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Political transformation in Ethiopia: Possibilities to prevent autocracy

(Master´s Thesis)

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Abstract

In 1991, there was a revolution in Ethiopia. A military dictatorship was overthrown by a revolutionary party and a new, democracy-friendly Constitution was drafted. Nevertheless, the party stays in control of the country´s politics ever since and uses brutal repression to supress civic and political opposition, which is strongly criticised by the few who rick to speak out or who are not under a direct threat. How can this political regime be called, then? The absence of the shift in political power for many years suggests that the democratic transition have been only a formal issue and that rights and freedom mentioned in the Constitution have been only to make the impression of democratization process. Thus, the political regime in the country can be classified as a kind of hybrid regime.

Up to now, the research is based upon empirical facts that have been reported by people and institutions independent of the Ethiopian government. Now, having a general picture of the nature of the political regime, we can proceed to the main issue of this thesis, which is the possibility of democratization in the country. How the gulf between reality and the Constitution can be reduced? What are the areas or actors that have the potential to bring about the genuine democratization? Through what areas or actors Ethiopian politics could be prevented from becoming victim to autocratic rule? These questions are so complex because they explore a chaotic political reality. Therefore, using a theoretic framework helps us to stay oriented and to cover the most important aspects of the wide spectrum of political reality. Through an analysis of the strategy of the ruling party we discover that such areas and actors can be found not only outside of the incumbent.

Key words: political regime, political change, Ethiopia, hybrid regime, democratization

Abstrakt

V roce 1991 nastala v Etiopii revoluce. Vojenská diktatura byla svržena revoluční stranou a byla vydána nová Ústava příznivě nakloněná demokracii. Zmíněná revoluční strana je ale u moci dodnes a pro potlačování občanské i politické opozice používá brutálního násilí, jež je předmětem ostré kritiky těch nemnohých, kteří se odváží promluvit nebo kteří nejsou v přímém ohrožení. Jak tedy můžeme nazvat takový politický režim? Dlouholeté neexistující předání moci naznačuje, že demokratická tranzice byla pouze formální záležitostí a práva a svobody zmínění v Ústavě měly pouze vytvořit dojem demokratizace. Politický režim v zemi tedy může být nazván druhem hybridního režimu.

Dosavadní analýza byla založena na empirických faktech podaných ze strany jednotlivců a institucí nezávislých na Etiopské vládě. Teď, když máme obecnou představu o charakteru režimu, můžeme pokračovat k hlavní problematice této práce, kterou jsou možnosti demokratizace v zemi. Jak mohou být zmenšena propast mezi realitou a Ústavou? Jaké oblasti nebo jací aktéři jsou potencionálními agenty skutečné demokratizace? Jaké oblasti nebo jací aktéry by mohly Etiopii ušetřit od autokratického režimu? Takové otázky jsou velmi komplexní, protože zkoumají chaotickou politickou realitu. Teoretický rámec nám proto pomůže s orientací v problematice a pokrýt nejdůležitejší aspekty širokého spektra politické reality. Skrze analýzu strategie vládnoucí strany zjistíme, že oblasti a aktéři s potenciálem spustit proces demokratizace se nenachází pouze vně jí samé.

Klíčová slova: politický režim, politická změna, Etiopie, hybridní režim, demokratizace

Declaration of Academic Integrity

I declare and confirm with my signature that this thesis is solely my own work based on my research and literature published which have been acknowledged and fully cited.

Bc. Kristýna Hejzlarová

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List of abbreviations:

ANDM – Amhara National Democratic Movement

DAC – Development Assistance Committee

EPRDF – Ethiopian People´s Revolutionary Democratic Front

OLF – Oromo Liberation Front

OPDO – Oromo People´s Democratic Organization

SEPDM – Southern Ethiopia People´s Democratic Movement

TGE – Transitional Government of Ethiopia

TPLF – Tigrai People Liberation Front

UNDHR – Universal Declaration of Human Rights

1. **Summary introduction**

1.1. **The main question and it´s presumptions and background**

The main aim of this paper is to find areas in Ethiopian politics which are likely to stop and prevent autocratic rule in the country. There are three presumptions related to this question: (1) Ethiopia is now under an authoritarian rule, (2) democracy prevents autocracy[1] and (3) the key political actors in Ethiopia want the country to democratize.

The first presumption is so essential that it is necessary to cover in a separate chapter. Formally, the ruling party is a coalition consisting of various parties which ought to represent different nationalities within the state. Nevertheless, organizations and scholars independent of the ruling party say that these representatives are hidden allies of the most dominant party within the coalition.

I am aware that the second presumption is very general and would merit greater attention, but in fact the paper is very specifically focused on the Ethiopian case. So generally, I will simply outline the idea behind this by referring to Robert Dahl (1998) who says that one of the reasons to consider democracy as a desirable goal is that it is a way to avoid tyranny (Dahl, 1998, 45). Other authors who discuss the opening of authoritarian regimes within democratization differ in their opinion on how the democratization functions in this way. The first group stress the structural relations of power within the society and insist on the limitation of the institutional constraints. The second group, presented here by O'Donnell et al., emphasize the strategic decisions of the leaders and assume that social actors can break through the institutional constraints (Robinson, 1994).

In my opinion, there is at least one condition if democracy is to function as an effective hindrance to autocratic rule): genuineness and absence of opportunism in employing democratic institutions and rhetoric. As we will have the opportunity to explore this topic more in detail in the subchapter 3.1.3., I will not go further here.

The presumption of the ability of democracy to prevent autocracy can be easily accused by some who contest the western approach to democracy promotion abroad. These critics say that although these intentions are good-looking on the first sight, they mask the genuine motivations of the democracy promotion. This is, according to these critics, to dominate the third world countries. And this domination is done exactly by drawing the third world countries not only into the globalized system of democratic governance which can be controlled, but also into the system of liberal economics in which they have a little chance to succeed (Abrahamsen, 2000).

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[1] This assumption is based on the work of Robert Dahl. Nevertheless, I do not take it for a general truism. I am aware of the number of different views on this problematic issue – for example, the critical voices here represented by Abrahamsen (2000), mentioned below.

In this paper I view democracy mainly using the specific clauses from the Ethiopian current Constitution (the Constitution), as it was written by Ethiopians themselves and as it says that:

"the Constitution is the supreme law of the land. Any law, customary practice or a decision of an organ of state or a public official who contravenes this Constitution shall be of no effect. All citizens, organs of state, political organizations, other associations as well as their officials have the duty to ensure observance of the Constitution and to obey it" (the Constitution, 1994, article 9, paragraph 1 and 2).

As we will see, this document states a strong commitment to democratic order and political development built upon the rule of law. These expressions of political will to create a democratic state are taken as an answer to the third presumption of this paper - the key actors of political life in Ethiopia want the country to be democratic. As a result, this paper generally assumes that democracy is a desirable goal of political development as well as wanted by the incumbent political leaders in Ethiopia (formally Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia). However, the exact opposite is stated in other sources of information - international agencies, political scientists, and both political and civic opposition within the country accuse the incumbents of hindering the democratization process already since taking political power in the 1991.

Once we summarize all these assumptions and their background, we can also make the main question even more narrow and specific in order to express exactly on what this paper is focused. Because there is a clear formulation of democracy from the Ethiopian point of view in the country´s current Constitution (1944), there is no need to search for some external concepts of democracy and democratization. This paper takes this constitutional concept of democracy as the primary measure to establish a normative standard for the real situation. Thus, the main aim of this paper can be further specified to be a search for the possible ways to make the reality in Ethiopia closer to the national Constitution principles (which is also the subject of the fourth chapter).

1.2. Differences between paper assignment and actual content of present paper explained

There is a difference between actual contribution and the one stated in the paper assignment. The latter declares to bring a "strategy to prevent Ethiopian politics from authoritarian rule". As this is too complex and ambitious, I reduced it to a similar, but more achievable goal – to find areas which are likely to stop and prevent the authoritarian political system in the country.

I find this formulation more fitting because of two reasons: one, it focuses not only on the future political development in the country, but indicates also that the threat of authoritarian rule is now fully

present in Ethiopia. Two, as already mentioned, as it is more narrow, finding answer in this paper, with respect to its limits, is more achievable to find answer in this paper in respect to its limits. Thus, the difference lies in the shift from focusing on the whole strategy to prevent an authoritarian rule in Ethiopia to a less ambitious but (in my view) more realistic focus on areas which are likely to stop and prevent authoritarian rule in the same country.

The main aim of this paper is not constructed on the analysis of various political transitions in Ethiopian during the whole 20th century, because there are too many variables that make any valid comparison between history and present impossible or highly contestable. I answer the main question mainly, but not exclusively, on the analysis of the important moments in the country´s political development since 1991 that directly shaped the current regime. Also, a brief explanation of geographic, ethnic and social aspects of the process of nation building is presented as an introduction to the current history of political situation in the country.

1.3. **Methodology and nature of resources**

This paper does not aspire to be a complex analysis, or an assessment, of the Ethiopian political regime. It is rather an attempt to analyse the areas, which are most likely to bring about a democratic change. Every political regime is highly specific and it is not possible (or the possibility is very limited and fragile) to predict or drive parallels on the basis of comparison with a different country or using a theory. It is also not the purpose of using a theory which classifies political regime types to only explore one category and to ignore others – as we will see, there are some traits and observations, not corresponding to the category that are considered as best fitting the Ethiopian case. This is the reason I do not build on any particular theory, or some similar case study, or historical parallel with some Ethiopian political experience from past. This does not mean that I reject considerable help of theoretical classifications of political regimes. By contrast, I use them to stay oriented in the chaotic reality and to drive links between possible parallel across different regime types.

In this paper, sometimes I work with sources which are not explicitly aware of political reality in the African countries, or were written even before democracy emerged in African countries in a larger scope. But this is only if the work of this author is well-known and is useful to the present study[2]. Otherwise, I prefer to use literature that is aware of African political reality and is written upon empirical experience of the author. However, as will be further argued in more detail, the distinction between "western" and "African" view on the issue of democracy do not have to be necessarily different, as the finding of Afrobarometr.org suggests. One of its studies fined that Africans have similar perception of modern democracy as westerners (Bratton et al, 2005, 65).

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[2]   For example: Acemoglu and Robinson, 2006; Dahl, 1971 and 1998; Inglehart and Weltzel, 2005; Rustow, 1970; Schumpeter, 1976; Vanhanen, 1999; Ženíšek, 2006.

2. Development and current form of political system in Ethiopia

This chapter briefly overviews the process of forming the present-day Ethiopian territory. The main contribution of this chapter is to analyse political development in the country since the break-up with socialist military regime in 1991. It is closed by an analysis of the strategy of the incumbent to manage its leading role within the state politics.

2.1. Political development in Ethiopia

This subchapter unveils some important aspects and moments in the development of political power in Ethiopia. The first part shows that part of the process of making modern-day Ethiopia involved violent and massive exploitation of the southern territories. The core part looks at the political development in the country after the socialist and military regime coup in 1991. At first, it seemed the democratization process took place, but as in the first months after the revolution, the political party which was the most dominant in the previous regime´s removal maintains its exclusive rule, even now. As is shown in the last part of this chapter, well-elaborated rhetoric including the formulations in the constitutional and legislative documents, and suppressing dissent through political fraud are just a part of a strategy to remain in power.

2.1.1. Short introduction: formation of today´s Ethiopia

To be able to understand the present situation in Ethiopia, we have to take a closer look to its historical development.

The historical core of today´s Ethiopia is located in its northern part (see Appendix). The oldest political formation is known to last from the 1st century AD, and to be named Axum. In the 7th century, it was overthrown by "Solomon" dynasty, the reference to Christianity indicating clearly its inner identity. Its strong integrating principle was the Orthodox Church, with not only religious, but social and economic importance to members of this entity, also known as Abyssinians (Zewde, 1991). It comprised the ethnic groups of Amhara and Tigre, sharing a Christian religion. Later, as rulers became powerful, they expanded southwards (Abbay, 2004). Each region was led by its monarch, more or less powerful, depending on his resources and abilities to mobilize them. The production mode was in principle parallel to European feudalism – decentralized structure, creating the wealth by land exploitation by elite, who collected tax in services and/or in kind from peasants (McClellan, 1984).

Today´s form of the state of Ethiopia originated in the middle of 19th century by the expansion to south, inhabited mainly by non-Christian Oromo, under the rule of Menilek from Amhara region (Zewde, 1991; Abbay, 2004). This step was very strategic one indeed: "With a territory tripled in size and a population at least doubled, the enlarged unit possessed considerable potential in both scale and resources to

resist threats to its own integrity, both internal and external, while simultaneously providing an opportunity to transform the state structurally in the direction of political, economic, social and administrable centralization" (McClellan, 1984). This was also the first prerequisite of gaining sufficient resources for his successor Haile Selassie to build modern, centralized state under his rule, innovative and absolutist at the same time (Zewde, 1991).

