers begin with the creation of awareness, to be followed by the formation of attitudes and then the alteration of behaviours. By calling attention to some matters while ignoring others, the news media influence the standards by which policies, political figures and nation-states are judged. It is thus possibly justifiable to argue that salience and framing in media coverage are among the notable journalistic practices that counter objective reporting across the globe.

2.5 OBJECTIVE REPORTING AND THE CHALLENGES IT FACES

The practice of a standard journalism has long been associated with certain professional principles, in which objectivity holds chief importance. Journalistic objectivity has been espoused by governments, human right advocates, media institutions and individual journalists and media users. These principles guide journalists to separate facts from personal judgements, and be objective in their reporting. Schudson (2000:150) notes that objective reporting is supposed to be cool, rather than emotional, in tone. Objective reporting takes pains to represent fairly each leading side in a political controversy, without commenting on it, slanting it, or shaping its formulation in any way. The value of objectivity is upheld specifically against partisan journalism in which media are the declared allies or agents of political parties and their reporting of news is an element of partisan struggle. Oosthuizen (1989) draws up that democratic media uphold the notion of objectivity in order to play a greater role in creating democratic debates and providing information without any dictatorial restrictions.

2.5.1 Objective reporting and elections

MacGregor (2002) makes clear that no greater test of objectivity, impartiality and balance in journalism exists than that posed during democratic political elections. Educating electorates on their democratic rights, providing accurate and balanced information, setting the agenda, creating a public sphere, et cetera are the most critical tasks of the media at election time. Media should play a vital role in evaluating the candidate, the election issues, campaign events and covering election scandals. To do so, media must be free and fair.

The media must be free to tell everyone what was said without pressure to twist the truth. The job of professional journalists is to fully inform citizens of the issues and their choices, so that they can decide for themselves whom to vote for. All candidates must have equal rights and opportunities to campaign through the media, without interference. Elections are thus a

great challenge for the media, as they require journalists to adhere to professional standards that entail accuracy, (getting the correct information), impartiality (not taking sides) and responsibility (obligations to the people they report about and to).

Accordingly, during the campaign period, the media must consider at least three important subjects to report: the political parties and candidates, the issues, (political parties' views, promises, policies, party manifestos, controversial issues, statements), and the voting process (election rules and processes, how voters register, the length of the campaign, how much money parties can spend on their campaigns; rules on advertising and media coverage; and who will impose penalties on parties or the media who violate the rules, abuse of any group of voters, who will count the votes). Despite these, none of the media systems, democratic or not, have been able to live up to expectations (Gans 2004). Principally, governments, media institutions, societal and professional values and ideologies, as well as individual journalists and editors have usually been said to be responsible for lack of objectivity in media news reporting.

2.5.2 The practice of news agencies in news reporting

Proponents of the media globalisation thesis, such as Denis (in Denis & Merrill 2002:194-95), believe that the operation of the global news media helps the human being to conquer time and space, and explore the world. And, this in turn widens audiences' options. According to them, the global media maintain and increase the diversity of programmes and offset centralised tendencies of local and national media systems. Some popular cultures and political and social values, such as democracy, free market, the rights of women and minorities, *et cetera*, that developed in the Western nations, have been able to reach millions of people living in the far corners of the earth, as a result. Furthermore, they hold that the global media are able to play a greater role in opening up new opportunities for global citizens, who are captives of the state controlled media, which are

suffering from draconian censorship and interferences by incumbent governments.

Judged from the perspectives of developing nations, the optimistic argument about the global news media has nevertheless been challenged by a number of counter arguments. The opponents of the media globalisation thesis say that the major news agencies retain significant associations with, according to the world system theory, the core nations². So much so, they are made to reflect the values, ideologies and interests of their home countries or regions (Boyd-Barrett & Rantanen 1998:5). Furthermore, those who own and utilise the global news system from the core have an ultimate power to construct their own realities, by setting the global agenda and framing of contents, to the global media users (Thussu 1998:72-73). Due to this fact, as to De Beer, Serfontein, Naude and Steyn (1996), conflict or bad news had been the major agendas of the media, particularly when they were reported from developing nations.

Media scholars, including Merrill (1995), Oosthuizen (1989:3-4), Weaver (1998), Ramaprasad (2001; 2003), Negrine (1998) and others, indicate in their studies that the mass media have been unable to objectively present issues and actors as they appear in the actual world. The main reasons for lack of objectivity have been time and again attributed to governments' interventions, journalistic ideologies and values, and national interests, which media content producers were accustomed to.

2.5.2.1 Government policies and practices

Throughout the world, according to Merrill (1995:29-35), regardless of what press philosophy a country might accept, objectivity is either denied or under constant attack, a phenomenon for which government authorities have been considered as one of the responsible bodies. In view of Merrill, governments control the media in four ways:

- Using legal pressure through constitutional provisions, security laws, press laws, and penal laws;

- Applying economic and political pressures, such as offering/denying of subsidies, advertising and grants as the direct interventions of governments. Other measures such as reducing/increasing of taxations, postal rates, transportation costs, etcetera are also often applied;
- Secrecy is another form of limiting the free operation of the media. Even in the most democratic countries like the US, due to evasiveness and over classification of documents, governments' press overwhelm the news source;
- Direct censorship and force are also common practices in the communist and other dictatorial nations. There are various forms of this type of forceful pressures such as official censorship, warning against and abusive instructions to media personnel.

In general, regardless of the degree and extent, almost all governments are said to control the media in various ways and based on certain ideological principles, which reflect their respective systems of governance, as well as economic and cultural values.

2.5.2.2 Ideologies and values

Oosthuizen (1989:3-4) considers the influence of ultra-media forces as external frameworks. Included in ultra-media forces are ideological principles, values and practices of the government, elites, and societies in which the media operate. According to Ramaprasad (2003:8), an ideology is an integrated set of frames of reference through which people see the world and according to which they adjust their actions. Certain ideologies, particularly those espoused by the powerful, tend to rise above others in each society and pose as the preferred values of that society. These values continue to be socially reproduced. As a result, some views or values are considered acceptable, whereas others are read out of legitimacy. First, among ideologies of interest there is a dominant ideology, which encompasses the main values of a society. Closely coinciding with dominant ideology, in most cases, is a second set of values, the elite

ideology. These are the values of those with power in society, such as the political elite. A third ideology derived from and closely related to the dominant and elite ideologies and influences journalists is what is called occupational ideology – an ideology believed to be a society's accepted media philosophy, such as libertarian or authoritarian. According to Ramaprasad (2003), as members of the society and as professional newsmen, journalists can never be free from the influence of these preferred ideologies.

Media in the developed nations is therefore said to be influenced by such ideologies as democracy and liberalism, which in turn spur the concentration, trans-nationalisation, and commercialisation of media institutions. Such institutions, according to Campbell (2004:74-77), put the major journalistic occupational ideologies and functions, such as objectivity, diversity, accuracy, analysis, investigation and entertainment at risk. These ideologies are said to jeopardise the role of journalists by compelling them to produce contents that would attract audiences who are often inclined to prefer entertainment. What is more, they also force journalists to compete each other in being the first in news coverage for fame and better pay, and thus making the idea of “coming out first”, as one of the most important attributes in news reporting.

The overall pressure of these on journalists has thus been said to result in the change in the manner in which journalism is practiced. According to Campbell (2004), in order to produce an audience-friendly and sellable content, journalists have been made to be technically uniform, and as a result, produce visually sophisticated, easy-to-understand, fast-paced, and people-oriented programmes in a minimum amount of time. The result of such a trend, as to Rayner, Wall and Kruger (2004:183), makes power elites, celebrities, surprises, bad news, good news, and greater magnitude (in either number of people involved or potential impact), increasingly dominant news values in the Western world.

In his study of the profile of Tanzanian journalists, Ramaprasad (2001; 2003), uncovers that journalists in Africa had been doing their job based on the dominant African ideology, which is a traditional African perception. Particularly, the Tanzanian journalists' conceptions of the role of the press is said to have been largely based on the general perceptions of the society and the government, though Western journalistic values – objectivity, accuracy, analysis, investigation and entertainment – were also highly rated. According to Ramaprasad (2001), these perceptions often lie in the need for portraying the country positively, ensuring rural coverage, promoting the strength and unity of communities, propagating policies of the government, portraying national leaders in a positive manner, and developing intellectual and cultural interests of the public.

Ramaprasad (2001; 2003) says the reflection of a society's dominant and elite ideologies in journalists' occupational ideology in Africa had resulted in shaping the institution of the media into becoming an instrument for the social reproduction of the ideas of the powerful, as well as the dominant societal ideologies and cultures. According to him, the African perception of authority includes fear of big men, group orientation and non-individuality. In view of Ramaprasad (2001; 2003), other values, like sanctity of authority, respect for old age, and religion, among others can be added to these lists of dominant ideologies. Mwesige's (2004) study of the profile of Ugandan journalists also shows that Ugandan journalists highly value the Western journalistic functions of information, analysis and interpretation as well as investigation of official claims. However, the study continues to indicate that they work under conditions that pose major legal, political and economic limitations on their journalistic freedoms.

2.5.2.3 Journalists and editors' views

Ramaprasad (2003:8) underscores that journalists and editors, in both developed and developing nations, uphold the worldviews of the dominant and elite ideologies, as they serve as a base for meaning construction. This occurs either voluntarily or unconsciously on the part of journalists or

through subtle as well as overt coercion and manipulation of journalists by the dominant and elite ideologies in society.

In view of Van Ginneken (2003:8-16), Western journalists seem to denote places, people and times in the most casual way, but connote them to ideologies. Most of the time, they look at the world through a Eurocentric grid, from a Christian or Judaeo-Christian point of view, from a white view, from Anglo-American points of view. They see the world in terms of East and West, North and South, First and Third worlds, and classify the world in different population and in such a way they denote ideological senses and primacy. These biases mean that looking at peoples and regions, issues and political actors through ethnicity, religion, colour, belief, social practices, *et cetera* lenses is a widely held practice in the media business. Agenda-setting and framing roles of the news media can therefore be said to have emerged from such practices and attitudes of institutions and individuals.

Arguably, lack of objectivity in media reporting across the globe left LDCs vulnerable to adverse media effects that range from cultural invasion expulsion to economic dependency, which eventually led to the formation of the NWICO in the 1970s. As a result, the growing concern of developing nations of misrepresentation and the imbalance of news exchanges between the developed and developing nations could not but appear as one of the core issues in many of the NWICO's debates (McPhail 2002).

2.5.2.4 Media policies

Media have their own operational policy within the general policy framework mainly set by governments. This internal policy, which is developed by gatekeepers, usually states the objectives, the type of the media content, other operational aspects of the media that dictate the product and its dissemination (Oosthuizen 1989:13-15). If a medium's policy is to support a certain political party, this support is usually reflected in the content. As Merrill (1995:4) asserts, throughout the world, media freedom has been an ideal framework; which no country has actually

achieved. He further notes that, government pressures in the libertarian nations, however, are usually a subtle gradual application of legal, political and economic restraints from time to time. For instance, in the case of the global news agencies, as Rauch (in Horvit 2006:430) confirms, they are "rooted in the perspectives, assumptions, and interests of their home nations, management and individual journalists". And their news reports often reflect these bases. In the process, as people do not travel and see what is happening on the other parts of the world, the global media's intermediary role is tangibly crucial in portraying homogenised views of the world (Paterson 1998:82).

In the authoritarian countries, the government pressures are more direct and less subtle. In many of the developing countries, according to Boyd-Barrett and Rantanen (1998), governments so much heavily interfere in the operation of the news media, that they are becoming the mere propaganda instruments of incumbent governments. This is to say that, African leaders in power have simply not accorded media editors any meaningful leeway to give the populace a voice in the media, which they have largely owned and controlled.

2.5.2.5 NWICO

Stevenson (1994:9) and Tehranian and Tehranian (1997:124), in explaining the NWICO's issues, claim that global media corporations from the core nations have created a severe disparity in the flow of media content against the least developed countries (LDCs). According to them, the result of this imbalance has left LDCs synonymous with natural and man-made disasters while their efforts for development have been rarely noted. Similarly, for many LDCs, the current world media system is an outgrowth of prior colonial patterns reflecting commercial and market imperatives. It is for this reason that LDCs were drawn into calling for government control of the media, limited reporters' access to events, journalistic ethical codes, licensing of reporters, and taxation of the broadcast spectrum. But for the Western governments and news

organisations such an idea had been and is still unacceptable and they have, as a result been opposed to it, fearing it will bring increased interference with the media, and ultimately reduce market share and profitability. For Western nations, only an open and free flow of information is consistent with the goals of a truly free press (McPhail 2002:9).

Though NWICO is no longer an issue in the global communication order, many communication scholars still underpin the ideals of this initiative. Nohrstedt (1986:432), for instance, in his study on the ideological news reporting of the Western media on the Third World, wrote that news reports of the global media systems have been the ideological products of Western self-image and superiority, which reinforce Western hegemony. Ethnocentric stereotypes and foreign policy interests, according to him, influence the way the Third World is pictured.

Exploring various forms of news reports and literatures, Nohrstedt (1986) summarises the manner Africa has been perceived by Western media in the following:

“Africa is seen to be unstable and chaotic, cruel and inhuman, underdeveloped and backward. The African people are seen to be suspicious, fickle, fierce, libidinous, cunning, treacherous, bloodthirsty, but also timid, lazy and over-sensitive. Conflicts in Africa are viewed from the West in terms of tribal enmity and ethnocentrism and special motives such as revenge, religion and personal prestige.”

The UNESCO-sponsored study on foreign news coverage in 1985 by Annabelle Sreberny-Mohammadi (1985) and her colleagues, can be considered one of the comprehensive studies conducted in the area. This study challenges the widely-held assumption that Africa was a neglected region by the foreign media. Rather, it asserts that Africa had gained a greater deal of coverage, but predominantly with a negative tint. Generally, as Stevenson (1985:71-80) indicates, the findings of previous studies on

the news media coverage depicted Africa as a struggling continent, whose fate had been umbilically tied to the dictates of the West.

2.6 ETHIOPIA IN THE GLOBAL MEDIA

Only few studies can be discerned relevant to this topic when one begins to explore the subject. Covington-Whitmore's (1994) study, which examines media's reports about Ethiopia before and after the Cold War, is one such attempt. Covington-Whitmore (1994) concludes that the global media system had been reporting Ethiopia in negative lights in both periods. The civil war, the Eritrean struggle, the US involvement, famine and the death of the US Governor Mickey Leland had been top on the agenda during the Cold War. A series of dramatic events had also been reported in the Post-Cold War period. The demise of the communist era and the toppling of the then Ethiopian President Mengistu Hailemariam, the cessation of Eritrea, the stalking famine, and the lifting up of Falasha Jews (an ancient branch of Judaism practiced in Ethiopia) to Israel were repeatedly reported in the Western media in a manner reflecting the Cold War frames (Covington-Whitmore 1994:10).

Tornau (2006), who conducts a comparative analysis on the 1984 Ethiopian famine and the 1992 civil war in Somalia, noted that the reportage by the BBC journalist Michael Buerk seemed to have provoked public outcry all over the world by setting the famine agenda on the BBC. Since then it was not only the international and national organisations, but also artists, musicians and common people involved in the tragedy of Ethiopia. It is also assumed that the US, as a prominent aid provider, profited from the great attention of the media to the Ethiopian crisis, as the media continuously reported the US involvement in aid programmes despite political frictions.

As Ethiopia was then a socialistic state and access to the country and information was highly restricted on grounds of ideological and security reasons, Westerners were unaware of the then famine in Ethiopia. At the beginning, the disaster was interpreted as exclusively a natural

phenomenon. And for this reason, Western nations and their governments were warm-hearted and compassionate, and were confident to feed the suffering, and thereby fortify one of the cruellest regimes in the Cold War Africa. Nevertheless, of the large-scale Western donation, as later evidences had documented, a great part of it was used to underpin Mengistu Hailemariam, who was then engaged in brutal wars against separatist rebels. This in turn had brought about an extended debate about whether it was the lack of rain or the despotic regime of Ethiopian dictator that led the country to the catastrophic level of survival desperation (Tornau 2006).

Hagos (2000:160-165) had studied the press coverage of the US media of the Ethio-Eritrea conflict that lasted for about 30 years, the longest civil war in Africa. In his study, he shares the opinion that Africa's news had been distorted for decades as a result of the interplay between media organisations and the state in the West. In the case of the Ethio-Eritrea war, he concluded that the stand of the elite press on the key issues of the war tended to be mostly politically motivated. Despite the fact that the issue of self determination was a human right issue, the stand of the US press on this issue, particularly when it appeared to collide with the US national interests, seemed to be unable to uphold such an ideal as objective reporting. Instead, it propagated the issue in line with what was good for the US. To this effect, the leading role players had been found to be journalists and gatekeepers.

Another relevant case study, which was conducted by Sonderling (2001), also focused on how the Mail and Gurardian's editorial opinion of its May 26, 2000 edition portrayed the bloody war between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Sonderling (2001) discerns that the editorial content represented the war as "reprehensible" and "futile", and the two countries as "poor", which could not merit conducting a war. The editorial also portrayed the actors/leaders of the two nations as "unreasonable". In doing so, the writer promoted her/his "pacifist" or "anti-war" ideology, while, at the same time,

concealing some facts, while revealing others such as those that support the ideology or fixed ideas of the editorial writer.

Though few in number, research studies on the coverage of Ethiopia by the international media, congruent to the tenets of NWICO, indicated that the global media firms reported Ethiopia's most eventful, catastrophic and conflict-oriented events that mainly interest the Western society. These studies also inform that the country had been portrayed in a manner that reinforces the stereotyped images of famine, war and poverty, which the country had been associated with for years.

In sum, the dissertation is based on the theoretical assumptions of agenda-setting and framing theoretical frameworks, which underpin the significant roles that the media play in setting agendas and framing issues. It can thus be concluded that media agendas and frames influence human perception of public and political issues, as well as the policy making processes. Setting agendas and framing of issues can either be intentional or unintentional on the side of media organizations. With regard to objective reporting, factors, ranging from government policies to individual views have been contributing to lack of objective reporting in both democratic and authoritarian regimes. These factors, according to Gans (2004) and Van Ginneken (2003), perpetuate the inescapability and consequential nature of agenda-setting and framing practices of the news media.

CHAPTER 3 ETHIOPIAN POLITICAL AND ELECTIONS' CONTEXTS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

As briefly mentioned in the previous chapter, Ethiopia has been receiving limited media coverage from global agencies. This coverage, however, has never been depicting the country's rich historical, spiritual and cultural heritages and successes, but rather has been reflecting largely the hard times the country and its citizens experienced in many occasions. Famine, political instability, war, food aid and government coup d'états were the dominant images painting the screens and pages across the globe. Equally important and newsworthy to the media firms were the May 2005 Ethiopian Elections. These Elections had been covered by major global news agencies, including CNN, BBC, AFP, AP and Reuters. The local news agencies had also provided unprecedented coverage of these Elections. As a result, these Elections have provided media researchers with opportunities to examine hypotheses and social problems in real situations. In light of this fact, this dissertation also has taken the Ethiopian Elections, and the reports of ENA and Reuters on the post-Elections period as bases for an empirical study. This chapter therefore briefly looks into the contexts in which the Ethiopian Elections were conducted, the Elections' output, and the brief profiles of ENA and Reuters.

3.2 ETHIOPIA'S SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CONTEXTS

Ethiopia, with 74 million people, is located in the Horn of Africa. It borders Sudan on the West, Eritrea on the North, Djibouti and Somalia on the East and Kenya on the South. The country, with 1,127,127 square kilometres area, is the home of over 80 distinct ethnic groups, which speak over 70 languages and practice distinct cultures. The largest faiths are Orthodox Christianity and Islam, each is thought to constitute 40 to 45 percent of the population (LCFRD 2005).

