

# **‘The Developmental State and Developmental Journalism’: Spotighting Ethiopia**

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I once read a commentary by the Addis Admas Amharic *Weekly* criticizing a state-driven economic growth in Ethiopia as ‘inherently a promise of inflation’. No sooner did I notice this than I read an interview by a former Ethiopian Television Newsreader Beley Bekele. This gentleman, back from the United States of America, at the time, said America is the true land of ‘developmental journalism’. Well, for me, these two sources were deadly mistaken in their own right. On the first, Addis Admas told us, one way or another, that the state should keep itself away from full engagements of economic growth because it undermines the role of the private sector so that producing a severe situation of inflation. The pointless point, however, is that this private sector by Ethiopia’s proportion of 80, million people is a non-existent fact even today.

Belay Bekele appeared to be impressed by the passionate commitment, high professional standards, smart practices, and accuracies of American journalism. That is not bad in itself. The bad point however is that Belay meant to interpret this American journalistic success as a matter of ‘developmental journalism’. I do not know about his profession. I have learnt, nonetheless, that Belay, as a journalist, made the gravest mistake by searching for the rose in the cornfield. In precise terms, ‘developmental journalism’ is never and ever an American or Western demand at all. While developmental journalism is the demand of pre-capitalist and non-liberal developing states of the South, it has no any socio-economic and socio-cultural space in fully-grown capitalist societies.

In Ethiopia, a polarized understanding of journalism within the liberal versus developmental debate is also evident between the private and the public press. As day-to-day experiences tell me, the private press tends generally to reduce ‘developmental journalism’ to be ‘fake public relations’ in the interests of the ruling party or the government. It, more often than not, characterizes developmental journalism as a state media industry to report only success stories and cover up failures. On the opposite pole, the public press throws away with the private press as agents of pessimism, denial, and hidden political interest. In extreme cases, one accuses the other of serving Western liberal and imperialists in developing states for the advantages of the former than a truly organic growth from inside out.

Well, the scholarly adage pins down that there is always half a truth within any extreme, and usually no more. However, I feel it unwise to die only for the fifty percent of the truth while it is an open opportunity to move much further ahead to reach the 100 percent, that is the most desired moderation point or, in the words of Aristotle, the golden mean. I do not believe that we, Ethiopians are by nature, people of taste for polarity or extremism. As many other views of ours in other areas of enquiry, here too in journalism, our inclinations to stick to divergent poles have been largely reflections of the actual existences of two polarized socio-economic worlds—the developed and prosperous North versus the developing and deficient South.

## **1. Locating the place of ‘Modern Journalism’**

As implied above, somehow, 'journalism' is, primarily a socio-cultural phenomena at some point in human history. As such, there were specific permissive socio-political situations that surrogated the birth of modern journalism in the Western world---its very womb and embryology. These situations favored 'journalism' at the detriments of forces of anti-journalism including royal circles, the pope, and the conservative social strata. This shows clearly that modern journalism came into being not by state policy or government support from above but by its own bottom up growth just from ground zero. Conversely, journalism, defeated its enemies, helped by the victory of capitalism, its natural sanctuary. Concisely, modern journalism and capitalism are inseparably intertwined where one necessarily needs and serves the other.<sup>1</sup>

Modern journalism under triumphant capitalism is an unavoidable consequence for, at least, six compelling factors calling for its birth.

First, at the value desk, journalism provided the tool to fight against obsolete royal values quite incompatible with the new and more progressive values of the emerging capitalist class—liberalism. These values were 'the right to liberty, life and property in England; fraternity, equality and freedom in France; liberty, life and happiness in the United States. These values won the lips of the new liberal society, of course, thanks to modern journalism. By its orientations, therefore, journalism is a liberal value and industry or a spirit of capitalism with clearly stated goal of completing the historical deaths of pre-capitalist value systems.