Southern expansion under Menilek brought its negative side as well – and for some, the only aspect this transformation brought. Even though the expansion took different forms, often the people from south had to fight brutal wars before they were subjugated and incorporated into Empire. The problem of cultural, economic and social conflict between the historical core and conquered provinces on the peripheries is evident from a typical story that happened to a common farmer from the South. The expansion consisted of a long-term vision to replicate a northern-type household and to Christianize the Southern territories. It was carried out by a strong motivation for the incomers – mostly single males – in the form of a given authority over several southern households. This authority, often comprising a slave labour of indigenous inhabitants, permitted him to extract a surplus for his own basic needs (McCllelan, 1984). The atmosphere of those days was captured in the saying that those northern settlers were given the southern land "to eat" (Markakis, 2011, 97). The basic principle of national economy was thus to exploit the land and the labour of the subjugated population, which leads us to call it simply a colonization of southern nations (Markakis, 2011; Kumsa, 2014).

Land alienation and labour extraction was only one of the two facets of northern domination. The second came to the South through political and cultural domination of at least two main aspects: the language and the religion (Fessha, 2010). The language of the historical core – Amharic – was exclusively used as lingua franca to maintain the status of the ruling elite after the conquest. This powerful tool for homogenization of the society was expanded to important areas of everyday life – education, religion and politics. This phenomenon was called generally as process of "amharization" (Abbay, 2004; Markakis, 2011). The cultural domination was evident in the ignorance of the fact that the newly incorporated parts of Ethiopian state comprised a large number of Muslims among the Oromos - monarchs of Ethiopia continued to call it to be a Christian state (Fessha, 2010). This grievance from the side of Muslim population persists until the present day (Leverink, 2013).

Building of the modern state included the natural companion to the governmental bodies in the form of non-government organizations (NGOs). Only few NGOs existed before 1970s, mainly engaged in social welfare and community development and their location was strictly limited to the capital. Two great famines in the mid-1970s and 1980s gave rise to a number of humanitarian NGOs, only to be reduced again by the more and more repressive regime of the Derg (Rahmato in Zewde and Pausewang, 2002, 122). This suggests that in the past, the role of Ethiopian NGOs was mainly visible in social and economical areas. This has changed later, as we will see in following chapters.

As can be deduced from the manner the southern territories were incorporated, the state building was not conducive to raising ethnic plurality within its boundaries, euphemistically said. The key pillars of the

new state centralization were (1) resources to be able to finance the structure of the state administration and control and (2) the cultural homogenization of its society in order to gain control over it. Both Markakis (2011) and Toggia (2008) note that this kind of expansion is not an exception in the context of modern states history. They both drive parallels to the kind of forced subjugation of African population by European states as colonial powers. But the question of legitimacy and following conflicts stays unresolved. As we will be able to see later on, this conquest has its implications for actual problems underlying the politic of the ruling party in Ethiopia these days. As Markakis (2011, 107) puts it: "The great majority of the neftegna were Christian, Amharigna and Tigrinia-speaking Abyssinians, a distinct nation in a region inhabited by many other groups, speaking various languages and adhering to Islam and traditional faiths. The distinctiveness of Abyssinian authority was accentuated by monopoly of political power, economic privilege and superior social status. All Abyssinians who settled in the highland periphery became landlords on expropriated land and exploited the labour of the indigenous peasantry. The relationship between them was that of master and servant, landlord and tenant, tax-collector and tax-payer. This conjunction made for a potentially explosive outcome that took only a few decades to mature."

2.1.2. Forming of the present government – regime at the crossroads

This part is crucial to understand the specificities of the regime and relationships among the important actors of political and social life in Ethiopia. Without this insight, it would not be possible to fulfil the main aim of this paper as we would not have the crucial orientation in the context of individual elements and areas in their Ethiopian setting.

2.1.3. The 1991 regime transformation and the transitional period

This chapter explores the character of the so-called "transformation period", which lasted for five years after the regime transformation in 1991. It is important to see that in the early years of the transformation, the political system started to function as a multiparty regime with a meaningful opposition. But "what began, ostensibly at least, as a multiparty affair ended in, what appeared to be, the consolidation of one-party rule" (NDI, 1992, 3-4).

The socialistic military regime, or Derg, under the rule of Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam followed the long-lasting rule of Haile Selassie. The military socialist regime was overthrown by ethno-nationalist liberation fronts in 1991. These politically oriented armies evolved later to respective political parties. The strongest opposition for Derg was the Tigrai People Liberation Front (TPLF). Also, it was TPLF, led by its leader and later Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, who first ousted the Derg from Tigray region. Then it associated with other political parties (mostly based on nationalistic revolutionary fronts). Subsequently, they ousted the Derg out from Addis Ababa on May 1991. Today the coalition is comprised of TPLF, Amhara National Democratic Movement (ANDM), the Oromo People´s Democratic Organization (OPDO) and

Southern Ethiopia People´s Democratic Movement (SEPDM) and formed the Ethiopian People Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF).

The subsequent period until 1995 was called "transitional". A few months after the coup, Peace and Democracy Conference (the Conference) resulted in establishment of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE) on the basis of the Transitional Charter (the Charter) (Fessha, 2010). During the early years of the transitional period, EPRDF had a prominent partner, the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) as they were the two dominant speakers during the Conference and as they assumed the largest share of legislative and executive offices in TGE. The proportion of assignment seats in TGE was drawn from the representation at the Conference. The formula for allocation of seats in the Conference is likely made on the meeting among EPRDF, OLF and EPLF two weeks before the Conference took place (Wodajo in Hydén and Venter, 2001). Many political organizations left or were expelled from the TGE because of their conflicting approach to question related to the Constitution (1994) – specifically, about the question of individual and collective rights and the right to self-determination (Lata, 1999). The dominant role of OLF was given by its spatial, economic and population reasons: Oromia region occupies about one third of today´s Ethiopia surface area, it is well economically endowed due to its rich natural resources and 34,4 % of total population in Ethiopia. Plus, it is the largest political organization unaffiliated to EPRDF (Eshete in Hydén and Venter, 2001; CIA, 2014; UNPO, 2015).

Formally, the Charter used perfectly democratic formulas and principles. It reflected the fact that such a document (which was later transformed into the current Constitution) is never produced in a vacuum (Hydén and Venter, 2001, 3) and articulated not only important aspects of a democratic regime such as recognition of political plurality, elections as a way to establish government in the future, rule of law and political rights and civic freedoms, including the full commitment to Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), but also announce the breakup with the country´s past cultural homogenization, replacing it by the "politics of plurality" - formal recognition of the country´s ethnic heterogeneity. The state was organized as an ethnic federation, formally divided into states, differentiated along the ethnic group´s boarders. The Charter defines a nation to be "The right of each state to administer its own internal affairs and the right to secession"[3] was politically recognized for the first time in Ethiopian state history (the Charter, 1991, art.2; Tronvoll and Hagmann, 2012; Masrie, 2013).

To illustrate the beginning of the events, we can cite the HRW report from 1995, commenting on the approach of the TG towards the non-governmental organizations (NGOs): "The transitional government was generally very open to monitoring by human rights organizations based outside the country. Human rights monitoring by local human rights groups was more restricted, however. Several local human rights and

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[3]   The right of any ethnic community to secede paved the way for Eritrean secession in 1993 which establishes a precedent for Oromo secessionists, as expressed in the nationalist nature of OLF. Counter the fact that OLF is one of the oldest centrifugal forces in the state, these secessionist tendencies are hindered by limited sources of collective identity or universal literacy to mobilize themselves in their struggle for independence (Abbay, 2004).

development organizations existed in Ethiopia but were required to obtain permits subject to annual renewal. Some were denied permission to operate or experienced extensive delays in obtaining permits. Two human rights organizations, the Ethiopian Human Rights Council and Gadado (an Oromo word meaning "agony"), were actively involved in receiving complaints, documenting abuses, and publishing their findings. The government denied both organizations formal registration, thereby severely restricting their ability to operate" (HRW, 1995).

Federal organization of the Ethiopian state can be viewed both positively and negatively. Claude Ake (1993, 244) stresses the advantage of such an organization in the context of Africa in general, because "democracy has to be recreated in the context of the given realities and in political arrangements which fit the cultural context, but without sacrificing its values and inherent principles. In Africa that fit is likely to entail, among other things, a consocietal arrangement – the use of ethnic groups, nationalities and communities as the constituencies for representation. This would be a highly decentralized system of government with equal emphasis on individual and communal rights". But the very principles of the genuine representation and decentralization are not present in Ethiopia, as we will be able to see later.

Such a distinctive enthusiasm of the Charter for democracy can be seen in the context of the global political scene at that time, such as the fall of Soviet Union, a significant partner of previous Ethiopian regime. It is true that in this context, democracy has become the "only model of government with any broad ideological legitimacy and appeal in the world today" (Diamond, Linz and Lipset 1988, x in Abrahamsen, 2000, 2). That almost inevitably led to abide the vocabulary of democratic governance (Zewde in Zewde and Pausewang, 2002, 10).

Problems of fulfilment of the constitutional arrangements emanated after the first multiparty elections in Ethiopian history took place in 1992. EPRDF organized so-called "snap election" to see whether they had a real chance to gain enough votes to maintain its present power at the time. They derived their legitimacy to govern from their defeat of Derg. But as the results showed them that they lack sufficient support to maintain their power, they started to treat voters in the same way as was usual in the times of their defeated political predecessors (Lata, 1991). As soon as during the 1992 regional elections, the EPRDF controlled rural population through its grip on local state institutions (Tronvoll and Hagmann, 2012). The 1992 election itself resulted in little genuine possibility for multi-party competition, as political opposition was limited by intimidation from the side of EPRDF and its allies (Eshete in Hydén and Venter, 2001). During the previous and the present regime, the political opposition asked their supporters to not to vote, so that the turn-out of votes can be translated into the support for the opposition. But to combat this practice, coercive measures such as harassment were taken from the side of EPRDF so that the right to vote becomes a duty, sometimes compared to paying taxes (Lata, 1999, 31; Aspen in Zewde and Pausewang, 2002, 68).

Following disputes between EPRDF and OLF over the fairness of the elections, the OLF representatives withdrew from the TGE and from any activity in the domestic politics (Eshete in Hydén and Venter, 2001). Not only OLF, but all non-EPRDF parties accused EPRDF of intimidation and political harassment. Surely, there was no dialogue or competition between the political parties – instead, their

relations were dominated by great distrust and conspiracy and clear domination of EPRDF (Tronvoll and Hagmann, 2012).

An observation report of 1992 election, executed by a community of American and Ethiopian experts from the political area, lists absence of competition in the election as the first point among other unachieved proclaimed objectives. Also, it asses the transitional period more generally: the 1992 elections "were counterproductive in their contribution to democratization in Ethiopia…and reinforced the hegemonic power of the EPRDF while marginalizing other fledgling parties, and were a central factor in the withdrawal of OLF from TGE" (NDI, 1992, 7).

This was evidently just the beginning of "empty democracy" (Tronvoll and Hagmann, 2012, 11), which has a highly elaborated democratic rhetoric, but it is "no different from the previous government, because it will never allow itself to be subject to democratic change... He [Meles Zenawi] and his TPLF will not risk to be voted out of office. They are condemned to rule the country as a minority, and that is very dangerous for stability" (Cohen 2012). The intensity of this condemnation of exclusive rule was first visible in its full form after special elections to form a Constituent Assembly to draft the Constitution in 1994. The approval process was a foregone conclusion as EPRDF and its allies won 539 seats out of 557 seats in the Constituent Assembly, meaning that "whatever its (EPRDF´s) leadership wanted to include in the Constitution was adopted" (Wodajo in Hydén and Venter, 2001, 141, italics added). Members of political opposition and journalists criticizing EPRDF were arrested. At this time, other serious political and human rights violations were reported, including killings (HRW, 1995; UHRC, 2006). Another major concern in the democratization process was an unequal access to the mass media – some parties were specifically denied air time (HRW, 1995).

As we can see from the above, the transitional period, which raised the ambitions to "lead the country towards full democracy" (the Charter, part 4), was closed by an empirical break-up with the early enthusiasm for democratic order as "it became increasingly difficult to distinguish between the EPRDF as a political party and the EPRDF as the government in power" (HRW, 1995).

2.1.4. Opening and subsequent disclosure of political space

This part deals with the development around two turning points in Ethiopian politics after the transitional period. Considerable optimism was raised by the pre-election period both in 1995 and 2005, which were characterized by relative openness in the political space and tolerance of criticism of the incumbent party. But after both elections, this excitement vanished as the leading party showed that it will not share its power and renewed its oppression once more. Democratic rhetoric and institutions are compared to reality, which shows the emptiness of the incumbent party´s promises.