Ethiopia is one of the poorest countries in the world, with a gross domestic product (GDP) of roughly US\$6 billion. Its per capita annual income is about US\$100 with chronic trade deficits. These deficits have been covered by credits and loans from international lending institutions and by debt forgiveness. The post-2000 period, however, has seen a resumption of large disbursements of grants and loans from the US, individual European nations, and Japan, and from the World Bank, the European Union, and the African Development Bank. Like many other developing nations, Ethiopia's economy is dependent on subsistence-level agriculture. The country is vulnerable to recurrent and often catastrophic drought and famine (LCFRD 2005).

Historically, dominant socio-political culture in Ethiopia has been vertically stratified and rigidly hierarchical, allowing governments in Ethiopia to exercise extensive control over major resources (budgets, salaried employment, land, services, *et cetera*). The inequality of access to resources had been the primary root of conflict for many decades (Vaughan & Trovnmvoll 2002). Even in today's Ethiopia, power transition seems to follow the culture of violence, accusation and war.

The Ethiopian emperor Haile Sillassie, who ruled Ethiopia from 1941 to 1974, was overthrown by a military junta, following a series of famines and political unrest. The military established a leftist dictatorship headed by Colonel Mengistu Hailemariam. The ruling military committee, called the Derg, issued a land reform declaration, which abolished all rights of the old feudal aristocracy. All land was to be the property of the Ethiopian people. The Derg regime had close links with the former USSR and was beset by civil war against the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) that continued until the regime was overthrown in 1991. The current ruling party, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) was founded by the TPLF, when they took over power together with EPLF in 1991. The EPRDF invited all ethnic resistance movements to form a transitional government and take part in making a "Transitional Charter" that was to function as Ethiopia's

constitution until a new constitution could be ratified (Pettersen & Salvesen 2006).

The present constitution of the country was adopted by the transitional government in December 1994 and came into force in August 1995. It provides for a parliamentary form of government and an administration based on nine states: Afar, Amhara, Banishangul-Gumuz, Gambela, Hareri, Oromiya, Somali, Tigray, and Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples (SNNP), as well as two special city administrations: Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa. The states are subdivided into zones, districts, and sub-districts. Each of the nine states has its own parliamentary assembly, which elects representatives to the upper chamber of the federal parliament, the House of the Federation (HOF). Each has taxing powers and its own budget, but in practice the assemblies have had to rely on the central government for funding. The constitution also enshrines the separation of church and state and basic human rights and freedoms, and guarantees that all Ethiopian languages enjoy equal status of recognition, although Amharic is specified as the working language of the federal government (Ethiopia 1994).

The constitution (Ethiopia 1994) establishes Ethiopia as a federal republic with a parliamentary form of government. The legislative branch is composed of a bicameral parliament: the upper chamber, which is the HOF with 108 seats and the lower chamber, which is the HPR with 548 seats. The states' parliamentary assemblies elect members of the upper chamber, whereas members of the lower chamber are elected by popular vote. All recognised national groups are guaranteed representation in the upper house; representation in the lower chamber is on the basis of direct election by the population.

Terms in both chambers are five years while legislative power is vested in the HPR. The executive branch includes the President, Prime Minister, Council of State, and Council of Ministers. Both legislative chambers elect the president for a six-year term. The leader of the largest party in the

lower chamber becomes prime minister, who submits cabinet ministers for the chamber's approval. All ministers serve for the duration of the legislative session. Executive power is in the hands of the Prime Minister, who is also the commander in chief of the armed forces. The current prime minister is Meles Zenawi, who has served since August 1995. The judicial branch is composed of federal and state courts. The Federal Supreme Court is the highest court and exercises jurisdiction over all federal matters; lesser federal courts hear cases from the states. The president and vice president of the Federal Supreme Court are recommended by the Prime Minister and approved by the lower chamber of the legislature.

3.3 THE MAY 2005 ETHIOPIAN ELECTIONS' CONTEXTS

The May 2005 Elections for House of People's Representative (HPR) and Regional Councils (RC) were the third general elections since the incumbent government took power in 1991 following elections in 1995 and 2000. A year after the assumption of power, the EPRDF conducted its first election, which resulted in the defection of the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), the strongest of the ethnic movements outside the EPRDF, from the transitional government and became an opposition force. Several OLF candidates and their families were threatened and arrested. Several other ethnic movements left the transitional government the following year. There have been several local, regional and federal elections in Ethiopia since then, with a history of heavy electoral manipulation (Carter Center 2005).

The May 2005 Ethiopian Elections have been among the most noticeable dramatic events occurring in the Horn of Africa, to say the least, at that time. The campaigns were exceptionally fierce, open and sensationalised with a huge turnout of active public participation and involvement of international observers. They were the first highly democratic elections in the country's history, where political candidates, voters, the media and Elections' observers were free to operate and be critical of the ruling party. The pre-Elections' processes were outstanding, at least by African

standards, in the sense that the government of Ethiopia had the intention to make a more decisive step towards pluralistic democracy, and was keen to ensure a “flawless” democratic process, since it was said it had at first the conviction that it would be accorded a landslide victory. Additionally, these Elections were conducted at the time when new political and economic initiatives, like NEPAD³ and the Commission for Africa⁴, which Ethiopia was considered to be the leading promoter, were high on the agenda in Ethiopia and across the Western world and Ethiopia was seen as an ally on the war against terrorism and extremism (Wallis 2007).

For the May 2005 Elections, the EPRDF, which is a coalition of four parties: the Amhara People’s Democratic Movement (ANDM), the Oromo People’s Democratic Organization (OPDO), the Southern Ethiopia People’s Democratic Movement (SEPDM) and the TPLF, had been the leading contestant for power. The EPRDF is essentially an agrarian based Marxist-Leninist party that in recent years has recognised the need to launch a process of transition from a command economic and political model to a mixed economy within a more democratic and pluralistic governance structure. It is criticised for fanning ethnic problems and differences as a strategy to stay in power (Pettersen & Salvesen 2006).

Two major opposition coalitions contested the ruling party the EPRDF in the May 2005 Elections: the United Ethiopian Democratic Forces (UEDF) and the Coalition for Unity and Democracy (CUD). The UEDF was established at a conference in Washington DC in 2003 and includes 5 parties based in Ethiopia and 9 parties in exile. The UEDF is not satisfied with the existing system of ethnic federalism and wants more power to the various ethnic groups. The CUD consists of four main parties. According to EU EOM (2005), the CUD had warned against the risks involved in the system of ethnic federalism, which could lead to a disintegration of Ethiopia. In the Elections campaign, the CUD focused primarily on democracy, education and land ownership. The Oromo Federalist Democratic Movement (OFDM), Unity of Southern Ethiopian Democratic

Forces (USEDf) and Southern Ethiopian People's Democratic Coalition (SEPDC) have been formed more recently expressing their resentments over the overall performance of the government (Pettersen & Salvesen 2006).

The main legal instruments governing the May 2005 Elections were the 1994 constitution and the election law of 1995, amended before the 2005 Elections. EU EOM (2005), which evaluated the Elections process against international standards, notably article 25 of the International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) of 1966, which has been ratified by the FDRE, found it to be a point of concern. There were also concerns regarding the legal framework and independence of the National Electoral Board (NEB) and its secretariat.

The main body of the electoral administrator was the NEB, which was established in 1993 as an independent body for conducting democratic elections in Federal and State constituencies. According to Pettersen and Salvesen (2006), the administrative procedures and the overall conduct of polling by the NEB and sub-national electoral authorities were more transparent than ever before. NEB was entrusted to ensure that each of the 547 constituencies in Ethiopia elects one member of the parliament. It was expected to ensure that each constituency has a board of Elections officers who are responsible for the Elections in the constituency and for organizing and overseeing the activity of the polling stations. It was also responsible for the training of the polling station staff. Though NEB generally organised the process efficiently until Elections day, it, however, contributed to the significant delays in counting and aggregation after Elections day.

The voter registration took place from 9 January to 9 February 2005. To be eligible to register to vote, a person has to be 18 years old on the day of registration. 25 605 851 voters were registered for the elections. Of these, 13 265 721 were men and 12 340 089 women. The rate of voter registration was estimated at 85 percent of the total eligible population.

With regard to candidates, 1847 were registered for the HPR, of which 353 were independent candidates. Only 14 percent of the candidates were women. For the Regional Councils election, 3762 candidates were registered, where 2936 were men and 826 women (Pettersen & Salvesen 2006). Within these socio-economic and political contexts, the Elections have shown highly contrasting progresses in the pre and post Elections periods. The European Union, the Carter Center, the African Union (AU) and many nations, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and individuals observed these Elections (EU EOM 2005:15-16).

3.3.1 Pre-Elections period

In contrast to previous elections, the pre-Elections campaign period of the May 2005 Elections provided sufficient conditions for a credible and competitive electoral process in many respects. The government of Ethiopia took the initiative to level the electoral playing field. The NEB demonstrated greater openness and dynamism in resolving problems among the parties and the Board. In addition, the NEB established a website to post the latest Elections news. Opposition parties benefited from guaranteed access to state-owned electronic media. The Ministry of Information (MOI) and the Ethiopian Broadcasting Agency (EBA) decided to allocate free time in the state media to all parties. The EPRDF received 44 percent of the coverage and the opposition parties 56 percent (GSJC 2005).

This signifies a notable opening-up of the state media to the parties contending the Elections. The debates on the Ethiopian Television (ETV) with the major political actors demonstrated an effort on the side of the government to establish a mechanism for genuine political debate. Issues of democracy, land ownership, freedom of expression, ethnicity, poverty and economic upheaval, education, Ethio-Eritrea boarder conflict, *et cetera* were core subjects deliberated extensively by contestant parties and individuals.

According to Pettersen and Salvesen (2006), radio and television campaigning increased the last two weeks ahead of the Elections and images and messages were used that were intended to associate the opposition with the Rwandan genocide. The EPRDF banner had the slogan “Let us not give a chance to Interahamwe.” The UEDF responded by showing images of the movie “Hotel Rwanda” to demonstrate that the state-backed armed force was in command of the slaughter. Despite the controversial campaigning candidates had successfully transmitted their messages and showed Ethiopian citizens that government officials could be challenged without any fear of retribution. Most dramatically, the electoral campaign climaxed in its final week with large and peaceful campaign rallies by major contenders in Addis Ababa (Pettersen & Salvesen 2006).

3.3.2 Elections day

The Carter Center (2005) reported that the atmosphere throughout most of the country on May 15, 2005 was calm and peaceful and voters’ turnout was overwhelming. Though citizens had to wait in extremely long lines, they showed remarkable patience. Irregularities in procedures were observed, but many of these were relatively minor, particularly in Addis Ababa. More serious irregularities were observed in other parts of the country. On Elections night, in the context of the highly charged atmosphere among both opposition and ruling party supporters in the capital city, the Prime Minister imposed a one-month ban on demonstrations in the capital city, which foreshadowed the post-Elections crises.

3.3.3 Post-Elections period

Starting May 16 the quality of the electoral process declined rapidly in many respects. Disturbing reports were heard about the vote counting and tabulation process. In several constituencies at the polling station level, evidences were found that the ballot boxes had been improperly moved, secured, or party agents had been barred from polling stations or not

allowed to supervise the entire count. In the days following the Elections, it became clear that the ruling party had lost by a landslide in Addis Ababa and most urban and semi-urban areas in the country. Elections results trickled in, but there was no authoritative information on outcomes for rural constituencies. Both the ruling and opposition parties claimed victory. The opposition accused the ruling party of fraud and rigging the Elections, while the ruling party accused the opposition of carrying out an orchestrated plot to destabilise the country and subvert the constitutional order. Following these allegations, opposition parties were unable to access to state-owned media, which were available during the campaign period (Carter Center 2005; EU EOM 2005).

For the NEB, this particular time was difficult and challenging. With both the ruling party and opposition parties claiming victory, it became necessary for the NEB to release provisional results, as they became available. However, the process of finalising Elections in more than half of the country's constituencies was marred by unresolved complaints. As the scheduled June 8, 2005 date for the announcement by the NEB of provisional results approached, it became apparent that the deadline was not going to be met (Carter Center 2005).

At dawn on June 6, students at Addis Ababa University demonstrated on campus, resonating opposition complaints that the Elections were rigged. Hundreds of students were soon arrested, and several general strikes were heard around the city. On June 8, a transportation strike spread throughout Addis Ababa. Violence and gunfire broke out in several areas of the city. Official reports placed the number of those shot to death during the June 6 to 8 period at 37, with hundreds injured. Following the protests, opposition parties' leaders and supporters were either rounded up and arrested, or placed under house arrest. Opposition leaders alleged that these acts were political persecutions, where as the government blamed the oppositions for inciting the violence (Carter Center 2005).

The overall process was jeopardised as both groups started to criminalize each other. This finally led to the adoption by the ruling and major opposition parties of ad hoc complaints resolution process to deal with the numerous complaints that were not resolved through the established complaints resolution processes. The ad hoc process was structured to include two Complaints Review Boards (CRB) and 44 Complaints Investigation Panels (CIPs), which eventually faded from the scene at the end of August 2005 when the ruling party started to take serious measures against oppositions, their members and supporters (Carter Center 2005).

The outcomes of May 2005 Ethiopian Elections were perceived by different quarters, namely by the ruling party, the oppositions and the observers, in different ways. Begashaw (2005) characterises the divergent positions of the first two in direct opposition.

According to Begashaw (2005), the Ethiopian government or the ruling party believed that it had certainly and unprecedentedly opened democratic Elections in the country. In the first phase, that is, in the pre-Elections period, the ruling party said it allowed the oppositions to freely express their cause, and campaign on their platforms without restrictions or hindrances throughout the country. The government further claimed, according to Begashaw (2005), that it made available its senior leaders and government officials for the debates. According to the government or ruling party, during the second phase, that is, the day of the Elections, it was encouraging that the people had taken advantage of the democratic system made available by the government. In the last phase, that is, in the post-Elections period, too, the government was able to respond to the disputes by all the major parties, including the ruling party, over the vote results. This time the government took quick actions to put the Complaint Investigation Panel (CIP) for mediation and fact-finding in place so as to quickly resolve the disputes. Unfortunately, the government said, when the opposition saw that they had lost the majority of the countryside and could not, as a result, win the Elections, some of the hardliners from the oppositions embarked upon illegal and unconstitutional actions that

threatened the constitutional order of the country. The government was forced to restore law and order, which unfortunately resulted in the unnecessary loss of lives, including members of the police force (Begashaw 2005).

According to Begashaw (2005), the oppositions, on the other hand argued differently and said that it was largely because the donors and friendly nations had insisted the ruling party open up for real competition and for that reason the May 2005 Ethiopian Elections were much more open than before. And for this reason, so the oppositions said, mass media were open for debates and for introducing political programmes to millions of supporters, who were able to see and judge for themselves the incompetence of the ruling party's officials, and as a result, naturally turned to vote for the oppositions. On voting day, the people's willingness to wait for hours to cast their votes demonstrated the fervour for change.

Oppositions, according to Begashaw (2005), believed that trouble started on the day of the Elections, when the ruling party illegally announced in the evening that it had won a second mandate to rule the country. Soon after, reports came trickling into opposition headquarters that the cadres of the ruling party were forcing Elections' monitors to change results in precincts where they lost. As a result, though the oppositions accepted in good faith the mechanisms of dispute resolutions, the ruling party teamed up with the supposedly independent NEB representatives, and made the appeals of oppositions trifling. Considering the expanding daylight robbery of the Ethiopian Elections, the oppositions, according to Begashaw (2005), tried unsuccessfully to negotiate the deadlock with the ruling party. The oppositions then drew a plan for peaceful and non-violent approach with a slogan: "Respect the Vote", and peaceful measures and rolling actions were announced to the people to resort to applying their constitutional rights. However, the ruling party was unreceptive to these, and picked up opposition leaders one by one, and intensified its mass arrest. In the ensuing disturbance, almost 200 people were killed, many others

wounded and over 30,000 were jailed, including the leaders of the CUD (Begashaw 2005).

The opinions of observers may be categorised as a fusion of the above two stands, but with an inclination to give more weight to the latter, that is, to the stand of the oppositions. The observers from Carter Center (Carter Center 2005) and the US Department of State (BDHRL 2005) tend to acknowledge the governments' effort to make these Elections free and fair, though the aftermath was disappointing. The observers from European Union (EU EOM 2005) and Norway (Pettersen & Salvesen 2006), nonetheless, openly criticised the government of serious human rights violations, killings and mass arrests following the voting day. The Human Rights Watch (2007) evaluates the aftermath in the following manner:

“These Elections have laid bare the deeply entrenched patterns of political repression, human rights abuse and impunity that characterise the day-to-day reality of governance in Ethiopia. The aftermath of the Elections has been marred by seemingly intractable controversy and displays the government’s brutality that threatens to reverse the gains yielded by the electoral process. Ethiopia is considered an essential partner of the United States in its “war on terrorism,” and the US and other Western nations have generally been unwilling to apply meaningful pressure on the Ethiopian government over its human rights record”.

Gudina (2007), who was one of the political candidates from the UEDF, notes that the above-cited problems had emerged from certain conceptual flaws on the part of the government. The demand for democratisation without national consensus had been the first problem. Second, the perception of the ruling party of the oppositions as partners could not take root. Third, determination of the EPRDF leaders to use all institutions to promote their partisan interests had resulted in the failure of the government as three distinct branches. And, finally, the government choice

of fixing problems through manipulations of voting results, harassments, arrests and killings forced the whole process to come to a disappointing end.

3.4 A GLIMPSE ON ENA AND REUTERS

The world looks differently at different people, depending not only on their personal interests, but also on the map that is drawn for them by the writers, editors, and publishers of the news media (Wu 2003:21). The May 2005 Ethiopian Elections were among those newsworthy events, whose maps were drawn by global and local journalists. As the dissertation is concentrating on the news reports of the two news agencies on the May 2005 Ethiopian Elections, it is imperative to briefly highlight some historical, operational and ideological facts of that the two agencies constitute.

3.4.1 ENA as a national news agency

ENA's inception dates back to 1942 as “Agence Direcsione”, under what used to be known as the Ministry of Pen (*Ye-Tsehefet Ministeir*, in Amharic). It may well be argued that ENA is the first national wire service in Africa in light of the fact that no indigenous service of the kind was found in any other country in the continent due to colonialism, wherein social, political and economic institutions were established by, and made to serve the interests of the colonial powers. ENA, however, was stagnating in 1947 for about six consecutive years due to budget cuts. Even in the following 10 years, that is from 1954 to 1963, no significant development was witnessed, except a few attempts at expanding the service locally.

Beginning in late 1963, Agence Direcsione began to make its presence felt among the public through newspapers and radio broadcasting and its name was changed to Ethiopian News Source. On June 7, 1968, the first proclamation providing for the establishment of the Ethiopian News Agency was issued. Improvement came about in terms of staff size, which

in turn brought about an increase in the number of daily news dispatches to the then newspapers and national radio. A major turning point in ENA's history was reached in 1986 when the government for the first time earmarked an annual budget of 587,167 Birr (Ethiopian monetary unit) to it (ENA 2006).

A proclamation providing for its establishment (Proclamation No. 115/1995) was issued on March 1, 1995 to "organise anew the Ethiopian News Agency and thereby provide for the better management of its growing tasks and enhance its efficiency". Two years later, that is, on May 13, 1997, Proclamation No. 74/1997 amended ENA's establishment. Article 5 of this proclamation provides ENA with such powers and duties as to gather, edit and distribute news and photographic materials and render photo-documentation services to media outlets in Ethiopia. As per the new proclamation (Ethiopia 1997: sec 5), ENA is to be governed by an Executive Board, which will have 11 members appointed by HPR, upon presentation by the government.

