A CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF INSTITUTIONS, ROLES AND LEVERAGE IN PUBLIC POLICYMAKING: ETHIOPIA, 1974-2004

Mulugeta Abebe Wolde

Dissertation presented for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN PUBLIC AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

The University of Stellenbosch
Stellenbosch, South Africa

Promoter: **Professor Fanie Cloete, School of Public Management and Planning, University of Stellenbsoch, South Africa**

Co-promoter: **Dr Meheret Ayenew, Faculty of Business and Economics, the Department of Public Administration and Public Management, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia**

March 2005

Abstract:

This dissertation critically assesses and analyzes the institutional and political settings of public policymaking in Ethiopia in a space of three decades, from circa 1974. Based on data and/or information generated through a range of sources and instruments, it attempts to uncover the prominent actors in public policymaking in Ethiopia far beyond the official assertions that have formally been claimed in the statutory provisions. It appraises the institutions, their roles and leverage in the policymaking process, and the extent to which the profound institutional and political changes that have transpired over the past thirty years impacted on public policymaking, and with what effect. It examines the emergence and ascendance of a couple of closely linked institutions, namely the ruling party and the top echelon of the executive leadership, and the disproportionate influence they have on government, non-government institutions and overall public policymaking.

The supremacy of the executive and its claims on policymaking had been pervasive during Haileselassie's years, with absolute executive powers vested in the monarchy and the person of the emperor. The combined forces of party and executive leadership and their overwhelming dominance in public policymaking are relatively new conventions, phenomena and constructs which featured prominently in the aftermath of 1974. Ideology (Marxism-Leninism and revolutionary democracy) has since been a critical element guiding and as well as justifying policy elites' claims on the choice of public policies and the institutional and structural mechanisms of implementing them. Wedged between staggering financial, managerial and organizational capacity, on the one hand, and an inhospitable politico-administrative and legal milieu on the other, the civil society, a network of civil society institutions and the public over three decades appeared to have remained at the peripheral end in the continuum of public policymaking.

The most formidable challenges that the Ethiopian public policymaking process has over the past thirty years experienced can therefore be thematically crystallized into three issues. Firstly, the emergence and consolidation of party and executive leadership (policy elites) has been the dominant phenomena over the last thirty years, with the ruling party institutions invariably overlapping with the formally constituted policymaking government structures. Secondly, not only ideology played a critical role in the choice of public policies and institutional instruments for implementing them, but also provided policy elites with the latitude to justify their claims on policy actions, although ideological values served to preclude the non-state players from making legitimate claims on policymaking. Lastly, the

expansion of the powers of the party and the executive seemed to have taken place without a corresponding development of extra-bureaucratic institutions (i.e. elections and functioning legislatures) and civil societal associations, and which in turn boils down to the exclusion of the bulk of the Ethiopian public from playing its legitimate role in the policymaking process.

The public policymaking process in Ethiopia has, therefore, witnessed imbalances at two levels: first, between the executive and the legislature, and second, between policy elites (the party-fused-with-executive structures/institutions), on the one hand, and ordinary citizens and civil society organizations (CSOs) representing various interests, on the other. At both levels the party and the executive exact enormous power leverage. On the other hand, the ordinary citizens are highly disorganized, and tied up with attending to daily survival needs. Hence, they have little time to become fully and actively involved in holding government institutions accountable and responsive, articulating policy demands to policymaking institutions aside. The legislatures appear to have become a façade of legitimacy for party and executive decisions and are detached from the society. `

Finally, the dissertation puts forward proposals for more opportunities to give Ethiopian citizens of all walks of life a chance to influence policies and implementation outcomes. It suggests a range of options for greater and genuine public participation in the policymaking process, which would result in as much representative policy-making as enhancing the quality of services provided by policies and actual control of decisions by citizens. It also indicates Ethiopian academics' charge in the new endeavor to launch independent think-tank and policy study institutions to foster professionalizing policymaking in Ethiopia.

Opsomming:

Hierdie proefskrif ontleed en beoordeel die institusionele en politieke beleidmakingskontekste in Ethiopië oor ’n periode van drie dekades, vanaf 1974. Gebasseer op data en inligting wat deur middel van ’n reeks van metodes en bronne gegenereer is, poog dit om, ten spyte van amptelike stellings in statutêre bepalings, die prominente rolspelers in openbare beleidmaking in Ethiopië te identifiseer. Dit beoordeel die instellings, hul rolle en magshefbome in die beleidmakingsproses, en die mate waartoe die betekenisvolle institusionele en politieke veranderinge wat oor die afgelope dertig jaar plaasgevind het, ’n impak gehad het op openbare beleidmaking. Dit ondersoek die ontstaan en vestiging van ’n paar ineengeskakelde instellings, naamlik die regerende party en die topgarde uitvoerende leierskap, en die buitengewoon groot invloed wat hulle op die regering, nie-regeringsinstellings en algemene beleidmaking gehad het.

Die oppergesag van die uitvoerende gesag en sy beheer oor beleidmaking was wydverspreid gedurende die Haileselassie jare, met absolute uitvoerende magte gesetel in die monargie en in die persoon van die keiser. Die gekombineerde kragte van party en uitvoerende leierskap en hulle oorweldigende dominasie in openbare beleidmaking is relatief resente ontwikkelinge na 1974. Ideologie (Marxisme-Leninisme en rewolusionêre demokrasie) was sedertdien ’n kritiese element wat die beleidselites se beheer oor die keuse van openbare beleid en die instusionele en strukturele implementeringsmeganismes daarvoor gestuur en geregverdig het. Vasgevang tussen oorweldigende finansiële, bestuurs- en organisatoriese kapasiteit aan die een kant en ’n ongunstige politiek-administratiewe klimaat aan die ander kant, het ’n netwerk van burgelike instellings en die publiek oor drie dekades lank op die perifierie van die beleidmakingskontinuum gefigureer.

Die mees formidabele uitdagings wat die Ethiopiese openbare beleidmakingsproses oor die afgelope dertig jaar ervaar het, val daarom tematies in drie vraagstukke uiteen. Eerstens, was die ontluiking en konsolidasie van party en uitvoerende leierskap (die beleidselites) die dominante verskynsel oor die afgelope dertig jaar, met regerende partry instellings wat deurgaans oorvleuel met regeringstrukture. Tweedens het ideologie nie net ’n kritiese rol gespeel by die keuse van openbare beleid en die institusionele instrumente vir die implementering daarvan nie, maar het dit ook beleidselites geleentheid gebied vir ’n regverdiging van hul beheer oor beleidsoptredes, terwyl hierdie ideologiese beginsels terselfdertyd nie-regeringspelers verhoed het om hul betrokkenheid by beleidmaking op legitieme wyse op te eis. Derdens, het die uitbreiding van die magte van die party en die

uitvoerende gesag klaarblyklik plaasgevind sonder die gepaardgaande ontwikkeling van nie-burokratiese instellings (nl verkiesings en funksionerende wetgewers), en burgerlike organisasies, wat op uiteindelik ’n uitsluiting van die meerderheid van die Ethiopiese publiek van ’n legitieme deelname aan die openbare beleidmakingsproses tot gevolg gehad het.

Die openbare beleidmakingsproses in Ethiopië vertoon daarom ’n wanbalans op twee vlakke: eerstens, tussen die uitvoerende en wetgewende gesag, en tweedens tussen beleidselites (die party/uitvoerende gesagstrukture/instellings) aan die een kant, en gewone burgers en burgerlike organisasies wat verskillende belange verteenwoordig, aan die ander kant. Op beide vlakke oefen die party en uitvoerende gesag enorme magsbeïnvloeding uit. Aan die een kant is die gewone burgers baie gedisorganiseerd en vasgevang in ’n stryd om daaglikse oorlewing. Hulle het daarom weinig tyd om, benewens beleidseise aan beleidsinstellings oor te dra, ook volledig en aktief betrokke te raak by pogings om regeringsinstellings responsief en verantwoordbaar te hou. Wetgewers het klaarblyklik in legitimiteitsfronte vir party- en uitvoerende besluite ontwikkel en funksioneer afgesonderd van die samelewing.

Laastens maak die proefskrif voorstelle vir meer geleenthede om Ethiopiese burgers op alle vlakke ’n kans te bied om beleid en implementeringsuitkomste te beinvloed. Dit stel ’n reeks van opsies vir groter en meer effektiewe deelname aan beleidmakingsprosesse voor, wat sowel verteenwoordigende beleidmaking as die bevordering van die gehalte van dienste deur en daadwerklike beheer oor besluite deur die burgers, tot gevolg sal hê. Dit wys ook op die taak van Ethiopiese akademici om onafhanklike dinkskrums en beleidsontledingsinstellings te skep om die professionalisering van beleidmaking in Ethiopië te bevorder.

In memory of Abebe Wolde, a father and a friend, who in a dawn of a September morning led me towards the route to modern education, the world of learning and academic pursuits.

Acknowledgement

I am greatly indebted to the leading promoter, Professor Fanie Cloete, Professor of Policy Analysis in the School of Public Management and Planning, University of Stellenbosch, under whose supervision the PhD study has been carried out since 2001. Not only has he been magnificent mentor behind my academic pursuits, but also was constant source of inspiration and intellectual guidance. I owe a great debt to Dr. Meheret Ayenew[1], the Department of Public Administration and Development Management, Addis Ababa University, and co-promoter and field supervisor, from whose valuable comments and guidance during the hard times of the study I benefited greatly.

My special thanks go to Professor Cloete and the Department of Public and Development Management, the University of Stellenbosch, for continued support, and encouragement, for providing me sanctuary, an exquisite office with all the facilities befitting to the professors at the School of Public Management and Development Planning. I am extremely grateful to Addis Ababa University, Ministry of Education in Ethiopia, and the University of Stellenbosch, whose financial assistances brought this study into its logical conclusion. My deep appreciation and gratitude also go to my colleagues in the Department of Management and Department of Public Administration and Development Management, Faculty of Business and Economics, Addis Ababa University, who graciously accepted extra teaching loads to allow me to engage fully in my studies.

A great many individuals have been helpful and cooperative in the various stages of this study from my field trip in Bahirdar and Mekele to Awasa and various places in Oromia and Amhara, and from Addis Ababa in Ethiopia to Stellenbosch in South Africa. I am particularly grateful to Professor Erwin Schwella, the former Director of the School of Public Management and Planning, whose facilitation and assistance opened an opportunity for me to be enrolled as a PhD student at the University of Stellenbosch. My thanks also go to civil society leaders, leaders of political pressure groups, MPs, government and party leaders, Ethiopian and foreign academics, and local government authorities for sharing with me their incisive thoughts, experiences and understanding of public policymaking in Ethiopia.

Among the many individuals whose assistance made this study possible, I owe a great debt of gratitude to Professor Asrat Tessema (Eastern Michigan University), Professor Andréas Eshete, Mohammed Habib (assistant professor), Professor Endeshaw Bekele, Dr.

[1] Dr. Meheret Ayenew is currently a visiting professor at Tshwane University of Technology in Pretoria, South Africa

Tilahun Teklu, Dr. Mulat Demeke, Mohammed Said, Meseret Melese, Dr. Tadesse Beriso, Dr. Ayalew Gebre, Dr. Terefe Degefe (Addis Ababa University), Alemayehu Yihunie (Bahirdar) Debebe Moges (Addis Ababa), my sister-in-law Elisabeth Hailemariam and her husband Abraham Alamaw (Los Angeles), Rene Oosthuizen, Linda Uys, Suzette Wiese, Charmagne Marais, Jennifer Saunders (University of Stellenbosch), my mother Nigeste Dinku, my sister Alemnesh Abebe (Ethiopia), my niece Alemzoud Mingestab and nephew Gideon Mingestab (Houston) for their support, encouragement, cooperation and understanding in various ways. My heartfelt gratitude also goes to Dr Jiregna Gindaba, a post-doc fellow at the University of Stellenbosch and Faniel Sahle, a PhD student in the School of Public Management and Planning of the same University, without whose friendship, encouragement and company much of the lonesome and arduous work in Stellenbosch would have been a lot more difficult.

Last but by no means least, the study would have not been brought to fruition had it not been for the understanding, endurance and patience of my wife, Emuye, and our son, Girum. Only a two-year-old lad when this study began, Girum suffered the agony of separation and borne much of the brunt of the emotional cost of this study. I will always be grateful to Emuye and Girume. This study, however, is dedicated to my late father, Abebe Wolde, who invested so much in my education, who in a dawn of a September morning led me towards the route to modern education, the world of learning and academic exploits.

It is, nonetheless, important to note that all errors of facts and omissions are mine alone.

Mulugeta Abebe Wolde
The University of Stellenbosch
Stellenbosch, South Africa
March 2005

Table of Contents:

[2] In accordance with Ethiopian academic tradition, Ethiopian names in intra-text, reference and bibliographical citations appear with the first given names followed by their second ones. The same tradition is maintained in this dissertation.

List Maps, Tables and Figures

Maps:

Tables:

Figures:

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations:

AAU	Addis Ababa University
ADA	Amhara Development Association
ADLI	Agricultural Development Led Industrialization
AEPA	All Ethiopian Peasant Associations
AESM	All Ethiopia Socialist Movement
AETU	All Ethiopian Trade Union
ANDF	Afar National Democratic Front
ANDM	Amhara National Democratic Movement
BGPDUF	Benishangul-Gumuz Peoples Democratic Unity Front
CAFPDE	Council of Alternative Forces for Peace and Democracy in Ethiopia
CC	Central Committee
CCI	Constitutional Inquiry
COPWE	Commission for Organizing the Party of the Working People of Ethiopia
CoR	Council of Representatives
CRDA	Christian Relief and Development Association
CSA	Central Statistics Authority
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DSCGP	Dutch Scientific Council on Government Council
EDORM	Ethiopian Democratic Officers' Revolutionary Movement
EEA	Ethiopian Economic Association
EEPRI	Ethiopian Economic Policy Research Institute
EHRCO	Ethiopian Human Rights Council
EIIPD	Ethiopian International Institute for Peace and Development
EMI	Ethiopian Management Institute
ENDO	Ethiopian National Democratic Organization
EPDM	Ethiopian Peoples' Democratic Movement
EPLF	Eritrea People's Liberation Front
EPRP	Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Party
EPRDF	Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front
ETV	Ethiopian Television
ESDP	Education Sector Development Program
EWLA	Ethiopian Women Lawyers' Association

EWRP	Ethiopian Workers Revolutionary Party
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
FSS	Forum for Social Studies
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GONGOs	Government Organized Non-Government Organizations
GPDP	Gambella Peoples Democratic Party
HNL	Harari National League
HPR	House of Peoples' Representatives
HoF	House of Federation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INGOs	International Non-Government Organizations
JRM	Joint Review Mission
LNGOs	Local Non-Government Organizations
MLLT	Marxist-Leninist League of Tigray
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MPs	Members of Parliament
MRM	Mid-Term Review Mission
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NRSs	National Regional States
NDRP	National Democratic Revolution Program
NRDC-CPSC	National Revolutionary Development Campaign and Central Planning Supreme Council
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NDRP	National Democratic Revolution Program
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officers
NIPSS	National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies
NNPs	Nations, Nationalities and Peoples
NSAs	Non-State Actors
OLF	Oromo Liberation Front
OPDO	Oromo Peoples' Democratic Organization
ORDA	Organization for the Rehabilitation and Development of Amhara

PA	Peasant Association
PC	Producers' Cooperatives
PMO	Prime Minister's Office
PMAC	Provisional Military Administrative Council
PACD	Policy Analysis and Coordination Division
PDRE	People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
PM	Prime Minister
PMO	Prime Minister's Office
POMOA	Provisional Office for Mass Organization Affairs
PPD	Planning and Programming Department
PRI	Policy Research Initiative
PRS	Policy Research Secretariat
RAB	Regional Affairs Bureau
REST	Relief Society of Tigray
REYA	Revolutionary Ethiopia Youth Association
REWA	Revolutionary Ethiopia Women's Association
SCGP	Scientific Council for Government Policy
SDPRP	Sustainable Development for Poverty Reduction Program
SEDPU	Southern Ethiopian Peoples' Democratic Union
SNNP-NRS	South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' National Regional State
SPDP	Somali People's Democratic Party
TDA	Tigray Development Association
TGE	Transitional Government of Ethiopia
TNO	Tigray National Organization
TPLF	Tigray Peoples' Liberation Front
UDA	Urban Dwellers' Associations
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States
WB	World Bank
WPE	Workers Party of Ethiopia

Map 1. The political map of Ethiopia from 1963 to 1987

Map 2. The administrative map of PDRE from 1987 to 1991

Map 3. The political map representing the new FDRE structure after 1991

Chapter 1. Introduction to institutions, roles and leverage in public policymaking

1.1.Introduction

The past three decades have witnessed profound socio-economic and political transformations in Ethiopia, from circa 1974. Rural land had been turned into state property, and the age-old landlord-serf relationship was abolished by a stroke of a proclamation in 1975. In the same year, not just was urban land nationalized, but extra houses were also expropriated. Banks, insurance companies, and manufacturing industries, whether owned by foreign entrepreneurs or local investors, had already become government-owned. In view of the socio-economic changes taking place, the organization of government and society had fundamentally been altered, with the balance as much tipped towards the former as in the pre-1974 years. In a space of seventeen years between 1974 and 1991, ideology and institutions had undergone remarkable metamorphoses during the *Dergue* years. Ethiopian socialism superseded Ethiopia First (Ethiopia *Tikdem*), and Marxism-Leninism replaced both and continued to dominate public policymaking almost until the regime was ousted in 1991. Likewise, this period had seen remarkable institutional changes. Milestones, which left their imprints on policymaking, included the Provisional Military Administrative Council (PMAC/*Dergue*), the Provincial Office for Mass Organizational Affairs (POMOA), National Revolutionary Development Campaign and Central Planning Supreme Council (NRDC-CPSC), the Commission for the Organization of the Ethiopian Workers Party (COPWPE), the Workers Party of Ethiopia (WPE), the Peoples' Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (PDRE) and the attendant institutions, and the party- and government-sponsored civil organizations, as well as the urban and rural neighborhood associations (*Kebeles*) which came to be known as mass organizations.

In a similar way, far more radical socio-economic and political policies have been introduced since 1991, with the institutions and policies of the previous order undone. The July conference, a precursor of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE) that embodied the Council of Representatives and the Council of Ministers, the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), the protagonist of the 1995 constitution, the bicameral parliament in which the EPRDF emerged as the single most architect and important player in public policymaking, the establishment of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE), the Prime Minister's

Office, the national regional states (NRSs), the local and international NGOs and civil society organizations, which exploded in the wake of 1991, are amongst the major institutions that have clearly made their entry into the public policymaking process, albeit with manifestly uneven leverage. The economic reforms that reinvigorated the market economy, the restructuring of the state to institute ethno-federal administrations, the education and training policy, the introduction of land lease in the urban setting, agriculture-led development industrialization (ADLI), and revolutionary democracy as the value or frame of reference guiding policymaking have all been events dominating the Ethiopian public policymaking process since 1991.

The thrust of this dissertation is to describe, critically compare and assess the main institutions, their roles and leverage in the policymaking process in Ethiopia, and how the profound institutional and political changes over the past three decades have affected public policymaking in Ethiopia, and with what effect.

This chapter begins with an explanatory framework, and presents the statement of the problem. It then spells out the objectives, research questions and the working hypotheses of the study. Considering public policy analyses undertaken in Ethiopia are scarce, Chapter 1 specifies the historical and political milestones that make this study important and relevant. In view of the limitations of past studies, the chapter also sheds light on how this study can set a course for more thorough and critical analyses of public policymaking in Ethiopia. Finally, it details the documentary data, methods of data collection, analysis and the organization of the study.

1.2.A brief explanatory framework

In the literature the definitions of an elite refer to people with influence other than those who hold formal political power. Among others, members of government and of high administration, military leaders, leaders of powerful economic enterprises, leaders of political parties, trade union leaders, businessmen and politically active intellectuals coalesce into forming elites (Ham and Hill, 1993: 30). Arguably, however, in developing countries where wielding political positions (more particularly, party and executive leadership) becomes the primary source of policymaking power, policy elites should embrace individuals and groups who seize the mantle of high political responsibilities. Of course, bureaucratic positions associated with political offices have increasingly buttressed the policymaking leverage of policy elites, and so are integrated into the

corps of the elites group. Policy elites are, therefore, groups composed of persons whose positions enable them make policy decisions having far-reaching consequences (Grindle and Thomas 1991, 59). Hence, they are in command of major hierarchies of policymaking structures; they run the apparatus of government and claim its prerogatives; they direct the military institutions; they are well placed to maneuver power and economic wealth; and they occupy the strategic command posts of the social structure (Mills, 1995: 73).

Hence, premised on the ascendant ideological values, policy elites make decisions that have paramount impact on the lives of the public, with far-reaching consequences. In other words, policies are hardly based on the demands and interests of the people. The starkest reality is that elites appear to see the societal forces as passive, apathetic and ill informed; *ipso facto* public sentiments are more often manipulated by elites, rather than the public influencing elite values (Dye, 1995; Anderson, 1997). Not only are the elites making critical policy decisions, but also the flow of communication is for the most top-down. At the same time, political institutions such as the executive, bureaucratic agencies and parties in power employ strong statutes such as constitutional provisions to force the masses to observe the rules of the game of the elite system and values in developing countries. Elites do not just shape consensus about the continuation of the social system as well as the basic rules of the game, but the survival and stability of the system also depends on the elites' consensus to preserve the fundamental values of the system (Dye, 1995: 25*)*. Therefore, policies that can only comply with the shared consensus and values of policy/ruling elites will be given appropriate attention. The circumstances in most of the developing countries point to the fact that 'people are generally ill informed about policy issues and, hence, apathetic, both the political and bureaucratic elites fashion mass opinion than masses shape the leadership's views' (Saasa, 1985, 5:309-321).

Furthermore, interest and civil society groups are fragmented and lack the capacity to articulate their interests. Nor has there been a climate conducive to promoting involvement in a vibrant civil movement. In fact, in some instances when these forces are active, the mechanisms of wielding influence through formally constituted policymaking institutions and/or channel of communications are absent. In some other cases, not only have the executive, ruling parties and bureaucratic institutions developed clientele organizations that pre-empt autonomous initiatives, but also they use their power prerogatives to induce and guide corporatist participation, whereby groups designated by policy elites are escorted into controlled participation (Brinkerhoff and

Crosby, 2002: 138). For the most part, policy elites encourage public participation to ensure support for themselves and their policy initiatives (Huntington, 1976). It is therefore highly unlikely for public demand to have any effect on the public policymaking process.

Additionally, one of the most critical questions at the heart of the congenital link between governance and public policy in the context of developing countries is how would one institute a governance system so that public policymaking becomes technically efficient and effective, while at the same time policies are responsive to the needs of large sections of the citizenry (Olowu, 2002). The question may well be reckoned with in the realm of governance. Over the last two decades, competing governance approaches have increasingly been gaining currency among academic and multilateral circles. Despite the varying perspectives in approaches, the differences appear to crystallize into two schools, namely, between those who view governance as the conduct of public affairs, and those who see it as steering and controlling public affairs (Hyden, 1999; Hyden and Court, 2002; Olowu, 2002).

