Political History of Ethiopian Broadcast Media (1931-2020) in the Case of Ethiopian Broadcast Corporation (EBC) Development Review

The research analysis on the political history Ethiopian broadcast media from 1931 to 2020. The document analysis descriptive nature of the study employed qualitative type of methodology. After review of the researcher found that the broadcast media had varied origins and traditions, broadcasting was directly inherited from the authorities. Though in some other African countries interests had taken the initial steps in radio broadcasting, in the majority of cases it was introduced as a direct political and ideological instrument of the ruling state. The system, the broadcasting, had become a government monopoly. At the era of the empire and the present day of Ethiopia the structure of ownership and operation of the broadcast was largely the same as it had been under the military regime. One significant change made in the military period was the introduction of television broadcast in color at the time of the founding of the Workers’ Party of Ethiopia in 1984 as an act of political public relations. The broadcast industry in Ethiopia was dominated all type of content, format, technological expansions owned by the government.

Keywords: Broadcast Media, Ethiopia, Political History, Empire Regime, Military Regime, Current Ethiopia

Introduction

Before eight decades, Ethiopian broadcast journalism has started to make its mark more widely on the international stage. In Ethiopia, both the broadcast media and the print media, which constitute the two major types of media, have been in existence since the days of the empire regime (Zekaria, 2001). Regarding the broadcast media, Ethiopian radio and television, both of which were started by the benevolence and reformist enthusiasm of Emperor Haile Selassie, have been operating for the last many decades—without any significant competition—until this day.

Yesterday as well today, the broadcast media in Ethiopia still are under the ownership and control of the government and the political party that is in power. The conditions under which the broadcast media still operate today point to the government’s monopolistic hold on this sector of the media. Although laws have been promulgated to regulate the broadcast media with the attendant provisions for their regulation by the government, there are, to the best of my knowledge, very few privately owned and run broadcast media in Ethiopia. More than half of a century, the only service/industry available in the nationwide coverage of broadcast was Ethiopia Broadcasting Corporation (EBC).

The mass media played a role in the first printing in Ethiopia, then the radio later, and by lecturing and broadcasting television news, introducing and
innovating. Ethiopian Radio, which began broadcasting on September 10, 1935, has played an important role in facilitating information broadcasting and the development of other media professionals. *85 years of broadcast journalism* is a timely and influential summation of what can be learnt from history. It provides a valuable intellectual resource for Ethiopian journalists – but also for all those who wish to know more about Ethiopian journalism, such as teachers and students, members of the public, governments and international media.

In this research, the evolution and development of Ethiopian Broadcast Media during the Empire (1931-1974), Military (1974-1991) and Current regime (1991-2019) will be explored.

**Ethiopia Broadcasting during the Emperor Regime (1931-1974)**

In the establishment broadcasting media history of Ethiopia six major driving forces were involved in the evolution. These factors are:

1. The need of creating awareness about Ethiopia to the external world;
2. The need for internal communication
3. The need for provide information
4. The need to develop a sense of national identity;
5. The need to utilize media for education and
6. The need to utilize media for development of a healthy and literate workforce. (Bruce, 2003).

These six powers became possibly the most important factor in the last part of the 1930s when it was decided that Ethiopia ought to have a radio framework. Ras Tafari Makwannén (later *Emperor Haile Selassie I*) was particularly intrigued around then in the new innovation of remote correspondence and "started many radio tasks with the object of building up internal and external relationship" (Imperial Board of Telecommunication Tele Communication, 1971).

A tender was conceded to the Ansaldo Corporation of Italy in 1935 for the development of a one-kilowatt station; the conventional agreement was marked in 1931. The station would encourage remote "telecommunication and communication at Akaki [where] the establishment was laid on July 21, 1931" (Pankhurst, 1957, p.2). It is from the Akaki station transmission and the Ras Kebede station for reception that Emperor Haile Silassie I broadcast his famous speech to the world at the time of the beginning of the Italian conflict in 1930 (Yetesha-Work, 1961).
However, the establishment of radio, by its very nature, can only existed the government funded and willingness of the emperor, its job is accepted to have been done the Ministry of Post, Telegraphs, and Telephones introduced a radio broadcast inside the compound of the General Post Office in the focal point of Addis Ababa, and opened direct circuits with Cairo and Djibouti in 1933 the Ministry of Press and Information has one radio broadcast in activity and is setting up a subsequent one (Gartley, 1982).

The Ethiopian Government took formal proprietorship of the radio broadcast on 31 January 1935; on 13 September 1935 the Emperor's to begin with interest to the world was communicated (Ibid). In the history of broadcasting, the first ever radio station was started in the Akaki district of Addis Ababa in 1935 (Mezmur, 2019). It was interrupted in the exact year before it continued activities (Ministry of Information, 1966). At the point when it did as such, it was chiefly as a weapon of Italian frontier publicity (Mesert, 2013). At the point when the triumphant Ethiopian loyalists got back to the capital, they found the radio broadcast destroyed and defective. After repairs, it resumed broadcasting with improved and expanded coverage (Amanuel, 2007).