Today, ENA has around 125 journalists actively engaged in the gathering, writing and editing of news and news materials (ENA 2006). ENA, apart from its major role of gathering and dispatching local news, plays a gate-keeping role in filtering the incoming news from news agencies. It is obliged to ensure that no news that counters the government's interest passes to news outlets. It plays decisive roles in prioritising local political as well as developmental news items that promote the interests of the government (Belesti 2007).

Under partnership agreements, ENA exchanges news and news related items with big media organisations such as Reuters, AFP and Xinhua. It has cooperation ties with many other news agencies, such as ANTARA of Turkey, SABA of Yemen, IRNA of Iran, Itar-Tass of Russia, and Press Trust of India (Kifle 2007).

ENA is an information service operating in a multilingual environment. International media coverage, mainly of broadcasts and on-line, is

monitored here. English, Arabic, Amharic, Tigrigna, Oromiffa, and Somali languages, among others, are utilised in reporting. It is charged with the arduous task of tuning in to live broadcasts (and of surfing the Internet) transcribing them and supplying the editorial and the other news desks, mainly the English and City desks, with what it calls up-to-date and most vital information on what has been reported by a vast array of international media organisations (ENA 2006).

Throughout its near 60-year history, ENA had never been free from being a prominent mouthpiece of the ruling parties. It has been fully controlled and manoeuvred in their interests by successive governments, including the present. On these Elections, ENA's role was clear and prominent: serving the government in its full capacity. It followed the political trends, which the incumbent government pursued in the pre and post Elections periods. So much so, as per the interest of the incumbent government, ENA opened up its doors to all contestant parties and voters in the pre-Elections period, but turned its back to the opposition parties and voters in the post-Elections period. Its portrayal of the main oppositions and the whole issue of the Elections was attuned to that of the government's views (EU EOM 2005).

In a quite recent account, the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ 2007) notes that three nations in sub-Saharan Africa, including Ethiopia, are among the places worldwide where press freedom has deteriorated the most over the last five years. In connection to the May 2005 Elections, it says the government of Ethiopia launched a massive crackdown on the private press by shutting newspapers and jailing editors. Only the government-owned media outlets, including ENA, and a handful of private newspapers are now operational, all under intense self-censorship and government intervention.

3.4.2 Reuters as a global news system

Reuters' news reaches more than one billion people around the world each day. Its Media Division serves publishing and broadcasting

customers in the wholesale media market, including the affluent online audience. Founded in London in 1851, Reuters is now equipped with 2300 staff in 91 countries, with 196 bureaux serving approximately 130 countries in 18 languages. In 2004, it filed over two and a half million news reports from 208 countries. Being a financial news service, it also provides over 5.5 million financial real-time records, and collects over 35, 000 company information worldwide (Key facts about Reuters 2006).

To emerge as a global dominant news agency, Reuters, according to Read (1999), has trekked through a number of heights and plateaus, both historically and politically. Its founder, Israel Beer Josaphat, was born in 1816 in Cassel Germany. He went to Britain and was baptised there as Paul Julius Reuter in 1845. In his early years, Reuter was engaged in book selling, publishing, and later in translation works at Havas News Agency. In 1849, he started his own daily newssheet and a year later began running his own news agency by opening an office in London. Reuters did its first major news beat about the assassination of President Lincoln on March 14, 1865, which helped the news agency attain popularity from the media industry. In 1866, it completed the first trans-Atlantic cable, which enabled the news agency to dominate the business of newsgathering and dissemination, as well as sign the cartel agreement with Havas and Wolff to establish a worldwide news ring in 1870.

After the death of Baron de Reuter in 1899, Reuters underwent a number of changes, the major of which had been the change of ownership of the Reuters's telegram company to a private company and the expansion of services across Latin America. It also started supplying news to BBC in 1922. In the 1950s and 1960s, Reuters expanded its service across the globe and made arrangements to provide its economic services independently out of North America. The plan was fully realised in 1967. It broke its exchange agreement with AP in 1967 and with Agence France Presse (AFP) in 1972. In 1968 it launched an automatic data exchange in London. Reuters begun its satellite delivery of data in 1982, and in two years time, it became a public company with the name Reuters's Holdings

PLC. Within a year, it started a news picture service, and then took control of Visnews, a television news film agency. Reuters's first Integrated Data Network (IDN), a global 'highway for data', was launched in 1987.

Reuters debut in Africa dates back to 1865, by opening an office in Alexandria, Egypt. A year after the completion of the first trans-Atlantic cable, Reuters was able to report the many tragic wars and expeditions in Africa. The first colonial war between Emperor Theodore of Abyssinia (Ethiopia) and General Napier of Great Britain from 1867 to 1868 was among the notable reports of Reuters at the time. For this war, Reuters assigned its own correspondents, who managed to send several news reports, including the death of the Emperor and the final victory, to great numbers of newspapers in Britain. Reuters continued feeding newspapers in England until the son of Theodore arrived at Plymouth, UK, three months latter.

In 1876, it added the Cape Town office, in South Africa. Reuters's presence in Africa however grew more after the First World War. During this time, Reuters launched its service into black Africa, with both English and French speakers. The then Executive of Reuters, Patrick Crosse, played a great role in convincing African politicians and newspapermen, who would have resented being patronised and yet needed guidance. In his effort, Reuters enjoyed an early success in Nigeria, where it negotiated a long-term contract in 1956 with the federal government. Then, Reuters managed to sign agreements with thirty-five independent countries, with the only exception of Gambia, Rwanda and Burundi. By 1965, Reuters maintained twenty-four correspondents in Africa, plus fifty stringers. Five years earlier there had been just three staff correspondents to cover the whole continent. Reporting costs in the mid 1960s totalled about £215, 000 annually, but the revenue was £ 296, 000 annually (Read 1999:339-340).

Reuters calls itself the world's largest international multimedia news agency. According to Reuters Group (2007) annual report, *sales and*

trading is its largest business division, contributing 66% (£1595 Million) of its revenue in 2005. It provides real time prices, news and trading systems for banks, brokers and fund managers who are active in the treasury, fixed-income, equities and commodities markets. *Research and asset management* serves the needs of fund and wealth managers, investment bankers and research analysts who make complex financial decisions outside the sales and trading environment. This division contributed 11% (£268 Million) of its revenue in 2005. *Enterprise* is Reuters's aggregate information service, which is designed to give a single view of the financial markets and the events that move them. The Division products' provide access to those markets in formats that computers can use to support the financial systems of its customers run. Enterprise contributed 16% (£393 Million) of its revenue in 2005. The Media Division, which this dissertation takes into account, serves its publishing and broadcasting customers in the wholesale media market, contributing 7% (£153 million) of its revenues in 2005. This wing supplies text and broadcast news, as well as video and photographic coverage for publishers and broadcasters. It also provides financial information online and via mobile devices and interactive television to individual consumers. Chairman Niall FitzGerald (Reuters Group 2007) claims that, "for over 150 years, Reuters has been relentless in the pursuit of truth". Reuters has a stated goal of objectivity (Reuters Group 2007), which many believe facilitates its ability to distribute news around the world (Horvit 2006:430).

The concept of objectivity, according to Vincent (2000:324), holds that journalists emphasise impartiality, void of bias or distortion. This attribute of Reuters attains appreciations from the Western block, against the accusations that the developing nations raised in the forums of NWICO and elsewhere. Optimists of roles of the global news media system always argue that much of the news about the Third World is gathered not by Western reports, but by natives. Hence, every news report does have a Third World perspective. Additionally, they argue that as Western nations are the centres of power in the world system, their domination of the news

media is natural. The rampant censorship in developing nations also limits the news agencies from operating freely in the sub-Saharan Africa (Paterson 1998:70-71). For the Elections, Reuters had deployed additional staffs to support local correspondents and made a large number of news reports and analyses (Tadesse 2007). Currently, Reuters is the only global news agency for ENA that retains its long-time bi-directional subscriptions, and one in the forefront supplying ENA with a greater number of news stories (Belesti 2007; MOI 2004).

In conclusion, though varied arguments are made on media's bias and/or unbalanced coverage of developing nations, a significant number of media scholars believe, as indicated in the chapter of Theoretical Foundation of this dissertation, that national/regional as well as journalistic ideologies, values and practices of the government, in which the media operate, usually determine the social functions that the media should or ought to fulfil in a given society. These have been observed in the policies of both the authoritarian and liberal governments, and such a dominant view serves as a base for many studies including this one.

CHAPTER 4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Given the high prominence of the May 2005 Ethiopian Elections and the widespread news coverage that it received, an empirical investigation was undertaken to investigate the salience and framing of issues and actors in the period immediately following the May 2005 Ethiopian Elections.

Dearing and Rogers (1996) remind that the whole essence of agenda-setting rests on salience of issues and actors in news reporting. Finding, counting and coding of the issues and actors mentioned in the sample media contents are thus bound to happen in quantitative examinations of agenda-setting. For framing, the researcher may involve in critical examination of media texts so as to identify certain patterns of media coverage. In doing so, according to Entman (1993), the researcher must examine metaphors, keywords, concepts, symbols, visual images and catchphrases to understand how media frame issues and actors of a certain event. Based on these two research approaches suggested by Dearing and Rogers (1996) and Entman (1993), this chapter briefly illustrates the research methodologies and techniques this dissertation applied.

4.2 THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In light of the literatures reviewed in the last two chapters, it can be argued that ENA and Reuters set specific agendas and used specific frames in covering the issues and actors of the May 2005 Ethiopian Elections. It is possible to suggest that the agendas selected and frames employed by Reuters were different from ENA. One can also argue that the agendas selected and frames employed by Reuters in covering the May 2005 Ethiopian Elections reinforced the view that the Western news agencies reported the Elections on the basis of Western ideologies and interests, in order to promote Western values and liberal market philosophies. It can

also be argued that these agendas and frames served as a source of the mental frames about Ethiopia in general and the issues and actors of the Elections, in particular, for the global citizens, policymakers and opinion leaders, as well as other global, regional and national news outlets. Contrastingly, one can also argue that ENA, as mouthpiece of the ruling party, reported issues and actors of the Elections in a way that reinforced the positions and interests of the ruling party and the government, which could be described as defending the interests of national/ethnic groups, and maintaining the status quo.

This dissertation therefore attempts to examine whether or not ENA and Reuters indeed set agendas and frame issues and actors in such a particular way that they reflected their respective ideological bases and national interests, while covering the May 2005 Ethiopian Elections, with the following research questions:

Research Question 1: What were the prevailing agendas of ENA and Reuters's news reports, and to what extent were these two agencies different in this respect, while both cover the issues and actors of the May 2005 Ethiopian Elections?

Research Question 2: What were the dominant frames of ENA and Reuters's news reports, and to what extent were these two agencies different in this respect, while both covered issues and actors of the May 2005 Ethiopian Elections?

4.3 THE RESEARCH DESIGN

Based on the theoretical foundations of agenda-setting and framing, as well as on the concept of objective reporting, this dissertation employed quantitative and qualitative approaches. The quantitative method was applied to compare the agendas the two news agencies selected in order to discern differences and similarities they exhibited in this respect. The qualitative approach, on the other hand, was applied to identify and determine the kind of framing the two news agencies on the issues and

actors of the May 2005 Ethiopian Elections, and the differences/similarities they demonstrated.

4.4 QUANTITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS

4.4.1 Population and sampling

The dissertation took three elements into account as major components: One, the May 2005 Ethiopian Elections as one prominent incident; two, Reuters, as a globally renowned news agency; and three, ENA, as a domestic counterpart to Reuters, in order to make a tangible comparison to Reuters on the application of agenda-setting and framing of issues and actors. Issues in the May 2005 Ethiopian Elections were those political, economic, social and cultural media discourses, raised and discussed by political personalities, candidates, governmental and non-governmental institutions, voters and the general public during the Elections period. Actors were those political personalities, individuals, groups, voters, observers, institutions, the media, countries, *et cetera*, who were involved in the electoral process.

The May 2005 Ethiopian Elections can be considered as one of the most dramatic, as well as controversial events that the country has staged in its long political history. As the campaigns were exceptionally fierce, open and sensationalised with a huge turnout of active public participation and involvement of international observers, and the subsequent crises were bloody, it is understandable that they were able to attract journalists as well as media researchers. The public and the media had closely witnessed the election process, and, as a result, numerous documentations were made available for scholars. In general, many authors commented that, while the pre-voting period and the voting day were, more or less, free and fair, contrastingly, the post-voting period was disappointing.

Reuters was selected for this study on the ground that it was a well recognised as well as influential news agency across the world. Reuters calls itself the world's largest international multimedia news agency with a

stated goal of objectivity (Reuters Group 2007). With regard to Ethiopia, Reuters was the news agency that has the longest standing ties with the country. It was also the one that was better prepared to present wider coverage by deploying additional staff, during the post-Elections period, to support the local correspondents in Addis Ababa (Tadesse 2007). And indeed, compared to other outlets, such as AFP, AP and other global news agencies, it was Reuters that constructed a relatively extensive coverage of the Elections (Kifle 2007). Given the importance of comparisons to detect salience and media frames, ENA was chosen as a counterpart to Reuters on grounds of its long history as a national news agency.

Compared to Walta Information Centre⁵, ENA is the oldest and most prominent news agency in Ethiopia. ENA is mainly engaged in the gathering and distribution of news materials concerning Ethiopia and the rest of the world in accordance with media policies, laws and directives of the country (Mocria, Messele & Gebre-Hiwot 2003:43-44). Though it claims to present balanced and accurate news (ENA 2005), ENA, as a state-owned agency, is fully attuned with the political agendas of the government (Bonsa 2002), and it was this stance that made it lend itself for a comparative study.

The dissertation took into account only the English versions of the post-Elections news reports of ENA and Reuters. The time bracket was from May 16, 2005, when the voting ended, to August 30, 2005, when the whole process appeared to come to end. The news reports and articles of ENA and Reuters, which were wired within the said time span, were thus considered as target populations. The time bracket of the study was confined to post-Elections because Reuters scantily reported events occurring during the pre-Elections period and on the day of the Elections (Tadesse 2007).

As noted in section 3.3.3, the period following May 15 (voting day) was marked by highly charged political tensions, several days of protests and

electoral violence, delays in vote tabulation, a large number of electoral complaints, and a prolonged and problematic electoral dispute resolution process. In the end, killings, intimidations and mass arrests were what overwhelmed the post-Elections period (Carter Center 2005; EU EOM 2005:15-16; Pettersen & Salvesen 2006), to which Reuters exceedingly offered its attention.

All documented news stories and articles of ENA and Reuters by ENA's Documentation Service during the time bracket were also taken as an accessible population. News stories and articles from ENA and Reuters about the May 2005 Elections were located by searching the Documentation Service of ENA, which monitored all major wired news about the May 2005 Elections. The preliminary survey of the news reports within the above-stated time bracket yielded about 102 and 335 news reports by Reuters and ENA, respectively.

To examine the research questions, a random sampling method was applied to sample 100 news reports, 50 from each news agency. This indicates that about 50% and 15% of news reports from Reuters and ENA, respectively, were used for the examination. The fishbowl technique was used to randomly sample the news stories. In doing so, all the 102 news stories of Reuters and the 335 news stories of ENA were numbered and drawn separately, which resulted in the sampling of 50 news stories from each of the news agencies (Description of these news stories are presented in addendum 1).

4.4.2 Units of analysis

News reports and articles of ENA and Reuters were the units of analysis. The whole contents, except graphical images, of each of the 100 news reports and articles: the titles, leads, and body texts, quotes et cetera were taken as units of analysis.

4.4.3 Categories of coding

Two major categories of coding were made to embark on the quantitative analysis: the issues and actors. Attempts were also made to ensure all the categories were clearly defined to circumvent vagueness. Accordingly, based on a cursory review of the news reports and other pertinent documents, the category of issues was made to comprise such elements as: democracy, Elections outcome, violence and clashes, Ethiopia's future, and other miscellaneous issues, with their respective sub-issues. The category of actors was also made to incorporate such elements as: government, opposition leaders and their parties, individual contestants, elections observers, NEB, the media, voters and other miscellaneous actors. The salience of each category and sub-category was coded with the help of a coding sheet, which is in addendum 2.

4.4.4 Coding procedures

The author himself did the coding, as the Documentation Centre of ENA, in which the news reports of ENA and Reuters were documented, was principally made accessible only to the researcher, not to others.

Prior to coding, 10 news stories from the sample population of each news agency were selected and coded by the researcher to ensure the categorisation was appropriate and to make sure that the sub-categories were exhaustively incorporated. In doing so, some issues were added to sub-categories, and hence slight modification was made on categorisation. The coding test was necessary to check the intracoder reliability.

As the coding was done by the researcher himself, the assessment of intracoder reliability was a necessary step and as a result, intra-coder reliability test was conducted. The researcher had made two tests at different times. For each test the researcher used 10 news reports, five from each news agency (1-5 for ENA and 6-10 for Reuters). A randomly-drawn sub-sample that constituted 20% of the sample (100 news reports) was used for testing. Since the test was made to all issue and actors' categories, the researcher had undertaken lengthy and tedious

calculations to measure intracoder reliability, using Holsti’s method (Wimmer & Dominick 1994).

For instance, to measure the reliability of intracoder for the first sub-category, which was democracy, in the issues category, the researcher had to first clearly identify what variations were witnessed between the two coding sessions. Then, the researcher calculated the coefficient of reliability with Holsti’s formula. The coefficient of reliability can be interpreted as the percentage of observed agreement between the coders.

The result of the two coding sessions, for the issue of “democracy”, is indicated in the following table.

	First coding	Second coding
Sample news #1	2	2
Sample news #2	2	2
Sample news #3	1	2
Sample news #4	2	2
Sample news #5	2	2
Sample news #6	1	4
Sample news #7	2	2
Sample news #8	2	2
Sample news #9	1	1
Sample news #10	4	4

According to Holsti’s method of measurement, the intracoder reliability (coefficient of reliability), can be found by applying the following formula, as applied in the example given. In this example, M equals to 8 and N1 and N2, each equal to 10. So, we have:

$$CR = \frac{2M}{N1+ N2} = \frac{2 (8)}{10 + 10} = .80$$

Where M refers to the number of times the two coders agree and coding N1 and N2 refer to the coding decisions the two coders made. In this

example, the two coding sessions were in agreement 80% of the time. Accordingly, the overall coefficient reliability test done on all the categories indicated that 90 percent of coefficient reliability, which is acceptable (Wimmer & Dominick 1994) to pursue on coding the sample news reports and articles.

4.4.5 Analysis of the data

The quantitative data was organised and summarised by applying descriptive statistical methods, using Microsoft Excel software, to help the researcher to collect evidence for arguments and claims. Frequency distribution tables were used to summarise the data such that the overall pattern of the data was clearly depicted and explained.

4.5 QUALITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS

The qualitative method of analysing parts of news narratives to detect frames from the news stories in this dissertation was derived from Entman's (1991, 2004) study on the US media coverage of two similar tragic incidents: the shootings of a Korean Air Lines (KAL) flight by Soviet fighter planes on September 1, 1983 that killed 269 people and the shooting of an Iran Air plane on July 3, 1988 by the US fighters that killed 290 people. The first accident was committed by the then USSR and the second by the US. In order to identify the frames of the US media system on these two similar tragic events, Entman looked for specific expressions and words – nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs – chosen to describe the victims, the incident, and the act of the shooting down of the planes.