First federal regional elections took place in 1995. EPRDF lost in Addis Ababa. Its policy of nationalities was one of the reasons why - people in the capital mostly do not consider their ethnicity as an important element of their identity (Fessha, 2010). Another reason was the relative political openness in the

capital in comparison with rural areas, where peasants were threatened in order to vote for EPRDF by exclusion from beneficial land reforms (Tronvoll and Hangmann, 2012). But still, the official assertion of the ruling party and its allies was that democracy had arrived to Ethiopia, which was shared by none of the opposition groups (Lata, 1999, xiv). In the same year, the Constitution was drafted. It included the democratic statements from the Charter described above, plus it established a bicameral parliament - House of People´s Representatives with 547 seats, each member elected directly for 5 years period. The second chamber, the House of the Federation has 108 seats. According to the Constitution (1995, art. 61), each one of Ethiopian nationality, nation and people should be represented by at least one member in the House of Representatives.

In advance of the election in 1999, EPRDF was criticized on public broadcast in Addis Ababa and programs of alternative parties were presented. But again, there was a different situation in rural areas, where campaigning for any alternative party was strictly restricted (Tronvoll and Hangmann, 2012). The 2000 elections were accompanied by killing in the Southern region. The National election board ordered a re-election, which resulted in a slight increase of the seats in the House of Representative allocated to opposition (Tronvoll and Hangmann, 2012).

The 2005 election was another radical turning point, where plurality of political opinions in the run-up for elections substantially increased. Also, in live television and radio debates, EPRDF was openly criticized. This was a real challenge for EPRDF, which lost in Addis Ababa and in some rural areas. But re-counting of votes ordered by EPRDF resulted in a claimed EPRDF victory. Such a treatment of objectively legitimate election results left many voters disillusioned about the meaningfulness of the whole electoral process. Simultaneously, banning all demonstration, killing and cracking down on the private media institutions and civil society representatives are recorded (HRW, 2005).

Meles Zenawi, EPRDF leader and Prime Minister in one person, politically led the country since the regime transition in 1991. He explains the political hegemony of EPRDF by implementation of an "Ethiopian model" of democracy. As we can deduce from the chapters above, this model was based upon criminalization of both political opposition and critics from civil society. This lasts until today (Tronvoll and Hangmann, 2012): political and civic opposition is criminalized. The most known example is the blogging group of young journalists, called the Zone 9. They were arrested in April 2014, being accused of having connection to terrorist groups (BBC, 2014). But Leslie Lefkow, the deputy Africa director of Human Rights Watch is determined that "the authorities should drop the charges and release these young Ethiopians, so they can contribute to the political debate rather than to the prison population" (HRW, 2015). By the time I am writing this paper, Ethiopia is now awaiting another election on 24th May in the year 2015. But the event is as questionable as ever was in this state. But as a student interviewed by Al Jazeera (Foltyn, 2015) puts it: "to say we have elections, there have to be real alternatives. This election is just so we can tell Western governments we are a democratic country".

There were two groups of actors, who expressed their concern related to the post 2005 election events. First, it was domestic political opposition who called for demonstrations making reference to

international democratic standards and rights so clearly stated and so warmly accepted in the Constitution as a reaction to violent treatment from the side of EPRDF. They were in turn accused of undermining stability and plotting to topple the government. Second, foreign donors and Development Assistance Committee (DAC) suspended direct budget support. The Prime Minister Meles Zenawi argued that democracy cannot be imposed from outside and that each nation has to make its own decision as to how to govern itself. In relation to international bodies present in Ethiopia, international NGOs focused on human rights, election observation or democracy support were prohibited from establishing or maintaining their local branches in the country, for example Amnesty International or American Association for International Commission on Jurists. Eventually, the direct budget support from donors abroad was resumed, with part of the sum redirected from federal to local ("woreda"/"kebele") level. But decentralizing the funds was no way to bypass the state party leadership as it already had the chance to expand throughout the country through its massive recruitment membership campaign. With the argument of its rural roots (as it originated from the armed struggle against the previous regime), it is very active on the local level and has established its cadres in the local governmental units all over the country (Tronvoll and Hangmann, 2012). EPRDF further sponsored around sixteen People´s Democratic Organizations, each based on the dominant ethnic group in different regions. Also, it makes alliances with other regional fronts and movements. This ensures EPRDF holds a monopoly of power in not only national, but also local bodies (HRW, 1997). But the DAC was not aware of the lack of transparency and provided further means to EPRDF to expand political and administrative cadre of the party on the local level (Tronvoll and Hangmann, 2012).

By looking at 2010 election results, it is even more evident that they were modelled in the EPRDF´s interest – the ruling party gained 99,7% of seats in the House of Representative, meaning that the opposition got one single seat in the whole chamber. At this time, another turning point emerged as Meles Zenawi called the political system as "dominant party democracy". The events described above suggest that Zenawi was right (quite delayed though) in his statement about the nature of political regime under the rule of his party. The events as reported by various organizations focused on human rights monitoring mainly led to as extreme characterization of the political atmosphere in the country such as "culture of fear" (Tronvoll and Hangmann, 2012).

And this is roughly the same principle that remains until today. The length of duration of this state of distribution of power indicates that Thomas Carothers was right to accuse the transition paradigm of invalidity (2002). Ethiopia is no longer "a state in transition", as the ruling elite no longer circulates. The power held by EPRDF could be explained by the changed political situation within maybe the first few months of the transitional period, which is no longer the case.

2.2. Human, political and civic rights in the Constitution and in reality

This subchapter compares the principles related to human, political and civic rights anchored in the Constitution (1995) with the EPRDF activities. As is visible from the organizations monitoring human rights

reports, EPRDF activities in relation to these rights are in direct contradiction to what is stated in the Constitution (1995). In addition to that, it is shown in such areas as ideology, politicization of the judicial system, repressive treatment of the opposition and many variations of mis-telling the reality, that EPRDF is dominated by its tigrayan party. The analysis of the incumbent´s strategy to stay in power which is presented in this subchapter is the basis for the subsequent search for the elements that are likely to prevent autocratic rule in Ethiopia.

The way the concept of democracy is interpreted by EPRDF is the exact opposite of its fundamental pillars as written not only in the Constitution (1995, cited above), but also in the EPRDF´s program. Violation of these constitutional principle cited above is evident on the instruments that EPRDF uses to create such a political system, where it can be in the role of the leading party for 15 years (HRW, 1997, 2005, 2010, 2014; AI, 2012). Repression as the main instrument of EPRDF to maintain its present power is evidently attractive, but brings along certain risk for its proponents. Not only that it destroys potential of the country´s economic development as it causes killings and hindering of full use of an individual´s potential, but it can also lead to international isolation or revolution (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2006, 29).

The Constitution (1995, article 39, paragraph 3) further shows a strong determination to break up with the ethnic dominance which characterized previous regimes, stating that "every Nation, Nationality and People in Ethiopia has the right to a full measure of a self-government in the territory that it inhabits and to an equitable representation in the state and Federal governments". First, the concept of self-government will be analysed, followed by a short analysis of the statement about equitable representation.

It could be assumed that the federal organization of the state helps to fulfil this declaration about self-government. But EPRDF controls local politics through the system of upward accountability. Politicians and administrators of individual states are elected by regional governments, not by the local inhabitants, which prevent taking the full advantage of the decentralization process which was implemented in 1991 by structural transformation into a federal republic. The principle of central control of any local action by the ruling party is further strengthened by the fact that EPRDF membership is an unwritten condition to be elected (Ayenew in Zewde and Pausewang, 2002, 145).

As we saw above, there was certain plurality within the TGE at the beginning of the transitional period. But later "the elections of 1995 showed however that although there were very many political parties, almost all nationality'–based, the EPRDF umbrella re-united them into one ruling party" (Aspen in Zewde and Pausewang, 2002, 65). The unity of EPRDF is alarming when we take into consideration the fact that EPRDF is an alliance of various parties, which - according to the EPRDF representatives - ensures the mentioned representation and plurality in the House of People´s Representatives, the lower chamber of the main legislative body. This can be explained by the TPLF dominance since the EPRDF was established (McCracken, 2004). "It is widely alleged that several prisoners of war under the custody of the TPLF were instrumental in the formation of some of the member organizations of the EPRDF" (Berhanu, undated).

Thus, the alliance of four EPRDF members is a mere façade which is thoughtfully constructed in the Ethiopian political system to create the impression of representation.

In this regard, the fact that the core of the leading party with real say consists of a few individuals from TPLF is another threat to the stability of the regime. The boundaries between the state institutions and the leading party in Ethiopia are blurred as EPRDF controls key Ethiopian institutions through TPLF members in the leadership of these institutions, including Ethiopian Federal Police, the board chairperson of Ethio Telecom, Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority, President and Deputy President of Federal Supreme Court, Federal High Court Judge, Deputy Commander of Anti-terrorism Investigation Division, Head of politically-motivated cases, Ethiopian News Agency (SM, 2014). Also, all the national army´s fifty-five top generals but two are Tigrai (Dinsa, 2013). Under the TPLF/EPRDF regime, the separation between partisan and public affairs and institutions is being blurred: the judicial system is being politicized or subordinated to the ruling party´s political objectives (Lata, 1999). In the classical developmental states of East Asia, an independent bureaucracy was the guarantee that public policies will be insulated from vested interests and it was seen as crucial for creating sustainable economic growth. But the fact that civil service in Ethiopia is lacking its autonomy in the political sphere is not a concern for the EPRDF. Aalen confronted an official in the national EPRDF leadership, about this in an interview in November 2012, and she got following explanation: the politicization of the bureaucracy was "by design, and not by default" and that the EPRDF wants party officials to play leading roles in all areas of society, including the bureaucracy. In the civil service, "we [the EPRDF] go after the hard workers, struggle to make them our members, to recruit those who are willing to change." The bureaucracy, he contended, should not be isolated; it should be rooted in the masses and the party: "We cannot envisage a developmental state currently without the EPRDF, [since] there are no other parties with the comprehensive understanding like we have" (Aalen, 2014, 3).

The Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn (EPRDF) is said to be a mere figurehead without any real power. The de facto ministers are said to be Abaye Tsehaye (Minister of Federal Affairs) and Seyoum Mesfin (one of the founders of TPLF, the head of EFFORT and an actual ambassador to China). National Intelligence and security services (NISS) together with the Federal police, dominated by TPLF (SM, 2014) carry the main responsibility for the "anti-terrorist" attacks against journalists and reporters criticising the incumbent (HRW, 2014, 29). The rhetoric that is used by the incumbent to name its "enemies" has a lot to do with the ideological background of TPLF, which was largely built on Marxism, particularly on its Leninist and Maoist versions. This led TPLF to build its own strong army (Young, 1997, 33) which is now the national army for the whole Ethiopia. Also, the TPLF´s ideology became the official ideology of the whole EPRDF, so-called revolutionary democracy. The historical development and roots of the ideology is not necessary to explore more as its original substance was modified by EPRDF from its previous form. However, it remains a powerful tool of legitimacy despite merely replicating the illusion of liberal democracy.

Another function of the ideology of revolutionary democracy is to fight against opponents and critics (Bach, 2001). This trait of the EPRDF´s ideology was clear to peasants already in 1995 election, as they did not consider the regime change to have any relevance except that: "under Mengistu, the enemies of state were 'anti-revolutionary'. Today, they are 'anti-democratic' " (Aspen in Zewde and Pausewang, 2002, 64).

Despite the revolutionary enthusiasm that was inherent to the regime change in 1991, in the first country´s election in 1992, "voters went to the polls…, but few understood the significance of the election or the difference between these elections and those that occurred during the previous regime" (NDI, 1992, 7).

At this point, it is important to consider something which was not explicitly said in subchapter 2.1.1, but is important to understand the present situation in the context of Ethiopian history. The dominance of one group over another is not exception in Ethiopian history. Two regimes back, under the reign of Haile Selassie, political power was concentrated in the hands of Amharas. As a consequence, different ethnic insurgency groups emerged all over Ethiopia (Vanhanen, 1999, 173). As soon as 1999, Tatu Vanhanen observes the discrepancy between formal and real political equality: "the relations between major ethnic groups are now, in principle, based on equality. In practice, however, it is not yet clear whether the new constitutional structures will function as intended. Other ethnic groups resist the dominance of Tigrayans (TPLF)" (Vanhanen, 1999, 174).