Second, journalism served as a mouthpiece of the newly transformed social structure—the urbanized and industrialized society. This social structure gave a deathblow to the former agrarian, fragmented, rural, symmetrical, and egalitarian social establishment. Intrinsically, life circumstances compelled this new social structure to depend heavily and decidedly on a more rapid, efficient and accurate information system run by the civil society as opposed to the state. In many ways, these new social establishment was a capable organization to control 'journalism' as structurally the private domain than the public sphere.<sup>2</sup> In this new arrangement, modern journalism targeted the state as a defender of its causes and actions, and protected the society as a victim of the state;

Thirdly, quite inherent to modern journalism was that it was a creation within a literate social fabric. Journalism in its origination, regardless of its media, never matched the human invention of scripts/letters from hieroglyphics to Latin or Geez. It never came into being even in the 16<sup>th</sup> century when the German Guttenberg discovered and produced the first printing machine. The period of European Enlightenment and Renaissance gave way for the resurrection of reason, humanism, philosophy, and science. They never had led, however, to the rise of 'modern journalism' as an industry in their footsteps. There might have been fragmented start ups of individual newspapers here and there even in previous times but none of them ever constituted the journalistic establishment as such. Why? Because there were little or no mass literacy and mass media, which proved to be the lifeline infrastructures of modern journalism;

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<sup>1</sup> Block, E. Edward (1988), In Hiebert , Ray Eldon, *Precision Public Relations*(pp.86-99. New York: Longman.

<sup>2</sup>Gans, Herbert J.(1989). Bystanders as Opinion Makers: A Bottoms up Perspective

Fourthly, modern journalism came together with an increased value and practical pressure on the state as a limited corporate body. This in its turn called for a strong and large private sector and civil society destined to ‘emancipate’ itself from Government control in England, Executive dominance in the United States and resurgence of the Monarchy in France. In that sense, ‘modern journalism’ was and is an industry, which has needed always a kind of only a ‘night-watch-man- state’ as limited as possible and constrained heavily in the extents of its interventions. Under a perfect politico-economic situation where the free market guides the operations of ‘modern journalism’ than the state, the state must remain a neutral umpire like a football referee in the game between journalists and their customers, journalists and journalists, customers and customers, as well as journalists and the government and no more. The assumption is that the society is socio-economically capable to promote, sift, or punish the produces of modern journalism than the state;

Fifthly, ‘modern journalism’ as a creation of capitalism was and is a symbolic emergence, which represented the successful social transition of societies from collective to individualistic modes of life. The growth and dominance of impersonal, secular, borderless, rational, and profit-driven corporations fast eroded the basements of ethno-linguistic, religious, racial boundaries by forging a vast national and international market. Economic calculations, as the new rules of the game in the capitalistic market, rendered ethnic routs of social solidarity irrelevant. In short, individualism as a liberal value elevated the individual person as the ultimate unit of social organization at the demise of kinship formulas. ‘Modern journalism’ is therefore equally individualistic at its production as well as at its destination, the community, where it has little or no rationale to consider cultural groups;

Sixthly, ‘modern journalism’ was and is a concomitant outgrowth of modernity not confined to separate or fragmented social groups but to the majority of the capitalist society.<sup>3</sup> Modernity has continuously pushed populations of Western societies to depend structurally on science and technology to deal with their daily challenges of life. In straightforward terms, western culture has grown effectively to become a techno-science culture. Human mobility, health preservation, dressing, feeding, and every thing else grows to be subjected to a vast consumption of scientific and technical help. Unfortunately, modernity as a human ingenuity is prone to complexities, uncertainties, irregularities, and the like. This has made the demand for information acutely decisive, which in turn, has brought modern journalism consistently to the center stage of social communication.

Thus, ‘modern journalism’ is originally one body part of ‘mainstream liberalism’ whereby it demands a redefinition and reorientation of its intents and meanings when it operates in pre-capitalist Ethiopia, which is never its mainstream host. As a logical sequel to this argument, if the mainstream politics in Ethiopia is ‘the developmental state’ as the gap-filler institution of the incipient, if not non-existent, liberalism, its equivalent in journalism by automatic transitivity is therefore ‘developmental journalism.’ How? Let us proceed.

## **2. Parceling ‘the Developmental State and Developmental Journalism’**

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<sup>3</sup> The metaphor of “organism” was also fundamental for the British philosopher, Herbert Spencer (1820-1903), who argued that the industrial society was the embodiment of an “organic society”, an increasingly coherent, integrated system, in which functions become more and more specified and parts are interdependent. Information within the networks branching in to the public arena was seen as a basic component in a system of distribution and regulation.

Now assuming that the liberal capitalist state is the unquestioned politic-economic, socio-cultural, and ideological environment and background of 'modern journalism' in the developed north as a point of scholarly consensus, what is its equivalent in Ethiopia where there is no such a liberal society and state? Before exposing this, let us continue some distance deep locating the place of the developmental state and its social set up in developing Ethiopia in the South as compared to those in the developed North.