For example, some of the words that described the victims (actors) of KAL were “innocent human beings,” “loved ones,” and “passengers;” some of the words for the incident per se were “atrocious,” “murder,” and “massacre;” and some of the words used to describe the shooting act were “barbaric/barbarous,” “deliberate(ly),” and “murderous” (Entman 1991:17-18). Additionally, a thematic analysis was also applied to examine the

threads of meanings of the news reports by looking into recurrences and repetitions of some key words, phrases and sentences.

Similarly, the news reports of ENA and Reuters were analysed for expressions, keywords, metaphors and other such framing devices by picking out the nouns and verbs, as well as adjectives and adverbs that had been used to describe issues and actors of the Elections. Once these terms were identified, the researcher examined them in a way they could depict patterns and lead to tangible conclusions.

4.6 CRITICAL EVALUATION OF THE STUDY

Attempts were made to make this study achieve its intended goals by examining all the sampled news reports and articles, despite some limitations. Starting from the choice of pertinent theoretical frameworks to the analysis, this dissertation followed appropriate research procedures and methods, as well as paid attention to reliability and validity.

The reliability was enhanced by the fact that a triangulation method was used to examine the sampled news reports and articles. A quantitative method was applied to examine what issues and actors were made more salient than others. A similar method was also applied to examine how the issues and actors of the May 2005 Elections were framed by the two news agencies. By doing so, the dissertation discerned the similarities and differences as well as patterns, which the two news agencies exhibited in their reporting of the May 2005 Elections. Nevertheless, as the qualitative examination of 100 news reports was evidently a laborious and time considering, the findings in the qualitative research study could only reflect the major patterns, rather than including the subtle ones.

CHAPTER 5 RESULTS OF QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSES

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In the endeavour to discover the answers to the research study problems of the dissertation, it was important to find answers to the following questions: Which of the issues and actors of the May 2005 Ethiopian Elections had been made most salient by ENA and Reuters? To what extent did the two news agencies differ in this regard? How did the two news agencies frame those issues and actors that were embodied in these series of events? And to what extent did these news agencies differ in the framing of these issues and actors? The attempts to reply to these questions, using the quantitative and qualitative approaches, are discussed in this chapter.

5.2 THE FOCUSES (AGENDAS) OF ENA AND REUTERS

As noted in Chapter 2, the key aspect of agenda setting is salience. It is defined as a process through which certain issues and actors become more salient than others in news coverage. And, by influencing the rank order of public awareness of issues and attribution of significance, the salience of issues and actors, in effect, possibly influence the introduction or application of a certain public policy (McQuail 2000). In light of this, the two media had shown differences in the following manner.

5.2.1 The salience of issues as covered by ENA and Reuters

Looking into the overall trends of ENA's news reporting, as Table 1 indicates, Ethiopia's future and the issues related to violence and clashes, as well as other miscellaneous issues were not the primary agendas for ENA. Rather, some issues in the category of "democracy" and "Elections outcomes" constituted a significant place in its reports. In contrast, Reuters generally made the issues in the category of "violence and clashes" far more salient than any other news story. This category constituted almost

half of Reuters’s news space. The issues in the category of “Elections outcomes” as root causes of violence and clashes attained the second most prominent attention in Reuters’s coverage. Democracy and other miscellaneous issues, such as free market, terrorism, economic liberalisation, and human rights from the “miscellaneous” category also attained the spotlight of Reuters.

Table 1: The frequency of salience of issues in categories

	Categories	ENA		Reuters	
		Number of Appearances	Percentage	Number of Appearances	Percentage
1	Democracy	33.0	36.00	22.0	12.90
2	Elections outcomes	29.0	32.00	37.0	21.70
3	Violence and clashes	13.0	14.10	80.0	47.10
4	Ethiopia’s future	12.0	13.04	12.0	7.10
5	Miscellaneous	5.0	5.40	19.0	11.20
	Total	92.0	100.00	151.0	100.00

The issues related to democracy and Elections outcomes appeared in 33 and 29 news reports of ENA, respectively, from 50 news reports (sample size). This indicated that these two issues, which constitute about 68 percent of the total appearance of issues, were the most salient issues in ENA’s coverage, and can therefore be said were the agendas of ENA. Other issues such as violence and clashes, and Ethiopia’s future were rarely mentioned. Other miscellaneous issues, such as conducting re-elections and recounting of votes too, were mentioned in rare cases.

In the case of Reuters, issues related to violence and clashes appeared 80 times, which constituted about 47.1 percent of the total mentions of issues, and hence it can be said these were the dominant agendas of Reuters. Issues related to Elections outcomes also took a relatively large portion of Reuters’s attentions, with 21.7 percent from all issues. Other issues categorised under “democracy” and “miscellaneous” were also the second most depicted subjects by Reuters with 12.9 and 11.2 percents, respectively, of mentions from all issues appeared. ENA and Reuters had further shown marked differences and distinct patterns in the making of

salience of issues, when one considers the individual issues these news agencies made salient from each category by the news agencies. The sub-classifications of issues, which are tabulated in Table 2, illuminate the details of particular issues, to which ENA and Reuters paid/drive away attentions.

Table 2: The frequency of salience of sub-issues in ENA and Reuters

	Categories	ENA		Reuters	
		Number of Appearances	Percentage	Number of Appearances	Percentage
1	Democracy	33.0	36.00	22.0	12.90
	As a system of governance	11.0	11.96	3.0	1.17
	Free and fair elections	21.0	22.82	16.0	9.41
	Freedom of the press	1.0	1.08	3.0	1.76
	Others	0.0	0.00	0.0	0.00
2	Elections outcomes	29.0	32.00	37.0	21.8
	Voters' (Women) participation	3.0	3.26	3.0	1.80
	Polling results	22.0	23.90	28.0	16.50
	Re-counting results/re-running of elections	4.0	4.35	6.0	3.50
	Others	0.0	0.00	0.0	0.000
3	Violence and clashes	13.0	14.10	80.0	47.10
	Accusations	4.0	4.35	18.0	10.70
	Public outrage and demonstration	1.0	1.08	17.0	10.0
	Arrests and killings	1.0	1.08	34.0	20.00
	Security issues	7.0	7.60	11.0	6.40
4	Ethiopia's future	12.0	13.04	12.0	7.10
	Reconciliation and power-sharing	1.0	1.08	2.0	1.18
	Political and economic stability	8.0	8.70	2.0	1.18
	Ethiopia's relation with the Western world	0.0	0.00	6.0	3.52
	The historical significance of the Elections	3.0	3.26	2.0	1.18
5	Miscellaneous	5.0	5.40	19.0	12.90
	Total	92.0	100.00	151.0	100.00

The issues related to “polling results” from “Elections outcome” category and “free and fair elections”, from “democracy” category as major democratic values and rights, were the central issues for ENA’s coverage.

These two issues were mentioned 43 times (46.72 percent) by ENA. Democracy, as a good governing system, happened to be the second important issue for ENA. This issue was made salient about 11 times (about 12 percent). Of particular interest to ENA were the political and economic issues as well as the security issues, which received remarkable attention from it. Voters' participation, the re-run of Elections, accusations, and the historical significance of the Elections were also moderately mentioned. Though very crucial for the major opposition parties, such issues as freedom of the press, public outrage and demonstrations, arrests and killings, and the question of national reconciliation and power sharing received limited coverage.

Ethiopia's relation with the Western world had never been mentioned at all. Instead, some other issues, such as the complaint hearing and investigation process, from "miscellaneous" category, which followed the disagreement over the poll results among the contesting parties, attained fairly significant attention. The defamatory acts of opposition parties against NEB, the issues related to poverty, the need to uplift the image of the country, and the importance of respecting the supremacy of law were rarely mentioned in ENA's reports. Therefore, it can be concluded that issues related to polling results and free and fair Elections were the agendas of ENA.

In the case of Reuters, it was the killings and arrests from the "violence and clashes" category that outnumbered all other issues in terms of the frequency of mentions. The issues related to killings and arrests were mentioned 34 times (20 percent). These issues managed to get the maximum attention of Reuters throughout the post Elections period. "Public outrage and demonstrations", and "accusations" both from "violence and clashes" category were also mentioned 18 and 17 times, respectively. These two issues together constituted 35 percent of Reuters's space. Within the category of "democracy", the issues related to free and fair elections were mentioned 16 times out of the total references to issues related to democracy, which were 22. These issues constituted

about 9.41 percent of salience from the total issues reported, which is fairly significant. The other two issues, in the same category, democracy as a good governing system and freedom of the press, were reflected only 3 times each, constituting only 2.93 percent. Voters' participation and recounting and rerunning of Elections did not seem to capture Reuters's attention. Therefore, "killings and arrests" from "violence and clashes" categories were the dominant agendas of Reuters, whereas other issues related to public outrage and demonstration, and accusations were, in relation to the major agenda, the second most salient agendas.

Ethiopia's future did not attract any significant attention from either agency. Reuters tried to cover some aspects of the country's future relations with the Western world, yet in a rather shallow manner. The issues related to Ethiopia's relation with the Western world were not sufficiently illuminated by Reuters, as they constituted only 3.52 percent, the question of reconciliation and power sharing among contesting parties, political and economic stability, and the historical significance of the Elections attained even lower coverage, with identical percentage of 1.18. In fact, Reuters attempted to relate some miscellaneous issues with the Elections and made them salient. Free market, terrorism and human rights issues were among the subjects given focus from this category. Arguably, many of these issues were not components of either ENA or Reuters's agendas.

Some stark differences in the patterns of the coverage of issues between the two news agencies emerge from inspection. ENA had clearly given utmost attention to issues categorised under "democracy", while Reuters focused on issues tabulated under "violence and clashes" category. ENA particularly gave emphasis to "free and fair elections" and "Elections results" while Reuters was prone to "killings and arrests" sub-issues.

The disparity between the two agencies could not have unexpectedly emerged. ENA, as a voice of the government, was concerned with attuning itself to the intentions and positions of the ruling party, whereas Reuters, as a commercial global news system, was focused on market

and ideological imperatives. In both cases, the media had a dissimulation role. According to Thompson (in Sonderling 2001:320), concealing, denying or obscuring of issues, is one prominent feature of the news media. Dissimulation works by displacing attention from domination and focusing attention on other issues. Similarly, this quantitative analysis reveals that, by shying away from and obscuring some of the critical issues and propagating largely those subjects believed to be in the interest of the government, ENA played a dissimulation role for the government. Reuters, too, had similar roles by focusing only on a few dramatic issues, which reflected the dominant Western journalistic ideologies and market imperatives, and confirming as a result the accusations that the Western media often portray the Third World in negative lights, which were the core issues in the debates of NWICO.

ENA, at the outset, was poised to legitimise the interests of the government. As noted before, these Elections had been conducted at the time when the Prime Minister was “fated by Western leaders and personalities”, as one of “the new generation of African leaders”, thought to lead the continent on the path of democracy, and extract it from abject poverty (Ethiopian ruling party...2005; Analysis-Meles’s democratic...2005). It was also at the time when the Africa Commission and NEPAD were high on the agenda of the former UK Prime Minister Tony Blair, and other prominent figures. The intention of the EPRDF was, therefore, as Gudina (2007) notes, to make these Elections absolutely free and fair and live up to expectations of these stakeholders and present the country as a showcase for other African nations and the new leader of Ethiopia as one capable of implanting Western democracy in the poorest and ethnically diverse country, Ethiopia.

The events that cropped up soon after the day of the Elections, however, proved the government’s intentions were in vain (Gudina 2007). On May 16, the EPRDF announced that it had won the Elections, the act of which was instantly criticised by EU-EOM (2005), on the ground that the announcement came before the vote counting was over. On May 20, NEB

indorsed the announcement of the EPRDF that it won the Elections. On the same day, oppositions logged complaints over massive electoral fraud and vote-rigging by the EPRDF, and called for the establishment of the CIP. In such a state of uncertainty, ENA's role, as a state-owned media system, was very clear. ENA seemed poised to play the role of a conveyer of the government's interests and intentions, which was in dire need of recognition and legitimacy in the face of voters, international observers, partners and donors on the freeness and fairness of the Elections.

The provision of legitimacy, according to Thompson (in Sonderling 2001:320), is one of the areas where media play a role in imposing a certain ideology. Some issues and actions are represented in news media as legitimate and worthy of support. Domination is thus justified as rational and the interests of the ruling class are claimed to be universal and represent the interests of everyone in the society. To that effect, ENA was concentrating on reporting the greatness of the number of voters' turnout and their perseverance and determination, the flourishing of democracy, the landslide victory of the EPRDF, the fairness of the Elections, *et cetera*, rather than reflecting the sentiments of voters and contesting parties, as well as the sharp criticisms stemming from observers of the Elections.

For instance, ENA reported on May 16 that "over 90 percent of eligible voters cast their votes" and the whole process was conducted "peacefully and efficiently" (NEB says over...2006). In the same news, NEB Chairperson, Kemal Bedri, was quoted as saying, "the courage of voters had indicated democracy was staying in the country". A number of electorates from all walks of life were quoted as saying, "the national Elections laid cornerstones for democratic culture" in the country (National elections lays...2005). The EPRDF was reported to have claimed a "landslide victory" at federal and regional parliamentary elections (Electoral executives say...2005). In this manner, ENA was engaged in a sort of media campaign to cement the announcement of the government and NEB, that the EPRDF was the winner of the Elections in a free and fair (democratic) electoral process, too. These were the issues that received

more salience by ENA than others, and the whole of the post-Elections period was dominated by such news. For ENA, all the Elections were more or less conducted in a democratic manner and were indications of the sprouting of democracy.

As no one international body or Western organisation or diplomat had commented on these issues in the beginning, it was difficult for Reuters to report against or in favour of the position of the government. As a result, the issues related to the freeness and fairness of Elections received insignificant attention from Reuters. As omission by itself is a reflection of some interests and motives, Reuters's reluctance to confer on these issues, as the Western observers did, was a clue to Reuters's association with Western political and journalistic ideologies and values.

The issues selected and deliberately made salient by ENA in the aftermath of the mass arrests and killings of demonstrators, on June 8, 2005, also underpinned the conviction that ENA was on the side of the government. Though some sources such as Human Rights Watch (2006) estimated that there were many clashes between the government troops and demonstrators, in which over 42 people were killed and several others injured in which the aggressors were the government troops, ENA had put the death toll at 22. ENA had to advocate for the legality of the measures taken by security forces (Post election violence...2005), the need for tolerance among contestant parties, the respect for democratic cultures, and the call for accepting Elections results. For instance, the headline of ENA's report on June 8 says, "necessary measures being taken against elements engaged in chaos, unrest" (Accepting election results...2005). On the same day, it reported, "US Congressman urges political parties to accept Elections result to be issued by NEB" (Public observers acclaim...2005). "Anan [Kofi Anan] urges Ethiopians to solve differences through dialogue" (Religious leaders urge...2005).

According to EPPF (2005), on June 9, Amnesty International, the US and the UK governments as well as other institutions condemned the killings

and alerted thousands of students and civilians were at risk of torture. On the same day, the credentials of the reporters of the Voice of America (VOA) and Deutsche Welle (DW) radios were revoked. On June 13, international media reports revealed that more than 3000 people had been arrested and, the US government issued a statement, saying that rule of law had to be respected in the country. On June 15, The UK Development Minister announced that his government had suspended a-36-million-dollar aid increase.

Despite all these series of actions, ENA's focus was on the freeness and fairness of the Elections processes. The issues related to voters' participation in regional states and the positive role played by NEB had also been frequently mentioned by ENA at the time when the killings and arrests overwhelmingly clouded the electoral process. Omitting this aspect of the electoral process and congruent to the interest of the government, ENA continued to reiterate the statements of the Prime Minister, which he gave on June 11 to Reuters and which read: "the incidents are indicative of the maturing of democracy in Ethiopia, and the "push for greater democracy remains on track" (NEBE says it...2005).

In contrast, Reuters made salient largely those issues that were neglected by ENA. Once the international community started to condemn the killings and arrests, Reuters immediately began vigorous coverage of this aspect of the electoral process. Soon, issues related to killings and arrests, polling results and the freeness and fairness of the Elections were made more salient than other issues. Showing no restraint at the onset to criticise the government on the killings and arrests, Reuters made its news reports on the brutal acts of the security forces significantly salient, shortly after the condemnation of the act by Western governments and institutions. For instance, on its June 8 news, Reuters's lead says: "Police and troops indiscriminately fired on protesters" and killed 22 persons and injured scores (Post election violence...2005). Thereafter, Reuters constantly reiterated the killings and arrests, which reinforced the observations of Herbert (2001:68), who says every day editors ask reporters to go in

search of the story which will allow them to say, “if bleeds, it leads”. It was therefore no wonder that tragedies, disasters, and accidents dominated Reuters’s news and that Reuters, as an ideologically-inspired as well as market oriented media system, focused primarily on such issues.

After the June 8 killings and arrests, the only hope for the Elections process to get back on track was to resolve the crisis by way of setting up what is called the Complaint Investigation Panels (CIP) (Begashaw 2005). The issues of polling investigation by the CIP were therefore another newsworthy event calling for a cautious treatment on the part of ENA, as it was a sensitive issue on the side of the ruling party. For the ruling party, cautiously participating in the panel was crucial in order for the process to eventually portray the image that, even if the Elections had some problems, the government had the will and the courage to resolve such problems democratically. Furthermore, participating in the complaint investigation scheme also presented an opportunity for the government to slow down the pace of worrisome events, including mass demonstrations of oppositions, and to avert possible subsequent violence and clashes.

Accordingly, ENA attuned its coverage to the rhythm of this initiative. As a result, in its June 19 news report, ENA could not but describe CIP, which was composed of “lawyers, international observers and contesting parties”, as one poised to solve “some elections irregularities” in a “transparent” way. ENA, in this news, was promulgating the reliability of the Panel, rather than informing the public about the real issues that gave rise to the establishment of the CIP. The complaint investigation process was described as “a tool for democratisation” (Ministry says investigation ...2005). NEB announced, as a result, the provisional results of 519 out of the 547 constituencies (NEB finalises complaint...2005), and disclosed that the EPRDF was the winner of the Elections. With this, CIP’s mission was reported accomplished effectively and issues related to recounting of voters and re-rerunning of the elections faded away.

The international community had hoped that the CIP would be an effective instrument in addressing Elections problems. The oppositions too involved in the process with the intention of demonstrating their will and determination to solve the alleged vote-rigging through democratic means; but these well intentioned efforts turned out to be in vain. This prompted Reuters to report at least a few news stories on the issue, and made it regularly salient. Aware of the fact that the complaint handling process and any other possible dialogues and negotiations had failed to provide any sound solutions to the problems of poll-rigging, the EU-EOM's Head, Anna Gomez, reported that the Elections had failed to meet international standards (EU-EOM 2005). Accordingly, Reuters tried to cover this aspect of the Elections in a few instances without making them as significant as others that fell outside the agenda of Reuters.

Soon after the CIP proved a failure, the CUD called on August 11, for the formation of a provisional government that would function on mutual understanding, and as a means to democratic transition and power sharing. At this point, ENA and Reuters were unable to properly respond to this issue. They downplayed the announcement as though it was trivial and unremarkable, deserving only a few brief news reports from both. On ENA's part, it was difficult for it to entertain such a "disruptive" idea with extensive coverage as the government had already declared itself a winner and rejected any such compromise that violates this position. For Reuters too, the issue escaped coverage, as the involvement of Western countries and agencies as well as the responses of the voters were lacklustre, for the consequences of this proposal was not clearly speculated.

One additional area where the two news agencies diverged dramatically was on the issues they treated in the "miscellaneous" category. While ENA concentrated on such issues as the supremacy of the country's constitution, poverty, peace proposals, and defamation of NEB by oppositions, Reuters made salient such issues as free market, terrorism, economic liberalisation and development, human right, financial aid, lifting

of demonstration bans, peaceful dialogues among contesting parties, and the need to maintain democratic credentials for leaders, et cetera, which, according to Reta (2000), were the most pertinent values of the Western world.