The latter approach has been promoted since the 1980s by powerful multilateral organizations and United Nations institutions. To all intents and purposes, governance, as conceived by these multi-lateral organs, emphasizes leadership - the manner in which political (state) leaders manage, use, or misuse power - to promote social and economic development or to pursue agendas that undermine such goals (Olowu, 2002: 4). Hence, good or better governance is conceived from a process perspective with an emphasis on the rule of law, accountability, participation, transparency, and human and civil rights (World Bank, 1992a). These elements appear to be comparable to those governance elements that are ascendant in the Western liberal democracies. Considered chiefly as a partnership approach, the second approach focuses on sharing of authority for public management between state and non-state institutions with greater emphasis on the framework in which public policy decisions are made (Hyden and Court, 2002: 17; Olowu, 2002: 5). The second school therefore extends the issue of governance beyond the confines of an exclusive state domain and action, and sees it as a domain of multi-actors and multi-organizations. A further element that sets apart this school from the first one is that governance is judged as good or bad by both processes as well as outcomes: the use of state and non-state institutional resources to solve social and political problems (*op. cit*). In view of the fact that participatory and transparent policymaking process in Africa and the bulk of the

developing world is in its infancy, and considering the problems stated below, this study follows the second school of thought in governance.

1.3.Statement of the problem

Ever since the recorded history of Ethiopia began, public policymaking has invariably been the prerogative of the emperors, kings and palace courts, the nobility, military dictators, and civilian and bureaucratic elites. Chiefly due to the awesome power of the policy elites and their dominance, and partly because societal actors lack the organization, the autonomy, the capacity and the resources needed to counterbalance party and government players in Ethiopia, any attempt to limit the intervention of state actors and their sphere of influence has rarely been successful in the past. One of the recurring problems in the maze of public policymaking in Ethiopia is, therefore, the imbalance between policymaking institutions and policy beneficiary societal actors.

Party and executive leadership in Ethiopia have assumed disproportionately central roles in initiating, shaping and pursuing public policies from 1974 to 2004. More importantly, the parties and the upper reach of executive leadership (policy elites) (*Dergue*, WPE, EPRDF and the political executive) are the most important actors in placing issues on an agenda, assessing alternatives, as well as being in charge of implementation. As a result, central government institutions have been centralizing policymaking, and make policies that affect people down the remote districts and *Kebeles* (villages). Put simply: over the past three decades the upper reaches of party and executive leadership in Ethiopia (party-fused-executive leadership) have deeply been involved in the policymaking process. On the flip side, the overwhelming party and executive presence in the policymaking sphere appeared to inhibit the growth of robust legislatures, voluntary associations and other civil society groups essential for viable democratic governance. In other words, the expansion of the party and the power of the executive have always taken place without a corresponding development of extra-bureaucratic institutions and civil societal associations. Consequently, the exclusion of the bulk of the populace from participating in public policymaking tended to characterize the Ethiopian public policymaking scene of the past three decades.

Putting it differently, chiefly because the ruling party and government institutions have very narrow circles of policy makers that make participation limited, and because large sectors of the

public are for the most part politically inactive and inarticulate, participation in the policymaking process by the citizenry has appeared to be much less. Democratic institutions such as elections and parliaments either appear to be in shambles or tend to be manipulated in favor of policy elites in Ethiopia. While there have been claims that public participation is encouraged, prior decisions and understanding have been reached almost unanimously among policy elites to mobilize support from 'the inert and apathetic masses', without eliciting critical inputs into the policymaking process. Apparently, where electoral and legislative systems are weakly instituted, where robust and vibrant societal forces that could have countervailed the executive are absent, as is the case in Ethiopia, the mere establishment by decree of electoral procedures and the parliamentary seats can probably contributed very little to forging the balance between policymaking polity and policy receiving larger society.

In Ethiopia, as is probably the case in other developing countries, policy elites (party-fused-executive leadership) play decisive roles to determine policy outcomes and the process through which issues get into the policy agenda, through which they are deliberated within government institutions; and more importantly, how they are pursued and sustained. The preponderant share of the leverage to determine agenda setting, formulate policies and change institutional outcomes for their execution have been invested in the party and the executive leadership. Among others, policy elites who determine who gets what and when have been the key party leadership (WPE, EPRDF), the upper reaches of the executive (the *Dergue*, the PMO and the Council of Ministers), and key regional executive and party heads, with almost all the leadership of these institutions encapsulated in the ruling party leadership. On the other hand, over the past three decades in Ethiopia, not only have the legislatures (the National *Shengo* and the House of Peoples Representatives) been used as instruments of legitimating policies, but they have also been passive institutions that can easily be manipulated by the parties and executive leadership. Therefore, the dominance of the executive in policymaking and the overbearing influence of the party structures relegated the legislative institutions to docile organs having little influence on public policymaking.

The institutional impact of government structures and institutions on policymaking has not been studied extensively, and the few policy analyses that have so far been attempted point to the fact that the black box of Ethiopian policymaking should be uncovered and studied. This study attempts to do just this. In a bid to understand where the real power to make public policy resides

in the policymaking system in Ethiopia, explanatory variables and empirical evidence concentrate upon the institutions, roles and leverage of major actors such as the parties, the executive, the legislatures, civil society at different point in time and their relative capacity (power or resources) to affect public policymaking. Policy elites in contemporary Ethiopia play what appear to be centrally important roles in identifying policy issues for agenda setting, defining policy changes and managing their implementation as well as pursuit. This dissertation attempts to critically assess the salient problematic and recurrent features of public policymaking in contemporary Ethiopia: the imbalance between policymaking institutions and policy beneficiaries.

1.4.The objectives, research questions and hypotheses

1.4.1. The objectives

The dissertation attempts to address the following main objectives:

1. to lay bare the institutional mechanisms and organizational instruments used; the overriding ideological values and outlooks that have influenced, dictated and shaped public policymaking; and the key actors who have dominated and spearheaded policy formulation and implementation over the past thirty years in Ethiopia;

2. to examine the relationship between the party-fused-executive leadership, on the one hand, and the legislatures, on the other, and the leverage that each has brought to bear on the public policymaking process;

3. to critically assess the salient features and perennial problems of public policymaking in contemporary Ethiopia: the imbalance between policymaking institutions and policy beneficiaries;

4. to suggest potential scenarios which are in the prospect of fruitfully forging the balance between policymaking institutions and societal actors, which have hitherto been peripheral actors in the policymaking process.

The following research questions and hypotheses shall guide the study.

1.4.2. Research questions

1. Who are the major actors or the leading players (groups and institutional actors) that exercise the strongest leverage in the policymaking process in Ethiopia?

2. Why have the political executive and the ruling party-fused-executive leadership (policy elites) been dominating public policy making in Ethiopia?

3. How can one assess the relative strength, participation of the civil society and its role in public policymaking vis-à-vis policy elites and the existing socio-political milieu in Ethiopia?

4. What strategies will rectify the imbalances in public policymaking in Ethiopia?

1.4.3. Working hypotheses

1. The dominant ideologies (Marxism-Leninism and revolutionary democracy), which policy elites have embraced and promoted over the past three decades in Ethiopia, have vitally influenced the type of socio-economic policies to be pursued and the choices of institutional mechanisms of implementing them.

2. The domination of the party-fused-executive political leadership in public policymaking has inhibited and obstructed the contributions of the legislature, civil society agencies and independent-minded individuals in national policymaking processes in Ethiopia.

3. Effective democratic participation in public policymaking in Ethiopia is only possible through a deliberate separation of party and state and a deliberate creation of more

effective policy agenda-setting and participation opportunities in public policymaking for legislative institutions, civil society organizations and the public.

1.5.The relevance of the study

Public policymaking and the attendant policymaking institutions have experienced more profound transformations than at any other time, first, in the wake of the 1974 revolution during the *Dergue* era, and second, since EPRDF took power in 1991. Therefore, the following milestones, which have been documented over the past thirty years, make the study vitally relevant.

1. 1974 ushered in a defining moment in Ethiopian history, in which the bulk of the Ethiopian populace from every corner of the country took to the streets, with most of the civil commotion lasting several months, till it culminated in the usurpation of power by the *Dergue* in September 1974. Not only had the Ethiopian revolution represented the citizens' defiance against an anachronistic feudal order, but also had abundantly demonstrated their expressed desire to be involved in the public policy system and become the key players in the policy decisions that affected their lives as well as become the ultimate beneficiaries of socio-economic development.

2. Ethiopia has, over last thirty years, seen much more radical and sweeping policy reforms on a scale unmatched before (namely, 1974-1991 during the *Dergue* era, and 1991 and beyond under the EPRDF).

3. This period also witnessed an upsurge of constitution making, two constitutions in less than a decade – one in 1987 and the second in 1995, with each accompanied by a general election and institution of national and regional parliaments. The period has also seen a flurry of statutes with new conventions, constructs and new institutions characterizing them.

4. Carried to the extreme, not only have the ruling parties been fused with the executive, but also the ideologies (Marxism-Leninism and revolutionary democracy) that the policy

elites have over the past three decades espoused and promoted set the parameters for policy choices as well as the institutional instruments for policy implementation.

5. Despite operating within a difficult legal and political environment, which challenged critical and independent initiative, and with an inadequate resource base, insufficient capacity and minimal experience in civil society activism, on the other, the public and civil societal institutions emerged and proliferated in the wake of 1974, and even the more so after 1991.

Hence, not only shall the events that have transpired over the previous thirty years be examined and addressed in the light of the hypotheses, research questions and objectives, but they also certainly point to the importance and relevance of the study. Furthermore, there has been a convergence of concern in most of the developing countries with citizens' engagement in policy formulation and implementation, and with good governance, broadening political participation to include a search for new and more direct ways through which citizens may influence policies and hold government accountable (Brinkerhoff and Crosby, 2002). The last twenty years have, therefore, witnessed a further emphasis on democratization, with a renewed commitment to citizens' participation in the policymaking process in developing countries. In part due to the spuriousness of Ethiopian political culture, and partly because the constraints posed by ideology, party and executive leadership, Ethiopia stands out the developing world, where citizens' empowerment for policymaking has invariably left a lot to be desired. These factors, too, make the study all the more timely and important.

1.6.The significance of the study

Past studies on public policymaking in Ethiopia were few in number (Redden, 1966; Shiferaw, 1989; Fasil, 1997; Alemayehu, 1998). In his work *The Law Making Process in Ethiopia*, Kenneth Redden (1966) described the law-making process in what was known as Hailesellassie's Ethiopia. Having been entirely predicated on the 1955 revised constitution, and the laws promulgated by the executive and the legislative branches, Redden (1966) described the role of the monarchy (executive), the bicameral parliament (the Chambers of Deputies and Senate) and their competences as spelt out in the constitution (cf. Chapter 3). Likewise, Shiferaw

Woldemichael (1989) produced two separate pieces in which he described the legislative process in much the same fashion as his predecessor. One deals with the law-making process before the 1987 constitution, and the second detailed the part that formally and constitutionally instituted state structures (viz. the National *Shengo*, the President, the Council of the State, and the Council of Ministers) played in the legislative process after the 1987 constitution came into effect (cf. Chapter 3). There have very few attempts to study policymaking in the wake of 1991. However, Fasil Nahum (1997) and Alemyehu Yihunie's works merit attention. In a major work, *Constitution for Nations of Nations: the Ethiopian Prospect*, constitutional lawyer, Fasil Nahum (1997), explained and interpreted the current Ethiopian constitution gravel-to-gravel. In his own words, the work is intended to clarify the new constitutional process in Ethiopia, taking the 1995 constitution as the point of departure (*op. cit.*). On the other hand, in an M.A. thesis entitled 'Enhancing Public Policymaking Through Institutionalization of Policy Analysis in Developing Countries with Special Reference to Ethiopia', Alemayehu (1998) identified weak policymaking capacity in the executive structure as a critical problem of policymaking in Ethiopia, and recommended a high level of interdisciplinary policy analysis unit located right in the heart of the machinery of the government or political executive to deal with the problem (cf. Chapters 5 and 6).

One of the major deficiencies that past attempts to study policymaking in Ethiopia have in common is that they were not based on primary empirical data, and the few analyses made have, therefore, entirely depended on secondary sources (see Redden, 1966; Shiferaw, 1989; Fasil, 1997; Alemayehu, 1998). Furthermore, not only do the studies lack empirical rigor, their study sources and materials have chiefly been the formal constitutional and statutory provisions. In other words, the materials and data limit the breadth and depth of understanding of public policymaking and the major players in the process that should have been examined far beyond the formalities. Moreover, other studies have for most part been discrete, specific and focused on the isolated aspects of the public policymaking process which examined problems in education, health, transport and population policies, but never were targeted at a thorough analysis of institutions, roles and leverage. Hence, analyses of public policymaking premised on manifold data-collection techniques and methods have so far been non-existent. Nor has there been any such attempt in Ethiopia to undertake as much comprehensive public policy analysis, as with

such measures as to explore and examine the institutions, roles and leverage in policymaking of the past three decades.

Furthermore, because of time lapses, the earlier studies were not able to capitalize either on the techniques or knowledge that has grown and developed over time, with knowledge gaps predominantly characterizing them (cf. Redden, 1966; Shiferaw, 1989). As a result, the studies lacked thoroughness in the treatment of the players in the policymaking process at best, and were unsubstantiated at worst. Therefore, there has been little research, and even less has been written, on the problematic of public policymaking in Ethiopia. This is, nevertheless, not to write off the avalanche of studies and research conducted on various discrete policy spaces including land, education, health, population and other socio-economic and political policies.

A systematic anatomy of the role of state-society actors in policymaking and the leverage that each brought to bear on policies and practices, and the influence that institutions, ideological values and/or frame of references of policy elites (the party-fused-executive leadership) exert on the content as well as the course of public policies has nevertheless not been undertaken. Hence, not only is this dissertation intended to fill the void left by knowledge gaps, but it probably also offers a relatively thorough and critical policy analysis based on data and information generated through manifold techniques. It further aims to diagnose germane conceptual tools, qualitative and quantitative events, facts, data and/or information that probably supplement the quantum of the existing knowledge in public policy in Ethiopia in particular and developing countries in general (see Chapters 4, 5 and 6; also see sections 1.7, and 1.8).

1.7.Documentary data

The study uses a descriptive method and critical analysis leading to explanatory and exploratory approaches to the understanding of the complex formal and informal relationships between policymaking institutions (the executive and legislature), on the one hand, and between the party and executive leadership and civil society organizations, on the other. The nature of the study necessitates reflecting on largely qualitative data, although a reasonable quantity of quantitative data in tabular forms has also been used. A large volume of primary and secondary data sources has also been consulted. Apparently, because of the rarity of opportunities to explore and garner primary data/information sources, the author relied largely on the perusal of the secondary sources to ascertain information about the policymaking institutions, roles and leverage of the

Dergue era. Statutory materials, including the constitutions and pieces of legislation of three distinct periods (Haileselassie, *Dergue* and the current government), have been examined to determine the leverage that the formally constituted policymaking institutions enjoy and these have been cross-checked with the data generated through interviews, questionnaires and direct observations. Furthermore, the minutes of the plenary sessions of the Council of Representatives (CoR) of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE) from August 1991 to August 1995 in 109 volumes, the minutes of the plenary sessions of the House of Peoples' Representatives (HPR) and the House of Federation (HoF), from September 1995 to April 2004 in 12 volumes and the minutes of the Constitutional Assembly in 6 volumes were studied and documented, although the restrictions imposed on the use of all of the materials made the study time-consuming, daunting and cumbersome.

Because of the secrecy shrouding the operations of the ruling party, the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), the author had to rely on his personal acquaintances, most of whom have been former students, to have a conduit of constant and unrestricted access to its unofficial and unpublished documents that chiefly circulate among the educated corps of the ruling party. Almost all written in Amharic, and intended neither for propaganda nor external consumptions, the materials provided ample evidence about who has claims on agenda setting, how public policy agendas have been established and with what effects. Some of the documents were further complemented from the party's headquarter in Addis Ababa, and through separate visits to the four headquarters of Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) affiliates in Addis Ababa (Oromo People's Democratic Organization-OPDO), Bahirdar (Amhara National Democratic Movement - ANDM), Awassa (South Ethiopian Peoples' Democratic Union - SEPDU) and Mekele (Tigray People's Liberation Front-TPLF). The literature was reviewed at three places: the GS Gericke Library at the University of Stellenbosch in South Africa with all its electronically equipped facilities and inter-library loan system; and at the libraries of the Institute of Ethiopian Studies (IES) and Institute of Development Studies (IDR) of Addis Ababa University in Ethiopia, and the library of the House of Peoples' Representatives (HPR), whose generous cooperation from staff of both universities and the HPR's library this author had enjoyed.

For much of the period 1991 and beyond, primary data/information gathering focused on four core regions, namely Oromia; Amhara; South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples; and Tigray

national regional states (NRSs) as well as the capital city, Addis Ababa. Not only do the five regions embody almost all the major policymaking establishments which have been operational since 1991, but also these five areas have over the past thirteen years been the strongholds of the ruling party; *ipso facto* the party and the executive structures are actively involved in policymaking and extending down the line to the *Kebele* levels. Certainly these regions represent the core of public policymaking in Ethiopia, and this was sufficient reason to capture the imagination of the author to undertake his field studies there. In other words, issues and concerns involving the fundamental details of public policymaking are abundantly available in the regions mentioned earlier.

Furthermore, this study places the dynamics of public policymaking in Ethiopia in the context of the analytical and conceptual framework of public policymaking in developing countries. By doing so, it has set the scene for unraveling the mazes of policymaking process in Ethiopia; the actors and their power as well as resource leverage they command; the legal and institutional preconditions for public policy formulation and implementation; and the relationships between state and society, as well as the origin and ascendancy of the elitism of the party-fused-executive leadership in public policymaking in Ethiopia (Cloete, 1991, 2000; Dror, 1968; Grindle, 1980; Grindle and Thomas, 1991; Horowitz, 1989; Saasa, 1985; Brinkerhoff and Crosby, 2002). The analytical framework explains the complex relationships between the nature of policies, the characteristics and systems of government institutions and party apparatuses more deeply involved in the policymaking process (*op cit*).

1.8.Empirical data collection, analysis and phases of data collection

Given the qualitative nature of the study, the author relied on in-depth interviews (with most of the interviewing taking an hour and half to two hours), an open-ended questionnaire, and direct observation for primary data/information collection. The latter was used to observe the debates and/or deliberations of the plenary sessions of the House of the Peoples' Representatives (Ethiopian lower house of parliament) and public hearings on draft legislation. Questionnaire responses were obtained from Ethiopian members of parliament (MPs), civil society leaders, Ethiopian and foreign academics and leaders of key political pressure groups, teachers and government officials. Likewise, interviews were conducted with key informants, leaders of civil

society organizations, leaders of political pressure groups and government and party officials. These were selected either for having closely studied both policymaking systems (the *Dergue* and the present) and/or for getting involved with the systems in one form or another; almost all of the interviewees provided incisive information.

Interviews and questionnaire responses were collected in Amharic, the lingua franca of central government institutions and the bulk of Ethiopian populace, translated into English and processed. Since almost all of the interviews were tape-recorded, not only did this provide the author with the opportunity to go through the tapes quite frequently and carefully transcribe them handwritten on papers, but it also simplified the translation of the Amharic versions of the interviews into English. Organized and categorized primarily by target respondent groupings, namely, civil society organizations, MPs, political pressure groups, academics, and teachers, questionnaire responses were summarized in Amharic and translated into English. As Amharic is not part of the language family of the German or the Latin stock, translating the interviews, questionnaire responses, unpublished party, and government documents from Amharic into English were as daunting and arduous as summarizing and analyzing the qualitative information was.

It took three periodic phases to collect study materials and primary data. Running from January to June 2003, the author had close contacts with the archival center of the HPR and some of the MPs during the first phase, collected the bulk of the relevant materials, and had talks with several of the MPs. It was not permissible to borrow the materials, nor was it permitted to photocopy them, which complicated the task of data collection. This prompted the author to rely on personal contacts with the MPs and administrative staff to get access to the hard copies of the minutes of the plenary secessions of the HPR. From early October to the end of December 2003, the author was allowed unrestricted access to the sessions of the HPR, and had the opportunity to meet the chairpersons and secretaries of the standing committees, although interviewing them was not that successful (for reasons specified in Chapter 5, page 219). Despite this, the direct observation, by way of participating in the sessions of the HPR and public hearings, very well served the purpose of the study and was largely successful. Most of the field visits to Oromia, Amhara, SNNP and Tigray NRSs and Addis Ababa were made from January to June 2004.

The lion's share of the last phase had been devoted to primary data gathering in NRSs (i.e. 350 to 700 kilometers to the north, south, north-west and south-east of Addis Ababa), with the

bulk of the time spent talking to or interviewing NRSs' Speakers or heads of secretariats of NRSs parliaments, party and government officials and leaders of civil society organizations (youth, women, and teachers associations). Concomitantly, enough time was devoted to examine the secondary sources at the Institutes of Ethiopian Studies (IES) and Development Research (IDR), both of which are among the oldest institutes affiliated to Addis Ababa University. The author traveled three times to Stellenbosch, South Africa, twice (each lasting three months) to consult the leading promoter, Professor Fanie Cloete of the School of Public Management and Planning (SOPMP) and to use the abundantly equipped GS Gericke Library for the literature and theoretical surveys. The last visit to South Africa coincided with writing up the final draft (July, 2004-March, 2005). Having taught public policymaking at the oldest institute of higher learning in Ethiopia, Addis Ababa University, for over eight years now, the author's mix of teaching and modest research experiences in the area probably provides added significance to the study. In short, manifold data-collecting methods with a range of methodological approaches had been used to generate data and analyze them in light of the hypotheses and research questions.

It is, however, worth mentioning the daunting challenges, which delay the task of data collection that one can face in a qualitative research of this stature. Despite being an ancient state that has maintained its independence over the last two millennia, Ethiopia's political past nonetheless appeared to have weighed down on the collection of study materials and primary data (see Chapter 3). This ranges from foot-dragging in providing materials and questionnaire responses to completely shunning interview appointments. Despite repeated assurances [by the author] that it is the ethical responsibility of the researcher to keep them anonymous and the ramifications of what they said and/or wrote, this was more conspicuous among the ruling party members of the Ethiopian parliament and government officials. For some party or government officials any researcher carrying a letter bearing the emblem of the University (as the author did) would almost immediately be seen as a nemesis intruding into his office to seek information, much the same as a journalist in the private press or as a member of an opposition party, and they were thus loath to divulge any information. Indolence, indecency and reluctance characterize some of persons in academic circles from Addis Ababa to Mekele, from Awasa to Bahirdar. The author, more particularly, remembers with much dismay how a department chairperson at one of the universities in Ethiopia, whom he requested to fill in a questionnaire designed for Ethiopian academics, ridiculed and kicked him out of his office. Nevertheless, thanks to the generous

cooperation that the author enjoyed from former students and personal acquaintances, the unpublished and unofficial materials abundantly collected during the field visits, as earlier indicated, neutralized the ramifications of other's reluctance.

1.9.The organization of the study

The dissertation consists of six chapters. This chapter provides a brief outline of the explanatory framework, and presents the statement of the problem, introduces the hypotheses, the objectives and research questions, establishes the rationale for the relevance and significance of the study, and finally the chapter specifies the methodology, study materials, methods of data collection and analysis.

Chapter 2 introduces conceptual and analytical tools on the basis of which pertinent data; information and the public policy phenomenon in Ethiopia are assessed and analyzed. The chapter places Ethiopian public policymaking dynamics within the context of institutional and socio-political features that typically characterize pubic policymaking in developing countries, and carefully selects germane theoretical constructs that pertinently explain circumstances of Ethiopian public policymaking. It further explores tentative choices and strategies that allow the use of a wide range of tools, knowledge and experiences which offer potentially fruitful scenarios viable for redressing the policymaking problems that have over the past three decades prevailed in Ethiopia

Chapter 3 begins with tracing the country's tumultuous history and socio-political contours that stretch as far back as several centuries, which are essential to our understanding of contemporary public policymaking in Ethiopia. It emphasizes traditional and indigenous socio-political values and norms that have been deeply embedded in Ethiopian culture, which simultaneously militate against the ascendant contemporary values of good governance and forging a balance between the ruling party and the executive, on the one hand, and civil society, civil society organizations and the public, on the other. Separately treating the institutions, roles, leverage and socio-economic policies pursued during the *Dergue* era (1974-1991), and the EPRDF rule since 1991, Chapters 3 and 4 provide descriptive analyses. Chapter 3 further describes and explores the key institutional, individual and group players that had exclusive claim over the public policymaking process in what was popularly known as the *Dergue* regime. It examines the profound ideological and socio-economic transformations that had been taking

place over the years, and the influences that these transformations brought to bear upon policies and practices. It further discusses the assertion of power by the party (WPE/COPWE) and the executive, and the exclusive dominance of a couple of institutions over the organizations of society and the policymaking process. Focusing on the governmental establishments that the *Dergue* had created in the wake of the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Chapter 3 analyzes the center-region relationship; the legal, institutional and ideological guidelines put in place to guide the relationship; and the implementing agencies re-launched to execute centrally guided socio-economic policies.