### **A. Recognition of the structural gap**

The developmental state in Ethiopia is exactly and primarily the clearest self-understanding of the widest gap of socio-economic growth between the South and the North. It is quite unthinkable in any way to discover the essences of the developmental state before adequately understanding this gap. This understanding however is not simply and merely a pile of information statistically exposing that Ethiopia lags behind Europe or America. One may appreciate this gargantuan gap as a social, technical, spatial, and temporal mismatch in the fundamental sense of the concept.<sup>4</sup>

Socially, the key gap is essentially a difference between the human resource of the developed north and that of Ethiopia. I strongly believe that socio-economic advancement is not primarily a physical or non-human factor but a social and historical phenomena determined by human action. We Ethiopians, as a society, did not do the way European and American populations did by way of initiating and moving growth ahead. As the result, we are now what we are today as compared to what the British or Americans are. In either case, the human element is the ultimate seat of chances, options, responsibilities, and potentialities of growth. Still, non-human factors of growth like factories, technologies, money, or oil may be in themselves important but only lifeless and meaningless material objects without the human factor that gives them value and meaning. This makes the duty of growth in Ethiopia human-centered where it means nothing but Ethiopians not as individuals but en masse, as human beings are the only and final drivers of development. Though we may fantasize about modern liberal journalism, do we have modern and liberal journalists as a social group within the emerging middle class in Ethiopia, who are creations of a competitive capitalist market? Never, we are to cultivate them in the future;

Technically, the developed north understands and measures 'growth' as a cumulative totality of newly created wealth in the free market regardless of the concern--who gains and loses? Both gains and losses are rewards and punishments respectively of the non-human free market. This is not the case for poor Ethiopia. The Ethiopian state, as a strategic substitute for the absent free market because of the absence of a private sector and civil society, must go beyond this to insure that the growth and the subsequent benefits are a totality of the contribution and rewards of the larger mass, just at household level. Thus, Ethiopia needs growth with development while America needs growth without necessarily development, that is, without worrying about the distribution of the newly created wealth. Otherwise, the few who have the capacity take advantages over the larger majority who lacks the capacity, leading the entire society to polarized

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<sup>4</sup> Mowalana, H. (1997) *Global information and world communication: new frontiers in international relations*. Second edition, London: Sage. Fukuyama, F. (1992) *The end of history and the last man*. London: Hamish Hamilton. Ohimeia, K. (1995) *The end of the nation state: the rise and fall of regional economies*. London: HarperCollins. Robeterson, R. (1992) *Globalization: social theory and global culture*. London: Sage.

income structure. Modern journalism against this background is usually part of the middle class, which constitutes the urban majority. Thus, where is its place in Ethiopia of a society without an established urban majority? Nowhere.

Spatially, Ethiopia and its developmental state are without option but depend on the rural agricultural set up as the major locomotive of growth for obvious reasons. From demographic and sociological points of view, Ethiopia is poor because this population is poor. Ethiopia is now a developing state because the incomes and the lives of this population are improving. Ethiopia is a pre-capitalist state because this population is a pre-capitalist social organization. This population as the essence of Ethiopia's growth is helpless under a limited, inactive, and neutral state; equally, the Ethiopian state is helpless without the continuous improvements in the life conditions of this population even for its existence. Spatially, therefore, the location of the growth dynamo of the Ethiopian state is the rural agricultural and pastoralist domestic setting while external input from the external world is most important determinant for faster growth. Where is the place of modern journalism in this social setting? Nowhere.

Temporally, the present prosperity of Europe and America, as a bottom-up process through a market-driven social action, required them of passing one of the longest and the harshest time period---about 350 years or so. In this long journey, the British capitalism brutally crushed and greedily swallowed the working class at home and colonized populations outside. The American capitalism, in famous for its low regard for human dignity, sub humanly exploited and degraded slaves and their labor from Africa. Progressive journalism in its modern sense played positive and negative roles in either opposing or supporting this state of affairs in the equally longest travel along with the evolution of Western capitalism. In Ethiopia, the opposite is quite true. At the time when Western capitalism went out of its national borders, Ethiopia was within its agro-pastoralist border without a single newspaper or radio or a spark of any journalism. Journalism in Ethiopia is an import from the modern capitalist world into the non-modern traditional populations of Ethiopia.