In general, ENA promulgated the democratic nature and fairness of the electoral process, and the need to accept the Elections results, in which the EPRDF was the winner. The issues of power sharing, freedom of the press, public outrage and demonstrations, arrests and killings, and reconciliation and power-sharing were presumably deliberately obscured in the news reports of ENA, whereas many of these issues attained prominent position in Reuters's coverage.

5.2.2 The salience of actors as covered by ENA and Reuters

Individuals, institutions and countries are often said to be the creators of many of the news reports for media. Nevertheless, newsmen have hardly equally treated these actors who created or involved in the newsworthy events. Some may be quoted extensively and others are deliberately ignored. Some are presented in the headlines; others are relegated to bottom lines. Some are named by their ranks, others without. All these and other approaches of news reporting have been associated with the provisions and denials of powers to those who are involved in the reported issue (Deacon, Pickering, Golding & Murdock 1999). The examination of the salience of actors is thus one that provides an understanding of how political power has been shared among the role players in certain newsworthy events. In light of this, understanding the similarities and differences between ENA and Reuters in their coverage of actors in terms of salience yields some conceptual frameworks on how political power was shared among and disseminated to media users. Table 3 indicates the actors, where ENA and Reuters rested their focuses in the May 2005 Ethiopian Elections.

Table 3: Frequency of saliency of actors by ENA and Reuters

	Categories	ENA		Reuters	
		Number of Appearance	In percent	Number of Appearance	In percent
1	The Government	28.0	17.07	97.0	39.70
2	Opposition leaders	50.0	30.50	52.0	21.30
3	Individual contestants	3.0	1.82	0.0	0.00
4	Elections observers/ mission leaders	17.0	10.36	11.0	4.50
5	The National Elections Board (NEB)	19.0	11.58	11.0	4.50
6	The media	9.0	5.48	9.0	3.70
7	Voters	27.0	16.46	12.0	5.00
8	Miscellaneous	11.0	6.70	52.0	21.30
	Total	164.0	100.00	244.0	100.00

As indicated in Table 3, ENA made salient the two major contesting categories: “opposition leaders” and the “government”, which were made to appear 50 and 28 times. The government, which often was mentioned interchangeably with the EPRDF, the Prime Minister and the cabinet, the leaders of prominent oppositions, in the name of the CUD, the UEDF, and others were made to attain the greatest focus of ENA. They constituted about 47.57 percent of the total rate of actors’ salience. Voters, NEB, Elections observers, the trans-national media systems, and some miscellaneous actors, such as religious leaders, the Chinese, the UK and the US governments, the UN system, scholars, and some minor opposition parties were intermittently mentioned.

Similarly, Reuters mentioned actors in the categories of the “government” and “oppositions”, and from other “miscellaneous” actors. Government and opposition actors alone were mentioned 97 and 52 times, and many other actors from the “miscellaneous” category appeared about 52 times. These three categories constituted 82.3 percent of Reuters’s space. Reuters’s concentration on the big opponents and the total neglect of individual contenders reflected Westerners’ preference to see the world in terms of

good guys and bad guys, black and white, right and wrong, and truth and lies (Moeller 1999).

The examination of news reports at the major categories level indicated that the two news agencies focused on the same groups of actors. As the opposition parties, the government, and voters, were the central role players in the electoral process, the categories in which these actors were located were made to attain significant attentions from both news agencies, compared to other categories. However, that the two agencies clearly provided particular attention to one or the other was a clear demonstration of the similarities/differences the two news agencies showed.

As depicted in Table 4, ENA had extensively made the two main opposition parties, the CUD and the UEDF, as well as voters more salient than any other actors. The CUD leaders were mentioned 28 times, with different names, whereas the UEDF was mentioned 22 times. This indicates that the leaders of the two parties constituted 30.48 percent of the total rate of salience of actors. Voters were the second in line in ENA's news reports, assuming over 16.46 percent, with the share of urban and rural voters being the same. NEB also attained noticeable attention from ENA, appearing in 19 news stories that constituted 11.58 percent of salience from all actors. Equally important to ENA had been the Elections observers, who appeared in 17 news stories constituting an over 10.36 percent salience rate from all actors.

The ruling party, the EPRDF, as a contesting party was mentioned in a similar way with regional and international observers. The EPRDF, and the regional and international observers were mentioned in 15 and 14 stories, which constituted a 9.15 and 8.54 percent salience levels from all, respectively. Though significant numbers of news reports mentioned, "international observers", the EU-EOM and the Mission's head, Ms Anna Gomez were singled out in reporting.

Table 4: The frequency of salience of actors by ENA and Reuters

	Categories	ENA		Reuters	
		Number of Appearance	In percent	Number of Appearance	In percent
1	The Government	28.0	17.07	97.0	39.70
	The Prime Minster (PM)	5.0	7.81	33.0	13.50
	The cabinet	5.0	7.81	11.0	4.50
	EPRDF	15.0	9.15	38.0	15.50
	Security forces	3.0	1.83	15.0	6.10
	Others	0.0	0.00	0.0	0.00
2	Opposition leaders	50.0	30.50	52.0	21.30
	CUD	28.0	17.07	38.0	15.50
	UEDF	22.0	13.41	14.0	5.70
	Others	0.0	0.61	0.0	0.00
3	Individual contestants	3.0	1.83	0.0	0.00
4	Elections observers/missions leaders	17.0	10.36	11.0	4.50
	Local	2.0	1.23	0.0	0.00
	Regional/International	14.0	8.54	11.0	4.50
	Institutional	1.0	0.91	0.0	0.00
	Others	0.0	0.00	0.0	0.00
5	The National Elections Board (NEB)	19.0	11.58	11.0	4.50
6	The media	9.0	5.48	9.0	3.70
	Government	1.0	0.61	7.0	2.80
	Private	0.0	0.00	2.0	0.90
	Trans-national	7.0	4.27	0.0	0.00
	Others	1	0.61	0.0	0.00
7	Voters	27.0	16.46	12.0	16.46
	Urban	14.0	8.54	8.0	3.30
	Rural	13.0	7.93	4.0	1.60
8	Miscellaneous	11.0	6.70	52.0	11.20
	Total	164.0	100.00	244.0	100.00

One interesting fact discerned was that the Ethiopian Prime Minster, Meles Zenawi (Prime Minister) and his cabinet were not mentioned in a regular manner throughout the post-Elections period. In direct contrast, the major oppositions, particularly the CUD and the UEDF, voters, NEB, international observers, and the EPRDF constantly appeared in the news reports in varying degrees.

Neglected actors in terms of coverage by ENA were also minor political parties, security forces, individual contestants, local observers and the government media.

ENA, by making some actors more salient than others, was perfectly in tune with the intention of the government in the post-Elections period: winning legitimacy and approval from the public, the international community and observers on the “freeness” and “fairness” of the electoral process. The statements, which the government made shortly after the voting day, include those such as “democracy was working in the country”, the “Elections were free and fair”, the “oppositions were unconstitutionally disrupting the democratic electoral process”, and the EPRDF’s “triumph over the oppositions” should not and cannot be a point of discussion, and therefore the “complaints and claims of oppositions are groundless and undemocratic”. The state-owned media, including ENA, as part of the government system, were in the forefront in corroborating these positions. ENA involved high profile personalities, government officials, and NEB as legitimate and neutral bodies, and made them dominantly and positively salient to reiterate those positions of the government.

Such high profile personalities included prominent individuals and authorities who were believed to represent a significant segment of the population, such as the leaders of the Islamic Affairs Commission, the Synod and Diocese of Churches, British Journalist Andrew Heavens, the US Congressman Michael Honda, the US Secretary General Kofi Anan, university professors and students, EU-Delegation Heads and members et cetera. Some of these voices were selectively echoed by ENA in order to endorse the positions of the government.

The oppositions, including and particularly the CUD, as an unrivalled fierce contender against the ruling party were given particular focus but with a darker colour on their image. Both oppositions and proponents were made equally salient in ENA’s news reports in order for it to glorify the “democratic ideals” of the government by misrepresenting or ridiculing the

oppositions. It is therefore possible to speculate that such portrayals were initiated by ENA with the belief that stakeholders of the Elections would eventually perceive the oppositions as troublemakers and violators of democratic principles and the rule of law. Other actors, such as individual contestants and local media, had, in the opinions of the leaders of the ruling party, little or no contribution in resolving the predicament, nor were they thought to hardly make a difference in proving that the Elections were free and fair and were thus neglected on the part of ENA. From the foregoing explanations, it is possible to suggest that ENA, as a government-owned medium, was fulfilling its mission, as a propaganda apparatus, of promoting the incumbent government and at the same time, ridicule oppositions and any other parties that challenge the positions of the government.

In contrast, Reuters paid marked attention to the Prime Minister and his party as well as to the CUD. Though the “government” category obtained the greatest focus, it was the EPRDF and the CUD, with 13.5 and 15.5 percents respectively that outnumbered all other actors in terms of salience. The two coalitions, the CUD from the oppositions, and the EPRDF from the ruling party, managed to attain almost one-third of the total coverage. Close to this figure was the rate at which the Prime Minister was mentioned. The Prime Minister appeared in 33 stories, which constituted about 13.5 percent coverage. In fact, the Prime Minister and Birhanu Nega, Vice-Chairperson of the CUD, were frequently mentioned along with their respective parties. Moeller (1999) says the global journalistic ideology dictates the news reporters to use elite sources to make their news reports newsworthy. The reporters of Reuters followed this idiom to the core in this case.

Security forces, in various names, the Cabinet, in the names of ministries, the other strong opposition coalition, the UEDF, as well as NEB, and international observers were third in the hierarchy. Voters, particularly urban voters, and the former Ethiopian President, Mengistu Hailemariam, were noticeably made salient by Reuters. Further enforcing Moeller’s

assertion, despite covering the voices of students, families of detainees, journalists and some members of local human rights associations, Reuters provided marked attention to spokespersons of Western countries, such as the UK and the US, international/regional organisations, such as Amnesty International and African Union, as well as renowned personalities, such as the former US president, Bill Clinton.

Making the former Ethiopian leader Mengistu Hailemariam salient was also another good example to illustrate Reuters's inclinations towards the promotion of Western values and pursuing journalistic ideologies. Mengistu was one of the most constantly mentioned actors from the "miscellaneous" category, with a ratio of 3.7 percent from all actors. The way Mengistu was portrayed as a communist dictator revealed the greater magnitude at which Reuters was loyal to the Western values, and the media markets it sought. In today's world, as Moeller (1999) says, news items must associate issues and actors with the existing facts and personalities and should provide comparative descriptions to show the magnitude or the importance of the current event in order to make the news items globally sellable.

Western countries, Amnesty International, diplomats, African Union, African Commission, G8, Bill Clinton, EU-Delegation Head in Ethiopia, Tim Clarke et cetera were made fairly salient by Reuters from this group. Similarly, from local actors, the Ethiopian Free Press Journalists' Association (EFPJA), university students, families of detainees, Emperor Haile Sillassie, journalists, and a number of ordinary citizens also had their voices heard by Reuters to make the Ethiopian Elections a global agenda, but none of them were treated like Mengistu in terms of quantity and image portrayal. The frequent comparison of Mengistu with Meles Zenawi, the former as a socialist dictator and the latter as a democratic leader were presumed to elicit attention from the Western news outlets, which use Reuters's news.

In sum, it can be concluded that the two news agencies were concentrating on the most visible and powerful actors, who were engaged in the electoral processes. As Negrine (1998:6) says, it is natural for the media to perceive some institutions and individuals as more 'important' and hence as more 'newsworthy' than others. For instance, both ENA and Reuters made political parties, their leaders, international institutions, and the police more important by deeming them more 'newsworthy' than other institutions and individuals. But the importance they attached to each actor was significantly different.

ENA focused on the CUD, the UEDF, international observers and NEB and made all of these actors prominent in order to promote the position of the government, whereas Reuters made the two giant forces, the CUD and the EPRDF, and their leaders most salient in order to show that the confrontation was fierce. Furthermore, ENA was more interested in dominant and domestic role players, such as religious leaders, scholars, etcetera, whereas Reuters concentrated on the former Ethiopian leaders, international role players and institutions, detainees and students, and their families, et cetera. In this case, the kind of actors selected and the way they were presented to media users by ENA and Reuters played into the conviction of Negrine (1998), who argues that media systems, in both authoritarian and democratic systems, are not and cannot be free from the ideological and national interest imperatives, as well as market forces, which in turn, were what dictated journalists, editors and media institutions to compromise the principles of objectivity in reporting.

5.3 THE FRAMES OF ENA AND REUTERS

The emphasis given to certain media contents is meant to direct the human mind to focus on selected issues, whereas, the framing of the already salient contents in a certain way is to lead media users to a critical understanding and toward taking partial positions, which the framer wants to be adopted. That is why, McCombs, Shaw and Weaver (1997), perceive framing as a second-level agenda setting, which tells media users "how" to

think about issues and actors. In light of this, this portion of the chapter discusses the frames used by ENA and Reuters in covering the issues and actors of the May 2005 Ethiopian Elections, and the way the two agencies were different in this regard. The examination is thus directed at evaluating how the major issues and actors, which gained significant salience, were framed in the news reports of ENA and Reuters, and how the two news agencies behaved differently in this respect.

5.3.1 The framing of issues by ENA and Reuters

As noted earlier, legitimising the Elections as a free and fair process was the most crucial aspect of the government's propaganda. As Begashaw (2005) perceives it, the government framed the Elections as "extraordinarily open" and "democratic", which allowed the oppositions to "freely express their ideas", and "take advantage of the democracy that the ruling party bestowed upon them" and that "the people voted for candidates of their choice", which were from the EPRDF. In this respect, reiterating democratic concepts, voters' astounding turnout, reliable ballot counting, complaint resolution processes, et cetera were the most noticeable pattern in ENA's reporting. On the part of Reuters, arrests and killings were the agendas, which were dominantly present in its news reports. To promulgate these values, ENA and Reuters, however, used many voices, as a feasible strategy.

Deacon et al (1999) say that it is the usual practice of the media to find a greater number of sources cited in favour of a particular outlook or a line of interpretation and evaluation. Certain sources are undermined, discredited or disclaimed, particularly those advanced by others whose positions are at variance with those, which are given priority. According to Deacon et al (1999), quoting certain sources in their ranks and others without makes significant differences in shaping the news content in terms of influencing how the political power is distributed among various parties. With this strategy in play, the issues of democracy, free and fair elections, and the complaint handling process, arrests and killings were the major prominent

issues for both ENA and Reuters, which were framed in way to signify a certain meaning.

- **democracy – a maturing versus a broken exercise**

With regard to issues related to democracy, the government intended to emphasise that democracy in Ethiopia was taking root and it was impossible to look back, even under threatening times such as those shown during the post-Elections period (National elections lays...2005). ENA reflected this position of the government in many of its news reports. For instance, in its coverage of Prime Minister's interview, ENA emphasised the government's commitment to keep "greater democracy" on track, and "no turning back from democracy" (Meles says his...2005). ENA also attempted to repeatedly substantiate this view with other popular voices.

It, however, must be noted here what the government meant by democracy. For the government, democracy was limited to the exercise of conducting free and fair elections, resolving differences peacefully, promoting dialogues among contesting parties, and, accepting results with zeal. The other major tenets of democracy, such as free press, independent judiciary system and freedom of assembly, et cetera, were largely disregarded, or, at least, not sufficiently mentioned by the government. Congruent to such government framing of democracy, ENA too provided significant attention to the "greatness of the number of turnout and perseverance of voters" (NEBE says over...2005), the "free and fairness of the conduct of the electoral process" (National election lays...2005), the "democratic manner" (Tripartite Enquiry team...2005) through which Elections complaints and violence were handled, and the acceptance of the final results as true "voices" of the electorates.

In other words, democracy, as a tool for conducting free and fair elections, was perceived by ENA as a "cornerstone" (National Elections lays...2005) to establish "good governance" in the country, and which could only be achieved through a "ballot" box (National election lays...2005). In view of

ENA, democracy, with all these attributes, was being entrenched in country. For instance, the extensive coverage that ENA provided to Kemal Bedri, chairperson of NEB, shortly after the day of the Elections, could be cited as one good example. Kemal said the determination of the voters to exercise their democratic rights was a sure guarantee that democracy was “to stay”, “has gotten strong foothold”, and had “continued getting root” as it was well demonstrated by a “number of voters who marched to the constituencies” and the “commitment they showed” in staying long hours to cast their votes (NEBE says over...2005).

In the same news report of ENA, certain electorates were quoted as saying, “democratic culture has been flourishing in the country” and “this would be a good example for other African countries”. Scholars and students of the Addis Ababa University, were also quoted as saying that the active participation of the public was the “clear indication of the sprouting of democracy”, and competing parties “ought to accept graciously the Elections results”, in which the EPRDF was said to have won the Elections, in order to ensure “the peaceful transition of power” (National elections lays...2005). Foreign observers, according to ENA’s news reports had also appreciated the “democratisation of the Elections, which met world standards”, which was “a great victory for the nation”, and accepting results of the peaceful and democratic Elections with “bless” was the “sole option” (EU chief observer...2005).

Here, ENA’s framing of democratic values, as an “instrument only to conduct Elections” was pronounced, to a larger extent and in such a way that media users would think of democracy as a long process, which was hard to realise in its totality at once, but rather could only be attained in a fragmentary manner, through a lengthy process of tolerance, understanding and practical lessons. The above frames of democracy of ENA, which omitted other aspects of democratic principles, also seemed to remind voters that they had full rights to participate in the Elections, but not exercise these rights to the extent of asking their rights, such as the

freedom of expression and reception of media contents, and freedom of demonstration, et cetera, which were topical during and after Elections.

In the case of Reuters, the framing of the democratic process was treated along with the electoral process. Reuters had not been initially dramatically different from ENA in framing the electoral process as a showcase for major democratic principles, until the violence erupted. Before the June 8 incident, international Elections' observers, Western countries, human right watchdogs' perception of the Electoral process were somewhat optimistic, and so was Reuters. Despite the oppositions' accusations of widespread fraud in vote counting, the Elections had been seen by the latter as "the first real multi-party Elections", which provided "unprecedented opportunity for oppositions", "testing grounds for Ethiopia for its compliance to democratic principles" and as "astounding" (Ethiopian oppositions claim...2005). The electoral processes were also perceived as an opportunity for the Ethiopian government to further demonstrate its alliance with Western governments in their attempt to "promote" democracy and fight global terrorism in Africa. Thus, the government's attempt to ensure the "freeness" and "fairness" of the electoral process were more pronounced in the early stages of Reuters reporting.

- **Elections results and the complaint handling process – genuine versus flawed practices**

Polling results and the complaint handling process were the other sub-issues from the category of "Elections outcome", which were made greatly salient by ENA and Reuters. The manner the polling results sub-issue was framed in ENA's reporting reflected the government's line of "I won the Elections democratically, and it is better to allow me to peacefully establish the new government". In doing so, ENA continually reported that Elections were free, transparent, and standardised and well received by such international parties as the Ambassadors Donor's Group, the European Delegation and the US State Department. ENA also reported that it was this "democratic" process that allowed the EPRDF to win a "landslide

victory” (Electoral executives say...2005). Furthermore, Elections results were framed by ENA as an opportunity for contesting parties to further enrich democracy, change the country’s image to a more positive view and achieve accelerated economic developments by mobilising their supporters towards the government’s development programmes. ENA further stressed in its reporting that, “oppositions must accept the result of the ballot box graciously” (Active participation of...2005; Accepting election results...2005), in which the oppositions were said to have increased their seat count tenfold; was the “sole option”, not other options such as negotiations, dialogues, rerunning of Elections, recounting of votes, et cetera, were possible for the contesting parties in order to accept the outcome but to “graciously concede defeat and accept the will of the people” (Islamic Affairs Supreme...2005).