Chapter 4 deals with the current policymaking landscape, the roles, leverage, and institutions and the trajectories that the public policymaking process has undergone, over the last thirteen years, since 1991. The chapter appraises two periods with distinct institutional arrangements; the first was a four-year transition period, which accompanied the establishment of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) following a ratification of the constitution by a constitutional assembly in December 1994. With the benefit of hindsight, not only have the socio-economic policies formulated and implemented under the auspices of EPRDF had an enormous impact on the periods immediately following the transition, but they also have set institutional precedents and ideological parameters, and created a political context within which policies continue to be made to this day. Focusing on the relationships between the executive and the legislature both at the national and NRSs levels, the chapter examines the statutory powers vested in each, and the perceived roles and leverage each executes in public policymaking after 1995. Finally, Chapter 4 assesses agricultural development-led industrialization (ADLI) and education policies, which were among the major socio-economic policy measures sponsored by the new policy elites, and looks into the motives spurring state and party to situate agriculture and rural-focused development policies at the heart of almost all socio-economic policies in Ethiopia. Hence, ADLI is treated in this chapter, not only because it forms the centerpiece of the ruling party's ideological commitments to the peasantry, but also because it is the core of all socio-economic policies.

Chapter 5 appraises how the predominant ideological recipe (i.e., revolutionary democracy) that the leading protagonist of public policymaking embraced and promoted in the wake of 1991, and hence arrogates for itself virtually the sole claim on the formulation and implementation of socio-economic policies in Ethiopia. The chapter reflects on the resolve with which ideology (i.e.

revolutionary democracy) is pursued to bolster the EPRDF's leverage, as well as that of the network of the leading persons in the party and executive leadership, on the entire gamut of public policymaking. In fact, this has nowhere been more vividly manifested than in the national and NRSs parliaments, where the blend of ruling party-executive leadership sways all the socio-economic decisions. Informed by empirical evidence gathered from field and from the EPRDF's unpublished and unofficial documents, Chapter 5 details how the combined forces of the ruling party and the executive dominate the socio-economic and political policymaking process in Ethiopia. The chapter further provides insight into how the lesser recognition that the party and the executive leadership accord to the civil society and civil society organizations generate less democratic interaction and consultation in the policy process. Finally, it analyzes how the surge of paternalistic and clientelistic participation has rather continued to cast an ominous shadow on efforts to build democracy and promote good governance.

Finally, Chapter 6 provides a succinct explanation of the significance of the theory and recapitulates the findings, explores potentially fruitful courses of action and scenarios that may put Ethiopian public policymaking on the right path, and proposes future research options and challenges that Ethiopian academics should address. Having summarized the formidable challenges that the Ethiopian public policymaking process has faced over the last three decades, Chapter 6 encapsulates the finding into three fundamental thematic problems. It comes to grips with the dictates of ideology and the crucial role that it has played in guiding policy elites in their choice of policy options and the perceived institutionalization of policy actions, the emergence and ascendance of a camaraderie of policy elites with overlapping membership to the ruling parties and top echelon of the executive leadership, and the marginal place that civil society and the attendant associations have in the policymaking process. Chapter 6 further explores a spectrum of options to address genuine public participation in the policymaking process to build the capacity of the society to be able to provide critical input into the policymaking process, and the capacity of the state to be able to accommodate the society's growing involvement in the public policymaking. It also appraises potentially useful institutional mechanisms to pragamatize and to professionalize public policymaking in Ethiopia.

Chapter 2. Theoretical perspectives on public policymaking in developing states

2.1.Introduction

This chapter situates the dynamics of public policymaking in Ethiopia within the context of the analytical and theoretical framework of public policymaking in developing countries. It introduces conceptual and analytical tools on the basis of which empirical evidence shall be assessed, examined and analyzed. In an attempt to examine where real policymaking power resides in the policy system in Ethiopia, explanatory variables and conceptual issues concentrate upon the role of major institutions (legislatures at different point in time, the political executives, political parties, interest groups) and their capacity (power or resources) to affect public policy. The purpose of this chapter is, therefore, to offer an explanatory framework that draws on many strands in public policy theory to help us comprehend the dynamics of public policymaking process in Ethiopia, to provide insight into the salient features and perennial problems of public policymaking, and to explore potential mechanisms for contending with the problems of public policymaking in Ethiopia. It proffers an explanatory framework for an appraisal of the institutions, roles and leverage in public policymaking. Among others, it adopts the elite model theory of policymaking (Sassa, 1985; Dye, 1995; Anderson, 1997), and examines how the *modus vivendi* of people, and the socio-economic and socio-cultural variables determine and influence the dynamics of policymaking (Cloete, 2000). It also looks at the state-society relationships vis-à-vis policymaking in essentially developing country context (Dror, 1968, 1986; Grindle, 1980; Horowitz, 1989; Smith, 1973, 1985; Grindle and Thomas, 1991; Turner and Hulme, 1997; Cloete, 1991, 2000).

It further explores a wide range of knowledge and experience that are essential for coming to terms with the multitude of policymaking problems in Ethiopia. It appears that the power of policy elites has rarely been balanced by the plurality of autonomous civil societal associations such as professionals, intellectuals, trade unions, business associations, religious groups, voluntary associations and NGOs in most of the developing world. Moreover, systems and structures of governance have not only widely involved socio-political and economic actors in the society; the state and its administrative structures in developing countries have not invariably been accountable to the civil society. This study, therefore, addresses the contentious issue of forging the balance between state and society. The latter presupposes developing and

institutionalizing sound governance structures, ensuring the accountability of political and administrative institutions to the civil society, and encouraging citizens' involvement more fully in public policymaking, and providing professional skills to public institutions for formulating and implementing sound policies.

The next section explores a spectrum of concepts to define public policy, and adopts Gerston's formulation as a working definition. Focusing on conceptual lenses (models), this chapter also sheds light on a selected set of approaches to public policymaking that feature prominently in the realm of policy analysis. In a bid to trace inherent commonalities, it further appraises the socio-cultural, socio-economic and socio-political characteristics of developing countries. Furthermore, this chapter clearly demonstrates who the prime movers, architects and players in public policymaking in developing countries are, and evaluates the stature of non-state actors in the policymaking process. Finally, it offers an exposition which points to potential instruments for dealing with the recurrent problems of policymaking in Ethiopia in particular and developing countries in general.

2.2.Defining public policy

The historical root of the concept of policy can be identified from its etymological origins (Dunn, 1994: 33). The term policy comes to us from Greek, Sanskrit and Latin languages. Dunn (*ibid.)* further noted 'the Greek and Sanskrit root *polis* (city-state) and *pur* (city) evolved into the Latin *politia* (state) and later, into the Middle English *police*, which referred to the conduct of public affairs or the administration of government'. The etymological origin of two other important words, *police* and *politics,* is the same. This is also one of the factors contributing to the present-day ambiguity surrounding the boundaries of such disciplines as political science, public administration and the policy sciences, each of which is heavily committed to the study of politics and policy (*ibid.*).

It has been argued that the study of public policy is far from a new venture; the systematic study of public policy, however, began nearly half a century ago (Bauer, 1968). The discipline of public policy emerged as an important field in the early 1950s with the pioneering works of Harold Lasswell. In the mid-60s the works of David Easton also provided an intellectual framework for understanding of the entire policy process (Sabtier, 1991). Howlett and Ramesh (1995) also noted that policy science is a relatively recent discipline, emerging in North America

and Europe after World War II as students of politics groped for new understanding of the relationship between government and citizens. Pioneered by Harold Lasswell and others in the West, the focus of policy sciences was not so much on the structure of governments or the behavior of political actors, or what governments should or ought to do, but on what governments actually do *(ibid.)*.

There are as many academic definitions of 'policy' as there are many everyday usages of the term (Hogwood and Gunn, 1984). Some scholars pointed out the difficulty of finding a single neat phrase to define the concept of public policy (Bauer, 1968 Saasa, 1985; Theodoulou, 1995). De Coning (2000) stresses that an assessment of the nature of definitions in the field of policy provides no universally accepted definitions. 'However, an adequate framework of definitions enables one to explore the multi-dimensional nature of policy, to establish the key elements of definitions in the field and to develop a working definition' *(op. cit.)*. It is with this heuristic understanding that we should critically explore the various definitions of public policy and their interpretations.

Public policy is what governments choose to do or not to do (Dye, 1995). Dye not only offers a definition too generalized to be useful; the formulation also tends to be too simple and fails to provide the means to conceptualize public policy. It would include every aspect of governmental behavior from purchasing or failing to purchase paper clips to waging or failing to wage nuclear war; it thus provides no means of separating the trivial from the significant aspects of government activities (Howlett and Ramesh, 1995). Dye's definition, however, states clearly that the agent of public policymaking is a government. Second, he highlights the fact that public policies involve a fundamental choice on the part of governments to do something or do nothing. Policy can even be viewed as change and goal oriented (Cloete, 1991: 4). 'The policy of government can be defined as its programme of action to give effect to selected normative and empirical goals in order to address perceived problems and needs in society in a specific way, and therefore to achieve desired changes in the society' *(ibid.)*.

Anderson (1997: 9) offers a more generic definition. He describes public policy as 'a relatively stable, purposive course of action followed by an actor or set of actors in dealing with a problem and matter of concern'. Anderson's formulation adds two important elements to those noted by Dye. Primarily, it stresses that sets of actors, rather than a sole actor, within government, take policy decisions. Policies are also the result of not only multiple decisions, but

of multiple decisions taken by manifold actors. Second, it highlights the link between government action and the perception of the existence of a problem or concern requiring governmental action.

Dror (1968: 12) offers a more succinct and comprehensive definition of public policy. It is 'a more complex, dynamic and continuous process whose various components make different contributions to it. It decides major guidelines for action directed at the future mainly by governmental organs…' (*op. cit.*). Dror's definition contains the essential elements of public policy. First, it stresses that public policymaking involves structures (components), and is an ongoing process taking place within governmental institutions. Second, depending on the nature of the structure of policy and policy system, the institutions in the public domain (such as the legislature, the executive, the judiciary and the administrative apparatus) make different contributions to public policymaking. Third, it asserts that public policy decisions are legislative enactments that can be made by public institutions.

Saasa (1985) introduces the idea that public policy is not only a conscious goal-selecting process undertaken by actors in the political system, but it also includes the identification of the means for achieving such public goals. Policy decisions should also appreciate the capabilities of the major actors vis-à-vis policy objectives *(ibid.)*. The assertion, implicitly or explicitly, signifies that policies are often far from achieving the originally established objectives mainly because of the gaps between power and resource capabilities of that policymaking and implementing institutions command, on the one hand, and the objectives accomplished gauged in terms of concrete goods and services, on the other.

The composite of ideas and elements that are incorporated in the majority of definitions are the following. First, public policies are designed to accomplish or produce definite results. Proposed policies may usefully be considered as hypotheses till concrete actions are taken to meet policy objectives (Saasa, 1985; Anderson, 1997). Second, policy is broader in scope and deeper in perspective than would discrete decisions account for (Hogwood and Gunn, 1984). Third, public policy should distinguish between what governments intend to do and what, in fact, they actually do. Policy involves what governments actually do, not just what they intend to do or what they say they are doing (Anderson, 1997). Fourth, public policies are enacted and enforced by governmental institutions and actors. However, this assertion should not be interpreted as belittling the role of non-state actors in public policy and the influence that they may bring to

bear upon policymaking. Fifth, public policy involves all level of actors, and is not necessarily restricted to formal actors (Theoudoulou, 1995). Sixth, numerous government structures and institutions contribute to policymaking. Policymaking is thus a pervasive process that is not solely limited to legislative and executive orders, rules and other ordinances (Dror, 1968). Last, public policy is an ongoing process, which involves not only the decision to enact law but also the subsequent actions of enforcing and implementing them (Theoudoulou. 1995, Anderson, 1997).

This study adopts Gerston's formulation as a working definition:

> Public policy is defined here as the combination of basic decisions, commitments, and *actions made by those who hold or affect government positions of authority*. In most instances, these arrangements result from *interactions among those who demand change, those who make decisions, and those who are affected* by the policy in question. The determinations made by those in positions of legitimate authority – most commonly, one or more public offices in government – are subject to possible redirection in response to pressures from those outside government as well as from others within government…*The linkage between policymaking and policy receivers is vital to understanding the meaning and power of public policy.* (1997: 6-7) (emphasis added).

Before winding up this section, it is necessary to distinguish between policymaking and decision-making. Decision-making involves discrete choices from among alternatives, and it is not a self-contained stage, but a specific stage rooted in the policy cycle (Anderson, 1997; Howlett and Ramesh, 1995). Policymaking, on the other hand, encompasses a flow and a pattern of action that extends over time and includes many decisions, some routine and some not. Second, policymaking is a highly political process where continuous conflict, bargaining and negotiation occur between groups, and between state and non-state actors as well. Discrete and mundane decisions can, however, be made routinely by households and individuals.

2.3.Models of public policymaking and their relevance to developing countries

In this section, in search of approaches that qualify the imperatives of 'avant-garde' developing countries, various models of public policymaking are explored. The discussions will, however, be limited to five models, namely rational, incremental, elite, pluralist and institutional models. Some of the models are reviewed here for the purpose of comparison. However, this should not be interpreted as denigration of the usefulness of models that are not treated here. Systems approach and mixed-scanning are not discussed, primarily because the systems model essentially views policymaking as 'a response of a political system to demands arising from the society' (Dye, 1995; Anderson, 1997), which does not appear to be the case in the context of developing countries. Second, although Amitai Etzioni suggested mixed scanning as an alternative approach to both rational and incremental models, it is nevertheless less clear how would it operate in practice. Although all the models originated from the mainstream Western social and political values, elite and pluralist models appear to be relevant to developing countries in general and the Ethiopian realities in particular.

To begin with, Dye (1995:18) offers a list of uses of models of public policy as conceptual lenses or tools. Among others, models simplify our thinking about public policy. They also channel our efforts to understand public policy by way of distinguishing between what is important and not important. More importantly, models suggest explanations for public policy and predict its consequences *(ibid.)*. Writers in the field, nevertheless, argued that most of the contemporary policymaking models are of imperfect application and limited relevance in understanding the policymaking processes in developing countries (Milne, 1972 Saasa, 1985; Dror, 1968).

The following models have been selected as the most appropriate models to assess and understand the policymaking processes in Ethiopia.

2.3.1. The rational actor model

The rational actor model is one of the leading models of policymaking. In essence, rational decision-making involves the selection of an alternative which maximizes the decision-maker's values, the selection being made following a comprehensive analysis of alternatives and their

consequences (Ham and Hill, 1993). It is 'rational' in the sense that the model prescribes strategies for decision-making that will lead to the choice of the most efficient means of achieving policy goals. The rational model is, therefore, based on the belief that problems of the society ought to be solved in a 'scientific' or 'rational' manner by gathering all relevant information on the problems and alternative solutions to them, and selecting the best alternative (Etzioni, 1967; Dye, 1995; Anderson, 1997; Howlett and Ramesh, 1995). Simon suggested and elucidated the idea of bounded rationality or 'satisficing' to describe a realistic decision-making in practice (cited in Ham and Hill, 1993). According to Ham and Hill (1993), bounded rationality involves a decision-maker's choice of an alternative intended not to maximize his values. The term 'satisficing' portrays not only this process, but enables policymakers faced with a decision to simplify by not examining all possible alternatives as well. In this sense 'the exacting demands of rational comprehensive model are avoided' *(ibid*: 84*)*.

There have been considerable criticisms directed at this rational comprehensive approach. Several writers pointed out that there are limits to the ability of policymakers to be comprehensive in establishing alternatives and calculating costs and benefits (Lindblom, 1959; Etzioni, 1967; Ham and Hill, 1993; Anderson, 1997). Lindblom *(ibid)* contended that 'limits on human intellectual and on available information set definite limits to be comprehensive'. Therefore, the rational model is criticized for 'being at once unrealistic and undesirable' (Etzioni, 1967). Several other scholars in the field questioned the validity and relevance of rational comprehensive model to the Third World policymaking (Milne, 1972; Dror, 1968; Saasa, 1985). They recognized the many deficiencies inherent in a rational comprehensive approach to public policymaking in developing counties.

The model is not practicable for the following reasons: first, the availability and quality of information is the most important handicap. It is not only costly to produce and process the required information, but also difficult to comprehend because of the absence of human and material resources and capacities to meet the demands of rational decision-making. This state of affairs is made worse in developing countries 'by the lack of skilled and experienced manpower to make decisions in the manner prescribed by the rational deductive model' (Saasa, 1985: 314). Second, the radical policy reforms and social transformations that are taking place in the developing countries make the use of rationality unreliable and uncertain. Therefore, scientific criteria for a thorough assessment of policy alternatives and their outcomes would be difficult to

ascertain (Dror, 1968). The rapid social and economic transformations may also result in changes in goals and values at a faster rate, which makes the practicability of rationalism suspect. Third, in part due to deficiencies in the policy structure, and partly due to the absence of a propitious environment within which the policy system operates, the rational components are of a poor quality in developing countries (*ibid*). More importantly, the bureaucracy is weak and cannot supply very many rational components in policymaking. Last, ascertaining agreements on most crucial policy issues among citizens, politicians and the bureaucracy can often be complicated by social fragmentation, absence of agreement on policy goals and crisis of leadership caused by social fragmentation based on primordial ties *(op. cit)*.

Saasa summarized his skepticism about the validity and relevance of the rational comprehensive approach to developing countries as follows:

> Developing countries that attempt to use 'rational' and 'scientific' approaches towards policymaking often plan with out going through the mechanics of implementation. For those countries that are not pragmatic in their approaches, it is common for their ambitious development plans, for example, to be founded on inadequate and unreliable information (especially of resource availability and implementation capabilities) and, thus, to end up being mere statements of intentions. (1985:318)

Overall, information that is critical in the decision-making process is not only in short supply, it is often unreliable. The shortage of information means 'policy makers have much less information than they need and that what they have is of questionable reliability' (Grindle and Thomas, 1991: 45). As a result, policymakers must depend more on intuition and experience than on solid information in making decisions. Decisions that capitalize on intuition are subjective and unpredictable. In the absence of adequate data and reliable information, decisions are likely to be more politically oriented in developing countries. Nevertheless, developing countries which cannot successfully practice other models of policymaking, such as incrementalism, may be induced by the drive for innovation to adopt policies which have unpredictable consequences. Ironically, the drive for innovations coupled with the rapid social and economic transformations perhaps leaves third world policymakers no option other than adopting those that resemble the rational model (Etzioni, 1967).

2.3.2. The incremental model

Misgivings about the relevance and usefulness of the rational model led to efforts to develop a theory of policymaking that avoids many of the difficulties of the rational comprehensive approach. Charles Lindblom is the leading protagonist of the approach that has several names: disjointed incrementalism, successive comparison or simply incremetalism. Essentially, the incremental method can be summarized as follows (Etzioni, 1967: 386-387):

1. Rather than attempting a comprehensive survey and evaluation of all alternatives, the decision-maker focuses only on those policies that differ incrementally from existing policies;

2. Only a relatively small number of policy alternatives are considered;

3. For each policy alternative, only a restricted number of 'important' consequences are evaluated;

4. The problem confronting the decision-maker is continually redefined. Increlmentalism allows for countless ends-means and means-ends adjustments, which, in effect, make the problem more manageable;

5. Thus, there is no one decision or 'right' solution but a 'never-ending' series of attacks on the issues at hand through serial analysis and evaluation;

6. As such, incremental decision-making is described as remedial, more focused on the alleviation of present, concrete social imperfections than to the promotion of future social goals.

In Lindblom's view, policymakers develop policies through a process of making successive limited comparison with earlier decisions (1959). He (1959*:* 81) argued that policymakers work through a process of 'continually building out from the current situation, step-by-step and by

small degrees', unlike the rational approach, which starts 'from fundamentals anew each time…and [is] always prepared to start completely from the ground up'. Policies thus arrived at only marginally differ from those that already exist. In other words, the departures from the *status quo* are incremental. The test of good policies, therefore, is not whether or not the policy maximizes the values of the policymaker; rather it is whether the policy secures agreement of the interests involved (Lindblom, 1959).

Although they fell by far short of appreciating the realities in the third world, Howlett and Ramesh (1995) advanced two important reasons to demonstrate why policies should not vary significantly from the *status quo*. Primarily, since bargaining requires distribution of limited resources among various participants, it is easier to continue the existing pattern of distribution rather than trying to attribute values to radically new proposals. Unlike the uncertainties surrounding new arrangements that may make agreement on the changes difficult, the policymakers are presumed to know the benefits and costs of the present arrangement. Second, 'the standard operating procedures that are the hallmark of bureaucracy tend to promote the continuation of the existing practices. The methods by which bureaucrats identify options and the methods and criteria for choices are often laid out in advance, inhibiting innovation and perpetuating the existing arrangements' (Howlett and Ramesh, 1995: 142).

Furthermore, policymakers adapt objectives to available means rather than striving for a predetermined or fixed objective. Means and ends are simultaneously chosen in the incremental approach. The model, therefore, views policymaking as a pragmatic exercise concerned with solving concrete problems rather than achieving lofty goals. More importantly, the means chosen for solving problems are discovered through a trial-and-error approach rather than through the comprehensive evaluation of all possible means, and 'policy does not move in leaps and bounds' (Lindblom, 1959; Howlett and Ramesh, 1995). Policymakers simply consider only familiar alternatives for appropriateness and stop the search after an acceptable alternative has been found.

There have, nevertheless, been criticisms leveled against the incremental method (Etzioni, 1967[3]; Dror, 1968; Milne, 1972; Saasa, 1985; Anderson, 1997). Before considering the applicability, validity and relevance of the incremental model to the Third World policymaking

[3] Amitai Etzioni suggested an alternative approach, mixed-scanning, to both rational comprehensive and incremental approaches in 1967. His model has not been dealt with here.

circumstances, we will enumerate the criticisms generally made of the model. First, incrementalism suggests that the most powerful interests in the society will make most policy choices, and therefore, 'the demands of the unprivileged and politically unorganized would be underrepresented' (Etzioni, 1967: 387). This would thus mean powerful interests have the most to gain from policies that differ marginally from the *status quo.* Second, the model is criticized for being inherently conservative and pro-inertia, for its suspension of large-scale change and innovation. As Etzioni (*op. cit.*) noted, incrementalism disregards basic societal innovations, as it focuses on the short run and seeks no more than limited variations from past policies and programs. Third, Lindblom's model seems to be a characteristic of policymaking in a stable environment, 'where all relevant parties have a more or less clear image of the expected results of a certain policy', and it is a typical policymaking process of advanced countries like the US (Dror, 1964: 154; Etzioni, 1967: 387). Last, according to Etzioni (*op. cit*) major strategic decisions are different from day-to-day operational decisions, a distinction that incrementalism has not adequately taken into account.