In fact, Ethiopian radio appears to be unique in Africa in not having been established by a colonial power. The history of Ethiopian broadcast media is an indigenous form of African media. Ethiopia is not colonized in history. Ethiopians were introduced to broadcast media when the late Emperor Haile Selassie, one of the forefathers of the African Renaissance, proudly televised the historic opening of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 1963 (Mezmur, 2019).

A Press and Information Department had been established in the Ministry of Pen, in 1942, and took over programme responsibility (Ministry of...
During the time of 1941–45, the seven kilowatt station was not in activity; this made a state of conflict between Emperor Haile Selassie and the British (Biruk, 2018). Radio broadcasts began “in 1941 on the one kilowatt station with a staff of seven, broadcasting four hours a day” in Amharic, Arabic and English (Ministry of Information, 1966, p.2). Ten years later the department was transferred to the Ministry of Finance (Ibid).

An Imperial Order Negarit gazeta, 1966 declared the Ethiopian Broadcasting Service “an autonomous public Authority within the Imperial Government” and, while operating under the “direction, control and supervision of the Ministry of Information” (Negarit gazeta, 1966, p.135). The declaration empowers the service “Licensing and authorization powers are subject to The Imperial Board of Telecommunications” (1966). Finally, the government was involved in both radio and television broadcasting in 1974 (Ibid).

It was in 1959 that the Ministry of Information began receiving an annual budget, although it was not officially gazetted until 1964 (Ministry of Information, 1966). Broadcasting has undergone some growth and development. All local broadcasts are carried by three transmitters, a ten-KW and a one KW shortwave, and a one-KW medium wave (Negashe 2005). The times of broadcasting amount to ten hours a day during weekdays, and eleven hours on weekends (Nigussie, 1988). Local broadcasts are carried in Amharic, Arabic, and Somali languages. After the completion of the two studios now under construction it is hoped that the length of broadcasting time will be expanded (Inquoi, 1963).

Later, the Lutheran World Federation established two 100- KW shortwave transmitters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Their plan is to broadcast both religious and educational programs to Africa and Southern Asia. Owned and operated by the Lutheran World Federation, Radio Voice of the Gospel (RVOG) was given a franchise to build and operate a Christian Radio Station in Addis Ababa in 1959 (Bernhardur,2018). The role of broadcasting in national development and the media’s role in creating an educated labor force grew out of the activities of the “Point Four Program” (Head, 1974, p.38).

According to the draft letter to the Emperor of Ethiopia (1941) asserted that the station was officially opened in 1963 (Destaw, 2007). Legally the station came under the jurisdiction of the Ethiopian Ministry of Information and in practice the Ethiopian Broadcasting service maintained a liaison officer to keep the station informed of government policy concerning broadcast coverage of current events (Negussie, 1988).

In addition to this marked the opening of the first private radio station in the nation (Zook, 2016). In the Northern part of Ethiopia the United States Army was operated station Kaghew from a 50-watt transmitter (Meseret, 2013). Station Kaghewe has also a television station connected with it (Ibid). The people of Asmara (pop. 150,000,) got the benefit of both the radio and television stations (Inquiai, 1931).

In the early 1960s Radio Ethiopia was, owing to technical developments, able to reach the provinces of the countries (Leykun, 2009). For the first time
in Ethiopian history people in the provinces possessing a radio were given
access to topical information. According to Tegegne Yetesha-work (1961)
Lutherian World Federation was completed in Addis Ababa a 50kw, radio
station by the end of 1961 (Fortner, 1990). The studio bears the name of “The
voice of the Gospel”, and it was designed to serve religious and educational
purposes (Aren, 1978).

However, television in Ethiopia was not established until 2 November
1964 intending to cover and highlight a meeting of the Organization for
African Unity (OAU) taking place in Addis Ababa in that year (Mesert, 2013).
The launch was facilitated by the technical assistance of the British company
Thomson (Ellene Mesfin, Alemayehu, 2003, p. 39). Back then the broadcasting
service operated within a radius of 170 km of Addis Ababa and no longer than
3.5 hours on weekdays (Ellene et al., 2003; Mekuria, 2007; Mekuria, 2013,
p.8).

According to Negarit Gazeta 27th year number 15 June 1968, Ethiopian
broadcasting service order number 50 of 1968 stated that “The Position of an
Ethiopian Radio and Television Service (referred to as the Enterprise) was
established under the authority of the Ethiopian imperial government as the
1958 Order of the Ethiopian Radio and Television Service” (Negarit Gazeta,
1968).

The main Organizational responsibility is the only government agency that
is allowed to trade in radio and television services. The Ethiopian
Telecommunication Board is authorized by the Ethiopian Imperial
Telecommunication Board to carry out its operations.

The power of the Minister of Information and Tourism to oversee the
organization enterprise shall carry out its duties in accordance with the
directives of the Minister of Information and Tourism. As the Minister is
responsible for all the activities of the organization, the organization would
have all the power necessary to direct the work of the organization.