On the other hand, the oppositions persistently accused the government of poll-rigging, which eventually called for and managed to bring about the establishment of a Complaint Investigation Panel (CIP) to look into and address the problems related to poll-counting (Begashaw 2005). In the view of the government, the complaint investigation process was a “democratic means of mediation and fact-finding to resolve Elections complaints”. The government thus framed the complaint handling process as “quick actions, taken by the government to put mechanisms of mediation and fact-finding in place so as to quickly resolve the concerns”, and the eventual withdrawal of the oppositions as a “retreat from truth as a result of losing seats in the majority of the countryside”, and inability to form a new government”. This perception of the government was duplicated by ENA as follows: “it [CIP] is the only single mechanism to get back in the course of the democratic process” (Tripartite enquiry team...2005).

Predicting the fact that the complaint handling process would legitimise the victory of the EPRDF and provide the ruling party with rationale to arrest demonstrations and violence, ENA, in some of its news stories framed this complaint handling mechanism as the process, “which was applauded by

all parties” and which “would play a positive role” in resolving Electoral problems. For ENA, the mechanism was the “key aspect”, and “sole alternative” to address disputed issues. This mechanism was also framed by ENA as, “an expression of developed democratic values and cultures” (NEB to probe...2005).

The oppositions recurrent blame foisted on the ruling party for “poll rigging”, was framed by ENA as “complaint” of oppositions (Tripartite enquiry teams...2005), which was “heavily exaggerated” (AU elections observer... 2005). For ENA, the “polling irregularities”, which were related to logistical issues more than to political disputes were also framed as an “important step toward democracy and peace” (NEB to probe...2005) not as a serious fraud that was capable of taking away political power of over 72 million people. In the end, however, when the oppositions and the EU-EOM declared that the investigation process was in “complete jeopardy” (CUD, UEDF say...2005), ENA’s reaction in its report was that “nothing was illegal”, everything was conducted “according to the legal procedures”. ENA’s framing of the reaction of oppositions as a “routine complaint” was transformed to a “natural criticism”, which could happen in any electoral process and, as a result mainly of failure to corroborate their issues (NEBE to probe...2005).

On the part of Reuters, the Elections results and the complaint handling process were progressively changing from neutral to worse. Issues related to Elections outcomes and the causes of all killings and arrests were not easy to report for Reuters. Reuters was initially able to say only that the “ruling party won the majority seat” and that the oppositions “claim big victory in the capital”. To endorse the Elections as “free and fair” and the results of the Elections were “factual”, Reuters had to quote prominent voices such as the US State Department and the EU-EOM. For instance, the US State Department was quoted as saying, “despite some irregularities, there was no indication of widespread fraud”. The “ban on demonstration was” the only concern for the US government” (Ethiopian oppositions claim...2005). The EU-EOM Chief, Anna Gomez was also

quoted as saying: “the elections were peaceful, although there was concern about intimidations” (Ethiopian coalition slams...2005). At this time, though Reuters gave particular attentions to oppositions, their voices were however kept at a secondary level.

In late May, when the accusation of oppositions of “vote-rigging” by government began to elicit some debates and obtain some weight on the part of international communities such as the European Delegation in Ethiopia and EU-EOM, when the government itself began to speak about the need for the setting up of a complaint investigation panel, Reuters’s tone began to change and see the situations differently. So much so, Reuters, in its May 19 report, quoted strong voices that questioned the freeness and fairness of the electoral process. Quoting the leaders of the CUD, Reuters reflected the idea of “poll repeat” and “vote recount”, as the “ruling party was acting with impunity in stealing people’s votes”. It also commented, for the first time, that “oppositions have won significant votes by campaigning on a platform of free market reform, in order to tackle poverty” (Ethiopian oppositions demand...2005). On its May 25 story too, Reuters headlined that “EU undermined the fairness of Ethiopian poll” and said that “Ethiopian poll was marred by media manipulations and irregular vote counting” (Fairness of Ethiopian poll...2005). At this point, Elections results appeared to be ambiguous issues for Reuters’s reporting. For instance, Reuters in its May 30 news, reported that, “both parties have accused each other of attempting to rig votes in the polls” (Ethiopian ruling party...2005).

The initial statements of Reuters, which predominantly framed the Elections as “true multi-party competition” on many occasions, began to be crowded with numerous issues that led one to think otherwise. In this report, the voice of the oppositions stood out in saying that the ruling party was engaged in a “daylight robbery, stealing and cheating”, such accusations against the NEB by the oppositions on the poll was “rigged”, “distorted”, and “manipulated”, and was a “public betrayal”, by the ruling party, turned to be legitimate for Reuters (The oppositions files...2005).

Meanwhile, the statements of the regional World Bank Representative, which focused on economic reforms, provided the opportunity for Reuters to highlight the views of the oppositions, who were framing Meles as an “authoritarian” leader, who “failed to lift Ethiopia, which consistently ranked as one of the world’s least developed country, inflicted by an acute cycle of poverty” (Ethiopia poll may...2005).

Since the government announced that it began to probe Elections frauds, Reuters started to provide fairly significant attention to the CIP, on the grounds that all parties, including Western governments, diplomats, and human right organisations, put the Elections process in question, and the complaint investigation process had a paramount importance for the Electoral process. In its June 17 news report, Reuters therefore framed the complaint investigation process as a “plausible resort” to find a solution for electoral disputes. Reuters also framed it as “an important precondition” for the Prime Minister, to maintain his democratic credentials, in the face of the G8 leaders, to which he was expected to explain the progress made in ensuring good governance in Africa in their upcoming meeting (Ethiopia to probe...2005). The success of the investigation process, in the view of Reuters, was largely meant to maintain the Prime Minister’s credentials in the face of Western leaders, not anything to do with respect for voters’ choices.

- **Arrests and killings – as necessary versus unruly actions**

The other notable issue, probably the most dominant one in the reports of both news agencies, was the June 8 violence, which, according to Begashaw (2005), was framed by the government as an “illegal and unconstitutional deed that challenged the constitutional order of the country”. To the government, the violence, which was “fomented by oppositions, particularly by the CUD”, and the killings and arrests, which unfortunately resulted in the unnecessary loss of lives, were “necessary legal actions to restore law and order”. In conformity to the government position, on its June 8 news, ENA disclosed: “measures being taken

against elements engaged in chaos, unrest” (Necessary measures being...2005). Again, on the same day, it said: “22 killed, 40 wounded in Addis Ababa city riot”, which was “put under control” (Federal Police: 22 killed...2005) by the Federal Police, not the government or the ruling party. These two stories about the incident contained detailed assertions of many aspects, including what happened, who was behind the incident and why the event happened.

Even though the official report said the number of people killed and wounded in the incident was over 42 and 100 respectively, ENA appeared to deliberately underestimate the figures so as to downplay the drama. The efforts reached such an extent that ENA, out of character with its reporting trends, quoted the Federal Police, instead of the government and the ruling party, perhaps, in order to give the impression that the latter two had never had any involvement in the incident.

Grammatical structures also provide insight into the extraordinary strategies used in ENA’s two cited news reports. ENA used passive constructions more frequently than active sentence patterns when describing the deaths and wounding. The news reports by ENA: “measures being taken against elements engaged in chaos, unrest” (Necessary measures being...2005) and “22 killed, 40 wounded in Addis Ababa city riot” (Federal Police: 22 killed...2005) can be cited as good examples in this respect. As to Aqtash et al (2004), using passive voice constructions often have the effect of dissipating the force of killings and injuries. They invariably weaken the emphasis on the suffering of the victims. This is also true when the agent of the violence, that is, the commanding party, is not clearly mentioned as the cause of death and wounds.

ENA held no other party responsible for the deaths and wounds that occur on June 8, apart from the opposition parties, particularly the CUD. By quoting many pro-government voices, ENA maintained that much of the violence was part of a deliberate strategy adopted by the CUD to

destabilise the country since it knew it had no chance of winning the Elections. ENA also quoted the Federal Police and MOI concerning the killings and arrests' degree of legitimacy. For instance, ENA quoted MOI saying, "the killings and arrests are the necessary actions to control the riot, which was instigated by the CUD" (Necessary measures being...2005). Following this press release, ENA continued to frame the actions of killings, wounds and arrests as "legal intervention", "anti riot action", "blocking life disrupting action", and "necessary measure" taken by the Federal Police against "city riots", "violence", "dangerous activities for peace and security", "anarchism", "lawlessness", and "illegitimacy".

Similar to the government's framing, the motive behind this violence was framed by ENA as the calculated plot of the oppositions to "overthrow the government by violence", means rather than dialogue, and, by "disrupting the constitutional order of the country" (Federal Police says...2005). The remedy was thus framed by ENA as taking the "necessary measures" against those who engaged in "chaos and unrest". If the violence continues, the Federal Police said in ENA's news, "similar action will continue" (Necessary measures being...2005). It further framed the act of violence as inflicting "danger against the peace and security of the country" whose result was to "disrupt the growth of democracy of the country", the actions taken by the Federal Police were not only "constitutional", but also "life saving" (Necessary measures being...2005).

Violence and clashes, particularly killings and arrests, were also major focus areas for Reuters during the month of June. Just as in the case of its framing of the fairness of Elections and Elections results, Reuters was initially at a crossroads in framing the violent clashes and arrests. On June 7, Reuters reported that "one student was killed and 500 were arrested", in a protest against "Ethiopian poll results". The protest was "staged" despite the fact that "a month-long ban was declared by the government (One student killed...2005). This Reuters' news seemed to create an impression that the students were responsible for the killings as they were breaching the government's ban. Quoting ETV, the Reuters' news asserted that the

killing was “accidental”, not intentional, and gave no clue as to who was behind it.

Nevertheless, the mass killings on June 8 called for a more serious coverage by Reuters. Reuters provided such extensive coverage on killings and arrests, as confirmed in many literatures, as “the more conflict in the nation, the more likely a nation would receive coverage from the international media” (Golan & Wanta 2003). Reuters in its comparatively extensive coverage of killings, tried from its perspective to reflect the extent of the violence, who was behind it and their motives, as well as the efforts of all concerned to end the fighting.

At this point, two foreign reporters, Katie Nguyen and Arshed Mohammed were assigned to support the local reporter Tsegaye Tadesse and they framed the situation as a “brutal action of the government” by describing the day as “the single bloodiest day of the unrest”. They further reported that the Ethiopian security forces had “indiscriminately fired on crowds”, and “22 were killed”, for the simple reason that they “protested the vote-rigging” conducted by the government (Post election violence...2005). In this news report, the situation was described as “tense”, as “hundreds of police and paramilitary troops” “flooded the capital’s streets”, and “hospitals were packed” and “blood spattered the floor from the dead and wounds”.

From this time onward, Reuters began to critically question the democratic credentials of the Prime Minister and his party, and tended to declare the position of the government as anti-democratic. The UK and the US governments were reported as saying that the situation had “raised their concerns”. The accusations of the CUD and the UEDF against the governments of serious fraud, intimidations, mass arrest and killings continued to appear in Reuters’s news reports instead of those statements that used to herald the freeness and fairness of the electoral process. Despite the government’s insistence that the supporters of oppositions were “looters”, “burglars”, and “prompters of violence”, Reuters’s focus,

quoting loud international voices, such as Amnesty International and EU, was on the mass killings that took the lives of over 40 demonstrators. Reuters also began to frame the post-Elections period as “disputed”, “worst bloodshed”, “full of political tension” et cetera, which resembled the typical African Elections that often resulted in predicaments characterised by mass killings and arrests. David Shin, the former US Ambassador to Ethiopia, was quoted in this regard as saying, “the bloodshed is the habit of political intolerance acquired over generations of dictatorship”. The act of the government was also labelled by Amnesty International as “crackdown”, “act of brutality”, and “tough line”, against “peaceful demonstrators” (Ethiopia frees opponents...2005).

On June 12, Reuters made an exclusive interview with the Prime Minister and reported with the headline: “Analysis: Meles’s democratic credential face key test.” In this report, even though the Prime Minister was quoted as saying “no turning back to democracy”, the “shootings were preventive measures”, and the “complaint handling processes will end legally”, Reuters underlined the “tough challenge” that the Prime Minister was to face to “convince the outside world that his democratic credentials are intact”. With this comment at the heart of its stories, despite the fact that the government held oppositions, particularly the CUD, responsible for inciting violence, Reuters made clear in many of its news reports that the security forces were behind the killings of students and demonstrators by disclosing that, “police and troops fired on protesters” (Post-election violence...2005). The act was framed by Reuters as a “heavy-handed crackdown”, and “unnecessary”, which raised the concerns of many nations and institutions, such as the US and Amnesty International (Ethiopian forces hold...2005). In one of the stories, Reuters also quoted Amnesty International as saying, “police showed brutality, by using live ammunitions and harsh beatings” against “peaceful protestors” (Ethiopia frees opponent...2005).

The killing of a newly-elected political leader in one of the constituencies, in Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples’ Regional State (SNNPRS),

was another incident which brought about more condemnations against the government from many quarters as well as further reinforcing Reuters framing of the government as “antidemocratic, slayer and repressive”. In its story, “police shot dead a newly elected law maker, Tesfaye Aden, while he was sitting and relaxing with a friend” (Ethiopia’s opposition says...2005). Reuters’s report of the killing of Tesfaye Adane was framed as a deliberate mission of the government’s troops to kill an opposition leader, who committed no crime. As similar reports inevitably provoke Western governments to intervene in the situation, the US government shortly thereafter said, “police should stop using excessive force, and the rule of law and human rights must be respected”. The UK government too, suspended its aid for Ethiopia “in response to the government’s crackdown of demonstrations” after “openly expressed its concern over the unrest” (British suspends Ethiopia’s...2005). These measures were meant to force the government to critically evaluate its position. As a result, the government began to release detainees, who were reported by Reuters as “the first reported release”, among an estimated number of “over 3000 people”, who were still in jail (Ethiopia frees 336...2005).

In general, for Reuters, the core causes of the killings were the “poll-rigging”, for which the oppositions held the government responsible, though the government denied the allegations. Reuters also predicted the ultimate consequence of the act of violence, and suggested that the country was “feared to go back to its totalitarian past” (Ethiopia arrests youth...2005). Though Reuters failed in fully justifying the rationale behind this assertion, it, however, forced many concerned institutions and individuals to condemn the killings and to seek for solutions. Reuters seemed to create the impression that the electoral processes were more open in its 3000 years of history, but withered away. Reuters also added that the government’s hope to conduct free and fair Elections had quickly faded away, as a result of the “heavy-handedness” of the police (Analysis: Meles’s democratic...2005). In the view of Reuters, the Electoral process was “heavily disputed”, the killings and arrests were the consequence of

“military clampdown”, and the vote results were “keenly challenged”. What is apparent from the above examples is that journalists and editors from both ENA and Reuters were largely incapable to clearly reflect the situations as objectively as they appeared.

5.3.2 The framing of actors by ENA and Reuters

ENA and Reuters’s framing of actors was no different from the pattern they followed in the framing of issues. As indicated earlier, ENA made the EPRDF and NEB, the CUD and voters more salient than others. On the part of Reuters, leaders of the incumbent government and oppositions were made more salient than others. Reuters also gave significant placement to voters, the former President of Ethiopia, Mengistu Hailemariam, and other Western countries and prominent personalities, from the “miscellaneous” category. The two news agencies then framed preferred actors in a way they can be associated to certain perspectives and meanings.

- **Government as lawmaker**

The EPRDF, often reported interchangeably with the government and the Cabinet, was framed by ENA as an indomitable party with the interest to “make the Elections free and fair” (AU elections observers...2005) on the outset. The government was also reported by ENA as a “lawmaker”, and “constitutionally accountable” for “peace and order” (Democracy in the...2005). The government was further characterised as one that promoted “dialogue and tolerance” among contestant parties and was for these reasons able to win trust and respect among the public, which helped it to win a “landslide victory”. In the view of ENA, it was the EPRDF that sacrificed a great deal to overthrow the past dictatorial socialist regime and to bring about enduring democracy and development for the country.

It was not only the EPRDF that was accorded such positive framing, but also other institutions and individuals that were affiliates of the EPRDF were portrayed as constructive actors. NEB is one of the institutions which received positive framing by ENA.

Though NEB was perceived by oppositions as only "partial", "blatantly biased", and incapable of providing access to "documentary evidences of truth", the government and ENA frequently addressed NEB as "constitutional", "legitimate", "independent", and "accountable" (CUD, UEDF rejects...2005). NEB was also framed by ENA as "legitimate and official governing body", vested with all authority to make decisions on the electoral processes. It was further framed by ENA as a "neutral mediator", which genuinely facilitated the Elections process and with the sole authority to "investigate and decide on the complaints lodged" (AU Elections observers...2005).

On the part of Reuters, the actions related to government systems were largely reported in association with individual actors, predominantly the Prime Minister, rather than the government as one single entity. Reuters's framing of the government was therefore largely reflected through the framing of other government-affiliated bodies and institutions.

- **The Prime Minister – as visionary versus challenged leader**

Apart from the EPRDF and NEB, ENA portrayed the Prime Minister as a firm leader, who can steer the electoral process in the interest of his party, the EPRDF. His image was glorified with such framing as "thoughtful", "democrat" and "provider of ample opportunities for oppositions and the public to exercise their democratic rights" (PM Meles calls...2005). He was usually framed by ENA as a "forward looking", "stable", and "peace loving" person. ENA's extensive report on the discussions the Prime Minister held with the British Secretary of State for International Development, Hilary Ben, at the time of violence was an indication of how much it was keen to promote the positive image of the Prime Minister. In this news, ENA made development issues stand out: "the Ethio-British joint development program discussed on food security, education and capacity building" (British Secretary of State...2005). Such approaches at a time of violence seemed to deliberately downplay and conceal the real issues on the

ground on one hand and to promote the Prime Minister as a “skilful” and “visionary” leader.

On some occasions, ENA also tried to frame the Prime Minister as a “decisive” and “unwavering” leader, who was indomitable. The news report, which says: “Meles asked the oppositions, as soon as possible, whether they would fully respect the constitutional order and other legal institutions of the country [NEB], or pursue on alternative path” (EPRDF Chairman holds...2005), can be cited as a case in point. Additionally, ENA’s framing of the Prime Minister as a steadfast leader was also reflected in its report, which read: “the Prime Minister asked oppositions to distinguish the path of peace and violence” (Prime Minister Meles calls...2005). In this story, the Prime Minister was quoted as requesting oppositions to “submit to what he proposed for them which was nothing but accepting the Elections result or openly declare a war against” his party. For ENA, such a portrayal seemed essential to glorify the Prime Minister’s image over others. To further exalt his personality, ENA had always reported him with his full rank: the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, whenever he appeared in the news, rather than the usual reporting: Meles, and his words with active voice construction.

The Prime Minister, as a prominent role player in the electoral process, had also been accorded a significant place in Reuters’s coverage. In general, the Prime Minister was always presented with his full rank and with his statements given prominence. This shows that, in all cases, the Prime Minister was framed as a key influential person in the electoral process. Nevertheless, Reuters seemed later to be obliged to put the Prime Minister in different frames that complied with the shifting views and reactions of the Western world, the media and other international organisations.