The preceding criticisms are of a universal nature and perhaps may not necessarily appreciate developing countries' policymaking realities. Very few writers in the field of policy delved into the subject to comprehend whether some of the policymaking models, developed based on Western socio-economic circumstances are indeed practicable. Incrementalism is unsuitable for a developing state with a mass leader and small political elite who have high aspirations for rapid and radical socio-economic transformations through centrally guided social changes (Dror 1964, 1968). The following series of problematic issues were raised to address the difficulties of using the incremental model in guiding policymaking in developing states (Milne, 1972; Saasa, 1985).

1. Because of a high desire and motivation to catch up, policy reforms in most developing countries show a radical departure from the past to meet the requirements of rapid socio-economic changes. Policymakers in developing countries would, therefore, conceive of incrementalism's limited usefulness, because it apparently promotes inertia and discourages innovation.

2. Most developing countries are perhaps unable to secure a sufficient degree of consensus envisaged, which is essential to make the incremental model feasible.

3. Stability has been presented as a necessary and desirable criterion for incrementalism to succeed. In developing countries, where grand and fundamental policy reforms are often launched, war and natural calamities continually disrupt normal life, and amidst resource scarcities, it would be unrealistic to conceive of the suitability of incrementalism. Lindblom (1959) himself admitted that his model is applicable only 'to relatively stable countries such as the United States'.

In a more general sense, the incremental approach has been found appropriate neither on descriptive nor prescriptive grounds (Turner and Hulme, 1997). On a prescriptive basis incremental solutions are not the requirements for development problems that deserve major and urgent attention, and on descriptive grounds incrementalism fails to incorporate enough of the extra-rational components which impinge on the policymaking process in developing states *(ibid.).*

2.3.3. The elite model

Despite the fact that the reasons for the lack of suitability of the models may differ, neither the rational comprehensive model nor incrementalism is suitable for understanding the policymaking process in the Third World states (Dror, 1968; Milne, 1972; Saasa, 1985). It can nevertheless be argued that elite theory describes and explains developing countries' policymaking circumstances more appropriately than incremental and rational approaches do. Drawing on the work of the classical elite theorists, Pareto and Mosca, writers such as Wright Mills pointed to the concentration of power in the hands of a minority of the population (Ham and Hill, 1993: 31). Mosca (cited in *ibid*) wrote:

> In all societies-from societies that are very meagerly developed and have barely attained the drawings of civilization, down to the most advanced and powerful societies-two classes of people appear-a class that rules and a class that is being ruled. The first class, always the less numerous, performs all political functions, monopolizes power and enjoys the advantages that power brings, whereas the second, the more numerous class, is directed and controlled by the first, in a manner that is now more or less legal, now more or less arbitrary and violent.

In a modern state the definition of elite has increasingly involved persons other than those who hold formal political power. Included are members of government and of high administration, military leaders, leaders of powerful economic enterprises, leaders of political parties, trade union leaders, businessmen and politically active intellectuals. However, whether or not these groups are included in the category of policy elites in developing countries is highly questionable. The primary source of power for the policy elites in developing states is the wielding of political offices. The latter involve individuals who actually exercise political power in the society at any given time (Ham and Hill, 1993). In modern times, of particular importance is the creation and proliferation of bureaucratic positions to carry out the increasing responsibilities of governmental institutions. Bureaucratic positions and technical expertise associated with the former have increasingly strengthened the power positions of policy elites in developing countries.

Elite theory, therefore, asserts that public policy decisions are not made based on the demands and interests of the people, but rather based on the interests of governing elites, whose preferences are carried into effect by bureaucratic agencies. Albeit with considerable Western predispositions, values and experience, Dye (1995: 25-27) succinctly describes the elite perspectives of public policymaking. Significant elements of the assertions and perspectives resemble those of the developing countries. Dye *(ibid.)* noted that elitism views the masses as passive, apathetic and ill-informed; mass sentiments are more often manipulated by elites, rather than elite values being influenced by the masses. Policy decisions are not only made by the elites, but communication also flows from top to bottom. 'Democratic institutions elections and parties' merely have symbolic value and tie the people to the prevailing political system. In developing countries political institutions such as the executive, bureaucratic agencies and parties in power employ strong statutes to force the masses observe the rules of the game of the prevailing system.

Second, public policies reflect the demands and interests of governing elites, rather than the masses. Changes and innovations in public policies come because of redefinitions of their own values by the elites (Dye, 1995; Anderson, 1997). Because of the general conservatism of elites in preserving the system, changes in public policies are seldom fundamental. More importantly, changes in the nature of the political system can only occur when events threaten the system; elites will then be obliged to introduce reforms aimed at protecting the fundamental values of the

system. Third, elites also carve up consensus about the continuation of the social system as well as the basic rules of the game. The survival and stability of the system depend on the elites' consensus to preserve the fundamental values of the system (*ibid.)*. Therefore policies that echo the shared consensus and values of ruling elites will be given appropriate attention.

The circumstances in many developing countries largely demonstrate that 'people are generally ill informed about policy issues and, hence, apathetic, both the political and bureaucratic elite fashion mass opinion than masses shaping the leadership's views (Saasa, 1985: 311). It is thus inescapable to conclude that elite preference more aptly explains the policymaking conditions of developing than developed countries.

2.3.4. Pluralist model

More direct participation in policymaking is possible when the interests of various and/or divergent groups in society are aggregated in the formulation and implementation of public policies. Policymaking in pluralist perspective is the process by which various competing interests are reconciled; public policies are thus a result of competition and collaboration among groups working to further their members' collective interests (Howlett and Ramesh, 1995: 34). In other words, the pluralist approach to policymaking assumes that public policy is the outcome of a free competition between ideas and interests (Parsons, 1995: 134).

Nevertheless, the Marxist-Leninist approach to policymaking appears to be antithetical to liberal democratic values that emphasize on the importance of accommodating plural interests within a given institutional and political setting of the policymaking process. The predominant values in Marxist thinking are rather anchored in class and class struggle, democratic centralism and the advent of communism that sharpens contradictions within groups and instigates divisions within a given political society. In other words, unlike the pluralist model of policymaking, the Marxist-Leninist model tends to exclude certain segments of society at the expense of others. The Leninist model has collapsed worldwide because it never delivered in the way of democracy, nor had it demonstrated any significant shift away from the direct control of economic and social institutions by the state.

The trend towards liberal and pluralist approaches to policymaking in developing countries therefore seems justified on the grounds that the 'liberal democracy is a powerful

stimulus to societal progress, basically because it provides a more conducive institutional environment for market-led economic development, while at the same time creating a conducive socio-political milieu for accommodation of various interests in the policymaking process, rather than the exclusivist Marxist-Leninist approach (White, 1998: 21). Therefore, a democratic developmental state that combines the accommodation of divergent societal interests in the policymaking process and delivering sound economic development increasingly become an attractive option for developing countries that face formidable developmental challenges, although practicing the liberal democratic values exactly as in Anglo-Saxon countries may not feasible for developing countries.

However, White (*ibid*. 31) cautioned that the distinctive political and institutional model of the democratic developmental state can be seen as one of the alternatives among a wide range of political economies shaped and determined by the socio-economic system, civil society, political society, state institutions and global environment. In sum, a developmental state that is characterized by liberal values of *inclusive embeddedness* that goes beyond a narrow band of elites to involve broader sections of society (*ibid*.), and which at same time delivers economic development to the larger segment of society over long range, appears to be a relatively sound model for developing countries as an alternative to Marxist-Leninist models. Its experience in Ethiopia will be summarized and assessed in detail in chapters 3 to 5.

2.3.5. The institutional model

Policy as an outcome of political institutions has been the oldest concern of political studies (Dye, 1995; Anderson, 1997). Public policy is authoritatively determined, legitimated and implemented by governmental institutions (Hanekom, 1987). Intuitionalism tends to emphasize the more formal and structural aspects of policymaking and implementing institutions. Anderson (1997) defines an institution as a set of regularized patterns of human behavior that persists over time and performs some significant social function or activity, whose outputs are public policy decisions.

The heart of policymaking activities is government institutions such as the legislature, the executive, the courts and bureaucratic agencies. Dye (*op. cit.*) argued that public policy can become public policy only when it is adopted, implemented and enforced by public

(governmental) institutions. Government institutions lend public policy three distinguishing characteristics (Dye, 1997). First, government gives legitimacy to policies. Public policies are generally considered as legal obligations that command the loyalty of citizens. In other words, only policies issued by public organs involve legal obligations. Second, unlike policies or regulations of other groups and associations, public policies have universal application. Only government policies extend to all people in the society. Last, only government institutions can legally proceed against citizens who violate their policies, because it can make effective use of the means of coercion (*ibid.*).

The regularized and stable patterns of behavior as well as rules and structures can influence the content and context of public policymaking. Such dynamic aspects of public policy as parties, public opinion and interest groups can affect the policy outcomes of policymaking institutions. Nonetheless, policymaking institutions can be so structured as to serve certain elite group interests rather than others (Dye, 1995, Anderson, 1997). As is the case in most developing states, policymaking institutions give advantage to certain interests in the society and withhold it from other interests. The very small number of persons-policy (ruling) elites, who allocate values and resources, are also the ones who enjoy greater access to government and bureaucratic power in developing countries. The existing structure of government institutions can have important policy consequences. It has thus been argued that since '*both* structure and policy are largely determined by social or economic forces and that tinkering with institutional arrangements will have little independent impact on public policy if underlying forces remain constant' (Dye, 1995: 21).

2.4. Socio-cultural, socio-economic and socio-political characteristics of developing countries

Despite some socio-cultural and socio-economic variations among developing countries, various characteristics are shared largely by differing developing states. Dror (1968: 105) identified six characteristics that can generally be applied to most or 'avant-garde' developing states:

1. A very low level of technological development;

2. A once strong tribal or communal structure that is now slowly disintegrating;

3. A mass leader and small political elite, who are aspiring toward a rapid and radical socio-economic transformation by means of centrally, directed social change, the leader maintaining a strong grip on the masses by both charisma and force, but depending on support by the military;

4. Almost complete absence of a middle class;

5. A long history of colonial rule;

6. Wide scope of public policymaking that covers most economic activities.

Well over three decades after Dror suggested these characteristics, only few of them are perhaps unworkable today. The second and fourth characteristics could be questioned. Ethnic and communal structures are increasingly gathering pace in many parts of the Third World today. The inter-communal strife in Somalia, India, Nigeria, Indonesia, and Ethiopia would not only testify that the forces of ethnic structures are still at large, power elites in these countries maneuver these forces as a policymaking leverage as well. Second, on account of the rapid economic and political transformations that have been taking place, a robust, but a middle class of a comprador nature has flourished over the past many years in large number of developing countries.

Low per capita income, agriculture-dependent economies, large rural populations and the emergence of more complex societies generally characterize developing countries (Cloete, 2000). These harsh realities have added to the onerous tasks of policymakers and development managers in these countries. Hence, the principal work of 'policymakers is to address the critical issues of stimulating growth' and of development. Both in developed and developing countries, socio-cultural, socio-political and socioeconomic variables bear upon the contents of policies and determine the power leverage of actors and their efforts to influence policies (*op. cit.*). However, developing states suffer more than their counterparts in developed countries, essentially because they are underdeveloped in 'their history', in their ideology, in their resources and in their political regimes (Dror, 1968). Thus, for policymakers in most of the developing countries the job description is ambitious, the skills it requires are extensive (Grindle and Thomas, 1991).

The benefits of economic development and growth can be measured in terms of life expectancy, mortality rate and literacy. Weaver *et al.* (1997) noted that longevity is a good measure of a country's capacity to provide a high quality of life for its citizens. Closely related to life expectancy is mortality rate, measured by infant mortality for children below the age of five. The literacy rate also indicates how well a country prepares its people to cope in a modern and literate environment. Life expectancy, infant mortality and literacy are therefore measures of development. Furthermore, access to safe water, sanitation and health care are additional measures of a society's commitment to including all people in the development process.

The realities in developing countries are harsher and could perhaps present enormous difficulties to overcome in the near future. In connection with *sociocultural variables* and the debilitating features that these bring to bear on the people of developing countries, Cloete writes:

> Lesser developed states normally have much larger numbers of illiterate, poorly educated people and on the average a much younger and less mature population (the stereotypical examples are probably most sub-Saharan African countries, Latin American Countries… Asian countries…). The role of the extended family is crucial in community life, while in many cases women still occupy subordinate roles in society and ethnic tolerance is sometimes superficial. They frequently have only primitive means of transport available to them and are therefore not really mobile.
>
> Their populations have relatively short life expectancies compared with the inhabitants of more developed countries, with incidences of infant mortality and poor health services that struggle to cope with ballooning populations. Large numbers of people still live in primitive conditions in rural areas, where they eke out an existence, barely surviving from day-to-day. They have only rudimentary services and facilities, with large regions of the country frequently being inaccessible owing to a serious lack of transport and other communication routes. The governments concerned cannot provide for even the most basic needs of their citizens. (2000*:* 83)

Moreover, as the populations of most developing states are rural, they are scattered and are far from public institutions that make important decisions affecting their lives. It follows from this that people in developing countries have neither enough knowledge of what the government is doing, nor do they influence decision making, nor do they have access to important decision makers. These emanate from the poverty that sets apart these states from developed countries, which itself is closely linked to levels of literacy and school enrollments. For example, adult literacy was 52 percent female, 74 percent male in 1997 for low-income countries; and 80, and 91 percent for female and male respectively for middle-income countries 89 and 91 percent

respectively compared to 100 percent in most developed countries. The records for secondary and tertiary education are even more striking. The enrollment ratio for low-income countries was 46 and 8 percent in secondary and tertiary schools respectively of the appropriate age groups; for middle-income countries, 69 and 12 percent; and for industrialized countries 100 and 62 percent respectively (World Bank, 2001). It is thus self-evident that 'low levels of education limit the extent and complexity of communication among the population about the issues and problems facing the countries. This can easily translate into feelings of powerlessness among the least informed and most isolated sectors of the population (Grindle and Thomas, 1991). Grindle and Thomas go on to say that:

> the age distribution of the population is significantly different in developing countries than in industrialized countries, and this tends to reinforce the aloofness of decision makers from their societies… significantly larger proportions of population in low-income and middle-income countries are fourteen years of age or less. This means that the politically aware and active percentage of the population is also lower in developing countries than in industrialized ones. A large rural population, limited communications, low levels of literacy, and limited adult population tend to mean that a much larger percentage of the population is out of touch with what is happening especially when government is strongly centralized. This inevitably enhances the role of policy makers while tending to isolate them from critical information about what is occurring in their societies. (1991: 51)

These cases attest to the fact that the socio-cultural variables debilitate the policymaking leverage of societal actors more than they do state actors. These have partly become saliently featured when the public's access to information and knowledge of what a government does is much less limited; and partly because of the same a government's capacity to reach society is constrained even more. However, structural characteristics place decision makers in very critical roles of making important policies that affect people in remote villages, and ironically, the affected parties have much less power and/or leverage in influencing the decisions in which they have vested interest (*ibid.*).

The most commonly mentioned figures in the study of *socio-economic characteristics* of development are closely related to such economic concepts as, gross national product (GNP) per capita and gross domestic product (GDP) per capita. From this vantage point, the major division is between the high-income counties of Western Europe, East Asia, North America and Australasia, on the one hand, and developing economies of Africa, Asia and Latin America and

the Pacific, on the other (Turner and Hulme, 1997; Weaver *et al.* 1997; Cloete, 2000). Although the limitations of per capita GNP in terms of income distribution, it can indicate disparities in distribution of wealth between rich and poor countries. The World Bank (2003: 233-235) divides countries in the world into low-income (US$745 or less per capita), lower-middle-income (US$746-2975 per capita), upper-middle-income (US$2976-9205) and high-income economies (US$9206 or higher). The World Bank division lumps the first three income categories into developing economies. The range is enormous – such as between Rwanda US$100 per capita and Saudi Arabia US$7230 (*op. cit.*).

The developing countries, therefore, involve the low-income, middle- and upper-middle categories. The economy of this category is largely based on agriculture and extraction of primary products that are traded much less in the world market. The structure of production thus discloses that nearly all developing countries have relied heavily on natural resource exploitation, including agriculture, mining, forestry and fisheries (Turner and Hulme, 1997; Cloete, 2000). For rich countries agriculture provides less than 5 percent of GDP. The developing countries vary and stand in marked contrast. While agriculture provides 28 percent of GDP in the low-income economies, it is 10 percent of GDP for all middle-income economies (Turner and Hulme, 1997). But the range is considerable among the developing nations, with middle-income economies often possessing substantial industrial sectors and sometimes revealing production structures nearer to the high-income than to lower-income economies. Among others, South Korea, Argentina and Brazil can be good examples. Cloete (2000) noted that productivity in developing countries is low and technology primitive and substandard. Poverty is not only widespread; resources are inequitably distributed as well. International debt is normally high, which does not only reduce the decision-making autonomy of the third world governments, but also makes them vulnerable to policy prescriptions from international aid agencies (Todaro, 1992; Cloete, 2000).

Certainly, the *socio-political characteristics* are rooted in the economic, cultural and social contexts. Governments in most Third World states have taken upon themselves a crucial role in guiding the course of social and economic development. Policymaking is highly centralized and often involves more extensive issues of economic and social development. Policymakers are not only considerably influential, but structural and historical conditions also allow them to make decisions way beyond their mandate that have far-reaching consequences (Grindle and Thomas, 1991). The policymaking system is radically changed by ideological revolutions, sometimes even

by personal take over, but lacks systematic and rational evaluation (Dror, 1968). Persistent instability and unscheduled change of regimes prevail in most of developing countries. 'Sudden policy announcements tend to occur with out consultation with the affected interest groups or the masses, leading to dissatisfaction, coups and a new regime with totally new policies' (Cloete, 2000: 84). Policies are made regardless of the consent and contributions of the larger segment of population who would be affected by them.

Hence, a large portion of individual as well as group demands in developing countries reach the policymaking system not before policies are passed, but rather at the enforcement stage. Organized interest groups find it easier to influence the administration (implementation) of policies than its formulation (Grindle, 1980). In other words, to have any impact on decision making many may have found the implementation phase to be better suited to their needs. Moreover, there are few organizations representing the interests of broad categories of citizens in either formulating or implementing policies. Even if there are any of the organizations that claim to commit themselves to representing citizens, they are often co-opted, neutralized, or abolished by the action of governments (Smith, 1973).

The socio-economic reforms and 'democratization initiatives' that have over the past few decades been taking place in most of the developing countries did little to promote the public's interest in the public policymaking process. In fact, many of the commendable policy goals set out in the various public policies failed either because of the absence of balance between policymaking polity and policy-receiving societal entity and/or owing to the absence of capacity that societal forces could have marshaled to effectively countervail the overbearing power of policy elites in developing countries.

2.5. Actors, institutions and their leverage in public policymaking

2.5.5. Policy elites and their leverage in policymaking

The prime task of government seems to be the formulation and implementation of public policies. Governments issue policies to generate economic development, provide education, guarantee personal safety, expand job opportunities, and adopt many other policy initiatives which should lead to development (Turner and Hulme, 1997). Tuner and Hulme (*ibid*: 57) further noted that governments often use their own version of policy outcomes and initiatives to legitimate their

hold on power, while opposing forces belittle these same policies in order to justify their own claim to office. Be that as it may, the fate and future of millions of people hinge on the outcomes and performances of government policies in developing countries.

In developing countries, policy elites or central minds of government or central policymaking process systems play crucial roles in the process of policymaking and bringing about institutional reforms to implement them (Dror, 1986; Grindle and Thomas, 1991). Despite the fact that historical, cultural, international constraints, as well as societal pressures, are essential in shaping the actions and perceptions of those who make authoritative decisions, in developing nations policy elites or central minds of government play major roles in determining policy and institutional outcomes and the process through which issues get onto reform agendas, through which they are deliberated within government, and through which they are pursued and sustained (Grindle, 1980; Smith, 1973, 1985; Grindle and Thomas, 1991; Turner and Hulme, 1997; Cloete, 1991, 2000).

Scholars in the field of public policy have attributed the relative force of policy initiatives, formulation and implementation to policy elites in developing countries (*op. cit.*). An assessment of the actors and structures of policymaking in developing countries tends to prove the prevalence of limited policy circles compared to more developed states (Dror, 1968; Horowitz, 1989). The policymaking structures in developing countries are much less complex than in developed countries. Government elites, and individual and small group decisions play a greater role in policy decisions than complex organizations that could have involved a relatively large segment of the affected population. More importantly, the political executive claims a significant margin of power on the determination of issues to put on the policy agenda, and formulate and allocate resources for the execution of policies. Dror (1968) noted that the political executive in developing countries plays a larger role in formulating public policies than do the legislatures and the public, not only because power is exceedingly concentrated, but the political executive also possesses better latitude for establishing policies on many major issues without worrying about building coalitions with other vested interests.

Cloete (1991: 26) summarizes the major actors in the policy process as follows:

1. The political/power elites directly engaged in governing;

2. Interest groups and societal actors inside and outside of public institutions entering into competition to influence the contents of policies;

3. Groups of citizens instructing representatives and legislators through elections, referenda, or meetings to implement a specific policy agenda, or pressurizing them in various other more unconventional ways to change government policies.

It has, however, been argued that, except for some clientele groups which have more access to sharing the political resources of policy elites, in developing states the latter two sets of societal actors influence policymaking much less. Cloete (*ibid.*) says that elites who are directly involved in governing act as 'gatekeepers' to screen demands for change. They are in a more advantageous position to influence the end product than other interest groups or citizens, who are not as close to the locus of decision-making or implementation of policies.

There have seldom been disagreements among scholars in the field concerning the major role assumed by power/policy elites in the Third World countries in making and executing policies. The question of what leverage and/or capacities they command and how they maneuver their power resources are of paramount importance in unraveling the imbalance between policymaking institutions, on the one hand, and the larger public on the other. The relative importance of societal actors, the resources that they muster and their participation in the entire policymaking process vis-à-vis policy elites should warrant attention as well.

Policy elites are those who have official positions in government and whose responsibilities include making or participating in making and implementing authoritative decisions (Grindle and Thomas, 1991). The composition of relevant elites will nevertheless vary, depending on the policy under consideration. In the education sphere, for example, the prominent decision makers are the minister of education and his/her closest assistants. In such policy spaces as structural adjustment and stabilization programs, the major policy makers will include presidents or prime ministers, executive ministers, reigning political parties and key decision makers in the national capital.

Wright Mills provided a cogent explanation of elites:

> The power elite is composed of men whose positions enable them to transcend the ordinary environments of men and women; they are in positions to make decisions having major consequences. Whether they do or do not make such decisions is less important than the fact they do occupy such pivotal positions: their failure to act, their failure to make decisions, is it self an act that is often of greater consequence than the decisions that they do make. For they are in command of the major hierarchies and organizations of modern society… They run the machinery of the state and claim its prerogatives. They direct the military establishment. They occupy the strategic command posts of the social structure, in which are now centered the effective means of the power and the wealth. (1995: 73)

It has also been contended that, since the masses are ill-informed about policy issues and, hence, apathetic, it is the political and bureaucratic elites that actually fashion mass opinion (i.e. demands from the environment) more than masses shape the leadership's views (Dye, 1995; Anderson, 1997). This is especially so in developing countries. Hence, in a situation in which government is unlikely to be broadly representative and power tends to be highly centralized, the number of authoritative and influential positions in government also tends to be limited, those who play important roles (elites) in the policy process often have much in common (Grindle and Thomas, 1991).