The main objective of the organization is to establish, maintain and operate
radio and television services in the Empire, and to provide educational
programs that will benefit the general public and provide entertainment
(Ministry of Information, 1966b).

In 1968 the existing state media outlets were restructured into (1) the
Ethiopian Broadcasting Service (EBS), (2) the Ethiopian News Agency
(ENA), and (3) the (unofficial) Ethiopian Press Agency (Meseret, 2013, p.
364). By 1971 there were five daily educational TV programmes for students
which were continuously extended to educational programmes for adults
until the service was discontinued in 1981 (Meron, 2006, p. 31).
The beginning of Television Broadcasting

Seven Trials of Ethiopian Television Establishment

According to Sileshi Dabi, Binyam Alemayehu, Yemane Haileselassie (2016); Mesert (2013); Mekuria, (2007); Mezmur, (2019), the establishment of Television Service in Ethiopia under the institutionalization of Ethiopia Broadcast Corporation passes major steps. Here's more than half of the century now when Radio and TV is in Ethiopian homes. Ethiopian Television was able to present the program to its viewers through different processes which came into existence on October 23, 1965 (Sileshi, et al., 2016).

In this case, Ethiopians for the first time introduced the concept of “Television” in an exhibition in 1956 held during King Haileselassie’s coronation ceremony (Mesert, 2013). The exhibition was prepared to show the achievements made during the King’s reign, especially after the Italian aggression at around Old Airport (Bisrate Gabriel) (Leykun, 2005, Mekuria, 2013, Mezmur, 2019).

Some portion of the display was a Network program introduced by the English Broadcast Corporation (BBC). BBC showed two picture articon cameras and four screens acquainting Ethiopians with television transmission (Ibid). The presentation was introduced through the shut circuit television framework (Mezmur, 2019).

The first attempt was to celebrate Emperor Haile Selassie’s silver jubilee in 1956, at the Ethiopian Telecommunication Exhibition Center (Pavilion). The exhibition was produced by British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), a documentary on the occasion of the close-circuit system that was broadcast only in the exhibition. According to a research paper entitled “The Ethiopian Television from 1965 to 1996.” by Leykun Birhanu, the TV exhibition by the BBC faced condemnation from the public as they conceived it as work of the devil.

The Second idea of TV came from Dejazmach Daniel Abebe who presented his request of establishing a commercial TV station to the council of ministers from 1960-1961 (Ministry of Information, 1966a). But Daniel’s request was rejected as the council was not interested to see a private TV station.

The third trial that is believed to have contributed a lot to establishment of TV stations in Ethiopia is the one that took place during the founding anniversary of the OAU in 1963. The trial of television establishment in Ethiopia was until 2 November 1964 intending to cover and highlight a meeting of the Organization for African Unity (OAU) taking place in Addis Ababa in that year (Destaw, 2007). The launch was facilitated by the technical assistance of the British company Thomson (Elleni et al., 2003, p. 39). Back then the broadcasting service operated within a radius of 170 km of Addis Ababa and no longer than 3.5 hours on weekdays (Ibid.; Mekuria, 2007, P. 8).

Sileshi, et al., (2016) described that the time marks the freedom of many African nations and a huge gathering in the Economic Commission for Africa hall in Addis Ababa to form the OAU (present day AU). In 1963, Addis Ababa...
received the first television broadcast which was made to coincide with the founding festivities of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) (Mekuria, 2007). Amanuel in 2007 Addis Ababa millennium secretaries edition described that “500 TV sets, transmission was limited to areas within a radius of 25 km that broadcasted to the public. National television was totalititarian in nature and committed to unwavering loyal service to the Emperor and to the feudal system”.

The event was on display for the people gathered out of the hall and those in the venue opposite the national palace (Gessese, 2016). “This first meeting was covered by Mr. Samuel Ferenji and Ms. Alemseged Hiruy. Technical assistance and TV was provided by Phillips Ethiopia. The display was presented through a closed circuit TV” (Gessese, 2016).

During the eve of the 1964 (1956E.C) new year, people were able to watch the Miss national capital Beauty Contest through the Phillips Company from outside Haile Selasse the first Theater Hall, now National Theater (Sileshi, et al., 2016)). That underscored the importance of the fourth television broadcasting establishment milestone.

The fifth effort of opening a commercial TV station was made by the telecommunications authority. The government denied permission to the request (Leykun, 2000a). The desire to set up an individual at the fifth attempt was almost an attempt to set it up at an enterprise level. According to Afewerke exclusive interview (2016) reminded that “It was at a time when the Ethiopian Telecommunication Corporation had expressed interest in establishing a commercial television station (Afewerke, 2016). However, the organization was unable to fulfill its plans. This is due to two reasons: one, the lack of governmental approval and the second factor that is considered to be the suspicion of its existence if the site is established (Ibid).