The Constitution (1995, article 29) further states that "everyone has the right to hold opinions without interference" and further that "freedom of the press and other mass media and freedom of artistic creativity is guaranteed. Freedom of the press shall specifically include the following elements: (a) prohibition of any form of censorship; (b) access to information of public interest". It also informs us that "everyone has the right to assemble and demonstrate together with others peaceably and unarmed, and to petition" and that "every person has the right to freedom of association for any cause or purpose" (the Constitution, 1995, article 30), with articles 37 and 38 guaranteeing universal access to justice, and the right to vote and to be voted for without any discrimination, respectively.

As Ugandan president Yoweri Museweni said in 1991, at that time especially fitting for Ethiopia, "it serves very little purpose to write constitutions with elaborate human rights clauses if the values they represent have not been assimilated" (Mbaku and Ihonvbere, 2006, 364). At the end of this chapter, we can also ask the same question as Addisu does (2014): "how can the revolutionary democrats with their monist view of society, who do not give space to pluralism of ideas and values, build a democratic developmental state in Ethiopia?". Taking into consideration all the arguments above, we can answer this question as well – they cannot, simply because the principles that EPRF states to be committed to are contradicted.

3. Classification of political regime in Ethiopia

As we saw in the previous chapter, it will not be easy to classify Ethiopian political regime into a specific category. As it is important for the upcoming search for the areas which are likely to stop and prevent authoritarian rule in the country, the issue of the country´s classification is studied in more detail within the present chapter. It will begin with a theoretical introduction, which will serve as a framework and a referring base for the closing sub-chapter, which aims at closer analysis of the country´s classification.

3.1. Concepts definition and political regimes classification

This chapter serves as a theoretical framework for the analysis of Ethiopian political situation above. It explores not only the way that both democratic and non-democratic political regimes are viewed in the context of this paper. It also takes a closer look at so-called hybrid regimes, which are often found between the first two basic opposing categories. Detailed definition of these theoretical concepts is essential to stay oriented during answering the main question of this paper.

3.1.1. Democracy

This chapter mainly outlines some views on democracy to contextually introduce the reader, assumed to be western-educated, into the problematic of democracy as one of the central concept in this paper. It is important to note that despite a long history of discussions regarding democracies, there is no general agreement on some of its most fundamental questions (Dahl, 1998). But the ambition here is not to cover all, or even the most basic, approaches to democracy. The main goal is rather different: to put the Ethiopian view on democracy into the context of parallel western approaches to democracy. It is interesting to observe that in comparison with the western concepts, democratic mechanisms as mentioned in the Constitution (1995) are rather basic, focused mainly on the human rights protection.

Robert Dahl distinguishes between two different concepts of the term democracy are distinguished. Dahl explains that an ideal state of modern politics is the idea of democracy, some realistically unachievable ideal. And on the other hand, there is something totally different - the real world of actual government and politics. With awareness of the local variations, a regime can be called a "polyarchy" if "opportunities for public contestation are available to the great bulk of the population" (Dahl, 1971, 202). The terms in this paper associated with "democracy" refer mostly to the second meaning of democracy – polyarchy, in Dahl´s terminology. But this reference still keeps in mind that it comes from certain ideological and historical background and it is led by the aspiration to head towards the ideal model of democracy.

This ideological and historical background is mentioned in another well-known conception of democracy, this time called liberal democracy of Fareed Zakaria. In his article "The rise of illiberal

democracy" (1997), Zakaria notes, that the concept of liberal democracy is often confused with democratic regime as such, because for almost a century, democracy meant liberal democracy. The latter is associated with constitutional liberalism, whose two constituent parts – liberality and constitutionality - historically originated from two specific sources: Greek emphasis on individual liberty and Roman emphasis on rule of law, respectively. Thus, liberal democracy is defined not only by free and fair elections, but also by rule of law, a separation of powers, and by the protection of basic liberties of speech, assembly, religion, and property. The fact that the notion of constitutional liberalism has been established in western political discourse does not mean that all countries, which call themselves a democratic one, follow the same direction. On the contrary, Zakaria expresses the possibility of adapting varied forms of democracy, and that "western liberal democracy might prove not to be the final destination on the democratic road, but just one of many possible exits" (Zakaria, 1997).

Another source of the views on democracy in the present paper is the book "Democracy in developing countries", written by Diamond, Linz and Lipset (1989). They require three essential conditions for a political regime that is to be called democratic: (1) meaningful and extensive competition among individuals and organized groups (especially political parties) for all effective positions of government power, at regular intervals and excluding the use of force; (2) a highly inclusive level of political participation in the selection of leaders and policies, at least through regular and fair elections, such that no major (adult) social group is excluded; and (3) a level of civil and political liberties – freedom of expression, freedom of the press, freedom to form and join organizations - sufficient to ensure the integrity of political competition and participation" (Diamond et al, 1989, xvi).

One of the mentioned aspects of liberal democracy, free and fair elections, is fundamental in the view of Joseph Schumpeter´s definition called minimalist, or procedural. He says that democracy can be recognized as a specific method, which is an "institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of competitive struggle for the people´s vote" (Schumpeter, 1976, 250). The definition of Przeworski (1991, 10) can be called minimalist as well – "a democracy is a system in which parties lose elections" if an incumbent actually loses an election.

If we are to compare these three approaches to democracy, the advantage of the minimalist definition is that it is relatively simple to say whether a method to acquire people´s vote is or is not democratic. Nevertheless, an obvious problem with this definition is that it has too few criteria to assess the more complex question of whether a specific political system as a whole is, or is not, built on democratic principles. The advantage of the maximalist definition of democracy is that the picture of democracy it gives may be closer to its ideal (as was explained by the Dahl´s distinction between democracy and polyarchy). On the other hand, the more criteria considered in determining whether a certain regime can or cannot be called democratic, the less will be the likelihood of general agreement on that regime´s status.

The third concept of democracy is closer to Zakaria´s definition of liberal democracy than to the one of Schumpeter, except for one point. Diamond, Linz and Lipset (1989) take a different approach than Zakaria in his strict specificity about historical and philosophical roots of liberal democracy. They insist on keeping

separated issues of so-called economic and social democracy from the question of governmental structure and on valuing the concept of political democracy as an end in itself. They further argue that even just the political concept of democracy, separated from its social aspects, is highly problematic in its application. Larry Diamond argues that "democracy becomes truly stable when people come to value it widely not solely for its economic and social performance but intrinsically for its political attributes" (Diamond in Acemoglu and Robinson, 2006, 20). Another argument to not confound the political and economical aspects of democracy can be found in one of Afrobarometer publications, which states that among its respondents, popular demand for democracy depends more on the delivery of political rights that on economic performance (Bratton et al, 2004). Respondents in this publication consider that economic miracles are not essential for democracy to survive – instead, they think that "greater immediate progress can be made on democratization and development with an agenda of good governance" (Bratton et al, 2004, 352). African politologists John Mbaku and Julius Ihonvbere assert that "discussion on political liberalization in Africa must avoid precondition of democracy and concentrate on specificity" (Mbaku and Ihonvbere, 2006, 5).

I find that for the purpose of this study, it will be useful to combine these two approaches. Specifically, I will regard social issues if they are significantly intertwined with political issues as I am persuaded that at some point, politics is not only about the "governmental structure", but a highly social phenomenon. While the bones are the incontestable and essential technical and institutional aspects, the flesh is made out of individuals who represent various roles with specific mandates. Such an approach to politics can be found within the Vanhanen´s (2013) definition of two different views on democratization. She says that democratization can be viewed either as (1) an unintended consequence of change in socio-economical conditions and other environmental factors, or as (2) a consequence of conscious choices of political actors. Vanhanen prefers to view democratization from the second point of view in order to be able to generate knowledge on the means to further democracy (Vanhanen, 2013).

The second part of this subchapter provides, as mentioned above, analysis of the Ethiopian version of democracy as written in the Constitution (1995). Again, I am aware that real democracy and ideal principles rarely happen to be identical. But with respect to the basic nature of the demands on the democratic principles mentioned in the Constitution (1995), I will not distinguish too much between these two Dahlian approaches to the word democracy.

The word democracy can be found on two places in the Constitutions. The first one refers to a "democratic order", further unspecified as: "We, the Nations, Nationalities and Peoples of Ethiopia: Strongly committed, in full and free exercise of our right to self-detennination, to building a political community founded on the rule of law and capable of ensuring a lasting peace, guaranteeing a democratic order, and advancing our economic and social development;..." (the Constitution, 1995). Further, it says that "human rights and freedoms, emanating from the nature of mankind, are inviolable and inalienable" and that "human and democratic rights of citizens and peoples shall be respected" (the Constitution, 1995). In table 1, we can see how the Constitutions particularizes these democratic rights. In the right column, particular right or freedom is defined. The list of the areas of democratic rights are complete as mentioned in the Constiuttion

(1994); however, there are many more specifics related to particular rights or freedoms. I always chose just one or two specifics which were most relevant to the aspects of the political situation in Ethiopia discussed in this paper.

Table 1. *Democratic rights and freedoms according to the Constitution (1995).*

Democratic rights and freedoms	Specifics of the right or freedom
Right of thought, opinion and expression	"Freedom of the press and other mass media and freedom of artistic creativity is guaranteed. Freedom of the press shall specifically include the following elements: (a) Prohibition of any form of censorship. (b) Access to information of public interest" (p. 9-10).
The right of assembly, demonstration and petition	"Everyone has the right to assemble and to demonstrate together with others peaceably and unarmed, and to petition. Appropriate regulations may be made in the interest of public convenience relating to the location of open-air meetings and 'the route of movement of demonstrators or, for the protection of democratic rights, public morality and peace during such a meeting or demonstration" (p. 10).
Freedom of association	"Every person has the right to freedom of association for any cause or purpose. Organizations formed, in violation of appropriate laws, or to illegally subvert the constitutional order, or which promote such activities are prohibited" (p. 10).
Freedom of movement	"1. Any Ethiopian or foreign national lawfully in Ethiopia has, within the national territory, the right to liberty of movement and freedom to choose his residence, as well as the freedom to leave the country at any time he wishes to. 2. Any Ethiopian national has the right to return to his country" (p. 10).
Rights of nationality	"Every Ethiopian national has the right to the enjoyment of all rights, protection and benefits derived from Ethiopian nationality as prescribed by law" (p. 11).
Marital, personal and family rights	"Men and women, without any distinction as to race, nation, nationality or religion, who have attained marriageable age as defined by law, have the right to marry and found a family. They have equal rights while entering into, during marriage and at the time of divorce" (p. 11).

Rights of women	"The historical legacy of inequality and discrimination suffered by women in Ethiopia taken into account, women, in order to remedy this legacy, are entitled to affirmative measures. The purpose of such measures shall be to provide special attention to women so as to enable them compete and participate on the basis of equality with men in political, social and economic life as well as in public and private institutions" (p. 11).
Rights of children	"Every child has the right...not to be subject to exploitative practices, neither to be required nor permitted to perform work which may be hazardous or harmful to his or her education, health or well-being" (p. 12).
Right of access to justice	"Everyone has the right to bring a justiciable matter to, and to obtain a decision or judgement by, a court of law or any other competent body with judicial power" (p. 13).
The right to vote and to be elected	"Every Ethiopian national, without any discrimination based on colour, race, nation, nationality, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion or other status, has the following rights:...To vote and to be elected at periodic elections to any office at any level of government; elections shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall beheld by secret ballot, guaranteeing the free expression of the will of the electors" (p. 13).
Rights of Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples[4]	"Every Nation, Nationality and People in Ethiopia has the right to speak, to write and to develop its own language; to express, to develop and to promote its culture; and to preserve its history. Every Nation, Nationality and People in Ethiopia has the right to a full measure of self-government which includes the right to establish institutions of government in the territory that it inhabits and to equitable representation in state and Federal governments" (p. 13).
The Right to Property	"Without prejudice to the right of Ethiopian Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples to the ownership of land, government shall ensure the right of private investors to the use of land on the basis of payment arrangements established by law" (p. 14).
Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	"Every Ethiopian national has the right to equal access to publicly funded social services.

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[4] A "Nation, Nationality or People" for the purpose of this Constitution, is a "group of people who have or share a large measure of a common culture or similar customs, mutual intelligibility of language, belief in a common or related identities, a common psychological make-up, and who inhabit an identifiable, predominantly contiguous territory" (the Constitution, 1994, 14).

	The State has the obligation to allocate ever increasing resources to provide to the public health, education and other social services" (p. 15).
Rights of Labour	"Factory and service workers, farmers, farm labourers, other rural workers and government employees whose work compatibility allows for it and who are below a certain level of responsibility, have the right to form associations to improve their conditions of employment and economic well-being. This right includes the right to form trade unions and other associations to bargain collectively with employers or other organizations that affect their interests" (p. 15).
The Right to Development	"Nationals have the right to participate in national development and, in particular, to be consulted with respect to policies and projects affecting their community" (p. 16).
Environmental Rights	"All persons who have been displaced or whose livelihoods have been adversely affected as a result of State programmes have the right to commensurate monetary or alternative means of compensation, including relocation with adequate State assistance" (p. 16).