Policy elites who assume critical roles and determine who gets what and when in most of the developing countries are head of states or head of governments, cabinet ministers, ruling party stalwarts and the executive bureaucracy, and to some extent the list includes the legislators (cf. Dror, 1968; Cloete, 1991; Grindle and Thomas 1991). Of these, heads of states, cabinet ministers and their advisors are at highest echelon of the policymaking structure that is well placed to influence all of the important policy decisions. On account of the key position he holds, the president or the prime minister can be much more extensively involved in major decision making. In a crisis situation it is more likely that policy making will involve the president or prime minister, close associates and advisers, who usually hold positions in the office of the president or prime minister. The latter can have close political links with the head of the state, and 'their loyalty may have been cemented through political, professional, social, and even kinship ties' (Grindle and Thomas, 1991:60).

Most ministers can also be intensively involved, depending on the cabinet portfolios that they assume, the close personal and political links that they may have with the executive and

ruling parties, and the technical or other specialized skills they possess. In many African countries such as Ethiopia, major ethnic groups have representation in the higher echelons of government. The executive bureaucracy, more generally the public bureaucracy in Africa, Asia and Latin America, plays a significant part in public policymaking (Saasa, 1985; Grindle and Thomas, 1991). In Kenya, for example, the public bureaucracy, supported by the political executive and in collaboration with expatriates, heavily influences policymaking (Oyugi, 2000). In quite a large number of developing states, policy initiatives can emerge from the administrative and technical staff of government. The bureaucracy is not only involved in formulating and legitimizing policies; it is also a chief actor in the implementation process and an essential interface between policy elites and societal actors.

Dror (1968) described government bureaucracy in development countries as weak because it lacks the capacity and experience to usefully contribute to policymaking. Hence, the public bureaucracy in most developing countries cannot supply very many rational components to policymaking and therefore 'reinforces the weaknesses in the behavior patterns of the politicians instead of compensating for them' *(ibid).* However, as Grindle and Thomas argued otherwise:

> Despite the more political and less permanent appointment process, the highly centralized nature of decision making means these officials are as powerful as high-level civil servants elsewhere. They may, however, be more dependent on the political favor of ministers and chief executives.
>
> In those countries where there is formal civil service, it usually has power rivaling that of the political establishment. Its power derived from its capacity to operate the government, from its status, and from the fact that, while the political leadership may change, the civil servants remain in place and generally know the complexities of governing more fully than do the political leadership. In many countries they sit in the senior positions in ministries and run organizations on a day-to-day basis. They are frequently the ones who deal with aid donors and take charge of planning and budgeting. In some cases their staffs do whatever analytical work is done, and they see that proposed changes are cleared through the political system. (1991: 60-61)

In many African countries, the rapid growth of the bureaucratic apparatus that accompanied the consolidation of power following independence had important implications for the structures of the state and policymaking. The corps of the proliferating bureaucracy and its members holds privileged positions. The Ethiopian experience over the past two decades, however, showed that governing elites approach the proliferating bureaucratic administration with some measure of

skepticism, mainly because the political loyalty of the bureaucracy was doubted. In order to keep an eye on the administration, the ruling parties are often used as instruments of supervision. As we shall see in the next chapters, the process of politicization and holding of key offices by party functionaries has thus been carried out by injecting party political and ideological doctrines into the civil service, the police, the army and local government. As a result, the line of distinctions between the party and the executive become nebulous, as is still the case in Ethiopia. Similar examples elsewhere in Africa are: the Tanzanian African National Union in Tanzania, the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), the National Resistance Movement (NRM) in Uganda and many others.

In most of the developing countries the legislature is largely used to recruit support for the policies that the power elites favor. The legislative bodies' influence in public policymaking in developing countries is not only much less, they are also passive instruments that can be manipulated rather than active contributors (Dror, 1968; Grindle and Thomas, 1991; Smith, 1985). Members of parliament are often marginalized in taking policy decisions because of lack of experience in managing government and their lower levels of education compared to the members of the executive bureaucracy. Hence, in many instances the executive in developing states uses legislative approval to legitimize its actions, simultaneously though keeping members of parliament away from actual decisionmaking (Grindle and Thomas, 1991). It has also been asserted that legislators rarely have sustained policymaking power compared to the executive or the bureaucracy (*op. cit.*). Moreover, the dominance of the executive coupled with the penetration of party functionaries into the legislature drastically reduce its leverage in policymaking; instead, legislators often endorse policy decisions made by 'court' actors.

Hence, the major concern of policy elites in most of the developing countries is to consolidate and maintain the hegemony of their regimes (Esman, 1991). All other goals such as economic development, national integration, and expansion of education should always be consistent with and subordinate to the survival and consolidation of the rules of policy elites. It is thus clear from the foregoing that the policy/state elites guide and determine the course of development, and make a wide range of policy decisions that affect the lives of millions of people in developing countries (Grindle and Thomas, 1991). Their hold on state power, and over historical, cultural and economic factors have increased their relative autonomy and raised their leverage in making decisions that have far reaching consequences. The rapid expansion of the

bureaucratic apparatus over the last several decades in Africa and other developing states has injected skills and expertise into the policymaking system. As noted, the proliferation of the administrative apparatus, however, has been met with some suspicion from the top echelons of the policymaking structure. The latter pre-empted potential dissents and carried on the predominance of the political executive through party functionaries. This has also been replicated in state-society relations and governs the policymaking-policy beneficiary (policy stakeholder) relationships.

2.5.6. The stature of societal actors vis-à-vis policymaking

Although policy elites are centrally placed to make authoritative decisions on many policy issues, their preferences, decisions and activities can be constrained by the actions of societal forces. The degree to which societal actors influence decisions and have access to the legally functioning policymaking institutions differs significantly between industrialized and developing countries. The literature concerning the vexing question of the distinctive nature of policymaking process in developed vis-à-vis developing states is meager. But several writers in the field contend that there is a marked distinction between the two (Dror, 1968, 1986; Smith, 1973, 1985; Grindle, 1980; Grindle and Thomas, 1991; Turner and Hulme, 1997; Cloete, 1991, 2000; Horowitz, 1989).

The structures, institutions, participants as well as the weight of the state power relative to the society vary in developed compared to developing countries. In this connection Horowitz writes:

> Policy in Asia, Africa, and Latin America tends to be made in an environment characterized by several foundational elements-something close to givens-that differ sharply from those prevailing in advanced industrial societies. First, the legitimacy of many Third World regimes is in question. Second, policy concerns do not match those that predominate in the West. Third, *the state structures of developing countries, whatever their weaknesses are still relatively powerful vis-à-vis their societies*. Fourth, the capacity of Third World states to make and effectuate policy is, in several respects, more imperfect than that of their counterparts in the West. Fifth, participants in the policy process are fewer in developing countries than in the West, and *some sectors of the society are hardly participant at all. Sixth, the channels for participation are less well established and less clearly prescribed in developing countries*. Seventh, information for policy making is much scarcer in Asia, Africa and Latin America than it is in advanced industrial societies. (1989:199) (emphasis added).

In developed countries public policy tends to be a function of public opinion and pressures. Hence, 'public opinion is to the political market what consumer demand is to the economic market place…Policy demand determines policy supply' (Parsons, 1995: 110). Moreover, there has often been much emphasis on inputs to the policy process. Unlike in developing states, multiple channels of aggregation of individual and group interests are available and are formally institutionalized as parts of the policy-making systems in developed countries. In developing countries open clashes between individuals and groups who may have a stake in policies during conception, initiation and formulation of policies is unknown. Policies are largely formulated with little consultation of relevant interests and societal groups (Smith, 1973, 1985; Grindle, 1980; Cloete, 1991).

Apart from socio-economic and cultural barriers, the leviathan power of the state militates against societal actors' leverage and their legitimate part in the policymaking process. While organizational interests and specific groups are institutionalized in industrialized countries, there is a more obscure link between societal interests and the policymaking process in developing countries. Interest groups are not only well organized and articulated; the activities of some of these that are organized are either ill defined or less clearly defined. Interest groups, however, tend be active, but are integrated into political institutions (Dror, 1968; Grindle and Thomas, 1991). Since policy circles are inaccessible to societal groups, individuals and societal groups tend to exert their pressure on policymaking institutions through informal and non-official channels. In fact, many authoritarian governments in developing countries tenaciously prevent representation and organization of interests through formally established channels. In some instances, interests may well be organized, but are unable to wield real influence through formal interactions with political leaders; in others, 'organizations will lack access to policy makers or even the capacity to control their followers or to exert pressure on the decision making process' (Grindle and Thomas, 1991). In extreme cases, organized interests may be dependent on particular clientele organizations supervised by policy elites or of bureaucratic agencies, with little capacity and agenda to press on their patrons in government (Grindle, 1980). In some other cases, policy elites designate selected sets of interest groups for controlled participation, and the participation usually excludes other competing groups (Brinkerhoff and Crosby, 2002).

The policymaking structures and inputs are often in a precarious condition. The information, knowledge, resources and skills required in making and implementing policies are of poor quality. It has to be recognized that policymaking should be based on expert knowledge supported by specialized and adequate information (Horowitz, 1989). In many developing countries, however, data collection is not only far from enough, the motivation to solve critical public problems arises in advance of an adequate understanding of society's problems (Dror, 1968, Horowitz, 1989). Moreover, institutions charged with periodically and systematically evaluating and designing policies are absent. There tends to be organizational distance between those that make and implement policies (Dror, 1968).

Oyugi (2000) noted the pervasiveness of increased centralization and monopolization of political power since independence in Africa, and even after the surge of so-called multi-partyism. Not only do personal rule and charismatic domination overwhelm the content of Africa, but also mass mobilizations and involvement give the false impression of popular participation in policymaking. Moreover, with the emergence of 'State House' as a dominant locus of policy activity, the leverage and the political clout of such political institutions as parliament and popular elections are rendered meaningless *(ibid)*. Few leaders in Africa possess overlapping and multiple leadership roles that enable them assume control over the affairs of the state, legislatures and parties. Thus exercising such control has a direct bearing on popular participation, including denying citizens the opportunity to participate and to debate over policy issues which have national significance that affect them. As a result, 'what we have in many African countries are the "submerged masses": masses with little or no say about what goes on around them in spite of the resurrection of democratic pretensions since early 1990s' (Oyugi, 2000: xi). He goes on to say that:

> the masses in Africa have so far not been playing any meaningful role in determining who shall govern at the center and what policies the center shall follow, let alone in influencing how elected local institutions should be governed. They have been used to legitimize the existence of a system that those in control in the State House wish to see continued. More importantly, the citizens still have little or no influence over the political processes in their own local communities the freedom of initiative is denied them by both *political leaders and the state administrative machinery* which acts to promote what it perceives to be in the interest of the center. (2000: xii) (emphasis added)

A more serious problem that often affects the balance between the state and society is the absence of regime legitimacy. Governments in developing countries are frequently occupied with constitutional reforms, continually issuing proclamations and designing policies to shore up regime legitimacy exercises (Horowitz, 1989). The stakes are much higher when issues of legitimacy remain unsettled and regimes are fragile. Despite the fact that regimes in developing states are fragile and of questionable legitimacy, what the state does and decides may be enormously important for the society. Thus, 'the share of resources both invested and consumed by the state is typically larger than it is in advanced industrialized countries. Mediating institutions – the sort of organizations that can pursue their interests and activities in considerable measure set apart from the state-are in general more developed in industrial than in non-industrial societies. The balance between the state and society is fundamentally different from what is in the West'*(ibid)*. Any claim to limit the sphere of state intervention can rarely be enforced where extra state organizations lack autonomy, resources and power leverage.

De Coning and Cloete (2000) also argue that the policymaking process has to call for participatory actions involving direct representation, empowerment and active decision-making. Thus, 'if development is defined as the capacity to make rational choices, the participatory nature of policy process is of primary importance' (*ibid*: 27). Obviously, large sectors of the public in developing states are not only politically inactive and inarticulate would mean that participation in the policy process by the public and the citizenry is much less than in developed countries. Regimes in developing countries have very narrow circles of policy participants, which makes participation limited. Forms of democratic institutions such as elections and parliaments are either non-existent or are manipulated in favor of policy elites. In some situations when participation has to be induced, prior decisions and understanding may have been reached among elites to mobilize support from 'apathetic masses' to bolster their positions with respect to an advocated policy issue.

It has been argued that the most vital decision about political participation emanate from the nature of political institutions, the sources, and goals of political leadership (Huntington, 1976). However, the more decisive influence on political participation comes from those elites who are able to command the offices and resources of government. The decision to limit or intensify political participation depends on the calculus of policy goals to be achieved and elite interests to be served. As Huntington *(ibid*) argued, most policy elites would like to have the benefits of

participation, in terms of support for themselves and their policies, but they would rarely like to incur costs for the participation, in terms of limits on their power, the time effort required to win acquiescence, and the demands that participation produces for the allocation of scarce resources. Hence, for most political elites political participation is, at best, an instrumental rather than a primary value *(ibid:* 23*)*. It is self-evident that the policy elites in many parts of Africa, Asia and Latin America favor and elicit limited political participation from among the masses to remain in power, achieve economic and social goals that might be thought to strengthen their power positions. In fact, in several developing countries governments have taken an active role to establish systematic *parantela* relationships with pressure or interest groups through the dominant parties (Peters, 1995: 195). A typical characteristic of the *parantela* relationship is that the hegemonic party imposes its control over as much of the society and economy as possible. These relationships become instrumental in developing interest groups directly allied to the dominant party *(ibid)*.

More importantly, patron-client relationships can predominantly characterize the plurality of the societies' of developing countries. Governing elites and the higher echelons of the bureaucracy are expected to relate to the society and distribute the benefits through these patron-client channels, in exchange for which the patrons deliver their support and the compliance of the clients to the regime. The state selects or works through patrons who can take care of their followers and keep them under control; resources and access provided by the government enrich the patron, reinforce the patron's authority and stabilize the regime (Esman, 1991). One of the major manifestations of such plurality in countries like Ethiopia is through government-sponsored 'civil society organizations' such as the youth, women, farmers and ruling party-run and-organized non-governmental organizations. Moreover, voting and elections, in most developing states, are manipulated in favor of the executive and bureaucratic elites. In other words, despite the fact that elections are the most basic means of participation in the policymaking process, they afford the electorate little opportunity to express their choice of government; neither do they empower them to pressure parties and candidates seeking their votes to offer attractive policy packages.

There have been sweeping and radical reforms taking place over the last two decades in Ethiopia and many other developing states. Nonetheless, the economic and political reforms initiated and sponsored by the most powerful international institutions and donor countries

introduced few changes that favor societal actors. In other words, the reforms generated little improvement, as the weight of state actors in comparison with societal actors in developing countries has remained overwhelming. The result has, therefore, been that the bulk of the population in the developing world is excluded from the policymaking process. The perceived apathy of these populations may result from 'the rigors of attending to daily subsistence needs, the demands of patron-client networks, the difficulty of organization in hostile political environment and the systematic closure of policy circles by elites' (Turner and Hulme, 1997: 73). The exclusion of major societal groups and actors from the policymaking process not only accentuates the imbalance between policymaking institutions and societal actors, but it also has detrimental effects on the outcomes of policy implementation. It has been recognized that affected parties and groups articulate their interests during the process of implementation (Smith, 1973; Grindle, 1980). As a result, in developing countries policies have often been modified and the major purposes of policies were subverted to suit group and individual needs during the process of implementation (Grindle, 1980).

2.6. The role of citizens in policymaking

2.6.1. Citizens' participation, governance and state-society relations

The foregoing discussions amply demonstrated that policy elites authoritatively determine policy choices in most of the developing countries, regardless of the preferences of relevant publics or interests. The political process through which elites wield power may well make the legitimacy of regimes questionable. As a result, gaps exist between policymaking institutions, on the one hand, and civil and social movements, on the other. The failure of a plethora of policies in a large number of Third World countries is uncovered in the course of implementation, mainly because actors whose interests have not been articulated at the initial stage of the policy process often find implementation a lot more suitable for demand making and put acute pressure on the process (Grindle, 1980). Moreover, following independence from colonial rule, the demands of rapid social and economic transformation have been accompanied by mammoth expansion of the bureaucracy in most Third World countries (Turner and Hulme, 1997). However, this expansion has occurred without a corresponding strength in the political institutions and development of the civil society. This has severely affected the balance between policymaking institutions and the

society. Therefore, failure to forge a symmetry and/or balance between the state and society has increasingly become detrimental to the public policymaking process (Balogun, 1998).

At the heart of this gap between state-society relations is the failure of accountability between government and citizens, and the absence of channels of communication and participation for citizens and societal groups to have a direct involvement in the policymaking process and influence policies. It has been recognized that the channels though which governments hold themselves accountable to citizens, and citizens communicate their demands for better policy and delivery of services, are often non-extent or dysfunctional (Oyugi, 2000; Balogun, 2000). In other words, 'external demand from citizens is muffled by popular cynicism about the public sector and by inadequate channels for communicating demand'; neither is there any internal demand from public sector leaders, because they feel too little pressure from citizens for change (Schacter, 2000). In developing countries an issue of critical importance in public policymaking is opening up the policy process beyond the relatively closed circles of interlocking elites, and increasing government responsiveness and accountability to the society (Brinkerhoff and Crosby, 2002).

Participation is, therefore, a vitally important mechanism through which citizens and relevant stakeholders directly influence policies. Government and its institutions will be more accountable and responsive to citizens' demands if adequate, direct, institutionalized and binding channels of communication and participation are developed and allowed to operate without restraint. Responsive and accountable institutions presuppose a governance structure that accommodates the demands and interests of the relevant public or stakeholders. There should, therefore, be multiple institutional designs whereby citizens can be encouraged to participate and/or provide inputs into the policymaking process. Many ways as well as institutions and structures provide citizens with the opportunities to participate effectively. Public hearings, citizens' juries, round tables and electronic town meetings are examples of institutions meant to create opportunities for citizen participation (Toddi and Ascher, 1997; Adams, 2004). In the public meeting and hearing exercises, more often than not the officials sponsoring them tend to set the issues to be discussed as well as a framework for discussing the issues beforehand. Not only does this thwart constructive deliberations, but also it limits the voice of citizens, preventing them from altering the structure of the conversation and changing the way that the issue is framed. As a result, citizens' recommendations go unheeded, thereby reducing the whole exercise to naught. Forums

for public participation exercises should, thus, empower politically active CSOs and advocacy groups, academics, research institutes and the citizenry to develop informed opinions on public issues and they can thus become venues of expressions of policy demands to policymaking institutions, and can also become deliberative as well as instruments of forming ideas on a public policy or program (*op. cit.*).

Arguably, the issues of participation, accountability, decentralization (with all its diverse forms) and the role and leverage of societal groups in public policymaking are situated within the broader context of good governance. In other words, governance can be seen as an umbrella genre encompassing the whole gamut of state-society relations with respect to public participation in policymaking and setting up of institutionalized decentralization (de-concentrated and devolved) administrative and political structures that are responsive as well as accountable to the public. The concept has been around in both political and academic discourse for a long time, referring in a generic sense to the task of running a government, or any other appropriate entity for that matter[4].

While a few scholars seem to use the concepts of governance and good governance interchangeably (Balogun, 1998, Mule, 2001), others establish a marked distinction between the two (Blunt, 1995, Cloete, 2000), and yet others use the term democratic governance instead of the broader concept of governance (Brinkerhoff and Crosby, 2002). Be that as it may, many of the elements and principles underlying good or democratic governance have become an integral part of the meaning of governance. Since the 1980s powerful global institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank set the design and establishment of good governance systems in Africa and other developing countries as preconditions for financial assistance. In fact, donor countries and other international institutions have prescribed the elements and parameters that make up good governance systems. It implies a high level of organizational effectiveness in relation to policy formulation and the policies actually pursued, especially in the conduct of economic policy and its contribution to growth, stability and popular welfare, and tends to be a prerequisite for political legitimacy (Blunt, 1995). Good government also implies accountability, transparency, participation, openness and the rule of law (Smith, 1996; Grindle, 1997; Cloete, 2000).

According to World Bank (1992a; Blunt, 1995), six elements of good governance are of paramount importance: political accountability, freedom of association and participation, a fair

[4] http://www.sit.edu/global_capacity/gpdocs/articles/civil_society.html

and reliable judicial system, bureaucratic accountability, freedom of information and expression, efficient and effective public sector management.

1. The effectiveness of government depends largely on perceptions of its *legitimacy or political accountability*. The favored method for ensuring some degree of political accountability is to subject political leadership, and possibly other officials, to periodic tests of their acceptability to the people by holding elections and limiting periods of office.

2. The second prerequisite of good governance is *freedom of association and participation* involving the freedom to establish religious groups, professional associations and other voluntary organizations that possess social, economic and political purposes. The role of the media is critical here.

3. Clear, *established legal frameworks* are necessary to create a predictable and secure living and working environment for ordinary citizens and an environment conducive for entrepreneurs, farmers, investors and other economic actors. Moreover, a fair and effective legal framework requires, first, that there exists a set of rules, which are known in advance; second, that rules are in force; third, that means exist to ensure the application of rules; fourth, that conflict resolution is a function of binding decisions made by an independent and credible judiciary.

4. *Bureaucratic accountability* requires a system to monitor and control the performance of government officers and organizations, particularly in relation to quality, inefficiencies and the abuse of resources. *Transparency* is a key element of bureaucratic accountability that includes making all public accounts and audit reports available for public scrutiny.

5. Efficient markets and bureaucratic transparency are highly dependent on the *availability and validity of information*. Debates on public policy issues can be widely conducted involving societal groups, if governments make available data pertaining to national accounts, balance of payments, employment, cost of living, and so on. Civil society

organizations such as independent research organizations and institutions of higher learning can engage in independent analysis of information, if data are available.

6. The last component of a sound governance system is *effective and efficient public sector management*.

In most of the developing countries the power of the state has not been balanced by a plurality of autonomous associations such as professionals, traditional leaders, independent rural institutions, intellectuals, trade unions, business associations, religious groups, students and journalists, which are necessary for responsive and stable government. More importantly, wherever bureaucratic and repressive rule restricts the autonomy of interest groups, civil associations and political parties, the foundation of good governance and democratic practices are replaced by authoritarian consequences (Smith, 1996). A well-functioning government can address the elements of sound governance and be responsive to societal needs if state-society relationships are positively reinforced by the cooperation between government and various civil society groups. Hence, systems and structures of good governance should widely involve socio-political and economic actors in the society. In relation to Africa, the crisis of governance that has long been dominating the continent's development crisis is attributed to a failure to forge a symmetrical relationship between the state and the society (Balogun, 1998). The way forward, therefore, lies in reordering the links between the state and society and ensuring reciprocity as a basis for resolving issues of rights and obligations *(ibid)*. Events that have taken shape in Eastern Europe over a decade ago, developments in Africa, the surge of new democratic governments in Latin America and associations for democratic space in several countries of Asia, are reflections of the pressures towards the need for renegotiating the balance of relationship between the state and civil society.

While there seems little or no ambiguity about the critical role that civil society plays in public policymaking as well as its pivotal part in countervailing state actors, the meaning assigned to it and individuals and groups that should form part of the civil society has raised debate as well as skepticism. There is also much less disagreement among scholars about the importance of the civil society and its virtue in providing experience of governance and democratic process with widespread participation, thus perhaps providing a cultural environment

that fosters and protects good governance and sustain the balance between state and society. For some, civil society is extended to include the state (Blunt, 1995); others equated civil society with all those groups which are organized and operated not only outside of the state, but also those that are presumed to be autonomous from it (Polidano and Hulme, 1997; Blowgun, 1998). Yet others narrow down and limit the meaning of civil society to all institutional forms, excluding state and markets. Civil society includes a wide range of organizations that exist between the level of the family and the state, including NGOs, mass movements, cooperatives, professional associations, cultural and religious groups, etc[5]. This clearly indicates that government agencies and commercial companies are not part of civil society. Political parties are also in an ambiguous position vis-à-vis civil society. As opposed to this, the former are outside of the state, but their objective is to take control of the state rather than remain part of civil society, although they have the potential of countervailing state and bureaucratic institutions *(ibid.)*.