Bisrate Wongel radio station proposal to launch TV station effort was failed (Lundgren, 1983). The sixth experiment was the desire to set up a TV station in conjunction with the establishment of the gospel radio station (Palo, 1994). The site rejected the request, although the site submitted a request for settlement to the Council of Ministers (Radio Voice of the Gospel, 1968). The request of this religious organization has been rejected by others, such as former claimants (Ibid). This is presumed to be a fear that the government may not be able to control the programs (Voice of Ethiopia, 1985).

In general, the above six unsuccessful efforts were made that pushed for establishment of TV service in Ethiopia. The seventh and successful request for opening TV in Ethiopia was a request made by Phillips Ethiopia and Thomson Television (Ibid). This proposal promised to provide equipment and train manpower with an annual budget of 247,000 Birr (Gessese, 2016; Ministry of Information, 1965). After exchange of many letters, the proposal was presented to Haile Selasse the 1st on August 07, 1964 and a permit was given (Thomson Television, 1982). The TV station was made to open on the fourth floor of the Addis Ababa City Administration (Ibid).

As a result, the task of setting up the station was reached through an agreement with the government on Thompson Television International Limited
(Mekuria, 2015). The TV station started broadcasting on 1965 on the fourth floor of the newly constructed municipal building (Thomson, 1982).

The government announced on the evening of November 08, 1965, the TV station became functional during the kings coronation ceremony and here is the first paragraph from the speech the King’s delivered during the inauguration (Silishi et al., 2016; Mezmur, 2019).

"We are very happy to broadcast the Ethiopian TV as it educates and informs our mission. Education isn't only for the adolescent and youngsters, it is additionally significant for the adults. In spite of the fact that the Television slot is at first little, we do trust it will inevitably change itself into a major media that arrives at the more extensive populace. On the off chance that something is never begun, it won't be finished." (Emperor Haile Selassie’s speech during the inauguration of the TV station on October 23, 1957 E.C.)

*Figure 2.* The first Visit of Ethiopia broadcasting Service 1966 (EBC, 2016)

There were four producers and seven technicians during the early days of the TV station. According to Leykun, on the other hand, there were five British and twenty seven Ethiopian staff members at that time (2000b). The Ethiopian television had one studio when it started transmission and that studio was very small (Ibid). In addition to the studio, there was a monitoring room, transmission room, maintenance room, editing room, processing room and few other offices (ibid). Eighty percent of the airtime in Ethiopian Television was covered by foreign films while news, Question and Answer, Variety Show Discussion, Health, Children’s program, soccer were among the pioneering programs (Getachew, 2003).
At its establishment Negarit Gazeta 27th year number 15, the aim of the station was informing, educating and entertaining the audience; the languages of the station were only Amharic and English (1968) (Negarit Gazeta, 1968).

The TV station had not more than 40 minutes of daily transmission (As mentioned earlier, the Television station was established by an agreement between the Lord Thomson Company and the Ethiopian government while the majority of the equipment was provided by Phillips Ethiopia (Thomson Television, 1988). The equipment the station had during the launch of the broadcast service been non professional (Gessese, 2016).

Some improvements were observed in the five years until 1970 in manpower and equipment. The staff at that time was composed of Ethiopians except for one foreign national (Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency, 2004a). The administration was being run by British personnel until 196, since then an Ethiopian named Mr. Samuel Ferenju took over as Director of the TV station (Silishi et al., 2016)

“Enantew Fredu” (judge yourself), “Hizb Ena tenaw” (Public health), “Question and Answer” and “Children’s program” were among the popular programs until 1963 E.C, Indigenous programs gradually improved and the 80 percent airtime covered by foreign programs went on a decreasing scale (Ibid).

According to Ethiopian Broadcasting Service Order number 50 of 1968 declared

“The EBC has been governed by a five-part structure from its founding in 1957 to 1968. They are the Department of Engineering, Management and Finance, Program, Advertising and Film. The Director General or Director of Ethiopian Television is responsible for the Ministry and is responsible for the Ministry of Information and Tourism. Each section has 28 different sections with five different sections. Specifically, the program section is divided into 9 sections: Amharic News, English News, Domestic Programs, Foreign Programs, Traffic Control, Experience and Training Subdivisions. This section not only organizes daily news in English and English, it also organizes domestic and foreign programs. Deploys, monitors, and directs studio programs”.

The second structural change was made in 1977 and this was changed for the third time. At this time, Ethiopian Television was headed by the head of the department and is directly responsible to the Minister of Information. This new, second-tier structure was organized into five divisions, organized into nine divisions (Leykun, 2000b).

According to the Mezmur (2019), the Ethiopian Television Initiative began in seven departments in the municipalities. They are the studio, the Control Room, the Television and Transmitter Room, the Maintenance, Editing, Production, and Office Departments.

Imperial Board of Telecommunication (1971) described the studio system of ETV;

“Only one studio was available at the time and was slightly smaller. It has cameras, studio backwards, monitors, microphones, studio lights, chairs and
It looks like a small office with no proper length in terms of the studio standard. And the studio lights weren't as well organized as they would be for a TV studio. So it was difficult to move around in the studio. Especially news readers, camera operators, program directors, producers, community speakers, stage managers, etc. It is remembered that they were overwhelmed by the noise coming from the studio”.