3.1.2. Classification of non-democratic regimes

This sub-chapter presents possible ways to classify political regimes. Also, I am aware of a large number of alternative views, but I believe that the one presented here is sufficient to serve as a helpful guideline where the political reality is chaotic.

For the purpose of this paper, it is useful to apply not only the classical tripartite classification (democracy – totalitarianism – authoritarianism), but also post-totalitarianism. All four classifications were developed by Linz and Stephan (1996) by explaining differences between plurality, leadership and mobilization in following categories:

Table 2. *Totalitarianism* (Linz and Stephan (1996)

Totalitarianism			
Pluralism	Leadership	Ideology	Mobilization
No significant political, economic or social pluralism in the polity,	Exclusively restricted to the revolutionary party or movement; unconstrained	Elaborate and guiding ideology that articulates a reachable utopia.	Intensive and extensive mobilization of society into variety of regime-

pre-existing sources of pluralism have been uprooted or systematically repressed. Official party has de jure and de facto monopoly of power. No space for second economy or parallel society.	by laws and procedures, often charismatic and unpredictable. It can come from the revolutionary party or movement, but their members are as vulnerable to be put in danger from the side of the leader as the rest of the population. Recruitment to top leadership highly dependent on success and commitment in party organization.	Leaders, individuals and groups derive most of their sense of mission, legitimation and often specific policies from their commitment to some holistic conception of humanity and society.	organized activities and formations. Emphasis on activism of cadres and militants. Effort at mobilization of enthusiasm. Private life is decried.

Table 3. *Authoritarianism* (Linz and Stephan, 1996)

Authoritarianism			
Plurality	Leadership	Ideology	Mobilization
There is limited political, economic and social pluralism. Often quite extensive social and economic pluralism. Most of pluralism have roots in society before the establishment of the authoritarian regime. Often some space for semi-opposition, who make establish links with opposition moderates.	Leader or a small group rules within ill-defined, but more or less predictable norms. There are effort to co-opt groups that have some power and legitimacy that does not derive directly from the regime itself into leadership structure (e.g. old elite groups), and certain degree of autonomy in state careers and military. This gives to	There are nondemocratic mentalities, but there is no explicit ideology concerning different segment of the social, economic and political life.	There is no complex networks of association except at some points of their development.

many authoritarian regimes the flexibility to change from within the regime.	

Table 4. *Post-totalitarianism compared to totalitarianism* (Linz and Stephan, 1996)

Post-totalitarianism compared to totalitarianism			
<u>Plurality</u>	<u>Leadership</u>	<u>Ideology</u>	<u>Mobilization</u>
Institutional pluralism is more important and complex. Also, there is more significant degree of social pluralism. In mature post-totalitarianism, often associated with the phenomenon of a "second" or a "parallel" culture. Such kind of growing pluralism poses a source of vulnerability for the regime and at the same time, it pours strength to emerging democratic opposition.	Leaders tend to be more bureaucratic and state technocratic than charismatic. The range of arbitrary discretion of the top leadership is reduced to unspecified but reasonably predictable limits.	In totalitarianism, growing disjunction between official ideological claims and reality is a dynamic potential for change to post-totalitarianism. This lessens ideological commitment of the cadres and strengthens civil criticism (many of these critics come from former true believers who argument that the regime does not or is not able to advance its own goals). Often, groups in the "parallel" society call the "first" society a "living lie".	Regime-created mobilization still is a major part of associational life, but its members are more bored than enthusiastic. There is an alternative to cadre activism in career building – state-technocratic employment.

Table 5. *Post-totalitarianism compared to authoritarianism* (Linz and Stephan, 1996)

Post-totalitarianism compared to authoritarianism		
<u>Plurality</u>	<u>Leadership</u>	<u>Ideology</u>
Higher degree of social pluralism and by the nature of pluralism –	Leadership is recruited from the structures created by regime	There is an important ideological legacy that cannot be questioned officially. It still has a social presence in the organizational life of post-totalitarian polity.

there is an active effort of "detotalitarization" by oppositional side of civil society.	exclusively (party members). Some frozen post-totalitarian regimes are not able to renovate leadership, which is a potential source of dynamic change – its old and narrow leadership has a very limited capacity to negotiate. This kind of leadership structure is vulnerable to collapse.	As in authoritarianism, there is a growing effort to legitimate the regime through its performance, which is one of the sources of its weaknesses in the case such a criterion fails.

3.1.3. Concepts related to hybrid regimes

The purpose of this chapter is to look into a third major group of political regimes, which is found between the most basic distinction of democratic and non-democratic regimes. This dual classification does not suffice in a closer analysis as many countries do not fit into a single category. When we look at particular political regimes more closely, some have developed into what we call a liberal democracy, and some still are substantially different in reality, but not in legislature and in the rhetoric of their own politicians. These regimes are situated somewhere between these two categories, and are sometimes called "countries in transition". The problem is that often they stagnate in this "transition" period for quite a long time. This is why the expression of "hybrid regimes" was first used by Terry Lynn Karl - to describe a state containing both democratic and authoritarian form of rule for a longer period of time (Gilbert, Mohseni 2011). Thomas Carothers defines the hybrid regimes simply as regimes, whose transition to democracy have been only partial (Carothers in Burnell, 2000, 21). In short, "formal democracy can be imposed on almost any society, but whether it provides autonomous choice to its citizens largely depends on mass values" (Inglehart and Welzel, 2005).

This chapter also develops two dominant approaches in the way hybrid regimes are classified. It is either that the hybrid regime is called some kind of variant of democracy or a variant of authoritarianism. Their popularity came also in this chronological order - the first one, stressing the democratic traits of a regime preceded the second one, stressing its authoritarian traits (Gilbert, Mohseni 2011).

3.1.3.1. Democracy with adjectives

Beside Fareed Zakaria´s concept of illiberal democracy, which was already developed above, Diamond, Linz and Lipset (1989) assume that authoritarian regimes can be further divided into "semidemocracies" and "pseudodemocracies". They define semidemocracies as "those countries where the effective power of elected officials is so limited, or political party competition is so restricted, or the freedom and fairness of elections so compromised that electoral outcomes, while competitive, still deviate significantly from popular preferences; and/or where civil and political liberties are so limited that some political orientations and interests are unable to organize and express themselves" (Diamond et al, 1989, xvii), whereas pseudodemocracies are such political regimes, where „the existence of formally democratic political institutions, such as multiparty electoral competition, masks (often, in part, to legitimate) the reality of authoritarian domination" (Diamond et al, 1989).

Guillermo O´Donnell juxtaposes a "representative" and a „delegative" democracy. The former entails "accountability: somehow representatives are held responsible for their actions by those they claim to be entitled to speak for" (O´Donnell, 1994, 8). By contrast, in delegative democracies vertical accountability is "extremely weak or nonexistent" (O´Donnell, 1994, 8) since whoever is elected to govern, he or she does so constrained only by the real power relations and by a constitutionally limited term of the mandate.

3.1.3.2. Autocracy with adjectives

Levitsky and Way observe that "in competitive authoritarianism, formal democratic institutions are widely viewed as the principal means of obtaining and exercising political authority. Incumbents violate those rules so often and to such extent, however, that the regime fails to meet the conventional minimum standards for democracy" (Levitsky and Way, 2002, 52). They further highlight, that even democracies sometimes fail to meet their own standards, but the difference between democracy and competitive authoritarianism is, that in the latter, violations of these standards are broad or systematic (Levitsky and Way, 2002, 53).

Andreas Schedler once again focuses on the electoral process in his classification. He describes "electoral authoritarianism" as having the following characteristics (Schedler, 2002, 39): (1) limiting the scope and jurisdiction of elective offices; (2) restricting access to the electoral arena and fragmentation of opposition forces; (3) restricting political and civil liberties, restricting access to media and money; (4) formal and informal suffrage restrictions; (5) voter intimidation and vote buying; (6) electoral fraud and institutional bias; (7) preventing elected officers from exercising their constitutional powers and preventing victors from taking office, or elected officers from concluding their constitutional terms.

Marina Ottaway presents her concept of "semi-authoritarianism" (2003) by depicting the deliberate ambiguity of a regime to accept liberal democracy rhetorically. There are some formal visible democratic institutions established (like elections) but they are characterized with illiberal or even authoritative traits (to

continue with the example of elections, they are regular, but not free and fair). Semi-authoritarian states are determined to maintain the appearance of democracy with simultaneous exclusion of the political risk of free competition.

Table 6: *Diamond´s classification of hybrid regimes* (Diamond, 2002 in Gilbert and Mohseni, 2011) [5].
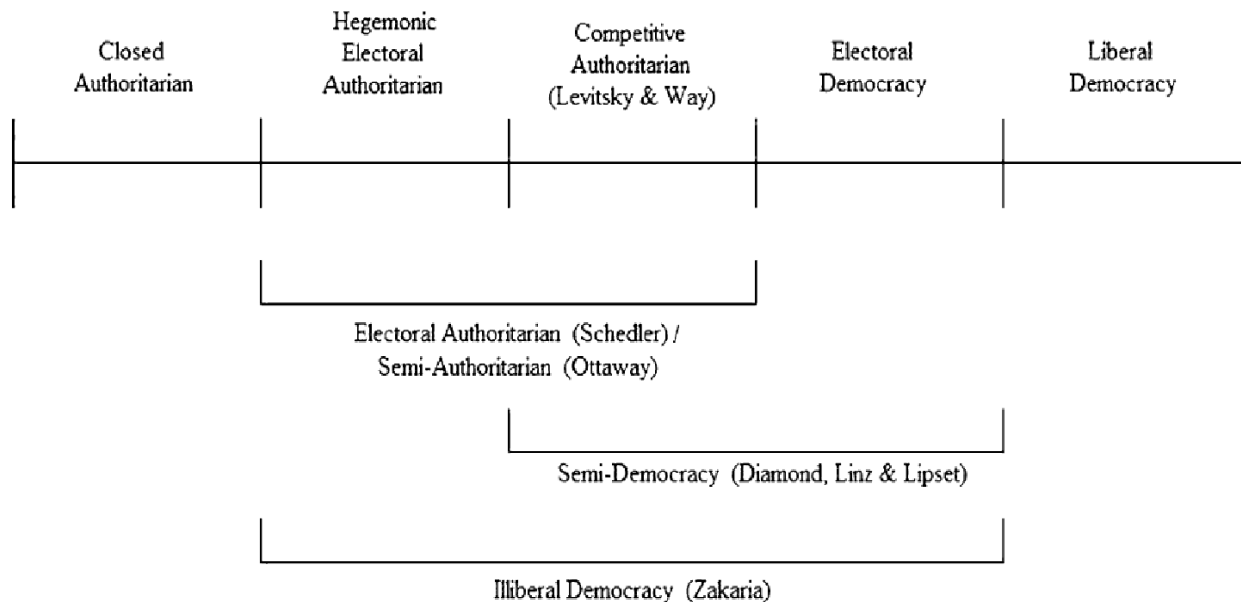
3.2. Semi-authoritarian traits of political regime in Ethiopia

This chapter views the political situation in Ethiopia in the context of the classification system from Juan Linz described above and explains how the political regime in Ethiopia can be classified. It is partly in order to provide foundations for the first assumption raised at the beginning of this paper – that Ethiopia can be classified as a country under an authoritarian rule. Partly, the exploration of particular traits of political regime in Ethiopia helps to get a picture of the areas that are especially authoritarian in their nature. Here, I will only recapitulate the main findings of the previous chapters to the theoretical framework by Juan Linz presented above to organize this information into a coherent picture.

As we saw in the previous sub-chapters, there are several reasons why Ethiopia could seem to be a democratic country. There are general elections to a parliament, regularly held in five-year intervals; the current Constitution´s rhetoric provides a legal recognition of basic human and democratic rights (see the

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[5] Closed Authoritarian regimes do not hold multiparty elections. Hegemonic Electoral Authoritarian regimes hold uncompetitive multiparty elections that are not free or fair. Competitive Authoritarian Regimes hold competitive, albeit unfair or un-free multiparty elections. Electoral Democracy holds free and fair multiparty elections although civil liberties are not fully protected and enforced. Liberal Democracies hold free and fair multiparty elections and broadly protect civil liberties (Diamond, 2002 in Gilbert and Mohseni, 2011).

table 1); the ruling party is a coalition of various parties which are formally representing different ethnic groups within the Ethiopian federation; the program of the leading party is very enthusiastic about democratizing Ethiopia. But, as we saw above, all these areas are profoundly different in reality. I believe the reality is best revealed by the kind of information which is provided by sources from institutions independent of the Ethiopian state or government and scholars, journalists and other individuals living outside of Ethiopia.