Various studies of structures and systems of governance across the developing world have found that the greatest threat to democratic functioning has been the dominance of the state over the institutions of civil society (Diamond *et al*. 1999). Wherever democracy has been threatened or derailed, wherever fascist and authoritarian tendencies (including military dictatorships) have taken over, it has been a consequence of the 'supremacy' of the state over civil society and the suppression of the institutions of civil society built over a period of history *(ibid.)*. In view of this fact, therefore, the relationship between the state and civil society needs to be reformulated. Buttressing the role of society in public policymaking just as much requires different significant ways of reordering state-society relationship. Although there is a great deal of overlap among these concepts, both practically and analytically, it is accountability, participation and decentralization that epitomize the enlistment of good governance.

2.6.1.1. Accountability and good governance

Accountability represents one of the hallmarks of good governance and it reinforces the latter. Despite there being a positive re-orientation towards holding those who govern accountable for their actions, the modalities of wielding as well as exercising power has ramifications for good governance outcomes. Although interventionist policy stances have recently shifted more towards

[5] http://www.bond.org.uk/wgroups/civils/report.html

market institutions, state-centered socio-economic policies have often represented uppermost features in African, Asian and Latin American countries. Since independence, not only do state institutions and bureaucratic structures play expansive development roles, but also the successful implementation of development policies and programs increasingly depend upon them (Dwivedi, 1985; Haque, 1997; Turner and Hulme, 1997). The complexity and diversity of the engagement of state institutions in making and implementing development policies and the pursuit of societal goals have enormously increased the powers of state players. Dwividi (1985) noted that the expansion in the scope and magnitude of activities assigned to state institutions has not only given them an awesome power base, but also that the more society is administered by public officials, the greater is the concentration of power in the hands of these officials. Dwividi continues:

> Thus, the administrative state has emerged in which public servants play the roles of crusading reformers, policymakers, social change agents, crisis managers, programme managers, humanitarian employers, interest brokers, public relations experts, regulators of economy, bankers and spokesmen for various interest groups including their own associations. These roles are in addition to the traditional functions of government such as maintaining law and order, providing education and social well fare, managing health programmes, operating transportation and communication facilities and organising various cultural and recreational events. Through the performance of these several and various roles, public servants and their ministers have acquired enormous power. *(ibid.,* 61*)*

Especially when the unwieldy expansion of government is accompanied by the politicization of the bureaucracy, not only do instances of misuse of power increase and ethical expectations dissipate, the public also begins to view public institutions as too powerful and having the tendencies of a fearsome leviathan *(ibid.)*. This thus prompts the notion that there should be a requirement for sound administration and improved moral fiber among government officials, and the demand for responsible use of power, but the authority and political as well as administrative accountability become very critical. The major concern is how those that have administrative and political positions exercise their power responsibly, and in a way that makes them accountable for their actions. One of the predominant forms of accountability - administrative accountability - is holding appointed officials answerable to their actions. In most developed countries, public management reforms have added a new strand to make bureaucratic officials directly accountable to clients, instead of the more conventional upward accountability to politicians (Polidano and

Turner, 1997). However, it is certainly understood that unless political accountability at higher echelons of government structures is primarily ensured, administrative accountability at professional and administrative levels would be illusory. Thus, the state and its administrative structures should be accountable to the civil society. This has several implications. The accountability implies that the state, its institutions and practices are entrenched in the culture, morality, values and norms of civil society (Tandon, 1991). Tandon *(ibid.)* argued that, since the alien forms of state apparatus and practices, policies and programs will result in weakening the positions of societal actors, the capabilities of civil society, its institutions and actors need to satisfy the requirements of good governance, if the absence of accountability has to be redressed.

Mechanisms of critiquing, questioning, debating and rejecting policies, programs, approaches and decisions of the state, its agencies and officials provide an additional dimension to accountability. Therefore, civil society must be able to critically examine policies any policies that the state construes before and after formulation. Civil society should be allowed to develop informed opinions and build public judgment on policies, and thus should have access to information as much important as influencing policies and practices. Not only should the process of formulating policies, laws, rules and procedures be an open and public process, but the mechanisms for arriving at public and participatory judgment also have to be promoted (Tanden, 1991; Balogun, 1998). Balogun (1998) situates the issues of rights and obligations within the context of revertible sovereignty, where the sovereign power of the people is annulled at the will of the people. The doctrine of revertible sovereignty thus legitimizes the decisions taken by government institutions in the name of the people, and the laws enacted to back the decision. In other words, the question why a citizen should obey the state or comply with its edicts can only be answered within the context of the doctrine of revertible sovereignty *(op. cit.)*.

Sustaining state institutions' accountability depends on maintaining the balance between the state and society as much as on a corresponding strength of the institutions of civil society. Institutions that could thrive in a free atmosphere should include: civic organizations, community gathering places, women's groups, rural organizations, poor people's groups, youth groups, farmers associations, professional associations and labor unions (Haque, 1997; Balogun, 1998; Polidano and Hulme, 1997). What is more, good governance should be matched by good citizens, who are: informed about their needs, resources and objectives, participate in governmental processes, and are dedicated to national process, proactive in observing rights and duties, realistic

in the expression of demands, tolerant of different views, and honest and productive in their work ethic (Cloete, 2000).

2.6.1.2. Decentralization as a balancing strategy

The ultimate goal of public policy is to improve the quality of social life through various social and economic development policies and programs. Thus, policymaking calls for actions by a large numbers of people to improve social life and achieve the desired policy objectives. Participation, pluralist consultation and decentralization are not only features of an effective policymaking process; they are also integral elements of good governance (Brinkerhoff and Crosby, 2002). It has been widely acknowledged that participation and decentralization not only reinforce each other, but they are also critical ingredients in improving the quality of the policymaking process and promoting development (Hope, 1997; Omiya, 2000; Brinkerhoff and Crosby, 2002). This section will simply discuss the importance of decentralization as a choice and/or strategy for bridging the gap between the state and societal actors or cementing the imbalances between policymaking institutions on the one hand, and policy beneficiaries on the other.

Good governance, peoples' participation in policymaking, decentralization and accountability are interlocking and indivisible issues. Sound governance can be promoted when public and administrative officials are called to account for their actions, and a decentralized governance structure permits citizens' participation in public policymaking. Not only does decentralization enhance citizens' participation, but also can it make policy issues accessible to a wide range of civil and societal groups for debate. Decentralization is not an end but a strategy (a means) for achieving good governance, accountability and popular participation in policymaking (Haque, 1997; Oyugi, 2000); neither is it a panacea for challenges presented by participation, accountability and responsiveness. It can, however, be seen as a strategy for increasing the activities and influence of stakeholders and policy beneficiaries on the planning and implementation of programs and projects that directly affect their lives. According to the World Bank (2001:54), decentralization improves good governance and public service delivery by increasing allocative efficiency (through better matching of public services to local preferences)

and productive efficiency (through increased accountability of local governments to citizens, fewer levels of bureaucracy, and better knowledge of local costs).

Decentralization as a multi-dimensional concept involves (Cheema and Rondinelli, 1983: 18-25, Luke, 1986: 79):

1. *Deconcentration* or the redistribution of administrative responsibilities within the central government from headquarters to field and/or local administration;

2. *Delegation* of decision making and management authority for specific functions to semi-independent agencies such as public enterprises, regional planning and area development authorities, multi-purpose and single-purpose functional authorities, and special project implementation units;

3. *Devolution* seeks to create and strengthen independent units of government. Theoretically, it is seen as an 'arrangement in which there are reciprocal, mutual beneficial, and coordinate relationships between central and local governments; that is, the local government has the ability to interact reciprocally with other units in the system of government of which it is a part';

4. *De-bureaucratization* or the facilitation of decision-making though political processes that involve larger number of interests including non-governmental and private institutions, rather than having decisions made exclusively or primarily by major political institutions in government.

Each form of decentralization has different implications for organizational structure, the degree of authority transfer and the amount of popular participation envisaged (Luke, 1986, Haque, 1997). When policymakers are centrally located and accountable to central authorities, it is centralization; when they are centrally located and accountable to the electorate, it is democratization; when they are located at the local level but still accountable to central authorities, it is deconcentration; and when they are located at the local level and are accountable to the electorate, it is devolution (Haque, 1997). This attests that the extent to which

decentralization allows civil societal groups opportunities for participation and assists maintaining the symmetry between them and the state forces may be determined by the degree to which decentralization is associated with sound governance, where the people are able to influence the process and the substance of decisions made by government (Oyugi, 2000). However, decentralization can stand the best chance of realizing the purposes of good governance and ensure popular participation in policymaking, if robust democratic institutions are put in place to augment the role of lower-level units of government in decision making. In other words, decentralization presupposes democratically institutionalized central and local government structures that are mandated by and responsive to popular will.

The upshot of the overall effect of much of the documented experiences with decentralization in Africa and most other developing states was to bring people under the control of central government bureaucracy rather than inducing them into becoming self-governing and proactive in decision-making (Oyugi, 2000). Other studies also revealed that such decentralization efforts over the past four or so decades in Africa did not encourage popular participation in local governance and development; the centrally engineered measures (such as deconcentration and distorted devolution) kept substantial powers in the hands of centrally located political, bureaucratic elites and their local allies (Balogun, 2000). Likewise, Haque (1997) concluded that pressure for central control did not only destroy governmental autonomy below national levels in Africa; it is also hard to find any local government with control over its budgets or any with autonomous policy-making powers.

The way forward, therefore, lies in promoting democratic decentralization, at the same time without losing sight of the administrative benefits that can be derived from administrative decentralization (deconcentration). While political or democratic decentralization emphasizes political rights, civil liberties, institutional pluralism and pluralism in policy choices, administrative decentralization seeks to transfer responsibilities to field agencies and reforming administrative organs to generate greater efficiency, responsiveness in delivering public services (Turner and Hulme, 1997; Haque, 1997; Oyugi, 2000).

Nonetheless, it is widely recognized that administrative decentralization limits policy and program decision-making to small and select set of actors occupying the top positions in official hierarchies (Oyugi, 2000; Brinkerhoff and Crosby, 2002). On the other hand, political or democratic decentralization increases the opportunities to lobby local officials and to hold them

accountable through the ballot boxes. As a result, not only is participation expanded to a large number of citizens, but increased responsiveness and better performance in public service delivery can also be secured *(op. cit.)*. Thus, decentralization (and all its diverse forms) can contribute meaningfully towards shaping the balance between state and societal actors, when democratic governance institutions both at the national and local levels are reinvigorated to incorporate and reinforce citizens' participation in policy formulation and implementation.

2.7. Choices for improving policy capacity

Attempts to improve the quality of public policymaking and measures to enhance the coordination and sustainability of policy implementation will involve efforts to improve administrative capacity within implementing agencies to make them more responsive to citizens' demands, strengthening the policy capacity of higher-level government agencies to achieve better policy analysis and coordination; equipping legislatures with adequate facilities and professional staff to raise their level of capability and promote enlightened policymaking; and encouraging the establishment of independent think-tanks and/or policy-oriented research academic institutions to assist in cultivating sound policymaking. Some policy scholars suggested that efforts to improve the quality of policymaking should focus on the central minds of government or the political executive (Dror, 1986; Schacter, 2000). Schacter (2000), for instance, suggested that measures to build policy capacity at central level and at the level of line ministries should include rationalizing and standardizing of the decision-making process and improving the flow of policy-relevant information, and strengthening capacity for policy analysis. Policymaking, therefore, has little chance of success unless significant redesigns are introduced into the central minds of governments, into the broader policymaking process system, into governance as whole and into societal problem solving (Dror, 1986). Dror *(ibid.)* categorically recommended an establishment of 'policy planning and analysis unit' near heads of governments. The quintessence of the proposal can be summarized as follows (cf. Dror, 1986: 281-282):

1. The policy analysis unit may consist of fifteen to twenty experienced professionals drawn from different disciplines (such as policy studies, political science, law, public administration, economics, sociology and so forth) selected from different structures of

government, and some recruited from outside to serve for a limited period (three to five years);

2. The principal function of the unit is to provide a comprehensive and professional perspective for evaluating major current decision issues, with special attention to more critical ones. The unit's tasks will also include identification of emerging momentous choices, setting policy and governmental priorities, and assisting government with managing policy-formulation and implementation in times of crisis;

3. The unit is not a substitute for any function run by regular government institutions, but reconsiders agenda setting, provides a critical and second look, reviews options from a broader and long-range perspective, pays special attention to interfaces as well as coordination between different decisions, and initiates further studies as the need arises;

4. The unit's clients are the central minds of government (the head of government and the entire cabinet). Thus, close access to the client and relations based on confidence and mutual understanding are essential prerequisites for success;

5. Although there is less chance that the policy analysis unit to serve as an intermediary channeling societal demands and policy preferences to policymaking and implementing institutions, it can nonetheless provide and facilitate a free flow of information to civil societal groups, policy-oriented research institutions, independent think-thanks and universities on the wider spectrum of government policies made and implemented. This will not just ensure a greater chance of acceptance of policy decisions, citizens' enlightenment on public policy, participation by the public and enhancement of policymaking capacity, but also serves as a counter-weight to over-centralization and bureaucratization.

Examples abound. Following the end of the cold war in 1990, donor countries and the powerful international institutions such as World Bank and IMF pressured many African and Third World states to adopt 'multi-party democracy'. However, the emerging 'multi-party

democracies' faced the challenges of reforming their governments in accordance with donor countries' and international organizations' policy prescriptions. Thus, given the sheer size of the task, some countries found it important to introduce a unit within the executive or cabinet office that can manage policy formulation and implementation. Zambia is a classic and instructive example in this case. When Chiluba's government came into power in October 1991, the new Zambian leaders faced an unfamiliar and unresponsive state bureaucracy (Garnet *et al*., 1997; Brinkerhoff and Crosby, 2002). The president and his colleagues, who came from the private sector, found that their private business experiences counted very little in managing unfamiliar public institutions. It quickly became clear that unless higher government officials could do a better job of coordinating policy formulation and implementation, Zambia's government's ability to deliver on its promises of economic growth and improved service delivery would be compromised. With the assistance of USAID and foreign consultants, organizational redesign to improve the quality of policymaking and implementation took place over a period of five years, from 1992 to 1997 (Garnet *et al*. 1997).

The redesign for policy formulation and implementation started with the formation of PACD - Policy Analysis and Coordination Division - in the cabinet office in 1993. PACD has 12 professional staff, divided into three sections: financial and economic policy, social and human resources development policy, and domestic, regional and international affairs. The staff are not only expected to make sure that all due collaboration takes place among ministries in the preparation of a cabinet memorandum, each member of PACD is assigned a number of ministries and is also expected to develop a close relationship as well as familiarizing them with each ministry's policy issues *(ibid.).* Simultaneously, an analysis of the existing policy management process was conducted to identify constraints and problems and to make some initial recommendations for change. To introduce the division, and reach consensus on its missions and responsibilities, a workshop convened PACD's staff and cabinet personnel. PACD's responsibilities include analyzing sectoral ministries' policy proposals, submitted to the cabinet to check for consistency with government policies, collaborating with ministries to improve the quality of their policy submissions, serving as the secretariat for the cabinet (preparing minutes and transmitting policy decisions to implementers), coordinating implementation of cabinet decisions across agency boundaries, monitoring the implementation of cabinet decisions, and

facilitating inter-ministerial implementation problems (Garnett *et al*. 1997; Brinkerhoff and Crosby, 2002).

In very few years PACD nurtured reasonably good relationships with ministries. It also developed a new policy formulation and implementation process. More importantly, while the old process lacked the coordination needed for effective policy formulation, the new policymaking process covers the entire policy cycle: formulation, decision-making, implementation and evaluation (Garnett *et al*. 1997).

The preceding discussion demonstrates that Chiluba's government in Zambia made a heavy investment in improving the quality of policymaking and increased policy coordination across line ministries. Over the five-year period the effort paid off and the outcomes in terms of the coordination and quality of policy proposals have proven successful. However, in a country where authoritarian rule prevailed for decades, and where civil society groups had little or no role and participation in policymaking, the Zambian Policy Analysis and Coordination Division's role as promoter of 'results-oriented, client-driven, participatory, transparent and accountable' policymaking system should be regarded with caution. In fact, the manner in which PACD's staff have been brought on board would raise more skepticism as to how far the division's mandates permit the staff to involve societal actors and/or stakeholders 'in the design and implementation' of policies that affect the their lives. Moreover, experience has shown that a policy analysis project such as this will eventually be captured by the policy/power elites, and the euphoria may soon dissipate unless a robust legislature and relatively well-developed societal groups stand to counter the elitism of the executive. Accordingly, the mere establishment of a policy analysis unit near the higher echelon of the executive leaves no space for pressure groups and societal actors for participation and demand making in the policymaking process. But, not only is Zambia's experience and redesign in managing the process of policymaking and implementation instructive, but countries such as Ethiopia can, somehow, also draw important lessons for a significantly modified endeavor, such as arms-length, independent and professionally advanced policy think-tanks, without belittling the role of institutionalized policy analysis units located inside the heart of government .

Similarly, over the last decade, there has been a renewed emphasis on improving policy capacity in more developed countries such as the US and Canada. In Canada, for example, from the mid-1980s to the early 1990s the government's capacity to perform its policy functions

effectively declined steadily (Kernaghan *et al*., 2000). Since the mid-1990s there has been a renewed effort to strengthen the policy coordination and capacity of senior ministers as well as the public service. In response to this, the Canadian government established the Policy Research Initiative (PRI) in 1996. PRI involves more than thirty government departments and agencies, and has established four big interdepartmental research networks dealing with growth, human development, global challenges and opportunities. It sought to build a solid foundation of horizontal research upon which public decisions can be based *(ibid.)*. The overriding purpose of enhancing policy capacity is to enable governments to cope with the current and emerging challenges of a rapidly changing political and social environment. Moreover, a Policy Research Secretariat (PRS) has been established 'to facilitate the integration of the work of the research networks, to seek innovative ways of sharing policy research data, to develop knowledge partnerships with the broad policy research community… and to link up with policy researchers in international organizations and other countries' (Kernaghan *et al*., 2000). PRI and PRS in Canada worked mainly towards improved management of horizontal policy issues. PRI managed to promote collaboration, cooperation and consultation as the pivotal means of policy coordination, both within government and between government and other policy actors.

Both Zambia's Policy Analysis and Coordination Division and Canada's Policy Research Initiative have sought to improve the policy capacity of the central minds of government, including the executive, line ministries and key public institutions. Each sought to manage the policy process with a view to ensuring that they had sufficient policy capacity and/or building the required policy capacity to make sound policies and implement them effectively. Moreover, both worked towards ensuring that public policies are mutually consistent, that duplication and overlap are avoided – or, at least, recognized, so much so that efficient, effective and responsive public services are provided (Garnet *et al*., 1997; Kernaghan *et al*., 2000). The Zambian endeavor, however, demonstrated a new initiative to raise the quality of policymaking, improve the coordination of the policymaking process across ministries, and has focused on molding the process of policy formulation and implementation within the executive structure. On the other hand, not only was the PRI initiative an incremental approach to building a foundation geared to nurturing a horizontal inter-ministerial coordination and management of policy, but it was also a renewed emphasis (rather than a new one) that aimed at reversing the tendency of the Canada's senior government officials to denigrate their policy functions and the erosion of the good

capacity that they inherited. Likewise, an institutionalized high-level policy analysis unit is operating in Nigeria under the name of the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS). In the Netherlands the Scientific Council for Government Policy (SCGP) has been assisting Dutch policymakers since 1972. Similar high-level policy analysis institutions are working toward improving policy management and coordination in many parts of developed and developing world.

It is worth mentioning here that in the context of developing countries policy think-tank institutes that are located away from both government machinery and policy advocacy institutions can do justice more in terms of professionalizing policymaking and augmenting policymaking capacity than those located near the political executive and party leadership.

2.8. Conclusion

This chapter assesses and explores various analytical and conceptual perspectives on public policymaking in developing countries. By doing so, it has set the scene for unraveling the maze of the policymaking process in Ethiopia; the actors and their powers as well as resource leverage they command; the legal and institutional preconditions for public policy formulation and implementation; the relationships between state and society; and the origin and ascendancy of the elitism of the political executive and ruling parties in public policymaking. In many ways this study commits itself to extending the explanatory variables of the public policymaking process in developing countries to the investigation of the process by which policies are made in Ethiopia over the past three decades under two different governments. It will also explain the complex relationships between the declared policies, the characteristics and systems of governments/institutions in which policies have been made and the socio-administrative context in which they have been implemented.

In the bulk of the developing countries policy elites play critical roles to determine policy outcomes and the process through which issues get onto the policy agenda, through which they are deliberated within government institutions, and more importantly, how they are pursued and sustained (Grindle, 1980; Grindle and Thomas, 1991; Cloete, 1991). The lion's share of this role goes to the executive, with a significant control over agenda setting, formulating policies and changing institutional outcomes for their execution. Among others, policy elites who determine who gets what and when are head of governments, party leaders, head of states, cabinet ministers, the executive bureaucracy, and the catalog can also include law-makers (Grindle and Thomas, 1991). In most developing countries, not only are the legislatures used as means of legitimating policies, but also they are passive instruments that can easily be controlled by the executive and party structures. Therefore, the dominance of the executive and ruling elites and the overbearing influence of the party structures relegated the legislative institutions to docile organs having little influence on the public policymaking process.

Interest groups, private initiatives and civil society groups are fragmented and lack the capacity to articulate their interests. In some instances, when these forces are active, the mechanisms of wielding influence through formal policymaking institutions tends to be weak and/or channels of communications are absent. In some other cases, the executive and bureaucratic institutions not only develop clientele organizations that pre-empt autonomous

initiatives, but they also use their prerogatives to induce and guide corporatist or clientelistic participation, whereby groups designated by policy elites are escorted into controlled participation (Grindle and Thomas, 1991; Brinkerhoff and Crosby, 2002). For the most part, policy elites encourage public participation to ensure support for themselves and their policy initiatives. It is thus highly unlikely that public demand will have any effect on the policymaking process.

An issue of crucial importance and the way forward in public policymaking should, therefore, be opening up the policymaking process beyond a coterie of interlocking circles, promoting the accountability and responsiveness of government institutions to the society, and developing and nurturing a state-society alignment. As stressed in this chapter, policymaking institutions will be accountable and responsive to the demands of the public only when a network of adequate and accessible channels of communication that make participation a lot easier are established and operate unhindered. In other words, instituting participatory, responsive and accountable policymaking structures presupposes reinvigorating state-society relationships, with institutionalized and decentralized political and administrative governance structures buttressing the same process. These can reliably serve as a mainstay of responsive and accountable governance, when the civil society and its attendant institutions are firmly established and thrive to the extent that the power of state actors can be balanced by the plurality of autonomous associations. It should nevertheless be stressed that ensuring the accountability of political and administrative institutions to societal forces and sustaining the balance between the state and the latter should be accompanied by a corresponding capacity and strength of civil society (Blunt, 1997; Blowgun, 1998; Polidano and Turner, 1997). To the extent that stakeholders are empowered to present demands and encouraged to initiate solutions to solve policy problems, sustainable and successful policy implementation can be more likely to materialize (Brinkerhoff and Crosby, 2002).

Moreover, forging the balance between state and society and making government responsive as well as accountable calls for improving the policymaking capacity of government. For the policymaking system to accommodate the demands of the public as well as command a high chance of success, not only does it require significant redesign of the central policymaking process, but also the initiative can be a step towards institutionalization of policymaking and analysis in the entire governance structure (Dror, 1985). Arguably, however, a robust legislature

and vibrant civil society forces that could reliably counterbalance the elitism of the political executive and ruling parties should accompany an enterprise such as this. Moreover, in the absence of professionally advanced, qualified and arms-length policy think-tank institutes that are located away from both government machinery and policy advocacy institutions, professionalizing and pragmatizing policies are inevitably bound to be suspect.