Figure 3. The first Staff of Ethiopia TV

Severe censorship has discouraged the broadcast content developments. Looking at the situation in Ethiopia historically, in the first ever constitution issued in the country, namely the 1930 Constitution, we find the following provision regarding the individual's privacy: **Article 26:** Except where the law permits, no person has the right to censor the personal correspondences of any Ethiopian citizen. The next the Revised Constitution of 1955 described the following two provisions in this Constitution. **Article 41:** Freedom of speech and the press is guaranteed the Empire law. **Article 42:** Correspondences shall be subject to no censorship, except in time of declared emergency (Negarit Gazeta, 1955).

Following the 1955 Revised Constitution, the major lawful code with respect to opportunity of the press and the orderly limitations is the 1957 Penal Code, additionally gave during the rule of Emperor Haile Selassie. 1957 Penal Code which has been replaced and superseded by a new Criminal Code that came into force on the 9th of May 2005 find restrictive and punitive provisions regarding freedom of the press (Negarit Gazate 1960).
One of the media regulatory bodies is the Minister of Information. The minister was Dr. Tesfaye Gabre-Egzy, who 29 different issues introduced censored in the Ethiopian media history. Under Prime Minister Tsahafi Teezaz Aklikou Abte Wold cabinet of the empero the media was also owned by the Minister of Posts and Communications: Lij Endalkachen Makonnen (Hassen, 2002).

Under the proclamation of the Negarit Gazeta that came out on 8 January, 1975 Article 12 allows the Ethiopian Television a legal right to collect permit and service fees (license fee) from TV owners. ETV have since then been independently collecting annual license fee from its customers. Though there were no changes in its structure until 1984, ETV formed new departments in an effort to restructure its organizational structure.

Thus, the Ethiopian Television Service was almost an organization that had put its own footprint which was crucial to the country's educational development. In 1970, there were two radio stations in Ethiopia: (1) Radio Ethiopia owned by Ethiopian government broadcasting in Amharic, English, French and Arabic; (2) Radio Voice of the Gospel, run by the Lutheran World Federation, broadcasting in 12 languages to Asia, the Middle East, Africa and Madagascar (Ibid).

The growth of Ethiopian broadcast media has developed from dram betting to internet browsing (Ayele, 2017). One of the most encouraging things in the ETV at that time was the achievement of the news department. According to Ethiopian Revolution Information Centre - ERIC (1977) 1968 was considered the most successful year of ETV live transmission of the OAU Ministerial and the 6th Heads of State and Government Conference on August, held in Africa Hall (Nigussie, 1988). Every night the ETV people sent the news and events directly from the conference hall. It is to be remembered, however, that the first attempt to send live coverage - during the arrival of Netherlands' Queen Juliana February, 1968 from “the Bole airport - ended in a flop. 11th OAU coverage succeeded and the installation of equipment and the preparation for it had taken ETV almost two months (Nigussie, 2006).

At the time of the Ethiopian Television, most African countries were freed from their colonial masters and gained political independence. Since the political climate of the day was aimed at promoting Pan-Africanism and fighting apartheid, TV-free television was set up in Ethiopia and Liberia at the time. The Ethiopian broadcast media followed the emperor's diplomatic line and became the voice of Africa (Mekuria, 2013).

Broadcasting Media during the Military Regime

The difference between the Monarchy and military time was mainly in technology and geographical coverage. But there had never been any drastic change or improvement in content. The Degree Media committee of the Ten Year development plan commented:"there are no major difference between media at the monarchy and the military period" (NRDC & CPSC, 1982, p.88).
This was still political oriented, monotonous and unbalanced in its content (Nigussie, 1988, PMC, 2005; Mekuria, 2015, Mezmur, 2019). Inefficient and slow reporting and a lack of interesting technical means needed for the proper functioning of broadcast media, all helped explain why the Ethiopian broadcast media was not considered a significant industry and social institution compared with the press of other countries (Mekuria, 2013; Leykun, 2000a; Mezmur, 2019). According to Meseret (2013) was very far from being a quality media production, profession and lacks skill and creativity. All broadcast media carry different type of news and programs in the prime time of the media and it is normally the reflection of government and party policy (Amanuel, 2007; Maregu 2003).

During the time of military, the current Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation was the official organ of the central committee of the workers party of Ethiopia (Hassen, 2002). Although its analysis and emphasis on important national and international issues was sometime sound and useful for its audience, it lacked simplicity and became monotonous and highly ideological and full of Marxist and Leninist propaganda (Mekuria, 2007).

The prime time news hour and program packages of Ethiopia television and radio, normally covers the party works and carries reports on important issues of the week, whereas the entertainment program usually contains a theoretical program, where important theoretical issues, particularly the teachings of Marxism-Leninism were elaborated (Ibid). Private media organizations were not available from newsagents and distributors (Birhanu, 2009).