Initially, Meles was framed by Western leaders as one of the “new generation of African leaders”, (Ethiopian oppositions claim...2005), with a vision to extract Africa and Ethiopia from abject poverty. He was framed as

one of the new blood of African leaders who could implant democracy in the country by staging the “first real multiparty election” (Ethiopian ruling party...2005) in Ethiopia’s long political history. He was also framed by the Western world as a strong person with an unwavering commitment to make these Elections “free” and “fair”, despite the fact that oppositions “mounted a more united challenge” against him.

Recalling the sacrifices his party - the EPRDF - paid during his march to power, Reuters, too, frequently framed the Prime Minister as a “strong guerrilla leader”, who toppled the “socialist dictator Mengistu Hailemariam”, to usher in peace and stability in the Horn of Africa. He was also portrayed by Reuters as a person who “provided ample opportunities” for the people of Ethiopia to exercise their democratic rights, express their views openly, and engaged in a democratic Elections for the first time in the country’s “3000 history”. Apart from these, the Prime Minister was framed by Reuters as a strong ally of the Western world in the global fight against terrorism (Analysis – Meles democratic...2005).

The optimistic attitude of the Western world towards the Prime Minister, which was well reflected in Reuters’s news reports, however, was only transitory in the face of changing circumstances. Such attitudes began to whither away starting June 8, when the government was accused by oppositions of killings and mass arrests of students and demonstrators.

The June 8 incident was framed by Reuters as a “bloodshed”, which put the electoral process and the democratic credential of the Prime Minister under a big question mark. Though oppositions waged a number of accusations by against the Prime Minister prior to this date, it was only beginning this day that Reuters began to critically question the Prime Minister’s credential. The act of “indiscriminate” killings and “mass arrests” by the government security forces seemed to have initiated the Western media and governments to question the Prime Minister’s real characteristics. It was also, since this time, that Reuters, quoting prominent voices began to frame the Prime Minister as a person who

stood behind “poll rigging”, the “crackdown” as well as “killings” and “arrests”. The voices of the CUD, Western nations, diplomats, voters, relatives of victims, et cetera might have negatively pictured the Prime Minister. Unlike the pre-violence portrayal, Reuters this time accused of the Prime Minister and his party of “tampering”, “cheating”, and “rigging” of votes in order to stay in power without public support. Particularly, the Prime Minister was framed as a “challenged” and “threatened” leader, who fell short of proving his expected democratic credentials (Ethiopia frees opposition...2005).

The framing of the Prime Minister by Western countries as a democratic leader who was able to “steer Ethiopia’s transition from socialism to democracy” was gradually changed to the fear that he might possibly “slide back to repression” (Analysis-Meles’s democracy...2005). During the time when the violence reached its peak, the Prime Minister’s portrayal assumed its worst form. In its report of June 10, on the stoppage of the leader of the CUD by the government at the Addis Ababa International Airport, who was on his way to London on a fund-raising trip, Reuters quoted the Prime Minister as saying, “oppositions are under police surveillance. If things got hotter, they will be detained without any question. If that is intimidation, so be it” (Ethiopia arrest youth...2005). This news report was a reflection of the extent to which the Prime Minister was depicted as a dictator and inflexible in his approach to the predicament he was beset by. In this regard, he was framed by Reuters as a person who was “authoritative”, “inflexible” and emotionally “tempered”.

During the course of the violence, Reuters’s made the security forces more salient than the Prime Minister. At the start, security forces were addressed as “police”, “Ethiopian police force” or “riot police” (Second day violence...2005), poised to avert hazardous situations created by violent voters. When the measures they took faced all out condemnation from Western governments, Amnesty International, the media and other local human rights organisations, the tone of Reuters’s news assumed a dramatic change and began to characterise the security forces as

“paramilitary troops”, and “government soldiers”, who “flooded the streets” of Addis Ababa, and “indiscriminately fired” on demonstrators. They were also reported by Reuters as the ones who “stormed the campuses” and “harshly beat rock-throwing students” (Post elections violence...2005). The framing of the security forces as “ruthless lawmakers” was further given attention in the following days as Reuters began to provide significant attention to ordinary actors like the relatives and friends of the victims, eyewitnesses and hospital sources. For instance, in its June 8 news, Reuters quoted eyewitnesses, rather than the official government sources, as saying: “police opened fires indiscriminately” (Post elections violence...2005).

- **Oppositions – as unlawful versus rightful contenders**

Equally as important as the Prime Minister for ENA and Reuters were opposition parties and their leaders. Opposition parties, their leaders and affiliates, though were made greatly salient, largely attained a darker image in ENA’s coverage. According to Gudina (2007), the government had never perceived the oppositions as partners, particularly in the post-clash period. ENA’s framing of the oppositions, too, had to change its course to reflect shifting interests from its fairly neutral treatment in the pre-clash period to blatant condemnation, in the post-clash period. In the post-clash period, negative generalities and stereotypes were the most explicit forms of ENA’s reporting of oppositions. Even, in the pre-clash period, framing oppositions with collective names as “contesting parties”, “opposition parties”, “contending parties”, “participating parties”, et cetera, was an attempt to create an impression that all oppositions were logically one and the same, though they had separate and distinct political manifestos. As unification, according to Thompson (in Sonderling 2001), is an instrument to impose dominant ideology by unifying groups and individuals into a collective identity regardless of their difference, ENA seemed to employ this strategy to create such an impression. Such a strategy of framing urge people to think of the oppositions as a collection of people who would only strive for power by overthrowing the

government, rather than by coming up with clear visions and political programmes and winning the Elections.

Starting on the day of the clash, the oppositions were however often called: “unlawful”, “anarchists”, “extremists”, and “rioters” by ENA, who were emotionally “fomenting chaos” and “endangering the security of the country” (Democracy in the country...2005). In the course of time, ENA began to single out the CUD as a frontline perpetuator of the violence, and remind the other opposition parties not to pursue the path of the CUD, which was the path of bloodshed and atrocity. What is more, they were largely framed by ENA as “perpetrator of violence”. In a similar application of the unification strategy, ENA utilised a fragmentation technique to promote a “pacifist” ideological interest of the government by weakening the alliance among the oppositions. Fragmentation refers to, according to Thompson (in Sonderling 2001), the act of creating disunity among the major challenging parties to an incumbent government.

Oppositions were initially perceived by Western countries, diplomats, and international bodies as the unlikely winners, who wrestled only for mere recognitions. Reuters, too, had to frame them as “unpromising participators”, as the EPRDF was “widely expected to win” the Elections (Ethiopian ruling party...2005). Reuters however began to frame the oppositions as “united forces” that posed a real challenge to the government (Ethiopian oppositions claims...2005). Particularly the CUD was framed by Reuters as the “biggest coalition”, the “main coalition”, and the “strong contestant”. The exchange of words between the government and oppositions was also framed by Reuters as a “war of words”, a metaphor, which hyperboles the situation. Inspecting at these trends of Reuters, it is possible to surmise that Reuters’s was poised to create an impression that the news it reported were of depicting real fights between two or more giant forces.

When the claims of oppositions began to gain some weight among Elections observers and mediators, Reuters’s news began to offer

significant attention to the complaints that the oppositions aired. In its May 31 news, Reuters quoted the CUD as complaining about “vote-rigging, deliberate fraud, media manipulation and public betrayal” in order to indicate that the promised “free” and “fair” Elections were on the brink of collapse. Reuters also continued to frame the CUD as the promoter of “free market”, “privatisation”, “land reform” and “creation of jobs”. By framing in such a way, Reuters seemed to suggest that CUD was a potential competitor who deserved winning the Elections. From this time onwards the CUD was, for Reuters, no longer a “mere competitor”, but one that seemed to deserve winning the Elections.

Even in the aftermath of the clash, despite ENA framing of the CUD as “desperate politicians” who wanted to grab power only through “stirring violence”, Reuters countered this portrayal through optimistically associating the CUD with the dominant values of the Western world. For instance, in its June 12 news, Reuters quoted the UK and the US governments and Amnesty International as accusing the government of a “brutal crackdown of demonstrations” (Ethiopia frees opponent...2005).

The international community, prominent individuals and political analysts were also quoted by Reuters as commenting on the damaging political situation of the country, which in their view required “free press”, “free court”, and “free market”. In this regard, David Shin, the former US Ambassador to Ethiopia, was quoted by Reuters as saying that, “Meles should critically deal with ethnic and ideological diversities” (Analysis-Meles’s democratic...2005). All these and other news reports of Reuters implied that the incumbent government had momentous weaknesses, which should be redressed urgently. And, the Elections were good opportunities for the government to see options in power stratifications.

When the efforts of actors in the complaint handling process and other mediation processes were known to have been aborted, Reuters clearly framed the CUD as the party of “peace” and “reconciliation”. In its August 10 news, Reuters reflected that the CUD was “appealing for reconciliation

and collaboration” to “form a national unity government” in attempts to resolve the country’s enormous problems in pursuit of democracy (Ethiopia to form...2005). In this news, Reuters tried to frame the CUD as a “far sighting” party that believed in dialogue, reconciliation and tolerance, all core values often discussed by Western partners and international organisations throughout the electoral process.

- **Voters – as rioters versus victims**

Next to the two big contestants, the government and the CUD, it was the voters that were made heavily salient and attained a contrasting frame from both agencies as the events unfolded. ENA reflected the vacillating perceptions of the government on voters during the two periods: before and after the June 8 clash. In the pre-clash period, ENA bestowed the voters with humane and sometimes even glorifying treatment. In the post-Elections period, ENA largely painted them as drifting from their hitherto constructive engagement. Reuters, on the other hand largely portrayed voters as victims.

At the onset of the post-voting days, ENA typically portrayed voters as “good-mannered”, and “peace loving” (National Elections lays...2005), “enthusiasts”, and “dedicated”, electorates who expressed “heartfelt happiness” over the openness and fairness of the national Elections (NEBE says over...2005). Later, ENA framed voters as “protagonist”. Especially voters such as scholars, university students, religious leaders, ordinary citizens, et cetera were framed as supporters of the government who strived to ensure “fair” and “free” Elections. For instance, one of ENA’s reports quoted scholars of the Addis Ababa University as saying, “contending parties need to accept the result of the ballot box graciously”. It also quoted students as saying the “electoral process was indicative of the sprouting of democracy” (Active participation of...2005) in the country. The leaders of Islamic Affairs, Regional Diocese and Synods also iterated, according to ENA, that “judiciary bodies and police had effectively discharged their duties” and hence, it was important to “develop tolerance,

accede defeat, and accept the will of the people” (Religious leaders urge...2005).

Nevertheless, in the post-violence period, when a large number of voters expressed their unwavering stand against the alleged vote-rigging, voters began to be framed by ENA as “antagonistic”. Voters, mainly the youth, were portrayed initially as “protesters” rather than demonstrators. Later, ENA turned to making its news reports harsher in tone by associating voters with hooligans. To this effect, ENA borrowed the voice of the federal security force spokespersons and began to frame demonstrators as “rock throwers” “violent rioters”, and “looters”, who engaged in “life-disrupting adventure”, which was conducted in response to the “heeding” of the CUD. ENA also employed the government’s framing of voters as “elements” in order to create the impression that the killings of some demonstrators by security forces were legitimate as they were engaged in activities that had no bearing on the constructive advancement of the electoral process.

Providing voters with a generalised name as “public” or “voters” had been a common trend in Reuters reporting until the eruption of the June 8 violence. Following the June 8 clash, the government labelled demonstrators as “anarchists” who wanted to topple the government by unconstitutional means. Reuters too had frequently mirrored similar framing for demonstrators until the reactions of election observers, the Western nations and organisations were clearly made public. When the reactions from the international community turned to adversarial in nature against the government’s measures, Reuters took made an about-face turn calling protesters “victims”, “Ethiopians”, “demonstrators”, “peaceful demonstrators”, “students”, “protestors”, etcetera (Ethiopian forces hold...2005). Reuters, in later stages, framed them as “helpless victims” who had been unfairly and brutally tortured by merciless government forces. The following narration of an eyewitness, called Rachel, who was quoted by Reuters, can be cited as a good example Reuters’s attempts to show the rough treatment the voters received from security forces: “They make him [her brother], run in the mountains. When he got tired, they beat

him... they put a gun in his mouth and threatened him..." (Families await Ethiopian...2005). These reports illustrated Reuters's "humane" framing of voters as well as their friends and families, and in contrast, the "inhumane" framing for the security forces.

- **Miscellaneous actors**

The two news agencies varied in making some miscellaneous actors salient with particular framing in action. ENA's framing of these miscellaneous actors, though not magnified, was indicative of its alliance with the government. Congruent to the government portrayal, ENA initially framed the Ambassadors' Donor Group (ADG), as a "reliable mediator", and the delegation of EU and Carter Center as "trustworthy observers", and AU observers "as a regional higher body, which was composed of intellectuals". The British journalist Andrew Havens, as a "neutral host of ideas over the Internet", the US Congressman Michael Honda as a "guardian to democracy", the UN Secretary General Kofi Anan as "promoter of peace" in the Horn of Africa, were among the notable actors, who attained positive depictions by ENA as promoter of a pacifist ideology, which the government claimed to endorse. All these portrayals were meant to serve as authoritative voices to confirm the legitimacy of the Elections and the Elections process as free and fair, and the results of the Elections as authentic.

For Reuters, the former Ethiopian President, Mengistu Hailemariam, was a prominent figure. After seventeen years of his ousting, Mengistu was recalled and framed time and again by Reuters as a "socialist dictator" and "authoritarian" leader, who was responsible for immense repression, backwardness, famine and bad governance that was prevalent in the pre-Meles era. Reuters also went as far as 30 years back and made Emperor Haile Sillasié's rule a contrasting reference to Mengistu's, with the intention to give more weight to Meles's regime. Moeller (1999) says media's use of historical analogies can be an extension of their tendency toward sensationalism. Analogies and comparisons is often a way of

communicating relevance as well. Reuters's focus on Mengistu's dictatorial personality can thus be squarely depicted as emanating from these habits of the global media system. Mengistu's rule in Reuters's news reports was deliberately amplified to glorify the personality of the Prime Minister, who was previously deemed by Western government as a progressive leader in Africa.

The UK and the US governments, diplomats, Amnesty International, the AU, the African Commission, and the EU-Delegation were also framed by Reuters as reliable mediators, negotiators, guardians of democracy and promoters of human rights, as well as advocates of peace, dialogue and coexistence, as in the following examples of Reuters's reports. On June 8, the State Department of the US government called on "each side to refrain from violence" and "resolve differences via political dialogue" (Post-elections violence...2005); Head of EU-EOM "condemns house arrests" and "harassments" (Ethiopian forces hold...2007); Western countries expressed their "fear that the government would be slipping back to totalitarian past" (Ethiopia PM defends...2005); EU Delegation condemned "government's tough line" on oppositions. "Amnesty International heralded the establishment of an independent and impartial inquiry commission" (Ethiopia frees opponent...2005). International community commented, "Ethiopia needs free press, free courts and free market, to critically deal with ethnic and ideological diversity. And, EFPJA said, a "great danger is hovering over members of the free press (Ethiopia charges editors...2005).

Apart from individuals and institutions, Ethiopia, as a nation, was framed by Reuters throughout as the "largest coffee grower" and "the second most "populous nation" in Africa, as well as an "Ethnically diverse" country, inflicted by recurrent drought and famine. It was also, on many occasions, portrayed by Reuters as a country, striving to implement democracy and good governance, as well as a strong ally of the Western world in the fight against terrorism.

5.4 CONCLUSIONS

In sum, based on the explanations and arguments given by such communication scholars as Dearing and Rogers (1996), Denis McQuail (2000) and Entman (2004) on agenda-setting and framing theories, it can be concluded that both ENA and Reuters exhibited the agenda setting and framing roles while covering the Ethiopian Elections. As the examination of the news reports of the two news agencies indicates, both news agencies implicitly and explicitly reflected contrasting brands of ideological, national or professional principles and values on which they are based. The following chapter briefly summarises and discusses the findings.

CHAPTER 6 DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Congruent to the agenda-setting and framing theories, what this dissertation distinguished from the news reports of both agencies the overemphasis/omission techniques as well as particular perspectives in the framing of issues and actors with a view to establishing a particular effect for media users to conceptualise reality. In doing so, some issues and actors were made to receive more preferential treatment or emphasis, while others were omitted or scantily reported. Given the preceding instances, one can conclude that ENA and Reuters were following distinct patterns of reporting in their coverage of the 2005 Ethiopian Elections as discussed in the following sections.

6.2 MAJOR DIFFERENCES OF ENA AND REUTERS IN THE COVERAGE OF THE 2005 ETHIOPIAN ELECTIONS

It can be said that while ENA was focused on the issues related to the freeness and fairness of the electoral process, as well as the Elections results, Reuters's limelight was cast on killings and arrests, as well as on public outrages and accusations. With regard to actors, ENA and Reuters largely gave more focus to the most prominent contesting bodies: The EPRDF and opposition parties, but with contrasting differences in the way they made these actors salient. ENA quoted various actors such as the EPRDF officials and NEB to legitimise the EPRDF's triumph over others and to condemn the oppositions, mainly the CUD, whereas Reuters extensively mentioned and quoted the CUD as well as the two giant forces in order to show that their fight deserved media and public attention.

These patterns of coverage of ENA and Reuters were indicative of the alliance of the news agencies to their respective national and international, as well as emerging journalistic, ideological interests. Arguably, these trends of coverage lend to the perception that ENA and Reuters set different agendas. Furthermore, it can be said that ENA's agendas' were

largely the reflections of the government's agendas, whereas, Reuters's agendas, which targeted Western media users, were largely derived from journalistic ideologies, as well as market interests.

To this end, ENA framed the electoral process as free and fair, and fully democratic such that it created a landmark opportunity for the country and the contesting parties. For ENA, the complaints of the oppositions were merely "natural irregularities", which could conceivably occur in any electoral process in developing countries; and the violence in the wake of complaints was mere "anarchism". The leaders of the EPRDF and other associated members, such as the NEB, were also framed by ENA as "indomitable", "farsighted", "stable", and, above all, "democrat". Divergently, oppositions were framed by ENA largely as "emotional", "violent" and most importantly, "unconstitutional".

On the contrary, Reuters markedly framed the arrests and killings, which were significantly downplayed by ENA, as a "brutal act", perpetuated by government troops, and which left the democratic credential of the Prime Minister in question. Reuters framed the polling results as the outcomes of the most undemocratic electoral process, which were marred by government agents and local media in the process. Reuters's initial hero, the Prime Minister, was also relegated from "the new generation of African democrat leader" to a typical African ruler who repeated his forefathers' mistakes. In the same light, the weak "united forces" who posed challenges to the Prime Minister were transformed into and framed by Reuters as "potential winners" who fought for free market and land reform, notably Western values.

The overall analysis on ENA's news reports reveals that its presentation of Elections issues persistently adhered to the incumbent government's framing of issues. Arguably, this trend of coverage lends to the perception that ENA's framing of issues and actors was driven by the framing of the government, which professed to "promote" "democratic", "pacifist" as well as "constitutional" "anti-anarchy" ideologies.

On the other hand, Reuters's framing of issues and actors resembles the perception of some prominent international and regional institutions, as well as Western governments and personalities. This trend of coverage can be said to lend to the perception that Reuters's framing of issues and actors was the ideological reflection of such institutions, countries and individuals. This had been true for the agendas and frames the two news agencies employed and the ways the two were different. Reuters promoted basic ideological notions of the Western world, which emphasise the major ideals of democracy that included freedom of demonstration and expression and anti-violence of citizens, without undermining the journalistic ideologies it was predicated on.