Chapter 3. Public policymaking under the *Dergue*, 1974-1991

3.1. Introduction

The previous chapter set down the conceptual and analytical framework for the study. This chapter presents the historical, socio-political variables and institutional forms that preceded current public policymaking in Ethiopia. It then provides a descriptive analysis of the policymaking process, principal institutions and structures that claimed the highest leverage during the *Dergue* era from 1974 to 1991. Discussed at length is thus the series of major legislative enactments promulgated by the Provincial Military Administrative Council (PMAC or the *Dergue*) that had a bearing on the policymaking process, and government establishments that claimed prerogatives in the formulation and implementation of policies. It also explores the relationship between the ideological metamorphosis over the years and the party, on the one hand, and policymaking institutions, on the other. Apparently, not only did policy guidelines follow the lead of the official ideology, but so also were the modalities through which policymaking institutions had been configured as well as altered based on the established principles of the official ideology. More particularly, the official pronouncement of the National Democratic Revolution Program (NDRP) in 1976 marked a turning point in the history of the country in terms of the recourse of the state to Marxism-Leninism as a panacea for the socio-political and economic policy problems. Henceforward, not only were policy objectives motivated by adherence to the official ideology, but it also dictated the organization of policy-implementing institutions.

The chapter also explores in some detail the structuring and restructuring of party- and government-organized 'civil society organizations' under the rubric of mass organizations. The land reform proclamation of March 1975 set the stage for fundamental transformations as well the organization of rural social life in the countryside. As a result, led by the party, peasant associations, producers' cooperatives, villagization and resettlement programs became essential instruments of carrying out rural transformation and implementing agricultural policies in Ethiopia. Furthermore, mass mobilization in the cities and towns in the entire country had been carried out after the nationalization of urban land in the same year. Consequently, urban dwellers' associations, youth and women's organizations mushroomed immensely after the mid-1970s.

Stretched from their headquarters in the capital to towns and villages (*Kebeles*) in the countryside, the structural networks of all of the mass and professional associations had been streamlined, although their part in policymaking was predetermined and circumscribed by the prevailing frame of reference (i.e. ideology) and the preeminence of the party and central planning. Implementing agencies had also been restructured in ways to execute centrally guided socio-economic policies along the principles of central planning ascendant in the socialist states. Especially, after the establishment of COPWE and NRDC-CPSC, state and mass organizational establishments became highly institutionalized and integrated into a common and centralized implementing administrative apparatus.

This chapter primarily throws some light on the historical, politico-cultural and institutional antecedents to public policymaking in Ethiopia (see section 3.2). It then expounds on the legislative process and the major players in the making of a plethora of laws during the *Dergue* era (3.3.1). This is followed by an assessment of specific developments of the official ideology, the apparatus of the governing party and their influence as well as leverage in policymaking (3.3.2). It also appraises the trajectories that the constitution-making process went through and the ramifications of this for policymaking (3.4.). It further appraises state-society relationships vis-à-vis policymaking and the roles that the major establishments on both sides of the equation played (3.5); and this is followed by an examination of the structures of policy implementation through centrally guided institutional mechanisms from 1974 to 1991 (3.6).

3.2. Background perspectives on the historical, politico-cultural and institutional antecedents to public policymaking in Ethiopia

3.2.1. Historical premises

Ethiopia is one of the oldest countries in history. Once known as Abyssinia, ancient Greek writers such as Homer and Herodotus mention it in the most ancient written records.[6] The origin of the Ethiopia as a state can be traced back two thousand years to the Kingdom of Axum, which

[6] As legend had it, the state existed as a polity for three thousand years. The anonymous (Greek) author of *The Perilus of the Erythrean Sea* is said to have mentioned Ethiopia in several part of the work. In the Septuagint version of the Old Testament, the Hebrew name 'Cush' was translated into the Greek 'Ethiopia', giving rise to the claim of Ethiopia's existence in Biblical times and the myth of history that it is 3000 years old (Markakis, 1974; Teferra, 1997).

flourished in the first century and declined in the seventh century of the Christian era[7] following the rise of Islam in Arabia (Clapham, 1969; Bahru, 1991). The Kingdom of Axum established the twin institutions that had since guided Ethiopia's socio-economic and political courses, namely, the office of the Emperor and the Orthodox Christian Church (*op. cit*). The latter was introduced during the fourth century AD in the era of the Axumite kingdom. Not only did the religion that became institutionalized in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church evolve into becoming the dominant cultural, political and economic phenomenon that all future traditional rulers had to reckon with, but also Ethiopia is the only place on the continent of Africa where Christianity survived as an indigenous belief system (Markakis, 1974; Schwab, 1985).

The remnants of the Axumite Kingdom moved southward and established the Zagwe Dynasty ruling the highland kingdom from about the middle of eleventh century until 1270. After 1270 AD those claiming Solomonic ancestry, based much further south in the plateau of Shewa, contested the dynasty. The restoration of the so-called Solomonic dynasty[8] marked the second great (after the Axumite period) acme of historic Ethiopia that dominated Ethiopian socio-economic and political life for several centuries (*ibid*). These three hundred years of history marked the genesis of traditional political forms, forms that chiefly represented indigenous Ethiopian outgrowths and values as opposed to the ones introduced from outside such as from the West (Markakis, 1974).

Over the succeeding centuries the center of the Ethiopian state changed locations westwards to Gonder in the sixteenth century, to Tigray in the middle of nineteenth century, and finally the capital shifted to and settled in Addis Ababa from the 1880s. Although Christian monarchs defended themselves against Muslim invasions in the seventeenth century, the Ethiopian kingdom was relatively weak, lasting for a century till the middle of the nineteenth century. This period was known in Ethiopian history as the Era of Princes - *Zemene Mesafint* - in which rival princes were embroiled in inconclusive struggle for supremacy. During this period not only was Ethiopia a collection of independent principalities, but it was also marked by an absence of central government for nearly hundred years (Bahiru, 1991).

---

[7] The first identifiable and historically recorded Ethiopian state was formed in the first century AD at Axum, in today's Tigray region of Ethiopia.

[8] According to Solomonic myth, before the birth of Christ, the Ethiopian Queen, Queen Sheba, visited King Solomon, King of Jerusalem, converted to Judaism and bore a son, Minilik I. Minilik I was considered related to Christ through the holy man Solomon and the Solomonic line of Ethiopian kings claimed inheritance and became a Christian dynasty (Schwab, 1985:5).

The thrust of modernizing Ethiopia, however, came with Tewodros II (1855-1868), one of the exceptional kings whose ambitions were motivated by a vision for the restoration of a strong Ethiopian state, its use of Western technology and recognition by Western powers. More categorically, he was largely successful in re-establishing Ethiopia as a unified state, a vision that his successors Yohannes (1872-1889)[9], Minilik (1889-1913) and Haileselassie (1916/1939-1974) maintained. Among the modernizing monarchs, Emperor Minilik, as the epitome of the Shewan dynasty[10], had the highest claim of the three nineteenth-century emperors to be seen as the founder of the modern Ethiopian state (Clapham, 1988; Markiakis, 1974; Bahiru, 1991). Minilik's astute leadership and shrewd diplomacy earned the recognition of the country's independence among the then powerful European colonialist powers - France, Britain and Italy. Particularly after the Italian invading forces met their decisive defeat by Ethiopian forces at the battle of Adwa in 1896, led by Minilik, a Tripartite Treaty between France, Italy and Britain was concluded in 1906 to recognize Ethiopia as an independent state (Halliday and Molyneux, 1981). Markakis (1974: 25-26) noted that Ethiopia is the only African state below the Sahara whose boundaries have been determined by an internally induced natural process of expansion carried out in a classic method of military conquest.

In any case, the recognition of its independence by the then colonial European powers accorded Ethiopia a relatively stable environment, and allowed Minilik further opportunities to pursue his visions of modernization. Among other things, the initiative to institute and sustain centralized government structures backed by the army and modern bureaucratic institutions supported the modernization drive. The effort that Minilik exerted in developing and expanding modern government and administrative institutions culminated in the establishment of the first ministerial cabinet in 1907. Although the ministerial system is a reflection of Minilik's desire to provide government with an institutional basis, the power of the ministers was highly restricted (Bahru, 1991).

---

[9] Emperor Yohannes, from what is now known as Tigray NRS, was crowned King of Kings in 1872, taking the name of Yohannes IV. He met his death at a place called Metema fighting the incursions of Madhist forces in the Sudan who infiltrated into Ethiopian territory from the western part of the country.

[10] Shewa was one of the provinces in Ethiopia where the capital Addis Ababa is found. It was from Shewa that the powerful aristocrats expanded their sphere of influence to the south, southeast and southwest. Like the south, the north also came under the tutelage of the Shewan aristocracy. Schwab (1985) noted that during the reign of Sahle Selassie (1813-1847), Shewa took the south, west and southeastern territories and he proclaimed himself the ruler of Shewa and Oromo. However, it was during the reign of Minilik II, who himself was a native of Shewa, that the empire virtually doubled in size, leading to the creation of boundaries which have lasted until today (Markakis, 1974; Clapham, 1969).

Appointed by the emperor, the ministers were given lists of functions to carry out. Not only were they palace councilors and retinue in the Emperor's court, but also they performed assignments strictly under the personal auspices of the emperor. In other words, the modern policymaking institutions of central government had evolved directly from the imperial entourage, with the responsibilities limited to advising the emperor and foreign consulates in the capital, Addis Ababa (Lipsky, 1962; Markakis, 1974; Bahiru, 1991). Towards the beginning of the twentieth century, however, the instruments and institutions of modern government and administration were as yet in their incipient forms. Moreover, not only did the power of decision making rest in the person of the emperor, but he was also the only person with the authority to rule over the country, to appoint palace court attendants, dispensed justice, issue decrees, make and revoke appointments and direct all public affairs (Lipsky, 1962; Markakis, 1974; Clapham, 1969). It was thus unlikely to place any formal (constitutional or legal) limit on the power of the emperors.

3.2.2. Politico-cultural antecedents

Ethiopia's past (its history and the traditional institutions developed in the course of time) have had an enormous impact on state-society relationships with respect to policymaking. The traditional values and institutions appeared to have encouraged neither open opposition nor reasoned criticism of government authorities, nor the policies that they unilaterally adopted. It is argued, therefore, that deep-seated traditional and indigenous political forms that have long been rooted in the past have vital relevance in explaining state-society relationships and the dynamics of public policymaking in Ethiopia.

Therefore, having a good grasp of the historical, social and cultural circumstances will be of paramount importance in understanding the dynamics of public policymaking in Ethiopia. Minilik II was the Emperor who oversaw the country's expansion to the south, the restoration of the medieval territories and the unification of Ethiopia, as noted above. The treaties that he concluded with the colonial powers that had colonial territories bordering on Ethiopia – such as Italy, France and Britain – earned him the recognition of the country's sovereignty.

However, the success in territorial gains in the course of internal conquest, expansion and resistance to external colonial expansions brought with it and bequeathed to the succeeding

generations the notion that the use of force could be largely recognized as a major instrument of control and domination. Over the years not only has this been gradually ingrained in the belief system and values of the policy elites in Ethiopia, but also has it been promoted by the cultural and social structure of traditional Ethiopia. The Solomonic myth, for instance, purportedly established the ruling line of Ethiopia into blood relationship with the House of David and ultimately with Christ. The people were persuaded to believe that Solomon's descendants, such as Emperor Haileselassie, should rule over Ethiopia, because they were divinely ordained. Chapter I, article 1 of the first Ethiopian constitution provided: 'the Imperial dignity shall remain perpetually attached to the line of His Majesty Haileselassie I, descendant of King Sahleselassie, whose line descends…from the dynasty of Minilik I, son of King Solomon of Jerusalem and of Queen Sheba of Ethiopia'. Thus, Emperor Haileselassie, who ruled Ethiopia for half a century, used the following titles in policy documents and official appearances: 'Conquering Lion of Judah, Haileselassie I Elect of God, Emperor of Ethiopia'. Additionally, not only did the Solomonic legend find its spiritual justification in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, but the latter also campaigned to inspire awe among the Ethiopian populace. The people were preached into believing that, although the ultimate source of authority is God, its worldly exercise was bestowed up on the emperor.

Therefore, not only was authority claimed to have originated from the pinnacle of the hierarchy and the direction of its flow downward, but also the excessive respect accorded to authority made it difficult, and even impossible, to express any opposition to a superior. This was even more complicated by the hierarchical nature of the politico-administrative structure and the predominantly feudal socio-economic formation. Ethiopian society has long been ruled by a hierarchical politico-administrative order, with public institutions operating under the monarchy (Meheret, 1997: 64). Since land was the basis for status and wealth, the monarchical structure had to sustain and adapt to modern bureaucratic institutions by extracting surplus from the mass of the peasantry. The basic components of the social system were the monarchy, the landed aristocracy, the clergy and the mass of rural farmers *(ibid).* However, the traditional polity had to strike a balance between the landed nobility and the modern educated elites, in which case a measure of adaptation had to take place in order to preserve the stability of the monarchical structure and exercise control in the face of continuing social and administrative changes. The process of adaptation not only integrated educated elites into the apparatus of the administrative

structure, but it also become instrumental in the process of centralization that Haileselassie's regime had pursued ever since his ascension to the throne. Centralization was accomplished through the partial modernization of state apparatus, and thereby establishing the basis of the elite status of the educated group (Clapham, 1969; Markakis, 1974; Bahiru, 1991). In the last years of the imperial era, the incorporation of the educated group into the politico-administrative structure not only had changed the monarchy into a veritable autocracy, but also this very adaptation engendered an imperial-bureaucratic elite structure (*op. cit*).

Hence, most Ethiopians have long been captured by traditions deep-seated in their socio-political cultures that defined the relations of the state to the society in authoritarian terms. The only politically active groups were those in the upper-most hierarchy of the government institutions. Authority was treated with the utmost respect, and a person holding it was received with reverence; thus, he could neither be challenged nor was there any reasoned criticism of policy proposals possible. Most Ethiopians had profound reverence for their great men, above all for their monarch, and to them it was considered as a diminution of that greatness for the subordinates to take decisions and perform actions entrusted to their superiors (*ibid)*. For the latter, too, delegating ones authority was unlikely, because doing so could be seen as lowering of the status of the superior in the eyes of the subordinates (*op. cit*). These entrenched feelings might have gradually changed over the past three decades, though they have been influencing remarkably the broad spectrum of public policymaking and relationships between state and society.

Furthermore, policy and political problems have hardly been resolved through open debate and compromise; rather authority and the use of force have more often than not been used to discourage even the most ordinary disobedience and dissent. Except for the privileged few, the bulk of the people remained apolitical. Nor was there any right to form associations. Till very recently neither transfer of power nor change of government were resolved peacefully. In the Ethiopian context, therefore, resorting to a violent mechanism of ascertaining political power and asserting one's domination has been integral in socio-political culture and history. History and culture also have an enormous influence on the dynamics of public policymaking and state-society relationships in contemporary Ethiopia.

In summary, major social and economic policy decisions affecting citizens and the country were conceived and made by the emperors and palace courts. Not only were the administrative

personnel who executed policies protégés of court officials of higher order, but they were also groomed to implement policies and decrees with absolute obedience. Moreover, the feudal order had long been the bedrock of the Ethiopian socio-economic order. In its worst form the feudal order nurtured a culture of subjugation and inculcated absolute compliance with the decisions made by the imperial court. Not only was the power of the emperors and nobility unchallenged, but citizens also had no say in policy matters. In pre-revolutionary Ethiopia socio-economic power and/or status were dictated by one's possession of large tracts of land (Bahiru, 1991). Emperors allocated land to the nobility and loyal subjects as patronage. The landlords, government officials and the Orthodox Church owned the bulk of land, and controlled the lives of millions of the peasantry. The latter had no legal, economic and political rights. The fact that state-society relationships and the structure of policymaking evolved from and were determined by the prevailing socio-economic order meant not only that the ordinary citizens' participation in the policymaking process was virtually undermined, but also that independent civil society groups had no chance of entry into the narrow circle of the policymaking process. In short, the client-patron relationship that has over the past several hundred years been developing between the state and society tends to haunt the structures and institutions of public policymaking in Ethiopia to this day.

3.2.3. Institutional antecedents: Haileselassie's period

To begin with, the 1931 constitution was a landmark in the history of Ethiopian public policy, not only because the first constitution was promulgated, but also because the first bicameral parliament convened immediately after the constitution was promulgated. The first constitution resembled in part that of the Japanese Empire of 1889, which in turn was similar to the constitution of 1871 of the German Empire (Redden, 1966; Assafa, 2002). Looking back to the time (i.e. 1931) when parliament was founded, nearly all sub-Sahara African states were still under colonial rule. It is probably not surprising to see a legislature whose powers had been circumscribed entirely. Nor was it expected to represent the basic repository of the authority of the people or supreme policymaking body of the state. The emperor had unrestricted constitutional powers, extraordinarily exceeding the power of the legislators, including the power to declare war, appoint judges, dissolve parliament, negotiate as well as sign treaties (Meheret,

1997: 86). The gist of the matter lies in article 6 of the constitution: 'In the Ethiopian Empire supreme power rests in the hands of the Emperor'. Hence, the parliament was neither meant to carry out the usual functions of an elected legislature, nor was it a source of pubic authority.

The 1931 constitution concisely defined the structure of the legislature to consist of two deliberative chambers. The Chamber of Senate or upper house *(Yeheg Mewesegna Mekerbet)* was to consist of members appointed by the emperor drawn from among the nobility 'who have for a long time served his Empire as Princes or Ministers, Judges or high military officers' (Article 31). Till the people are in a position to elect the members of the Chamber of Deputies or lower house *(Yeheg Memria Mekerbet)* themselves, the constitution stated, the nobility and local chiefs shall designate them (Article 32). The bulk of the 1931 constitution, nevertheless, was devoted to stipulating the power of the monarch, with the virtual power of initiating laws and policies resting in the person of the emperor.

Promulgated in November 1955, the revised constitution appeared to state some provisions giving the lower house (Chamber of Deputies) a power base separate from the emperor. In much the same way as the 1931 constitution, however, while the Senate remained an appointed chamber with members still chosen from among the nobility, dignitaries, the clergy and other prominent personages assigned to sit for a 6-year term by the emperor, members of the lower house (Deputies) were elected by universal adult suffrage for a four-year term (Revised Constitution, 1957). Unfortunately, a strict wealth requirement imposed on candidates coupled with the absence of a party from which Deputies could have drawn organized inspiration forced the MPs to rely on government patronage for re-election (Lipsky, 1962; Clapham, 1969). Nor did they put up any challenges to any legislative proposals originating from the executive. In fact, the powers of the monarch were even more precisely sharpened in the revised constitution than in the first constitution promulgated in 1931. It vested a multitude of powers of vital importance in the emperor. Not only did it invest sovereignty of the empire in the emperor with the power to determine the organization, powers and duties of all government departments, and to appoint and dismiss government officials, but he also had absolute control over the armed forces with wide-ranging emergency powers (Articles, 26, 27 and 29). Apart from this, the emperor had absolute control over foreign relations, the power to dissolve the parliament and to reverse the decisions of the courts and grant pardons (Articles 30, 33 and 35).

Instead of reducing the powers of the emperor, the revised constitution substantially enlarged and reinforced his powers. Article 4 of the constitution, among others, made an explicit reference to the absolute powers of the emperor: '…the person of the Emperor is sacred, His dignity is inviolable and His power indisputable'. Additionally, he had virtual powers and control over the executive and administrative structures: 'The Emperor has the right to select, appoint and dismiss the Prime Minister and all other Ministers and Vice-Ministers' (article 66). Put simply, the Council of Ministers, the organs of administrative apparatuses at central and provincial levels, operated as extensions of the palace court. After 1943 the emperor appointed ministries till an imperial order issued in 1966 granted the prime minister the power to nominate members of his cabinet, though subject to palace approval (Markakis, 1974)

In fact, intermediating between the emperor and the parliament, the prime minister and the council of ministers chiefly remained a clearinghouse for legislation. The close involvement of the emperor with the executive functions of central government certainly made the executive more important than the legislature and higher organs of the judiciary. Unlike as we know it today, the prime minister's office then lacked a useful supervisory and executive power, with little influence on the central government (see Chapter 4). In other words, the prime minister hardly provided unified executive direction for the government, whether by enforcing general policy initiatives or by commanding the obedience of other high officials, nor had he powers over such vital areas as provincial administrations and the armed forces (Clapham, 1969; Markakis 1974).

Furthermore, radiating from the central government in the capital, the emperor also gained more control over local government. The administrative divisions had been revised and administrative offices corresponding to them were established to reflect the modernization thrust and ambitions of the emperor. The provinces (*Teklay Gizat*) constituted the biggest administrative units, with each province divided into sub-provinces *(Aawrajas*), districts (*Woredas)* and sub-districts (*Mikitil Woredas*). Local administrators in rural Ethiopia were primarily concerned with the traditional functions of law enforcement, maintenance of law and order, and collection of taxes (Lipsky, 1962). Although provincial administrations remained the preserve of the nobility and traditional ruling elites, young educated men of unquestioned loyalty to the emperor were also assigned to help provincial governors and streamline administrative processes (Perham, 1969; Meheret, 1997).

The foregoing discussion attested to the fact that both legally and politically the palace (the monarchy) was the most powerful institution of policymaking and the center of all political activities during Haileselassie's era. The vital institutions of the palace court such as the Crown Council[11], the Private Cabinet[12], the Minister of Pen[13], *Aquabe Saat*[14] surpassed the formally established institutions of policymaking and implementation such as the council of ministers, the parliament and the provincial administrations. The emperor, as an apogee of both modern and traditional political institutions, became the source of legislation, and no policy was issued without his approval (Bahiru, 1991). As noted earlier, both constitutions had duly underlined that the power of the palace can neither be disputed nor challenged. Furthermore, the predominant legal, socio-cultural, historical and political milieu permitted no political associations of any kind; thus, the political system hardly encountered demands for preferred policies, neither were there any such significant societal pressures on the political system to put up proposals and demands for policy changes till 1974.

In the wake of the 1960 aborted military *coup*[15], the last fourteen years of Haileselassie reign witnessed growing opposition to his regime. In the aftermath of the *coup,* the Emperor sought to re-claim the loyalty of *coup* sympathizers by introducing a few reforms, but they were

---

[11] The Crown Council was an informal policymaking body and was the central focus of the emperor (Perham, 1969: 89). In accordance with the revised constitution of 1955, the Council was to consist of the primate of the Orthodox Church (*Abune)*, the president of the Senate, and 'such Princes, Ministers and Dignitaries' as may be designated by the emperor. Presumably, it was to convene only when fundamental issues or major policies had to be considered. Although most traditional institutions of policymaking declined in the 1960s, the Crown Council was the most important surviving element of the traditional form of Haileselassie's regime (Lipsky, 1962: 177).

[12] The Private Cabinet was designed to perform a function analogous to that performed by the White House of the President of the US (Markakis, 1974). Its members were to provide liaison with the formally established public institutions, appraise proposals emanating from them and advise the emperor, and also report to him on the performance of government organizations. Although the Private Cabinet did not have a constitutional mandate, it served as an independent source of information for the emperor over the officials in charge of major government departments.

[13] The Minister of Pen (*Tsehafi Tezeaz*) was one of the traditional institutions that wielded immense power in making key decisions. Although a prime minister and council of ministers had been set up in 1943, the dominating institution of the period was the Minister of Pen. It was so close to the emperor that its operations were often indistinguishable form his. By the virtue of his duties the Minister of Pen enjoyed unrestricted access to the palace.