Ethiopian radio and television presentations during Emperor Haile Selassie continued to favor the physical system, the prize of the king, an advocator of the monarchy, and after the military regime gained power, radio and television continued to use the broadcast media as a propaganda tool for power (Leyekune, 2000a; Birhanu, 2009). Beginning in mid-July 1966, the military’s attention began to intensify in propaganda, comparing it to the imperialist structures and authorities. Jonathan Dinblebye's "The Hunger for Hunger" (Ethiopian) television program, on the evening of September 1967, was titled "We Don't Have a Gift for the New Year in Ethiopia." The people began to feel sorrow over his bones, and burst into tears (Nigussie, 1988). The military propaganda campaign intensified the socialist revolution.

According to Nigussie, in February and March of 1969, the day-to-day pressures of radio and television, were broadcast to convey the message, "Punish, when you saw me" (1988). The right to strike, assemble or speak in Ethiopia is prohibited by the proclamation. The act of repression waited described in the military began to control the daily practice of journalists working in print and electronic media by assigning its cadres (Gesses, 2016).

In 1969, the military government reorganized the "Ethiopian Television Department" with its second structural adjustment (Negarit Gazeta, 1975). This structure is organized into four sections: programming, production services, news and current affairs and engineering departments. The departments consisted of several sub-divisions in their work, and the entire television work
was conducted by the department head and was responsible for the Ministry of Information. The structure was generally governed by the authoritarian Theory. Burgess (2000, p. 28) has stated that the military period intended to fight cultural imperialism in order to withstand foreign cultural influences.

The Revolutionary Government was reorganized as part of the Ministry of Information in accordance with the responsibilities of the Ministry of Information of the Ministry of Information, Proclamation No. 29, and August 30, 1977/69. This structure has reduced television and radio from organizational to departmental and allowed the newsroom to be independent. For this section, it is responsible for producing daily national and international news in Amharic and English languages. It has a subset of local news and international news, but for various reasons it has not been used.

The achievement and the progress that has been made in communication within the country are much greater than the level of mass media development as a whole (Ibid). Particularly since the 1974 Revolution, there have been undeniable changes in the general mass media set-up, although most of them occurred due to political and social pressures at different times (Mekuria, 2007).

According to Palo (1994) the assessment of Radio Voice of the Gospel the Lutheran World Federation’s International Broadcasting Project in Ethiopia, 1957-1977 listed out that since 1974, Ministry of Information budget and number of employees have been doubled (although this was mainly because of the nationalisation of Radio Voice of the Gospel (RDC & CPSC (1979). After the 1974 coup d'état and during the authoritarian rule of the militery, under the guise of socialism, all mass media were essentially transformed into instruments of propaganda for the regime and its Marxist-Leninist ideology (NRDC & CPSC, 1982). The media were reorganised to serve as the government's mouthpiece, and censorship laws were tightened up and not lifted until the Derg regime was overthrown in May 1991 (Daniel et al. 2003, p.15).

All programs were scrutinized according to the party principles, as the programs and news were organized in a way that summarized agriculture, industry, health, the activities of public enterprises, and the general community. The entertainment programs were designed to be locally produced and took a different look than the predecessor of Emperor Haile Selassie (Nigussie, 1988).

During the Derg period, national issues grew from 2% to 36%, while foreign films and documentaries dropped from 8% to 64%. Despite this, foreign documentaries and films were widely accepted because they were propaganda works from different social countries and were far from national identity.

Despite the military regime that oppressed the people of his country, the political system had been an hour-long program in English and other languages as long as the Zimbabwean liberation movement maintained its independence on December 22, 1971. Then again, on November 1, 1974, it was recalled that a half-hour program was opened to South Africa and Swape (Namibia) fighters for each of them (Addis Ababa, 1979). History reminds them of Ethiopia's radio and television contributing to this colonial struggle, even though the programs were broadcast by radio studios. That is why in Ethiopian history,
Ethiopian broadcast media is considered to be the first African voice that engendered Africanness. (Burgell, as cited by Berhanu Olana, 2009).

Ethiopian Broadcast Corporation 1991-2020

The nation’s lone visual broadcast station headed to yet another structural reform in 1991, the third since its establishment. According to Addis Ababa Millennium (2007), while “the media remained under government control, it nonetheless opened a new optimism for the expression of diversity of views”. EBC was a beacon of hope of a new era unfolding. There was also in the early years a forum on state broadcast media where uncensored, independent views by citizens were expressed (Ministry of Information, 1995). Also, the commencement of EBC programs in Oromiffa and Tigrigna following the EPRDF takeover (and later programs in Somali) has been a significant development and welcome news for those espousing multicultural ideology of Ethiopia (Ibid).

According to Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation -EBC the five years annual report (2012) stated that “the 1991 change put in place under the new structure. This reform closely supervised the operations of transmitters installed in Addis Ababa and other towns (EBC, 2015). The reform places the department head at the helm of the whole structure, putting sales and promotion, general services, programs and production, among others, under its supervision (Ibid). The Ethiopian Television then had four mediums, namely Amharic, English, Tigrigna and Oromiffa languages and its transmission expanded to include several towns (ibid).