Ethiopia's first modern newspaper appeared in the early 1900s, almost 300 years after the first newspaper appeared in the United States.<sup>5</sup> Thus, one could easily make out that the nature of Ethiopia's journalism can never and ever be the same as that of the West in any of its temporal attribute. Above all else, modern journalism is, to date, an infantile and incipient outgrowth needing a vast and generous policy support of the Ethiopian state as any other sectors of the national culture.

The paradox is that Ethiopia is agricultural and pastoral, which are never social conditions of modern journalism while modern journalism is industrial and professional. Ethiopia's population is collective and egalitarian while modern journalism is individualistic and profit-driven. Ethiopia is a land of mass illiteracy while the essence of modern journalism is mass literacy. Ethiopia is a land of cultural groups bordered by ethno-linguistic differences, while modern journalism is borderless and a crosscutting industry knowing little or no linguistic borders. Ethiopia is a land of ethnic groups tied to the land in their socio-economic structures and having simple needs and demands, while modern journalism is an industry created out of complex and myriad of social demands for information.

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<sup>5</sup> The channels of information (the press, telegraph and postal service) were as the equivalent of the nervous system, making it possible to the center to "propagate its influence" to its outermost parts. "Dispatches are compared to nervous discharges that communicate movement from an inhabitant of one city to that of another (Mattlart and Mattlart, 1998).

So the big question here is: thus, does it all mean that we Ethiopians do not need modern journalism? No, we need but journalism that exactly fits and matches our real situations described above. We need journalism that looks like our demographic, socio-cultural, and socio-economic picture and map. One may see that this demand divides the emerging journalism in Ethiopia into three divergent categories. These are liberal journalism, modernist neoliberal journalism and developmental journalism. Liberal journalism is the western mainstream journalism that has made Ethiopia its target largely from outside. The most dangerous version of liberal journalism, which is a mutated outgrowth of western liberalism but on the soils of Ethiopia, is modernist neoliberal journalism. This category is a replica of western journalism in Ethiopia's dress and by Ethiopians, who mostly innocently lobby for the massive importation of Western liberal culture into non-western and traditional Ethiopia. Third category is developmental journalism that argues that development is inside out, incremental, massive and collective, and never outside in, fragmented and individualistic as opposed to the above. Now let us proceed to compare, apply and test the right category of journalism to the peculiar nature of Ethiopia and its populations.

## **B. Identifying the most likely trajectory**

We already emphasized at the introduction that the developmental state is never the demands of developed states. If that is true, conversely speaking, the liberal limited state is the demand of developing states. Thus, liberal journalism is the counterpart of the liberal limited state. By the same logic, the 'developmental state is its direct counter part in Ethiopia for 'developmental journalism.' The anomalous modernist neo-liberal journalism is a mutation, as implied above, which demands liberalism and liberally limited state and a type of liberal journalism in non-liberal, even, in illiberal society of Ethiopia.

Modernist neo-liberal journalism is a host of extreme value danger because it is a naked and flat denial of the fact that Ethiopia is a country of illiterate, agrarian and pastoralist, rural, traditional, and collective populations. In other words, it is knowingly or unknowingly, an approach favoring social exclusion of the largest masses to the benefit of a tiny fraction of urbanites, who feel that they can play effectively the capitalist rules of the game. For the purpose of this paper, let us treat this approach as generally as liberal point of view and compare it with developmental journalism.

## **I. Liberal versus developmental journalism**

Developmental journalism is primarily therefore is a distinct paradigm based on the deeper understanding of capitalism and liberalism as much as developmentalism and the developmental state. Liberal journalism in its modern dress within developed societies is a natural component; in non-liberal societies, like Ethiopia, it is an artificial appendage without a natural social milieu so that an elite vocabulary. It brings the liberal journalist face to face with a traditional customer never heeding about liberal terminologies and rhetoric. Developmental journalism is a serious concern about the potential customer today in Ethiopia of rural majority but at the same time a continuous, conscious, and incremental process of cultivating the right mass of customers of the future liberal journalism. The difference between developmental journalism and liberal journalism is exactly the difference between American versus Ethiopian social structures.