ENA and Reuters, in their coverage of the May 2005 Ethiopian Elections, had shown significant disparities in their attempt to make some issues and actors more salient than others, as well as in the framing of these issues and actors in an intentional manner. In all their coverage, both news agencies had demonstrated one important attribute, which all media systems share (Malek 1997; Negrine 1998; Taylor 1997), and is identified as the cause of all differences. What was demonstrated was that it was not the event that dictated the shape and scope of their coverage, but rather the accounts of their respective actors and ideological principles that governed the tenors of their news. In view of this, it can be said that both news agencies had demonstrated tendencies to become part of their respective core political and ideological institutions by setting agendas and reflecting particular perspectives. It was, for instance, difficult for ENA to forward a substantive comment or to condemn the incident of the June 8 clash contrary to the government's conviction that the act was a "necessary intervention". For Reuters too, it would have been out of journalistic norms of the Western media for Reuters to ignore the killings and arrests of voters in the streets of Addis Ababa.

As Malek (1997:7) and Negrine (1998:117) remind, the media, and more specifically, the state-owned and public service media systems, tend to depend on governments, as they are structurally the creation of the states.

As the result, their role is to promote what governments do. This role is more pronounced in developing nations where many of the media firms are still under government monopoly. To a great extent in conformity with the positions of Malek and Negrine, ENA demonstrated its partiality to the ruling party, which usually dictated media strategies. Reuters also suffered from constraints that emerged from emerging journalistic ideologies, and market trends, such as sensationalism.

It was, therefore, apparent that both ENA and Reuters's journalists, owing to institutional as well as ideological imperatives, were unable to sustain sound critiques on their own over the critical issues that cropped up during the electoral processes. Instead, withholding, omitting and reframing of issues were some of the devices utilised such that the news reports reflected their respective interests. According to Moeller (1999), such patterns of news reporting are called "formulaic", which refers to a certain template that serves as a format for news reporting.

For ENA, for instance, the killings and arrests were simply the result of the violent opposition leaders who aspired for power by resorting to violence. It did not recount public expectations, the country's future and many other global and regional issues. And its solution was simple: accepting the official result, which held the EPRDF the winner. For Reuters, the killings and arrests were the most prominent news story in terms of numbers of casualties, and dramatic and sad expressions of relatives and friends. There are explanations why Reuters focused on the most dramatic parts of the electoral process. Mowlana (1997) and Van Ginneken (2003) indicate that because the major global news agencies retained their links with the West, as well as the market reality that their principal news sources are, either physically and/logically located in the West, the orientation of the news is largely Western. Their coverage of the Third World therefore focuses on negative or "bad" news rather than development news. Authors like Hachten (1999:174-176) believed that the end of the Cold War, which resulted in the decline of many civil wars and reduction of political upheavals, had placed Africa in a less important position in the world

system. Even when major events happen in Africa, the practice of “parachute journalism”, the trend of quick coverage of events without providing the actual contexts and follow-up, portrays the region from its unsightly scenes. Reuters’s focus on killings and arrests of the May 2005 Ethiopian Elections can therefore be perceived in light of these understandings.

Moreover, Reuters’s coverage on deaths of demonstrators was depicted as a mere clash between politically charged voters and ruthless government troops on the issue of poll-rigging. Such presentations seemed to allow Reuters to avoid a serious assessment of the factors that led the two parties to conflict in such a charged situation and to emphasise the killings and arrests. The lack of depth in Reuters’s news reports was also a reminder of Van Ginneken’s (2003) conviction where he noted that the global news coverage of events, on the whole, reveals a lack of depth and inclines to over-generalise. Such a trend of news reporting, according to Hachten (1999:97-98), emerges out of the fact that the global news agencies are increasingly becoming commercial. The “big” global news agencies must produce marketable news that attracts the attention of editors of media outlets at the far end of sensationalism. The end result of this commercialised exercise resulted in the production of homogenised as well as commodified information. Today, the “big” global news agencies are selling their services to whoever buys, wherever it may be, and hence, their personnel are becoming significantly internationalised.

ENA and Reuters had shown marked differences in the tone of the language they used. In the coverage of issues and actors, ENA regularly used a very formal and authoritative language that had a commanding tone such as, “the Prime Minister asked oppositions to...”, “NEB warned...”, “The security forces took..”, “Diplomats urge...” et cetera. Reuters on the other had used a very sensational presentation that focused on actions. It tried to make increasingly dramatic coverage to elicit the same level of sympathy and action as the previous catastrophes, as crises often merit the attention of Western society (Campbell 2004). For instance, it had

been observed that in Reuters's news that such phrases as "the single bloodiest day" and "unprecedented human tragedy" were often used. Reuters however presented the story of the killings and arrests in a language that reflected morality, sympathy and concern. Victims and their relatives were portrayed in such a way that they were able to arouse sympathy from media users. Victims and relatives were made salient and framed as credible actors for the Western public, for they were not aligned to any terrorist, extremist or political group, but only those who demand their basic rights.

The other area which ENA and Reuters showed differences was in the use of historical analogies and images. ENA had not demonstrated much effort to link news stories with national historical and political incidents of the past. Rather ENA seemed to dwell on comparing the number of turnouts to that of the US's to magnify how liberal and intuitive the Ethiopian Elections were. Such expressions as the "Ethiopian democracy is exemplary to other many African countries" and the "turnout of voters was even larger than US" were conveyed by ENA. Reuters, on the contrary, was very prone to the use of analogies and metaphorical expressions. As Moeller (1999) says, the use of imagery and metaphor by the global news system can be a calculated attempt to seize the attention of media users. Perhaps this could be one of the reasons why Reuters was keen in comparing the present Elections with the past; socialism with democracy; and Mengistu's "dictatorial" rule to Meles's "democratic" leadership. What is more, the dialogue between the EPRDF and the CUD was described and perceived as a "war of words", and the measures of the Prime Minister against protesters "triggered fears" among the Western allies that the country "will go to the past authoritarian regime".

One other interesting difference highly pronounced was that while Reuters attempted to associate its news reports with the Western world to promote its intrinsic interests, ENA chiefly associated its stories to the local public and government. Campbell (2004) says global media systems cover dramatic events, particularly crises for political, strategic, commercial and

historical considerations. And to that effect, journalists usually ask, “is it a place where Westerns have business in? Live in? Have relatives in? Is the military going there? And as a whole, what does this mean to the Western society?”

Reuters too can be said to have been making many of its reports with an eye to Western media users and media outlets. When Reuters covered the Ethiopian Elections, it seemed to ask what relevance did the events and actors have to the Western society. If this was not the case, Reuters, from the outset, would not have been interested in covering the post-Elections period. Its prediction was right. Politically tense events, dialogues and finally the killings and arrests occurred. Instead of some other pertinent issues, such as complaint investigations, reconciliation, and the establishment of a transitional coalition government, Reuters made the killings and arrests, and the tenacity of Western actors greatly salient.

For ENA, the major targets were the local media users, particularly the public, and the ruling party and opposition parties with some accommodation for Western diplomats and observers. This seemed to be an attempt to make its news appear balanced. In other words, ENA, in all its coverage, had not shown any significant attempt to cover issues and actors with an eye to Western society.

Given the theoretical discussions made earlier, one can conclude that such stark differences between the two news agencies had hardly been arbitrary occurrences. As Campbell (2004:74-77) notes, media systems in the developed nations are influenced by such dominant Western ideologies as democracy and liberalism, which in turn spur the concentration, trans-nationalisation, and commercialisation of media institutions, leaving the leading classic journalistic occupational ideologies, such as objectivity, diversity, accuracy, analysis, investigation and entertainment, at risk. It is thus fair to conclude that the particular patterns, which made Reuters different from ENA, had likely emanated from ideological and national interests in which the two operated.

Regarding ENA, it is not difficult to discern that the agency was fully in the government and the ruling party's control. As a result, its performances had been geared towards strengthening the findings of Ramaprasad (2001; 2003), which suggest that many African media operate based on the general perceptions, philosophies and ideologies, which often see the need to portray their respective countries and governments positively, ensuring rural coverage, and propagating government policy.

The understanding of the fact that these news agencies play a partial role and promote their respective interests, as a result, calls for another aspect of the study, which is related to the implications of such partialities in Third World countries. As noted by Boyd-Barrett and Rantanen (1998), the global news agencies retain significant associations with the core Western nations and as a result have the interest to reflect the values, ideologies and interests of their home countries or regions. They are also criticised for implanting the commercial model of communication system, which tends to erode the public sphere. Furthermore, the global media have increasingly interested themselves in conflicts or bad news. This is particularly true for the news items covering developing nations, which had been one of the core issues debated in the various NWICO's forums in the 1970s and 1980s. This was also true with Reuters's coverage of the May 2005 Ethiopian Elections as conflicts and killings constituted much of its coverage. In light of the above theoretical backdrops and empirical facts, markets as well as ideological imperatives seemed to have been the most compelling factors for Reuters to concentrate on dramatic events of the May 2005 Ethiopian Elections.

6.3 CONCLUSIONS

Negrine (1998:3-7) notes that media continue to build the structure of the views of the global population about the world they live in. In the contemporary world, media selectively set and frame the agenda, and make events newsworthy. By so doing, the media influence how the political relationships ought to be formed and maintained, as well as how

the political landscapes should be contoured. The means in the selection of news values, the media, be it global or national, avoid random selection of events, and instead use a patterned route to make the coverage more hierarchical and dramatic. In this way, media contribute to creating the mental maps of the world. In the realm of politics, they define and define away oppositions, prioritise events, describe, establish and reinforce images and relationships of order and power in society. And, by so doing, the media not only influence the direction of the public's thinking to specific areas, which the media define as "important", but also conversely direct the thinking away from other unimportant areas according to their respective ideological frames of reference: to Western in the case of Reuters and to Africa/Ethiopia in the case of ENA.

NOTES

- 1 The term ideology, first, used to mean the study of ideas but latter developed to mean a "believe system". For Marx, ideology is a means by which the ideas of the ruling classes become accepted through out societies as natural and normal. Ideological theories stress that all communication and all meanings have a socio-political dimensions, and that they cannot be understood outside their social contexts. This ideological work always favours the status quo of classes with power to dominate the production and distribution not only of goods but also of ideas and meanings (Rayner, Wall & Kruger 2004:78-83). In the news, ideology is defined as a deliberately thought-out, consistent, integrated, and inflexible set of explicitly political values, which are determinant of political decisions (Gans 2004:29-30).
- 2 Immanuel Wallerstein's theory of world system dictates that the political and geographical location of a nation is an important factor in shaping up the content, direction and volume of traffic of news. Taking the geo-political location of nation states in the world system as a crucial factor in news flow, Wallerstein classifies countries in three categories: core, semi-periphery and periphery, the core being playing the dominant role (Chang 1998). In light of this framework, Chang (1998:533-536), with the addition of other filters, confirmed the assumption that the core often holds a higher position to be covered in the core, semi-peripheral and peripheral nations' media. Core nations amply host news correspondent and commands foreign attention. In contrast, the other two zones constitute limited space in the international communication system, and any event they initiate faces severe scrutiny before it becomes news, unless it is dramatic and/or tragic.
- 3 The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is a holistic, comprehensive integrated strategic framework for the socio-economic development of Africa. The NEPAD document provides the vision for Africa, the statement of problems facing the continent and a programme of Action to resolve these problems in order to realise the vision with the supports of Western governments. The NEPAD strategic framework document arises from a mandate given to the five initiating Heads of State (Algeria, Egypt, Nigeria, Senegal, and South Africa) by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) to develop an integrated socio-economic development framework for Africa. The 37th Summit of the OAU in July 2001 formally adopted the strategic framework document. NEPAD was born on October 23, 2001, in Abuja, Nigeria (Hegazy 2004).
- 4 The Commission for Africa was an initiative, which was tasked to define the challenges Africa faces and to provide clear recommendations on how to support the changes needed to reduce poverty. The Commission comprised 17 renowned individuals, mainly from Africa. Prime Minister Tony Blair led the Commission. The Ethiopian Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi and Sir Bob Geldof, among others, were the active members of this Commission (The Commission for Africa 2005:2).
- 5 Walta Information Centre (WIC) is a news and information service establishment based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. WIC, with a network of reporters and stringers in dozens of towns throughout the country, offers daily news, features and editorials in Amharic and English from all regions. It also produces program series for broadcast on radio and television, and also produces documentaries (WIC 2006).

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ADDENDUM 1**NEWS ITEMS SELECTED AND CONSULTED****NEWS ITEMS FROM ETHIOPIAN NEWS AGENCY (ENA)**

Date dispatched	Title
May 16	NEB says over 90 percent registered voters turned out
May 16	National elections lays cornerstone for democratic culture: Electorate
May 17	Electoral executives say EPRDF wins landslide victory at federal level and four regions
May 17	Election observers, voters in Bahir Dar say national elections free, fair
May 19	NEBE says elections results being disseminated by political parties not official
May 19	Active participation of public in elections said manifestation of democracy
May 19	Accepting election results with blessing is the sole option
May 20	ADG urges concerned bodies to maintain integrity to vote tabulation process, respect the will of people
May 22	Public observers acclaim public participation, role of judiciary
May 22	Religious leaders urge political parties to develop culture of tolerance
May 22	It is possible for peoples for various ethnic background to live peacefully, harmoniously while respecting difference
May 23	NEBE says it receives preliminary election results over 110 constituencies
May 23	Islamic Affairs supreme council urge winner, loser parties to work jointly
May 24	EU says Ethiopia elections mark important step in democracy process, regional stability
May 30	Tripartite enquiry teams to be assigned to investigate elections alleged irregularities
June 2	NEB urges oppositions parties to desist from defamation
June 3	AU Elections Observer Team lauds NEBE for conduct of electoral process
June 4	Democracy in the country never accommodate anarchy: MOI
June 8	US Congressman urges political parties to accept election results to be issued by NEBE
June 8	Necessary measures being taken against elements engaged in chaos, unrest
June 8	Federal Police: 22 killed, 40 wounded in A.A. city riot, riot put under control
June 9	Annan urges Ethiopian to solve differences through dialogue
June 10	UEDF, CUD, EPRDF reach of seemed to peacefully conclude electoral process
June 11	Meles says his push for greater democracy remains on

	track: Reuters
June 13	US Government urges EPRDF, CUD, UEDF to abide by agreement without additional conditions
June 14	Meles announces extending of outdoor meetings, demonstration
June 15	British Secretary of State says political parties need to implement joint declaration
June 19	NEB to probe 146 complaints
June 23	Panel to begin hearing complaints lodged by political parties
June 24	NEBE announces provisional results of 519 constituencies
June 28	CIP to move to assignment areas as of Wednesday
July 1	Ministry says investigation of elections a tool for democratization
July 11	NEB finalizes complaints hearing
July 19	CUD, UEDF say election irregularities investigation process in jeopardy
July 20	Scholars in Somali state urge public to take part in forthcoming elections
July 22	Opposition parties engage in defamatory campaigns: Ministry
July 27	CUD, UEDF reject latest election results declared by NEBE
July 28	NEBE conducting well-investigation process under difficult circumstances-EU
July 29	EPRDF Chairman holds face-to-face talks with CUD, UEDF leadership
July 29	NEBE announcing official election results in line with constitution, electoral law
August 4	Prime Minister Meles calls opposition parties to conduct business in a legal, peaceful manner
August 6	CUD, UEDF issue news alternative proposal
August 9	Central Committee of the China's Communist Party congratulates EPRDF for winning elections
August 11	International media organisations describe the elections in Ethiopia true multiparty poll
August 13	AU Communication deputy chairman describes Ethiopia's election free, fair; oppositions complaints grossly exaggerated
August 17	CUD's position said to be contradictory
August 18	CUD files charges against NEBE
August 20	CUD Chairman says EU's draft report about election falls into his hands, down-grads AU's report
August 20	NEBE says it does not know about EU's report regarding the elections
August 25	EU Elections Observers mission issues preliminary statement regarding election

NEWS ITEMS SELECTED AND CONSULTED FROM REUTERS

Date dispatched	Title
May 16	Ethiopia oppositions claims big win in capital
May 16	Ethiopia ruling party claims poll victory
May 17	Ethiopia coalition slams ruling party over polls
May 18	Ethiopia opposition says heading for poll victory
May 19	Ethiopian oppositions demanded selected poll-repeat
May 23	Ethiopia opposition party threatens parliament boycott
May 25	Fairness of Ethiopian poll being undermined – EU
May 28	Ethiopia ruling party near victory – early results
May 30	Ethiopia ruling party consolidated pool lead - board
May 31	Ethiopian opposition files cases against poll- board
June 1	Ethiopia poll may hasten economy reform - WB
June 2	Ethiopia opposition accuses Meles, newsmen arrested
June 3	Ethiopia frees 8 journalists arrested over polls
June 6	One student killed in Ethiopia election protest
June 7	Second day violence of Ethiopia poll-protest
June 8	Ethiopian death toll raises to 18 – hospital sources
June 8	Post election violence flares in Ethiopia, 22 dead
June 9	Ethiopian troops kills 8 injuries cores - Witness
June 9	Ethiopian forces hold opposition often clashes
June 10	Ethiopia PM defends crackdown on poll unrest
June 10	Ethiopia frees opponents, Amnesty condemns police
June 10	Ethiopia arrests youths, Meles says worst over
June 12	Analysis – Meles’s democratic credentials face key test
June 12	Ethiopian oppositions urges calm after protests
June 13	Ethiopia extends protest ban for further month
June 13	Toll in Ethiopian post-election clashes reaches 36
June 14	US condemns use of excessive force in Ethiopia
June 14	Ethiopian oppositions says MP shot dead by police
June 14	US condemns use of excessive force in Ethiopia
June 14	US calls for quick probe of Ethiopian killings
June 14	Ethiopian opposition says Mp shot dead by policy
June 15	Britain suspends Ethiopian aid rise over unrest

June 15	Ethiopian opposition urges government to remove troops
June 16	Britain freezes aid rise, urges restraints
June 16	Ethiopia frees 366 people held in crackdown - radio
June 17	Ethiopia's ruling party extends vote success
June 21	Ethiopia to probe election fraud allegations
June 24	Ethiopia frees most prisoners from fatal election clashes
June 29	Ethiopia may order rerun in disputed poll areas
June 29	Ethiopia charges editors who criticised crackdown
July 01	Ethiopian PM promises poll probe will be fair
July 05	Opposition says Meles to blame for post-poll unrest
July 11	Families await Ethiopian students' freedom
July 13	Ethiopia says will lift protest ban this week
July 29	Ethiopia's Meles, opposition meet over election row
August 9	Ethiopia's Meles wins contentious second term
August 10	Ethiopia's Meles re-elected PM, opposition protests
August 10	Ethiopia to form new government, despite ;protests
August 10	AU urges Ethiopia to settle poll dispute peacefully
August 11	Ethiopian oppositions warns of a return to dark days
August 21	Ethiopia's remote Ougaden holds delayed polls
August 25	EU Criticises Ethiopia for flaws in election

NUMBER _____

CODING SHEET

News agency: (1) Reuters; (2) ENA _____ Date _____ Reported by: (1) local (2) International

Headline _____

1. FOR SALIENCE OF ISSUES

1.1 Democracy

- As a system of good governance 1
- Free and fair elections 2
- Freedom of the press 3
- Other: 4

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1.2 Election outcomes:

- Voter's (women) participation 1
- Polling results 2
- Re-counting results /re-running of Elections 3
- Other: 4

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1.3 Violence and clashes:

- Accusations 1
- Public outrage and demonstrations 2
- Arrests and killings 3
- Security issues 4
- Others: 5

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1.4 Ethiopia's future:

- The question of reconciliation and power-sharing 1
- Political and economic stability 2
- Ethiopia's relation with the Western world 3
- The historical significance of the Elections 4
- Others 5

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1.5 Miscellaneous:

2. FOR SALIENCE OF ACTORS

2.1 Government

- The Prime Minister 1
- The cabinet 2
- The party EPRDF 3
- Security forces 4
- Others 5

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