In 1994, the station underwent the fourth structural reform, which helped it progress from the department to an agency level (EBC, 2015). It included two departments and various services sections. Each department placed various coordinating offices, sections and groups under it (EBC, 2012). The latest structural reform brought a general manager at the topmost position (Ibid).

According to Negarit Gazeta (1995) state that the current structure and goals were established 1995 with Proclamation 114/95. Coming in 20 years after the station’s establishment the fifth structural reform resulted in the merger of the radio and television. The latter was then led by a general manager. Although the details of this reform were already stipulated in Proclamation number 114 of the year 1994 it was put into effect only in 1997. The new reform gave the enterprise the name, “Ethiopian Radio & Television Agency.” Three deputizes responsible for various sectors reported to a general manager at the top. These are; Television, Engineering and Radio.

Each of these sections had various services and coordinating offices under them. Radio and television were brought to this Parliament in 1995 under the new Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency. Mass media agencies for each regional State were included in a later creation. The city of Addis Ababa, for instance, now has its own television programming on EBC 2-the second channel to later Addis Ababa Mass media agency and today Addis Ababa
media network, besides two FM stations which became operational in 2000. In 2007, controversial broadcast law came into force and licenses were issued to private radio stations a little before the elections (Amanuel, 2007). More than 12 state owned, 22 private and 51 community owned broadcast media have begun operating their own radio stations.

The year 2007 also witnessed the launching of the second channel (known as ETV 2). At its early stage the newer channel transmitted programs and films from South Africa’s TV Africa (EBC, 2015). Nevertheless, complaints over the contents of most of the programs alleging that they went against Ethiopian culture led to the termination of the program in early 2000 (Solomie, 2007). The channel stayed without function. On September 6, 2007, the station launched satellite transmission abroad (EBC, 2015). "Our Eyes," "Contemporary", "Success", and more were produced by internal staff, as well as "Question and Answer", "Face-to-Face", and launched by popular organizations working outside of the organization.

According to the Former ERTA manager Solomie wrote about “It was then that the Ethiopian Television reported better reporting on war. During the Ethio-Eritrean war, a team of journalists traveled to the frontline of the day-to-day battle of the Ethiopian National Defense Forces. That's what breaking news is all about” (Solomie, 20007).

The show, which has been celebrating its 50th anniversary since the launch of the TV channel, Heberete Terete (Musical show), Kesetoeche Admase (Women’s horizon), "Children's Time", started by “120” ›Entertainment program, etc., is one of the most popular in the history of the site. Programs are mentioned (Ibid).

Compared to the previous regime, the role of the radio and TV station has been enhanced by the news, educational and entertainment programs, receiving information to the public and showing the country the appropriate features (State Mass Media Strategic Plan Steering Committee, 2003). Different ethnic groups have also played their part in highlighting music, culture, language, identity, etc. Drama and other works of art not only entertain the viewer but also bring many experts into action (Ibid). They have created a conducive environment for the arts industry to grow (EBC, 2016). ETV 2 began transmitting programs, news and contents prepared by the Addis Ababa City Administration since 2010. Three years later, the station pushed ahead with its third channel (named ETV 3) (OGCA, 2017).

On April 10, 2007 the station’s fifth type of language, Somali language transmission, hit the airwaves (EBC, 2016). The transmission of programs from the Amhara, Tigray, Oromiya, SNPP, Afar, Dire Dawa, Gambella and Harari regional states followed suit (Mezmu, 2019). Regional states rented air time and broadcast their own programs on EBC channels and national radio programs (Busch, 2017). The post-2007 era saw the launch of French and Arabic transmissions (Ibid).

EBC 3 channel, the third for the station, began broadcasting on July 14, 2011 with outsourced programs. Two aims prompted the launching of the channel, Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation.(2015) described that.
1. Facilitate the progression from analogue to digital transmission
2. Contribute its fair share for the thriving of the nation’s budding entertainment industry through granting more air time.

Since the years that the ETV and Ethiopian radio were merged together as Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency (ERTA) in 2007, later in 2014 becomes the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation was headed by director general with two deputies designated to head the radio and TV (OGCA, 2017).

Since the Ethiopian Radio and Ethiopian Television became one entity based on the 1995 proclamation and new structure was amended in 1997, a General Manager/ Director General were set to manage both organs (Negarit Gazeta, 858/2014). While celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2016 EBC has 2143 employees permanently working at the headquarters and branch offices and 61 contractual and 27 freelance employees (Nov 2015) (OGCA, 2017).

With the large rate of illiteracy, the majority of the people prefer to tune to radio for the latest information, poor economic status of the wider population is also another factor (Nigussie, 2006). Each language service produces its own programmes. The programmes could be categorized under six main areas (genres) (Ibid):

- News, News analysis and Documentary.
- Current affairs, public affairs programme, commentaries, talk shows, etc.
- Educational programmes on political, economic and social issues (development, woman, population, and etc.)
- Cultural programmes in the areas of art and sports.
- Entertainment programmes, traditional and modern music programmes, dramas, etc.
- Commercials and public service Announcements.