Liberal journalism as an industry in self-sufficient, critical, and scientific communities faces little or no danger of market failure. The customer is desperately needy of information with an appreciable degree of financial capacity to pay readily. Developmental journalism operates within a serious condition of structural market failure because of mass illiteracy and poor payment capacity. Liberal journalism takes the advantages of already established and structurally expanded infrastructures to all citizens individually. Developmental journalism must operate under a severe shortage of these inputs and must follow the footprints of newly built infrastructures for its growth. For this reason, liberal journalism drives itself by competitive profit making goal while developmental journalism places social services with an optimal profit (in case of the private press).

There are consequently spillover effects that further differentiate liberal journalism from the developmental one. The destruction or the failure of infrastructures for liberal journalism is a surprising phenomenon that becomes 'good news' for a society that does not usually experience such irregularities. For developmental journalism, the building of new infrastructures, unmet demands for them by communities, as well as their irregularities are simply 'news'. While liberal journalism chases after mistakes and failures, developmental journalism criticizes failures and mistakes and reports 'new' developments instead of ignoring them as 'normal', unlike liberal journalism.

## **II. Descriptive versus prescriptive journalism**

Liberal journalism as a commercial enterprise engaged in trading of information prioritizes descriptive reporting of events, which is, exposing them as they are over prescriptive ones.<sup>6</sup> This again has socio-cultural rationales. The customers of liberal journalism as literate and critical mass take the responsibility of solutions about described problems by themselves once they get accurate information. They have the skill as well as the resource to respond quickly and adequately within the framework of free market rules and individualism. If a newspaper informs them that there would be a serious shortage of oil, then they, on their own, take such measures like economical use of what they have at hand or change their oil traditions until they get alternate information.

Developmental journalism working in less critical and poorly informed society must add prescriptive reporting by suggesting solutions along with each failure story. Developmental journalism is a report not only about growth success story but also about distribution of wealth among social groups and individual households. Developmental journalism is a concern about existing households and their improvements and not about how much they are different, equal, or backward from the households of Europe and America. In aggregate, developmental journalism is a priority about how Ethiopia makes improvements and never how much Ethiopia looks like Britain or France. For a developmental journalist, Ethiopia grows to be better and best Ethiopia, and never to look like excellent Europe or Holland.

A news event for liberal journalism, as descriptive journalism, is its final product without any worry about what will happen to it in the future. In a very professionalized and scientific society of the West, this is the task of other social groups like high-profile scholars to do so as a matter of liberal division of labor. The liberal journalist reports

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<sup>6</sup> Dominick R. Joseph (1993), *The Dynamics of Mass Communications* (4<sup>th</sup> eds.): McGraw Hill, Inc.

about a plane crash as she or he exactly saw, and continues to inform continuing developments as they are. Developmental journalist however is duty bound, at least, morally, to worry and report about the implication of the event to development efforts and situations of poverty. In short, any news by a developmental journalist should make finally poverty and development as 'gauges' of one's reporting and profession, in general.

### **III. Public relations versus journalism**

Liberal journalism is usually a one communication with its customers, where the liberal journalist has little or no knowledge about the specific customer of her/his report. The rationale is again clear. Liberal customers of journalism in developed states are horizontally similar, concentrated in big urban centers, and capable to identify and sort out the media of their personal choice critically as well as the information, which they receive. In short, sociologically speaking, liberal journalists have are under little or no limitations in accessing their customers. In the words of journalism scholars, the liberal journalist has no 'proximity' problem from geographic points of view. The customer mass is not sociologically fragmented for the fact that they largely share one or two similar languages and similar media culture.

This is quite the opposite for the poor developmental journalist who suffers structural 'proximity failures' in her/his communication with the customer. Geographically, remote and peripheral rural Ethiopia structurally hosts the largest majority of the potential customer of developmental journalism. Due to the organic link between agro-pastoralism and ethnic identity, the developmental journalist suffers linguistic barriers. When a developmental journalist may satisfy urban customers by showing European football games, she/he could achieve this by neglecting the vast majority of taxpayers. Unfortunately, this majority (I am also the one) has no any taste at all to soccer at European stadiums. That means the majority pays and the minority enjoys.

Reciprocally, the developmental journalist should win the attentions of urban customers of a smallest size in their reports about what happens in rural and pastoralist Ethiopia. This again goes against the taste of urban customers, which is a graphic example of 'proximity crisis' challenging developmental journalism, as compared with its liberal counter part. For liberal journalists, it is simple to report about inflationary situations because inflation is fundamentally urban phenomena affecting about 98% of urban populations in the United States, for example. Truly speaking, every American lives in the practical life challenge posed by inflation. In Ethiopia, a country of rural populations, inflation adversely the urban population mainly but reports about inflation must reach also the rural mass. Can we expect same impressions? Never.