In his description of totalitarian characteristics, Linz says that pre-existing sources of plurality have been already uprooted and repressed. As we have seen in the previous chapters, in Ethiopia, the leading party tries its best to reduce both civic and political opponents to a point from which they no longer present a real threat to their dominant position. There are some sources of plurality, with both political and civic critics of the leading party´s dominant position. Repression ranges from political violence to recounting election results, as has been reported by international agencies. So we can rather drive a parallel with Linz´s depiction of plurality in terms of authoritarian regimes, where to some extent pluralism exists.

On the point of leadership, the assessment is less clear in the context of Linz´s framework, because there are two important features of the leadership in Ethiopia, both belonging to different types of political regime. The first one is under the category of totalitarianism, as the leading party is originally a revolutionary organization - and this feature is closely related to the question of ideology. The official ideology of revolutionary democracy refers to Ethiopian history, where democratic rhetoric served as a ground for the revolutionary change of the previous regime. But what is left now that is called revolutionary? Evidently, the regime still insists on this term to point at its enemies, and to make their accusation understandable to the masses. In this sense, ideology is connected to the leadership, but on the other hand it does not present any holistic conception of humanity and society as a whole as it is strictly focused on events of Ethiopian political history. So, leadership emanates from the idea of the revolution which gave it the opportunity to seize power. As we saw in the above description of central control of local action and as is clear from the fact that EPRDF membership is an unwritten condition to be elected at all, advancement or promotion of oneself within the party structure is possible only if the individual is absolutely loyal to the party´s ideology.

The second feature belongs to the category of authoritarianism according to the Linz´s framework used in this paper as the regime leadership in Ethiopia is quite predictable in the way it follows the formal political rules. For example there are general and regular election, the leading party is a coalition of parties representing different ethnic groups, there is a vast array of formally recognized political parties, etc. The extent to which these rules are executed in reality is a different matter. But what is important at this point is that the political behaviour and culture of the leading party are relatively possible to predict. Furthermore, there are some tendencies to establish the legitimacy of the leading party by the façade of the coalition of diverse ethnic groups. At this moment let us skip again the question of the coalition genuineness and let us focus on the decisive aspect of classification: the fact is that there are some indications that the regime is conscious of the need to cooperate with different groups that are not coming directly from the regime.

Mobilization, in its political form, is equally connected to the ideology of revolutionary democracy.

It was already mentioned, that the central government controls local action through a thorough penetration to local state institutions. Now the EPRDF´s ideology stresses the importance of massive participation from the side of the population (EPRDF Program, 2011). It follows that around one third of the total population living in an average lowest administrative unit are members of the local council, which is a direct channel for those who want to participate in the local affairs (Aalen, 2014). But with the fact that these councils happen mostly to be controlled by EPRDF, anyone who wishes to participate on local affairs is usually watched by at least some EPRDF member.

To sum up, in the terms of the criteria as described by Juan Linz in his political regime classification outlined above, it can be said that Ethiopian political regime is predominantly authoritarian. The only exception can be found in the analysis of the leadership structure and mobilization, which can be defined in rather totalitarian nature. This is one of the cases where one category within regime classification melts into another one in empirical reality.

But the criteria as formulated by Linz are not sufficient to get deep enough to understand the real nature of political situation in Ethiopia. In the above classification, it was necessary to ignore one substantial fact. It was already mentioned in the analysis of political situation in Ethiopia, that there are many areas that are different in reality from the rhetoric of the leading party. I will use a specific example here to illustrate the significance of this difference. As soon as in 1992, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, in cooperation with the African-American Institute, issued an evaluation of the first election in Ethiopia (NDI, 1992). They claimed that the 1992 election served only as a formal instrument for EPRDF to legitimize its power. From subsequent reports it follows that elections results have since been falsified to work in favour of the ruling party. This is exactly the kind of act of democratic institutions becoming a mere formality that Thomas Carothers categorizes as one of the traits of semi-authoritarian regimes (Carothers in Burnell, 2000). To continue with the same example, he adds that, simultaneously with such a superficial attitude towards democratic institutions, the ruling party allows a certain political openness in order to moderate democratic pressures and to gain some international credibility. This can be clearly seen in the Ethiopian case as the leading party is a coalition of parties formally representing different ethnic groups and as there is a constitutional recognition of the right to be elected for any political group.

It is true that the period right after the 1991 regime change is widely called "the transitional period". But Ethiopia can be no longer called a state in transition. Not that it ever was – as Ženíšek argues, a country can be called "transitional" only from retrospect, as the term "transition" is closely associated with the early stage of democratization, not with the political change as such. In this context, we can say that evidently the period called "transitional" in Ethiopia was labelled so under a certain intention to move along the path of democratization, which has turned out to be a faint hope for those who seriously intended to be committed to the democratization process. As Bahru Zewde (in Zewde and Pausewang, 2002, 7) aptly notes, mere introduction of the generally preferred mediums of democratization – multipartism and parliamentary government - does not guarantee a democratic mode of governance. Thus, to use a neutral approach to this issue, we can use the expression of Thomas Carothers, who calls political regimes that are between

democracy and non-democracy as being in a "grey zone" (Carothers, 2002). By this term, he tries to erase the expectation generally applied on the "transitional countries" to evolve in the direction of democratic political organization. In his approach, Carothers refers to the simple fact that political change includes both political developments towards and from democracy (Ženíšek, 2006). Carothers also argues that the basic obstacle for western political analysts to have realistic expectations about the likely structure of political regime in many developing countries is a "transitional paradigm", which ignores the two-way character of the political development and assumes that any "country in transition" would move toward the democracy (Carothers, 2002). He explains that five core pillars (in italics) of this paradigm are based upon wrong assumptions:

1. *Any country moving away from dictatorial rule can be considered a country of transition toward democracy.* This is not happening in the reality, a point made already by Adam Przeworski (1991, 37) "a breakdown of an authoritarian regime may be reversed, or it may lead to a new dictatorship".

2. *Democratization tends to unfold in different stages: first, there is an "opening", marked by political liberalization, differentiation of the ruling elite to hard liners and liberalized soft liners. Then a "breakthrough" emerges along with new, democratic system. As a third phase, "consolidation" transforms democratic forms into democratic substances.* But as we can see, in reality countries often go either backward along the path defined above, stagnate or deviate from it.

3. *The belief in the determinative importance of elections.* The role of elections in democratization is overestimated in terms of the profound legitimacy they give to postdicatorial governments and to what extent they broaden and deepen political participation and the accountability of the state to its citizens[6].

4. *Economic, political, institutional, ethnic, social or any other features will not substantially influence the transition process.* Such an optimistic view about minor role of preconditions in transition to democracy begun with the article of Dankwart Rustow (1970).

5. *Democratic transitions making up the third wave are being constructed on coherent, functioning states. Thus, the state building process was not considered to be part of transition process.* Meanwhile, political actors find themselves in the middle of largely non-functional state.

The concern about the great gulf between words and reality have been raised not only in relation to Ethiopia (Lata, 1999), but even in relation to autocratic leadership generally, which is said to be "image

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[6] This is a specific example of the condition to the second assumption upon which the main question of this paper stands, mentioned in the first chapter. If the election – or any other democratic institution – is misused opportunistically by the incumbent, it is not possible to take elections as a measurement of the democracy in the country. Rather, it is necessary to be aware of possible intrigues from the side of the incumbent.

conscious, and sophisticated in its ability to manipulate the language of democracy, human rights and social justice…therefore, we must pay attention rather to its actions than to its words" (Africa Demos in Ihonvbere in Mbaku and Ihonvbere, 2006, 17). And it is this "gulf between words and reality", which is the main reason Ethiopia can be classified as a semi-autocratic regime. It is the central aspect for Marina Ottaway in her definition of semi-autocracies, which she describes as follows: "semi-autocracies are not imperfect democracies struggling toward improvement and consolidation, but regimes determined to maintain the appearance of democracy without exposing themselves to political risk of free competition" (Ottaway, 2003, 3). I consider this definition as central to the main aim of this subchapter, which was to classify Ethiopia into a certain type. The aspect perfectly expressed by Ottaway in the last citation best describes the various aspects of the Ethiopian political regime I am aware of. Therefore I consider her concept of semi-autocratic regimes as the most fitting to the Ethiopian case and I will use her approach and recommendations in the chapters below.

The deduction which can be made from this is not only that Ethiopia is not a country in transition anymore, but that the type of the regime did not change profoundly. The regime before 1991 is widely categorized as totalitarianism, as it was under a strong communist rule with Marx ideology and extensive and intensive mobilization (see Courtois, 1999).

Another parallel stands out when we come back to the approach of Fareed Zakaria. In his article from 1997, he mentions Ethiopia as one of the countries he describes as illiberal democracies – the government is democratically elected but it "turns its security forces on journalists and political opponents, doing permanent damage to human rights and human beings". Zakaria points out that the phenomenon of "democratically elected regimes, often ones that have been reelected of reaffirmed though referenda, are routinely ignoring constitutional limits on their power and depriving their citizens of their basic rights and freedom" (Zakaria, 1997). Leenco Lata (1999) made a great point stating that the greatest danger that illiberal democracy poses - other than to its own people - is that it will discredit democracy in its liberal interpretation. Considering political circumstances in Ethiopia, it is better to hold no elections at all than to discredit them as a tool for democracy, thereby discrediting democracy in the people´s minds (Lata, 1999, 26). In the spite of this pessimistic conclusion, it is the main aim of this paper and of the next chapter to bring some proposals which could be useful in directing the future of Ethiopia´s political development, keeping in mind that its people want it to set out for, or return to, a path toward the reachable and unreachable aim of democracy.

4. Possibilities of democratization in Ethiopia

The fourth chapter proposes possible ways to democratize Ethiopian politics to prevent it from autocratic tendencies, as explained in the beginning. This requires possible ways to make the difference between the current Constitutional rules and reality smaller. A synthesis of Ethiopian realities sketched in the first chapter and general propositions of political scientists dealing with semi-authoritarianism are used as the original ground for this search. The areas with certain democratization potential are identical with the Linz´s four aspects of different political regime types – plurality, leadership, ideology and mobilization.

4.1. Plurality

An Ethiopian politologists Aaron Tesfaye classifies Ethiopia as one-party-dominant system. He compares it with one-party system, where different parties may exist but their influence on the course of political events is very weak. In one-party-dominant system, there is one major party able to govern and some smaller parties which cannot be ignored by the major party in its political calculations (Tesfaye, 2002). Ethiopia has been in such a state for over ten years. Now, the question is what are the possibilities for this one-party-dominant system to change into a type system that is depicted in the Constitution (1995)? Here, the key role of the Ethiopian government is that it represents the citizens. But one party can hardly be representative enough: it is a coalition, but established and controlled by a single party.

The Constitution (1995) established a legal ground for majoritarian system, saying that "a political party, or a coalition of political parties that has the greatest number of seats in the House of Peoples' Representatives shall form the Executive and lead it" (the Constitution, 1995, art. 56). Meanwhile, it is claimed by W. Arthur Lewis (in Vanhanen, 1999, 41), Frank Cohen (1997 in Vanhanen, 1999, 41) and Arend Lijphart (in Vanhanen, 1999, 41), that proportional institutions are more effective in the level of the representation of the political institutions than plurality or majority systems. These tend to exclude minority groups or to lead to unfair disproportionalities in representation and power of different ethnic groups (Vanhanen, 1999, 41).

Also, proportional electoral systems make it possible for cross-ethnic political parties to compete with ethnic parties in their core areas (Vanhanen, 1999, 203). This would be especially useful in Ethiopia, where the regions are rarely ethnically homogeneous. The actual majoritarian system makes the question of political representation impossible to fulfil, as most of the political parties are based on ethnic identity. The proposed shift from majoritarian to proportional system would bring an end to the sovereign rule of the so-called coalition EPRDF, which has a majority in the parliament and thus "have the power to form and lead the executive branch of the Federal Government" (the Constitution, 1995, art. 56).

The political traditions of Ethiopian historic core are characterized by inability or unwillingness to affect a peaceful transfer of power. In Amharic language, spoken in the northern regions, the term connected

to political power was "*mengist*", which means sovereignty, divine legitimacy, and in later context imperial authority, nation building, state-nationalism, control and domination (Ådland in Zewde and Pausewang, 2002, 29). These meanings are opposed to modern concepts of the democratic state as outlined in the Constitution (1995). In the history of political traditions, we can find an answer to the question of why northern regions of Ethiopia were governed in the form of monarchies (Lata, 1999, 223). One possible answer is in the relation between democracy and cultural heritage. The prospects of stable democracy are improved if they are embedded in the culture and transmitted from generation to generation (Dahl, 1998, 157).