While, frequency Modulation Broadcast (FM) started transmitting programs in June 2000 (Silishi etal., 2016). It was established under Radio Ethiopia, and its service is on the air for 18 hours a day (OGCA, 2017). The FM 97.1 station mainly focuses on urban issues (Ibid). The transmission is 2.5 KW and confides to Addis Ababa and nearby towns (Nigussie, 2007). The station has captured a significant portion of the urban population, broadcasting musical programs, interspersed with frequent headlines and news summaries (Mesert, 2013).
The new FM 104.7 runs for foreign language type of radio. Regarding radio medium, the agency uses EBC stations and FM 97.1 of Ethiopia Radio to broadcast programs produced by its own capacity (EBA, 2013). EBC gradually became instrumental in assuring the public that those at the helm of power were doing what was good for the people (Nigussie, 2006). Transmission coverage of EBC until April 2019 was not more than 85 percent of the total area of the country (EBA, 2019).

ETV’s broadcasting is financed from annual license fees, government subsidy, income from advertising and program sponsorship (Negarit Gazeta, 2014). ETV has well-equipped studios and facilities, and is, therefore, able to produce almost 70 percent of its programs locally (Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, 2015a). The remaining 30 percent is imported from abroad (Ibid). This is done mainly to compensate for lack of production of feature and documentary films in the country. Much of the largest part of material received for ETV covers sports events, world soccer, world athletics (mostly live transmissions), popular music, feature films and documentaries (Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, 2015).

Advertising occupies almost 15% of the total ETV program. Advertising is playing a much larger role than previously in all media, and further expansion in this area is anticipated. ETV receives international news from the Ethiopian News Agency (ENA), Walta information Center (WIC), Pan African News Agency (PANA), British Broadcasting Cooperation (BBC), Cable News Network (CNN), Canal France International (CFI) (Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, 2015). Reuters is main source of ETV in providing vis-news, texts, hard news (ten items daily), clips (music, movie, styles and magazine) (Ibid).

International media stations broadcasts including internet digital broadcasting are received in the country via web or satellite, big restaurants and hotels owners, expatriates and the diplomatic community who can afford to
purchase the satellite dish and decoder and pay the annual subscription fee
(Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, 2012). This has enabled the viewers to
have access to a wider variety of program than is available on the Ethiopian
Television (ETV) (Ibid).

Apart from that, the corporation also built digital studios in Hawasa,
Mekele, and Bahir Dar (EBC, 2015). These three regional studios are also
equipped with two cameras each. The master control room is presently
modernized and capable of receiving and airing events from 8 different spots at
a time (Ibid). Moreover the studios are presently equipped with such up-to-
date cameras like HDC-1400P, 3 HITACHI SK-HD1000E and Dxc-D55p
studio cameras. Modern DV cam and XD cams are also presently in use for
field activities (Fetehawoke, 2016). The editing system has also been
modernized through the utilization of stratus work flow editing system and
graphics (Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, 2015)

Although their growth is remarkable, viewership numbers remaining
below two million appear marginal compared to television, which reaches
between 60 and 70 million people.

The Ethiopian broadcast transmission has undergone numerous
challenges and long process in the country and in the process has hosted
missions that reflect the characteristics of the systems. At the present time, it
has become a government domain, especially in the history of the country,
especially since it has been in a system of public and developmental culture,
based on diversity and the importance of the people.

After the military regime was overthrown in 1991 "democratic rights,
including the right to freedom of expression, were introduced and state
censorship before publication […] was lifted" (Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung,
2010, p. 5). And as early as October 1991 the government set new standards
for the operation of state-owned media outlets (Busch, 2017 cited Daniel et
al. 2003, p. 15). Moreover, the 1992 Press Proclamation regulated all types of
media – including television. Whereas newspapers and magazines were
mushrooming in these early days of the freedom of the press in Ethiopia,
EBC remained the only domestic broadcaster until 2015 (Gebru, 2015, p. 40).
Later on, EBC extended its portfolio by establishing three television program
based channels and one nationwide international radio, Two Addis Ababa
based FM station

Conclusion

Based on the historical analysis find that the space for free and unhindered
journalism or had always began in the transition time when government was
the revolutionary "honeymoon” of transition years, after two or three years
later the media had hide in the government socks.

The history of Ethiopian Broadcasting media was founded on the wish of
the government for the goal of political system. In the time of Emperor Haile
Selassie, the Derg military and the current regime, the station went through
many difficulties during the 85 years of its journey. From the backdrop of television infrastructure, journalists have worked to challenge their professional independence for political systems. In conclusion, the Ethiopian mass media in the past lacked in particular journalists’ initiative, freedom, and permitted banal and ineffective writing, showing little respect for an interest in technical excellence.

The journalists were also viewed with suspicion by the community, who had been doing their jobs under difficult circumstances. Since Ethiopia's foreign policy began to focus its attention on Africa since the 1960's, the site served as a special place for the Pan-Africanist and apartheid movement in Africa.

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