Thus, the developmental journalist, unlike, the liberal one, has three additional duties that come after giving information. These are translation, interpretation and feedback collection. Translating reports from one language into the other as well as interpreting their meanings are twin duties in order to make them easily understood by a vast non-liberal mass. Equally, feedback collection helps to measure what impressions the information given induces in the customers' behavior, which is never a problem in liberal journalism. In short, a developmental journalist is necessarily and at the same time, a public relations expert whose profession is incomplete if limited only to one-way journalistic information supply. It must be a two-way communication to be developmental and incremental.



#### **IV. Objectivity versus subjectivity**

'Objectivity' from my experience personally is a most cherished, and at times, most worshiped phraseology of liberal journalism and Western epistemology<sup>7</sup>, in general. Definitely, I agree with the practice and ideal of 'objectivity' as a guarantee in favor of information accuracy. I do not personally need information bearing within itself the personal values and self-interests of the journalist in action. However, objectivity as a technical and ethical requirement is more a serious concern when the background social condition is permissive to its growth. These include the stiff competition among media agencies in the free market, the nature of the matter covered by journalistic report, the intensity level in social contradictions, the critical level of the customer mass, and the level in the professional enrichments of journalism itself.

It is therefore unquestionable that liberal journalism has to pursue 'objectivity' as a standard information practice, for it operates under the above background situations. The question, however, is: what does it mean to developmental journalism? A developmental journalist has developmental journalism as a professional paradigm, which soundly guides and judges her/his activities when working as an objective journalist in a predominantly subjective society. As such, the meaning of 'objectivity' should be subject to redefinition in order to mark the border between liberal versus developmental journalism. For the liberal journalist, 'objectivity' could mean playing a bystander position or presenting a report in a positivist manner without injecting interpretations or personal values so that the customer should do the rest. This is one way of winning the confidence of the customer.

This approach is under challenge when it comes to the developmental journalist. A developmental journalist cannot stand as a mere bystander as she/he works in a socio-political environment completely different from the liberal one. Liberal politics is competitive but ultimately a structural interest to preserve the statuesque. American leaders are creations of a long serving political system or regime and an economic system of historically and mostly a positive record of growth. They therefore have no reason to radicalize changes that could structurally affect their systems. The first American president before 200 years and the 45<sup>th</sup> president today are essentially federal, republican, liberal, and free market leaders. They have only small areas of change against these entrenched popular values. This generally works for the Western world.

When it applies to the typical developmental state, there come two paradoxical tasks as different from the liberal state. On the one hand and primarily, the developmental state is a project to change significantly the statuesque, which is structural poverty, dependence, ignorance, and never to preserve it. On the other hand, the developmental state is responsible to preserve new changes to last long and grow structural. In that sense, the developmental state is essentially a game changer on the speediest tempo against three social evils that called for the coming into the scene of a brand of the state known as developmental. These are poverty, inequality, and unemployment. Thus, while 'objectivity' enjoys great chances to establish itself in liberal journalism under a political environment responsible to preserve the statuesque, a developmental journalist is under pressure to take unwavering sides with the goal of changing the statuesque.

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<sup>7</sup> See Lerner. D (1958) the passing of traditional society: modernizing the Middle East. New York: Free Press, to learn how this view is dangerous in its low regard for traditions and cultures of developing states in the global south .

A policy, action, or event is subjectively correct and just for a developmental journalist at all times if it speeds up change against poverty, inequality and unemployment. Liberal journalistic standards may judge this policy or event subjective or against objectivity but it matters nothing for the developmental journalist. Developmental journalist must also fight any policy statement or action in a subjective manner if she/he finds it against change of the statuesque and favoring the undesired past—poverty. In that sense, developmental journalist is a change agent and guardian where there is no any crime by siding with the most normative goal of human beings—development.

## **V. Target versus consumer**

We already underlined above that liberal journalism has no or does severely lack the corresponding social structure in pre-capitalist states like Ethiopia. This social structure is a mass of well-educated, well-informed, massively literate, urbanized and industrialized, individualistic, and scientific society. Liberal journalism in the developed world is therefore an industry without any duty and mission to cultivate and nurture this foundation as it grew together with it. This profile of society is however a project for developmental journalism to help it develop, expand and grow continuously but within a relatively short period as compared to liberal journalism.