But it not only answers the question why the North was a monarchy for a long time – we also find the answer for the main question of this paper. Such focus on historical political tradition also leads us to focus on a political tradition located in nowadays southern Ethiopia. It is "gada, the long-dead ritual and integrative institution, which nationalist scholars and politicians seek to exhume. Romanticized as an egalitarian and democratic system, gada is being presented as a symbol of Oromo identity" (see Bulcha, 'The survival and reconstruction of Oromo national identity'). It included grassroots participatory democratic governance, with regular shifts in power (Zewde in Zewde and Pausewang, 2002). This relates strongly to what is the way of answering the main question of this paper. The view on democracy is based on what is written in the Constitution (1995). But it is important to understand democracy as it is viewed by a large part of the population. Because Oromo is a third of the population, and gada is their historical political tradition, it can be said that it can be used in a similar way to the Constitution (1995) in terms of a conception of democracy. This at least brings the important aspect in democracy of shifting the political power over regular periods of time, without any problems during those transformation periods. It does not have to be written to be identical to the traditions a large part of the population had in the past. But according to the principal authority on this subject, Asmerom Legesse, gada was neither a pan-Oromo political institution nor was it practised among all the Oromo (Abbay 2004, 11).

So, it could be useful to turn to a southern political tradition in the strive to make the current political system in Ethiopia more close to the democratic Rights of Nation, Nationalities and Peoples stated in the Constitution (1995) and cited above[7]. It could be difficult to "exhume" such a floating and dispersed concept. Still, making this tradition alive would be the ideal way to see the rise of certain democratic principles which are "home-grown". And this is, in principle, the approach to the way democracy as a normative concept is viewed in this paper. But in order to incorporate principles of gada into the local politics, a thorough study of the whole compatibility should be carried out. Already now, there is some role of traditional authorities in elections, but this issue is understudied (Tronvoll and Hangman, 2012). Going deeper into the detail here is beyond the limits of this paper. But the mere fact that there exists some political system in the past that is based upon the democratic principle which is absent in current politics promises to be a potential agent of certain changes within the culture that now dominates the political sphere in Ethiopia.

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[7]   Table 1.

There is another factor that contributes to the one-party government in Ethiopia that has not been developed much in the preceding chapters. It is the relative underdevelopment of the other political parties. This paper cannot seek to answer why it is so, whether it is caused by an active involvement of EPRDF cadres to undermine the efforts of other parties to develop their human and capital resources. It is just the simple fact that this kind of development would raise their ability to compete in the campaign and in elections.

The primary demand to cooperate with the opposition and to establish a representative government in such a multicultural country as Ethiopia includes full devotion to the democratization process in an open debate with the opposition (Mbaku and Ihonvbere, 2006, 19). We will see this as well on the example of Netherlands in the context of Arend Lijphart´s concept of consociational democracy in the subchapter devoted to ideology.

In Ethiopia, the current political elites are evidently not only lacking this ambition of meaningful dialogue, but also behave in a clear contradiction to it, which poses a great hindrance to the plurality of voices within the government. Already the issue starts with the fact that political representation in Ethiopia is based on ethnicity. At first sight, this seems like a welcome progression in comparison with the previous forms of rule, which were dominated by an individual from Cushitic ethnic group explicitly - that is, the ruling individual did not deny sovereignty of his rule. At the same time, as we saw in the previous chapter, this paradigm has not changed profoundly, with the exception of the way it is formulated in the Constitution (1995). Also, if it was properly followed in reality, it poses the danger of "encouraging differences" along the boundaries of individual states within Ethiopia (Aspen in Zewde and Pausewang, 2002, 65). The election system could be designed to change the incentive of politicians so as to make conciliation more profitable than conflict in a way that no candidate could be elected with the support of only a single cultural group. But the problem is to persuade political leaders to adopt such arrangements (Dahl, 1998, 151-156).

4.2. Leadership

The leading party is the key actor in the future development in Ethiopian politics, independently of the direction it will head in, particularly as there has been no shift in power since the regime transition in 1991. It is not an exception in the context of African countries that politics is being excessively personalized, which results in the pathological fixation of incumbent leader (Mbaku and Ihonvbere, 2006, 22). For 21 years, Meles Zenawi was the main political actor – he was not only the head of the leading party, but also of the whole country as it is stated in the Constitution, that "the prime minister is the chief executive, the chairman of the Council of ministers, and the commander-in-chief of the national and armed forces" (the Constitution, 1995, art. 74, par. 1). After his death in 2012, a smooth transition took place instead of the much more expected instability and chaos (Aalen, 2014). The post of the Prime Minister was shifted to Hailemariam Dessalegn, a man highly loyal to EPRDF and its ideology, who represents at least one historically marginalized group – the southern people. According to Aalen (2014, 2),this is exactly the

combination which makes him a good candidate to create the impression of representativity. It was already said at this time, that the post of the Prime Minister is a mere figurehead for the real leaders of the government, both TPLF loyal members (SM, 2014).

Lovise Aalen explains this by successful insituttionalization of the party and strong economic growth (2014). Linz and Stepan write, that "when an opportunity presents itself (such as the death of maximum leader), the top elite´s desire to reduce the future leader´s absolute discretion is predictably a dynamic source of pressure for out-of-type regime change...". But evidently, other party leaders did not use this moment to change the nature of the regime. Instead, they strived for maintaining the status quo and succeeded. This suggests that the party is not dependent on an individual. But Aalen still takes this stability as a temporary state and warns that it can easily evolve into instability (Aalen, 2014). A similar view is shared by Marina Ottaway, who calls the 1991 events a "managed transition" (Ottaway, 1995, 70 in Nur, 2013), which lacked an element important to a stable democratic society. Without popular protests or some similar form of a political change, the further stability of popular support and participation is unlikely to persist in time as the democratic principles are not required widely from the citizens (Ottaway, 1995 in Nur, 2013).

According to the Constitution (1995), Ethiopia has a parliamentarian form of government. But the Ethiopian political system has characteristics that are attributed rather to presidential than parliamentary democracy, at least according to the description made by Linz. He says that presidentialism not only "tends to concentrate power into the hands of one group and to exclude other groups" (Linz, 1994 in Vanhanen, 1999, 41), but it also presents a greater risk of instability of democratic politics because of its rigidity compared to the flexibility of the parliamentarism (Linz, 1994 in Vanhanen, 1999, 41). Furthermore, he assumes that it is rather a parliamentary system that "would offer the possibility of coalition formation and consociational type of agreements, which could provide flexible response to ethnic conflict (Linz, 1994, 44 in Vanhanen, 1999, 254). In a similar sense, Vanhanen assumes that presidentialism tends to polarize politics and to exclude minorities from the use of executive power (Vanhanen, 1999, 253). So, the conclusion which is driven by Juan Linz (1994) is that to ethnically divided societies – which Ethiopia is - the elements of parliamentary system are better because they promote cooperation and power sharing and it may satisfy the requirements of reciprocity better than presidentialism (Linz in Vanhanen, 1999, 41), where the executive depend on one person. But as was already said, this kind of cooperation is greatly opposed by the leading party.

With respect to other political circumstances, we can say that one of the arising reasons is ethnic antagonism. Altogether with Vanhanen (1999), we can pose the question of how to best reduce ethnic conflicts. Vanhanen answers that is through such institutions that provide internal inducements to make interethnic accommodation advantageous from the perspective of selfish politicians and recommends electoral systems that "provide incentives for vote pooling between parties across ethnic or racial lines. Such electoral systems will make moderation rewarding by making politicians reciprocally dependent on the votes on the members of groups other than their own" (Vanhanen, 1999, 252-253). Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan

(1996, 35) assume in similar way that in multinational setting, the element of inclusive and equal citizenship, together with state-enforced individual rights are two of the factors that make democracy in multinational states possible. This is in accord with the principles that are deeply anchored in the Constitution (1995) (though, as discussed extensively, these principles are mostly now reflected in reality). Here it is just worth noting the part of the current Constitution´ preamble which commits to hold on to the mentioned principle of equal citizenship: "We, the Nations, Nationalities and Peoples of Ethiopia ...convinced that by continuing to live with our rich and cultural legacies in territories we have long inhabited, have, through continuous interaction on various level and forms of life, built up common interest and have also contributed to the emergence of a common outlook...fully cognizant that our common destiny can best be served by rectifying historically unjust relationships and by further promoting our shared interest...have therefore adopted this Constitution..." (the Constitution, 1995, the preamble).

4.3. Ideology

The evidence shown in the above analysis of the leading party leadership indicates that the motives of the incumbent are of a different nature than what is common for many other African countries, led by a strong individual. The circumstances depicted in the chapter devoted to the rights in the Constitution (1995) and their reflection in reality show that another source of the party´s action can be the ideology of revolutionary democracy. In that case, more attention can be paid to the role of the ideology within the leading party structure and possible ways it can assist the principles stated in the Constitution (1995).

Thomas Carothers, an expert on democracy promotion and development, proposes some alternative strategies for democratization efforts in semi-authoritarian regimes. Among others[8], it is to try to change the power structures from within by finding and nurturing bright spots in the apparatus that is the current political elite. This bright spot can be expected to develop if we take into consideration the fact that is connected to the widening gap between the leading party ideology and its real action. As we read in the table 4, Linz and Stepan (1996) also observe that this widening gap is potentially the source of the shift from post-totalitarian to totalitarian regimes in a way that "the discrepancy between the constant reiteration of the importance of ideology and the ideology´s growing irrelevance to the policymaking or, worse, its transparent contradiction with social reality contribute to undermining the commitment and faith of the middle and lower cadres in the regime. Such a situation can help contribute to the rapid collapse of the regime if midlevel functionaries of the coercive apparatus have great doubts about their right to shoot citizens who are protesting against the regime and its ideology..." (Linz and Stepan, 1996, 49)[9]. In Ethiopia, this can be

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[8] These alternative strategies comprise to challenge of entrenched power through CS, to go around the central power structures by going to the local level, to modify and perhaps diversify the economic base of power by promoting economic development and to build the opposition

[9] At this point, I do not see that the respective regime types are important – as it was said in the chapter devoted to methodology, different regime types as defined theoretically can intertwine when applied to an existing regime. What is important here is that the widening gap between the ideology and rhetoric – which is normally viewed as a negative aspect of the political culture – can actually initiate a positive

expected to arrive any time as Marina Ottaway (2011) rightly notes on Ethiopia that "the problem with introducing a political change is the moment when somebody says only I know or my group knows best what is good for the country". But unfortunately, this is exactly the case of the leading party in Ethiopia, as can be seen from an EPRDF official interviewed by Aalen (2014). He illustrated the probable and very dangerous version of the real party leadership, EPRDF holds the key from the truth: "we cannot envisage the developmental state currently without the EPRDF, [since] there are no other parties with the comprehensive understanding that we have" (Aalen, 2014, 3). This is the very moment where Marina Ottaway warns that in this case, the political system ends up in rivalry instead of cooperation. Such an inner fight is various resources-consuming and not a long-term sustainable. Another result of the current ideology of EPRDF is that its members become less enthusiastic about the ideals that their ideology is claiming to bring about. These individuals can become the communicators that Lijphart is talking about in his conception of consociational democracy, where the essential ingredient is cooperation between the incumbents and opposition. Simultaneously, this more and more visible contradiction makes it easier for the side of the civil society to raise criticism and less possible for the ruling party to deny the evident fact these critics are pointing out.