The difference that results from this divergence is that while liberal journalism has an established consumer customer, target customer is the destination of developmental journalism. ‘Target’ here refers to the idea that the big agro-pastoralist mass of Ethiopia is a customer for the developmental journalist with a duty to not only access them but also uplift them to be information consumers in their own right. Here the developmental dilemma, which is not a problem of the liberal journalist, reappears—proximity crisis. Solving this challenge again brings additional duty to the developmental journalist to self-teach, train, incrementally improve and grow and sharpen their professional efficiency and, above all, innovativeness.

This, in other words, means, a developmental journalist is also an innovative journalist in that she/he has the professional quality to attract urban attentions to consume information about the monotonous and boring rural and pastoralist life and vice versa.

## **VI. Nationalism versus globalism**

This last, but not least, point brings us to the crux of the matter. We are now in a world in which Western powers have still managed to preserve and advance their global interests and demands. West-originated multinational corporations are moving away from their home countries and reach several societies far beyond their borders. Europe and America now find themselves in several corners of the globe in many ways ranging from diplomatic presence to military deployment.<sup>8</sup> The rise of China and other Eastern powers has given additional impetus to this movement of the West in the cover of globalization and global universal values. In tune with change, the liberal media industry

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<sup>8</sup> Hiebert E. Ray and Sheila Jeans Gibbons (2000), *Exploring Mass Media for a Changing World*: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Inc.

and the liberal journalist are moving equally with much heightened global interest and involvement. In practice, liberal journalism today is global journalism.<sup>9</sup>

In face of this, countries of the South, Ethiopia at the front, have been struggling to lift up their positions in the distant periphery or the remote destination of the West to challenge pressures of the West through rapid socio-economic development. This movement in opposite directions breeds unavoidable contradictions as much as friendships. The West exercises its dollar, diplomatic, and military powers to maintain its advantages wherever necessary. The most effective tool however is its global media and liberal journalism. In this value and information battle, the liberal western media enjoys present advantages in easily accessing urban consumers of its information in the South with an explicit goal of attracting their attentions to liberal advantages.

Developmental journalism, for this reason, is under the severest challenge from both within and without as much as the developmental state itself. In this case, I am talking about the 'state' and not about the ruling party, the government, or the Prime Minister of Ethiopia. A journalist may be of opposite political views against the ruling party and the government, may be a die-hard supporter, or may be a fan of moderate liberalism or its supporter. However, this is irrelevant when it comes to the civic duty of rallying behind the Ethiopian state against any foreign pressure or imposition of values or policies. In essence, the developmental state is a nationalist state without rejectionist policies against global values and globalization. 'Nationalist' here means adamant refusal to foreign impositions to change the inside out development path into an outside direction.

The developmental state never kneels down to foreign 'imposition' at any time **and place because 'imposition' is inherently a colonialist tradition to serve** external advantages. Equally, a developmental journalist never believes that any foreign imposition as a hand-bending tactic helps nothing to address any of the problems in Ethiopia. It is better for me to stay and get old with poverty and backwardness as potentially manageable challenges for a century or more rather than succumb to external impositions. The developmental journalist with this professional and spiritual passion is therefore at the same time a patriot standing in defense of the Ethiopian state against any imperialistic intervention, regardless of who rules or leads the government.

## Conclusions

Overall, one can rightly see that journalism stood as a historical phenomenon inseparable from a capitalist society and liberal social values as mainstream social consciousness. One should be careful here when interpreting 'liberalism as a mainstream social consciousness.' 'Mainstream liberalism' refers to the convergence between the majority population of a society and liberalism as its common value system regulating social relations. Europe and America rightly fall within this group. There might be some values at individual level contrary to liberalism but they enjoy no hegemonic dominance as they are out of the mainstream zone. Reciprocally, non-liberal value system, be it egalitarianism or traditionalism or agriculture, or whatever is the 'mainstream social consciousness' in Ethiopia. By the same logic, there may be urban-based, fragmented,

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<sup>9</sup> Cheah, P. and Robbins, B.(eds.) (1998) *Cosmopolitics:thinking and feeling beyond the nation*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota press.

and educated liberals at individual level in Ethiopia but precisely, they stand at the edges of the mainstream consciousness dominant now across the country.

Developmental journalism is a creation out of this divergence in Ethiopia though this is a painstaking job.