This dialogue between the incumbent and the opposition could contribute to introduction of Arend Lijphart´s concept of consociational democracy in Ethiopia. As a model example he uses politics in the Netherlands in the past. He tried to explain the so-called Dutch paradox: on the one hand the society was divided by sharp cleavages, but on the other hand, the Netherlands was a good example of a successful and stable democracy. That was possible because of the behaviour of the political elites. They were ready to negotiate about the main problems in the society. This principle of accommodation, consisting of directing the political processes to patch up all issues and conflicts, where there is minimal consensus, is also mentioned in the Constitution (1995) as a desirable goal of future political development[10]. This was the key to success in the case of this country and the primary pillar in the concept of consociational democracy. Lijphart adds some more definition to his concept of consociational democracy (Lijphart in Vanhanen, 2013):

1) government by a grand coalition of the political leaders of all segments of the plural society
2) the mutual veto, which serves as an additional protection of vital minority interests
3) proportionality as the principal standard of political representation
4) high degree of autonomy which allows each segment to run its own internal affairs

The possibility of productive dialogue between the party members who have become less persuaded of the monopoly of the party to the truth and the best solution to all the country´s issues, and the moderates among the opposition, is one possibility of introducing a change to the current political system that is in

phenomenon within the party loyalists, who can become disappointed and tired of this disjunction.
[10] Citations related to this issue are already mentioned in the end of chapter 4.2

harmony with the current Constitutional principles. But it has another consequence, this time only for the leading party. Commenting on hybrid regimes in general, Larry Diamond (2002) assumes that they are playing a two-sided game. This makes the goal of gaining and maintaining their political power even more difficult than if they would abide the democratic rules which may not produce such a certain election results, but are relatively easier to follow. But if we return to the semi-authoritarian classification of the regime in Ethiopia, it requires more resources, both material and non-material, to plan and navigate the risky slalom between the two worlds, one of democratic façade and the second of autocratic crushing of political opponents. This is what Carothers (Carothers in Burnell, 2000, 211) calls the "political dualism". He characterizes this by the situation where political institutions are formally democratic but carefully controlled to ensure the political power of incumbent is not threatened. So, support of the hybrid regime maintenance is not sustainable from the point of view of human and capital resources, which can contribute to political instability, mentioned by Aalen (2014). Mbaku and Ihonvbere (2006, 337) mention that one of the reason for authoritarianism is that those who control the power do not want to give it up because it is the base of their survival. So it follows that it is just a matter of time until the semi-authoritarian regime in Ethiopia gets overwhelmed with a wave of instability, too intense to manage.

As it was said, it is not desirable for the sake of the regime stability to let one of these two worlds to be publicly aware about the existence of the other world. This brings us to the next subchapter, which focus in part on the potential power of the public awareness of non-transparent political manoeuvres to hide the second side of the coin.

4. 4. Mobilization

The shift from majoritarian to representative political system mentioned above would also have an impact. It would mean less insistence on direct mass participation in its current form, which is almost inevitably connected to membership in EPRDF (Aalen, 2014). If there would be a higher plurality of the political parties active in local politics, EPRDF would not be a necessary channel to get to have a say in local affairs as it is now. But this is not the only form of mobilization that functions in Ethiopia – there are also forms of organizations not established by the government. These are the actors which have much more potential to bring about the political change in the sense of the current Constitution principles, as they are truly "representative".

It is true that democratic governance can only be ensured only when people whose lives are affected are an integral part of it. A healthy and dialectical nexus of the two levels – responsible leadership and the genuine grassroots participation - is crucial to achieve effective participation (Zewde in Zewde and Pausewang, 2002, 14)[11]. A number of authors (Mbaku and Ihonvbere, 2006; Rahmato in Zewde and

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[11] The word "genuine" and "effective" are crucial here, as they enable us to distinguish the nature of the principle of mass participation from the one that is misused in the program and actions of EPRDF, as we saw in the chapter "Semi-authoritarian traits of the political regime in Ethiopia".

Pausewang, 2002, for many others) express their positive view on democratization in Africa in general and in Ethiopia in particular because of emergence of human rights protection NGOs, pro-democratic movements and new political parties, as the development of this sector is believed to have direct impact on democratization. Because of this reason, there has been a growing interest in the civil society (CS)[12] (Rahmato in Zewde and Pausewang, 2002, 103). These assertions suggest that the way the society mobilizes itself in NGOs is a promising way to put pressure on government in the case of it exceeding the legal limits on its actions.

But such activity is not without problems, and these are expressed very usefully by Acemoglu and Robinson (2006). Therefore, in the subsequent analysis of civil society organizations (CSOs), we will use the basic presumption from the argument made by Acemoglu and Robinson (2006, 15), that divides any society within a state to two confronting groups: elite and citizens. Demands of both groups are often opposing as well, so that one policy will do well to one and harm to the other. In response to the question of why non-democratic elite ever democratize, Acemoglu and Robinson (2006, xii) argue that "it only occurs because the disenfranchised citizens can threaten the elite and force it to make concessions". As a direct consequence of this threat, the nondemocratic elite will try to prevent various forms that this threat can form into, such as strikes, demonstrations, riots or, eventually, even revolutions. The prevention can take various forms as well - from making concessions to repression, or alternatively, democratization of the non-democratic elite (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2006, xii).

So, the potential of CSOs to bring about political change depends on how the power of both groups is balanced – usually this means to what extent the civil society is able to mobilize and sacrifice itself and its resources - and to what extent the government (or the "elite") takes the demands of the CSOs into consideration. In Ethiopia, it is the case that even that "NGOs play vital role in bringing issues into focus, but the political will and the commitment of the government is central to the issue" (Ayenew in Zewde and Pausewang, 2002, 184). Or, as Ayenew (in Zewde and Pausewang, 2002, 200) further notes in relation to the private press, polarization of the government and the private press does not automatically mean that the latter has a "monolithic stand" vis-à-vis the government – that it is able to produce a corresponding influence on public opinion.

Rahmato (in Zewde and Pausewang, 2002, 118) names several constraints facing CSO in Ethiopia:

(1) Unfavorable political environment. Government suspects any independent institution of being part of the opposition.

(2) Related legislature is vague, subject to arbitrary interpretations by regulating agencies, uncertain legal status the next year.

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[12] For the purpose of this paper, I will treat the term civil society (CS) or civil society organisation (CSO) as exchangeable with non-governmental organization (NGO). I see their meaning very similar, as they both refer to the same nature of organizations – independence from government, which is of central importance for this paper. Another reason for this is that often they both appear in the literature in similar contextual meaning.

(3) The lack of independent resources – the economy is controlled by the government, thus CSOs cannot turn to private sector and depend either on government or on international agencies. In both cases, it is more difficult to maintain the organization´s autonomy. In the latter, it is necessary to do so in order to keep the democratization process home-grown and thus sustainable by Ethiopians themselves without external resources or legitimization of their action (Mbaku and Ihonvbere, 2006, 5, 28). Otherwise, uncritical and blind acceptance of alien ways will replace their roles as the instrument of expression of ordinary people (Berhanu in Zewde and Pausewang, 2002).

(4) Lack of organizational and intellectual capital; the problem of collective action from the perspective of Acemoglu and Robinson indicates that in order to create force effective enough to challenge the elite, individuals should be convinced to take part in particular CSO activity "despite the individual cost and the collective benefits to them as a group" (2006, 25).

(5) No dialogue between CSOs, between state and CSOs, between CSOs and public

(6) Concentration in Addis Ababa – here, some advocacy groups aroused public interest.

NGOs that are not to the government´s particular liking have two choices to adapt themselves to such an unfavorable climate: either to become subservient, which necessitates at least partial, if not complete sacrifice of its original goals and activities, or to capitulate in the struggle against government and fully co-opt the government´s goals (Berhanu in Zewde and Pausewang, 2002, 123). The ideal lies somewhere between the two extremes (Berhanu in Zewde and Pausewang, 2002), but to find the right balance might be difficult. It might be useful to view the role of CSOs not only from the point of view of Acemoglu and Robinson (2006) already mentioned, but to alternate the view with the opposite side. It is the interest of the political incumbent to allow enough political openness to defuse domestic pressure for political expression and to gain at least some international credibility (Carothers in Burnell, 2000, 213). However, this does not mean it always estimates the right ratio of openness and repression. More generally said, in order to have an impact on democratization, Ethiopian CSOs have to transform themselves into civic movements, which refers to "the active engagement" of the broad public, including the labor classes, in support of popular causes" (Rahmato in Zewde and Pausewang, 2002, 118). According to Rahmato (in Zewde and Pausewang, 2002), conditions of such transformation are two-fold:

(1) Widespread public awareness and active popular engagement. Bratton et al. (2004) in their Afrobarometer study conclude that the first step for active democratic citizenship begins with adult literacy and formal education. Instruments of such education can be civic education in schools, the independent mass media, and non-formal education programs of nongovernmental organizations. This can inform the people about democratic rules and at the same time, it should aim to reduce unrealistic expectations about what democratic reforms can achieve. A good example of such activity is the Forum of Social studies (FSS) as an independent, non-profit organization focused on policy-oriented research on the development challenges facing Ethiopia. It provides a forum for discussion

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of public policy and promotes public awareness and encourages broad participation in policy debates. It achieves its goals through public conferences and distributes its policy findings to policy makers and other key actors (Zegeye, Wambe 2009).

(2) The "dis-empowerment" of the state, meaning its withdrawal from the social and economic life as the only active force in the society (Rahmato in Zewde and Pausewang, 2002, 118; Gramsci, 1987, 494). This kind of state attitude discourages CSOs from empowerment and democratization activities, as they are viewed "political no-go areas" (Rahmato in Zewde and Pausewang, 2002, 126). This excessive presence and civil society control by the Ethiopian state results from the fact that for semi-authoritarian government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) can involve politically sensitive actors. Thus, governments tend to see the existence of NGOs in terms of national security. As Fareed Zakaria (1997) writes, that "while anarchy has its dangers, the greatest threats to human liberty and happiness in this century have been caused not by disorder but by brutally strong, centralized states, like Nazi Germany, Soviet Russia, and Maoist China." So we can observe that where a government is not sure about their grip on power, they are likely to fear, monitor and strictly regulate such autonomous organizations (Bratton, 1987, 17).

5. Conclusion

The aim of this paper was to find elements in Ethiopian politics, which would contribute to a change of the political regime toward democracy as it is the ideal anchored in the Ethiopian Constitution (1995). To stay oriented in the numerous factors and to cover the main areas of political system, an approach by Juan Linz was followed in the search for these areas. They are sorted into Linz´s four categories used to classify different political regimes: plurality, leadership, ideology and mobilization.

Regarding plurality, a major contradiction between the Constitution (1995) and reality can be seen in the Ethiopian political system. In Ethiopian legislative institutions, the power is distributed according to the system of one party system, or majoritarian system. Meanwhile, the Constitution (1995) appeals to the government to be representative, which is more probable with a proportional system. To change the current majoritarian system to proportional would therefore be a shift toward the current Constitution´ demand on how the government should function. There is also a potential in the Oromo political tradition, which is historically founded upon a smooth transition of powers. The promotion of Oromo´s political tradition would be highly beneficial to the whole Ethiopian politics which is now unequally promoting non-Oromo ethnic groups, namely Tigrai.

Another problem related to the plurality in Ethiopian political system is the fact that the alleged coalition called EPRDF is not constituted by genuine representatives of different political parties, but established and controlled by TPLF. Strengthening and development of non-EPRDF parties would create natural political counterweights to its monopoly on political power. Furthermore, the political identity based on ethnicity encourages ethnic differences, something that opposes the ideal of universal citizenship, again mentioned in the Constitution (1995). Therefore, in spite of enforcement of the universal citizenship, the way Ethiopians build their affinity to particular political parties should be alternated by different values.

The current situation in Ethiopia seems to be quite stable. But there is evidence that there exists many potential sources of instability. The current leadership in Ethiopia should not rely on this temporary stability. The control of natural political and civic life should be relaxed in order to lessen the threat of future instability. Also, an advancement of parliamentarism should be deepened, in contrast to presidentialism. For twenty one years, Ethiopian politics was strictly controlled by a single individual, Prime Minister Meles Zenawi. After his death his successor is not so dominant, but this cannot be said of the leading party. Its penetration of the main state institution greatly lessens the possibility for the existence of independent bodies, to control the action of legislative and executive bodies. Therefore, an advancement of the power separation would contribute strongly to de-concentration of political power, strengthen political representation and equal citizenship, based on individual rights enforcement. These are all principles that are clearly supported by the Constitution (1995).

A great paradox emanates from the EPRDF´s rhetoric. The widening gap between reality and what

its leadership says is a potential source to lessen the uncritical and passionate attitude of its members to the party´s actions. It could make many of its current members want to communicate with the political opposition and to accept civil society´s demands. Establishment of such a connection within the government would have great potential to bring about change towards democracy from above. Another area contributing to undermining the strength of the present regime is the high demands it imposes on its leadership in terms of human and capital resources to sustain the gap between the rhetoric and reality. As the present incumbent gets more and more weak economically, the probability that it loses some election in the future rises. So we can see that in the areas of ideology, the current regime is not sustainable for the long term, as the mentioned gap and the resources needed to sustain it are potential sources of regime change themselves.

Mobilization shows a great possibility to introduce change toward democracy from below, in contrast with most of the aspects mentioned earlier. In the event there would be a basic guarantee of the current Constitutional rights as mentioned above, civil society would be a natural civic counterweight to the incumbent. Such a balanced position of civic and political organization would contribute to the likelihood the political regime is stable for a long term. But again, there is evidence that shows this is not the case in Ethiopia. A massive restriction on civil society and its organizations makes such a balance impossible. It is through relaxing excessive government control over CSO´s that it would become a powerful source for the agent of the change toward democracy.

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