[14] *Aquabe Saat* can probably be translated as 'appointment', where each minister would be expected to deliver reports about the activities of his ministry to the emperor; and get clearance for decisions needing imperial order (Markakis, 1974). Thus, it had been the most important regular decision mechanisms in the Haileselassie's government since liberation in 1941. Its effect had been to emphasize the personal responsibility of each minister to the emperor, and thus to hamper attempts at collective responsibility under the supervision of the council of ministers or the prime minister (Clapham, 1969: 109-110). It had also provided each minister with a court of appeal where he could argue his side of a question before the emperor and other higher authorities. Equally important, it had given the emperor a channel for direct intervention in the affairs of each ministry.

[15] The 1960 coup represented one of the most serious challenges to Haileselassie's rule before 1974. However, the coup lasted for only few days. Despite its failure, the 1960 attempted coup marked the beginning of the failure of monarcho–aristocratic and bureaucratic elites in Ethiopia.

far too few. For the most part the measures, which took the form of land grants, primarily targeted enriching the senior and middle-level military and police officers, but no coherent economic and social development programs had been launched (Ottaway, 1978; Halliday and Molyneux, 1981). Haileselassie's government failure to carry out significant economic and political reforms over the previous fourteen years, combined with rising inflation, widespread corruption and maladministration, a famine that affected millions of farmers in the northern part of the country, and the growing discontent of urban interest groups provided the backdrop against which the Ethiopian revolution unfolded in 1974 (Teferra, 1997; Ottaway, 1995).

3.3. Process, roles and institutions, 1974-1987

3.3.1. The legislative process

For thirteen years since the downfall of Haileselassie's regime in 1974, there had not been any written constitution in Ethiopia. Established as a collective head of government by a proclamation, a body of junior and non-commissioned officers (NCOs) drawn from the armed forces, police and territorial army held government power (PMAC, 1974). The group was popularly known as the *Dergue* (the Amharic word for 'committee' or 'council'). It deposed the emperor, annulled the 1955 constitution, dissolved Hailesellasie's parliament and officially declared the establishment of a Provisional Military Administrative Council (PMAC) in place of the imperial government (PMAC, 1974:1-2). Afterwards, a plethora of proclamations were promulgated in the name of the corporate group, namely, the *Dergue* or the PMAC.

After removing the imperial establishments, the *Dergue* did not offer guidelines to deal with the policymaking process. The proclamation that the Military Government issued in September 1974 nonetheless suggested, at least indirectly, where the power of policymaking in Ethiopia resided. It stated:

> … Hailesalssie I is hereby deposed as of today, September 12, 1974.
>
> The Chamber of Deputies and the Senate (Parliament) is hereby dissolved until the people elect through democratic processes their genuine representatives dedicated to serve the interests of the people...
>
> The Constitution of 1955 is hereby suspended

> The Armed Forces, the Police and Territorial Army Council has hereby assumed full government power until a legally constituted people's assembly approves a new constitution and a government is duly established… (PMAC, 1974).

The proclamation was, however, vague about many contentious issues such as what the legislative-executive relationships and the separations of functions in the policymaking process would entail. Nor did it clearly stipulate the institutions with powers to initiate, adopt and implement policies, which did not augur well for a democratic policymaking process. Issued in the same year, the PMAC designated the organs of government that would be active in the legislative process, and it, too, lacked clarity on a wide range of issues pertaining to policymaking (PMAC, 1974).

Towards the end of December 1976 the *Dergue* introduced a hierarchy within itself. It involved a congress (consisting of all of the *Dergue* members), a central committee comprising forty members and designated by the congress, and a standing committee consisting of seventeen officers drawn from and elected by the congress (PMAC, 1976). A year later the *Dergue* promulgated a piece of legislation that had a semblance of 'a supreme law of the country'. The legislation was enforced till the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (PDRE) was officially inaugurated in September 1987 (PMAC, 1977). Not only did the legislation substantively guide the policymaking process in the country, but it also widely regulated relationships within various government agencies, on the one hand, and between government and mass organizations, on the other.

The proclamation empowered the *Dergue* with both the legislative and executive mandates (PMAC, 1977). Not only did the legislation institutionalize the hierarchy within the *Dergue*, but also the virtual powers of legislation and execution resided in the Standing Committee. Hence, almost all the powers of policymaking resided in the PMAC. The Congress consisted of all surviving members of the *Dergue*, the Central Committee composed of thirty-two members elected by the former and sixteen Standing Committee members elected by the Congress from the members of the Central Committee (PMAC, 1977, EMI, 1981). Thereafter, its membership never changed, although actual membership declined from 120 in 1974 to 80 in 1978 as defections, death and assassinations took their toll (Pilany, 1978: 3). Chaired by the Head of the State, who was also the Chairman of the PMAC, the Council of Ministers' competences had been limited to one of deliberating rather than incorporating critical inputs into the draft laws and

policies (Shiferaw, 1989; Andargachew, 1993). However, with the assignment of trusted personnel from the military to each ministry and administrative regions, not only had administrative fiat eclipsed responsibilities assigned to civilian ministers by law, but also parallel decision-making characterized the policymaking institutions. In other words, government agencies at each level of the policymaking structure had to account to the PMAC, the trusted military officials posted in every ministry and the Council of Ministers, which came to be known as multiple disunity of command.

What is more, the legislative process appeared to be limited to small circles of policymakers. In fact, the bulk of policy decisions of vital importance as rural and urban land reforms, nationalization of manufacturing industries, banks and insurance companies were made by the *Dergue*. Andargachew noted:

> All these radical reforms could be said to have originated from the demands of the public and of the civilian activists. Once a policy was taken up by the *Derg*, however, it was up to the department heads to follow up their successful completion. Each one of had one or more ministries and other public agencies under their jurisdiction to assist them in this endeavor. Following the initiation of a policy, a drafting committee was established in the relevant public agency over which the concerned head of the *Derg*'s department presided. Again, after the completion of the draft, it was up to the same department head to submit and explain it to the Ad-hoc Supreme Organizing Committee. The latter would then approve it with or without referring the matter to a general assembly of the *Derg*. (1993, 169)

Lacking experience and expertise in legislation, the *Dergue* sought the assistance of civilian ministers in the policymaking to complement its apparent weaknesses, although the latter had marginal influence on agenda setting and the choice of policies. Nor had they exacted any significant leverage to affect the directions of the implementation process (Teferra, 1997). Hence, each ministry or government agency primarily proposed laws, pending their deliberation and approval by the *Dergue* (Shiferaw, 1989). The Legal Department in the Office of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers prepared the draft when, under certain conditions, the Head of the State or the Council of Ministers had to initiate laws (Shiferaw, 1989:124). The draft laws from these sources were to be sent to the Legal Committee in the Council of Ministers, with the Department of Legal Affairs in the Prime Minister's Office serving as secretariat of the Committee. Chaired by the Minister of Law and Justice, the Legal Committee, whose members included the Minister of Education, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Deputy Minister of Finance, the Deputy

Minister of Mines and Energy, a representative from the National Planning Supreme Council, the Department Head of Legal Affairs in the Office of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, and the Minister or Head of the Agency sponsoring the draft legislation would deliberate the sprit of the legislation, and send that to the PMAC via the CoM for approval (*ibid*).

Shiferaw (*ibid.*: 125), however, noted that there were exceptions to the established procedures, as when draft laws were assigned to a group of experts specially established to examine bills to be able to provide their expert opinion and recommendation. In some other cases, legislation was referred to a joint Legal and Administrative Committee or to a joint Legal and Economic Committee, all of which were established by the Office of the Council of Ministers (*ibid.*). After having studied and incorporated their wisdom, the draft legislation would be sent to the Provisional Administrative Council for final approval. The proclamations were published on the official *Negarit Gazeta* bearing the name of the corporate body, Provisional Military Administrative Council (the *Dergue*). Albeit the same personalities remained in the leadership positions, the virtual power of decision making over the years shifted from the *Dergue* (PMAC) to COPWE/WPE.

3.3.2. The official ideology, the party and policymaking

In a desperate search to find a guiding philosophy, the ideological values, which PMAC (*Dergue*) espoused, had metamorphosed since its coming to power in 1974. It started with '*Ethiopia Tikdem*' (Ethiopia First) and/or *Hibrettesebawinet* (Ethiopian Socialism), which had for most part been kindled with the rhetoric of justice, equality, freedom, nationalism, national sovereignty and the primacy of the economic benefit of the common people. The first such attempt appeared in the official government policy document. It states:

> If we were to use the historic opportunity to create a new nation which we will all be proud of, it is necessary to provide an answer to the question 'what will be the political philosophy on the basis of which this new Ethiopia will be built?
>
> …having demolished the old order, it is necessary to demonstrate what political and social order takes its place. An act of demolition should immediately be followed by an act of creation. It is unfinished job which starts with the former and shies away with the latter. We have said that the new Ethiopia will be created on the basis of our motto 'Ethiopia Tikdem'. But the full meaning of this motto ought to be spelled out. The

political philosophy should provide the meaning of 'Ethiopia Tikdem'…The political philosophy embraces five fundamental principles of the present movement:

1. All Ethiopians of whatever religion, language, sex or local affinity shall live together in equality, fraternity, harmony and unity under the umbrella of their country. Ethiopia will become a country in which justice, equality, and freedom will prevail.
2. The boundless idolatry of private gain has chained our country to poverty, and which has humiliated our country in the eyes of the world, will be eradicated. Henceforth, the interests of the community will be paramount.
3. The rights of self-administration which our people had exercised at the village, district and regional levels and which had been usurped will be restored. The central government will be responsible for national or otherwise fundamental matters of state and give assistance and support to communities exercising self-administration.
4. Man is meant to work to support himself and his community. Human labor will consequently be accorded a respected place in our social framework. Conversely, exploitation and parasitism will be socially condemned modes of living.
5. Above all, the unity of the country will be the scared faith of all our people. In short: 'Ethiopia Tikdem' ('Ethiopia First') means *Hibrettesebawinet* (Ethiopian Socialism); and *Hibrettesebawinet* means *equality; self-reliance; the dignity of labor; the supremacy of the common good; and the indivisibility of Ethiopian unity*. That is our political philosophy. And those are the principles upon which the foundations of the new Ethiopia will rest. (emphasis added) (PMAC, 1974: 7-8)

The politico-administrative, social and economic policies that underpinned the philosophy had further been emphasized (*op. cit*). *Dergue* pledged to invest resources and exert efforts to promote collective decision making from village to higher-level government institutions. It also pledged for an establishment of a single political party under which every facet of social life had to be mobilized and to which every segment of Ethiopian society had to pay its allegiance (*ibid:* 8). Hence, not only was this single political party enjoined to ensure 'popular participation', but it would also be instrumental for the dissemination of the political philosophy as well as state control (*ibid*, 8). Ottaway and Ottaway (1978: 63), nevertheless, argued that *Ethiopia Tikdem* meant in effect a rejection of a pluralist parliamentary system in which various societal groups were represented in a struggle to determine national policy. In other words, only the military government and the higher echelons of its administrative structures could interpret the common good and steer Ethiopia in the 'right direction' (*ibid.*).

The guidelines certainly indicated that the *Dergue* placed it self in an analogous position to a vanguard party among the plethora of government institutions, with the public bureaucracy enforcing its policies (Schwab, 1985). In addition, the political philosophy that set policy guidelines redefined Ethiopia's economy, calling for the state control of major industrial establishments, with a limited participation of the private sector in the economy. It also called for government ownership of land (which was the center piece of Ethiopia *Tikdem*), communications, manufacturing industries, electricity, and mining of precious metals, tourism, and large-scale construction. In effect, the new economic policy provided value premises upon which a socialist Ethiopia would be constructed. The *Dergue* further outlined its economic program as follows:

> The principle that the common good takes precedence over the pursuit of individual gain is the starting point of both economic and social policies. In the domain of economic policy, giving priority to the interests of the majority means curing its basic economic diseases. The basic economic disease of the majority is at present poverty. The primary element of economic policy is consequently the abolition of poverty. In addition, the prevention of economic exploitation will also be an element of this policy. This requires the public ownership of the nation's economic resources.
>
> Accordingly those resources that are either crucial for economic development or are of such a character that they provide an indispensable service to the community will have to be brought under government control or ownership…
>
> The natural resources of the country will be a special instrument of this policy. Agriculture is at present the mainstay of the national economy. Land tenure and agricultural policy will consequently be changed in a manner which will make it possible to abolish poverty and narrow the gap in the level of living. As land belongs to the entire community, the government is the trustee of this important national resource.
>
> Land exclusively under public ownership and management will be designated periodically. Government will give guidelines for land which is owned communally. Similarly, private holdings which will fall under cooperative associations will also operate under guidelines provided by the Government. Individuals and communities which have the legal right to operate communal, cooperative, or private farms will be accountable to the Government for the good care and management of their holdings. The forthcoming law on land reform will in particular cover this point. Those who operate communal and cooperative farms will be given special government support and assistance. (PMAC, 1974: 10)

These represented the overriding parameters and beliefs that had guided the commitment of the emerging policy elites till they adopted National Democratic Revolution Program (NDRP) in April 1976. This period had also witnessed the rapid growth of a cohesive administrative

framework in which all social, political and economic policies that were to be pursued would be incorporated within that socialist construct (Schwab, 1985). In other words, not only did December 1974 represent the genesis of the institutionalization of policymaking structures under the leadership of the *Dergue,* but it was also a turning point in Ethiopian history for it witnessed the official introduction of socialism.

The ideological metamorphosis[16] that had its inception even before the *Dergue* took power culminated in the National Democratic Revolution Program (NDRP) that made its entrance into the official government policy documents and pronouncements after April 1976. Predicated on the teachings of Marx and Lenin, the NDRP was a radical recourse for ideological commitment towards scientific socialism. The Program set out the following objectives:

> 1. To completely abolish feudalism, imperialism and bureaucratic-capitalism from Ethiopia and with united effort of all anti-feudal and anti-imperialist forces build a new Ethiopia and lay a strong foundation for the transition to socialism.
> 2. Towards this end, under the leadership of the working class and on the basis of the worker-peasant alliance and in collaboration with the petty bourgeoisie and other anti-feudal and anti-imperialist forces, establish a peoples' democratic republic in which the freedom, equality, unity and prosperity of Ethiopian peoples is ensured, in which self-government at different levels is exercised and which allows for the unconditional exercise of human and democratic rights. (PMAC, 1976)

These pronouncements coincided with the establishment of the Provisional Office for Mass Organizational Affairs (POMOA). The responsibility of translating the teachings of Marx and Lenin into different ethnic languages, disseminating the same among the Ethiopian public and laying the groundwork for the establishment of a workers' party as well as a Soviet-style people's republic was assigned to the latter by legislation (PMAC, 1976). Despite it took several years of acrimonious conflict and bickering within the *Dergue* and between it and civilian activists, the objectives stipulated in the Program had an enormous impact on the *modus operandi* of policymaking and organization of policymaking institutions. From this time forth, the teachings of Marx and Lenin set the parameters of rallying the peasantry and the urban poor behind the government and its policies and practices. Nationalization of the means of production and the re-organization of the economy in terms of a central planning and command structure; and the

[16] Adargachew (1993: 163) summed up the ideological metamorphosis as follows: Ethiopia First (Ethiopia *Tikdem*) of July 1974 could be described as the program of a *coup d'etat*; Ethiopian Socialism (*Hebrettesebawinet*) of December 1974 as a program of African Socialism, and NDRP of April 1976 as a program of scientific socialism.

promotion of anti-West and pro-East foreign policies were entirely predicated on the ideology. Not only did the ideology set the parameters and *modus operandi* of public policymaking, but it also provided the party and the executive leadership with the powers to set priorities for agenda setting and policy choices to be made. Put simply, policy elites adopted Marxism-Leninism, whose conceptual tools guided the policy goals to be pursued and the institutional instruments to be constructed in formulating and implementing public policies.

When the Commission for Organizing the Working People of Ethiopia (COPWE) was established in 1979, not only did the *Dergue* make the official claim that building socialism and communism in Ethiopia would only be possible under the leadership of a Leninist party, but it also claimed that the single most important actor in the socio-economic policymaking process was the party of the working people (PMAC, 1980: 60). With COPWE as a leading political entity, the importance of disseminating Marxist-Leninist doctrine among government and mass organizations, cooperatives and the public had boldly been underscored (*op. cit.*). Policy elites further pledged to organize a single party of the working people and instituting a new people's democratic republic essentially guided by and based on the ideology of Marxism-Leninism (*ibid*: 61). A party document further reaffirmed:

> Marxism-Leninism, the philosophy of the working people, is indissolubly linked with practice, with political struggle. Born and developed in the heart of class struggle between the working class and the bourgeoisie, Marxism Leninism has already lit up mankind' s road to communism. … Since its momentous upsurge, the Ethiopian Revolution has stage-by-stage opened new vistas for the adequate dissemination of Marxism Leninism among the Ethiopian working people. Successive political measures effected by the revolutionary government in the last six years have created propitious climate for the spread of scientific doctrine. To mention but some, the government declaration proclaiming socialism as our political guideline and the establishment of institutions that enable the spread of the teachings of Marxism-Leninism among the broad people and the revolutionary army have been instrumental in this regard. The proclamation of the NDRP and the efforts of genuine revolutionaries have also facilitated the spread of Marxism Leninism in the country.
>
> It is well worthy to note that the formation of COPWE entails and has necessitated the spread of Marxism Leninism in a coordinated and centrally guided manner. The formation of the commission has opened wide avenues for the dissemination of Marxism Leninism free from dogmatism and revisionism…The Ethiopian working people who have reached a decisive stage in their revolutionary struggle need Marxism Leninism because they are striving to build a just society…Today, when conducive

> atmosphere for the dissemination of Marxism Leninism is at hand, the masses would certainly make strenuous efforts to all the more embrace it as the sole guidepost in their struggle. (COPWE, 1980)

Hence, the clamor for embracing Marxism-Leninism stems from the fact that it served as a tool for the socio-economic transformation of the country. It was also seen as the only reliable conceptual tool and guiding principle for formulating the 'correct' socio-economic strategies and policies and determining the lines of the country's socio-economic and political development (*op. cit.*).

In just a few months after its establishment, COPWE's structure spanned almost all the regions, provinces, districts and work places in the towns and rural villages. It increasingly came to symbolize the cutting edge of all socio-economic and political initiatives and national policy decisions, although the core group of *Dergue* members as yet remained the top echelon of the COPWE leadership. The Second Plenary Session of the Central Committee of COPWE, for instance, conducted a four-day deliberation on the vital national social and economic policy issues, and issued an 11-point resolutions mainly targeting the re-organization of the Ethiopian trade unions, urban dwellers' and peasant associations, youth, women's and professional associations along party lines (COPWE, 1981). COPWE's leadership issued a set of guidelines for restructuring and implementing administrative institutions that had vital importance, such as the Ministry of Urban Development and Housing, National Revolutionary Development Campaign and Central Planning Supreme Council (NRDC-CPSC) and other implementing agencies dealing with natural resources, tourism, agriculture and commerce (*ibid.*). Having been the hallmark of socialist socio-economic transformation, the establishment of NRDC-CPSC in Ethiopia marked the ascendance of a command economy and central planning based on socialism.

By a proclamation promulgated in September 1984, COPWE was renamed as the Worker's Party of Ethiopia (WPE). Since then, the latter issued guidelines and decrees to guide and monitor state-society relationships. Although much of the statutory pronouncements were often made in the name of the *Dergue*, since the end of the 1970s, nevertheless, COPWE and after mid-1980s WPE assumed virtual control over the entire socio-economic policymaking process. With the coming into being of the WPE, not only had policymaking by far been centralized and institutionalized, but so also did the teachings of Marx, Lenin and the program of WPE dictate

the policymaking process. The overriding strategic objective of the party was claimed to be building socialism, and via socialism achieve socio-economic and political transformation and move towards a classless society, namely, communism (WPE, 1984). The party professed that any socio-economic development and transformation in Ethiopia would be unthinkable in the absence of the leading role of the WPE and the principles of Marxism-Leninism from which it got its inspiration (*ibid*: 24). WPE contended:

> Accordance to the stage of development that the Ethiopian revolution has currently attained, the primary and fundamental goal of the revolution is the establishment of the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia under the leadership of WPE. The realization of this goal will primarily necessitate the political hegemony of the working class. In the economic sphere, the expansion and strengthening of the socialist relations of production, as well as facilitation of the development of the forces of production are second to none. Ideologically, promoting the cultural and the level of knowledge of the working people and achieving ideological unity among them are of paramount importance. The realization of the principle of proletarian internationalism should simultaneously be promoted in line with the political, economic and ideological objectives of the party. In sum, not only will the effective achievement of the preceding objectives deepen the democratic revolution, but also can create conditions conducive for building socialism. (1984: 116)

Having perceived the insignificance of the socialist portion in the economy, WPE pledged to work towards organizing and broadening the socialist economic base (*op. cit.*). While recognizing that the socialist and private forms of production relations were locked in competition, it saw the necessity of establishing state control over the private sector to prevent the latter from undermining the socialist form of production relations (WPE, 1984: 25-26). WPE saw revamping and strengthening of the party's structure as the most important precondition for the promotion of the public sector as well as laying the material basis for socialist socio-economic construction. Much like its successors, WPE laid emphasis on the primacy of agriculture both in the short and medium terms, and transformed the economy from a predominantly agriculturally based to an industrially based economy. WPE's central strategy in agriculture, therefore, was targeted at the transformation of miniscule and isolated farming units into modern large-scale farming whereby more advanced organization of agricultural production could be utilized (*ibid.*). The corollaries of WPE's agricultural strategies, at least in the medium term, included expanding big state-owned farms, and transforming small peasant holdings into large-scale producer cooperatives that would in turn facilitate improved organization, use of better and more advanced technology, better

production services (*op. cit.*). Another important corollary of the rural transformation program was the relocation and reorganization of the peasantry from peasant associations based on scattered homesteads to producers' cooperatives organized on the basis of rural resettlement and villagization programs, which had rigorously been pursued before and after the establishment of WPE (Harbeson, 1988). Additionally, WPE exerted an effort to create an efficient system of socialist economic management based on the principles of democratic centralism and strong central and regional planning.

In the political and administrative spheres, based on a worker-peasant alliance and progressive revolutionary elements, WPE pledged the establishment of a people's democratic republic of Ethiopia. 'WPE is at the forefront of the new socio-political order whose ultimate objective is the establishment of proletarian dictatorship and under the leadership of WPE. The Party's commitments to its historic mission of establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat and laying the socio-political basis of socialism can come true only if it can assert its supremacy in the political leadership' (WPE, 1984: 39-40). Moreover, not only did the party claim that it was at the cutting age of the entire political process, but also professed that no socio-economic development programs would be accomplished without its leadership. Suffice it to say that Marxism-Leninism profoundly influenced development goals, with the establishments of the day centrally guiding policy implementation.

As earlier noted, the real policymaking power in WPE, however, resided in the Politburo, which had eleven full and six alternate members. Dawit (1990), an insider and a former member of the Central Committee of WPE, nevertheless noted that, although WPE's Politburo had ostensibly been the country's most important policymaking body, the latter was a little more than the articulation of ideas already decided on personally by Mengistu. In other words, most policies of vital importance, including major socio-economic decisions, that Mengistu proposed had little difficulty finding their way onto the agenda, and, therefore, he could make decisions that had far-reaching consequences without consulting the executive ministries (*ibid.*, 1990).

3.4. The making of the 1987 constitution and its implications, 1987-1991

3.4.1. The making of the constitution

WPE's program set the preconditions for the making of the constitution in 1984. It spelt out the following points.

1. A new political order called for an establishment of the Peoples' Democratic Republic of Ethiopia under the leadership of WPE. The major task ahead of the leadership of WPE and the government of PDRE would be to undertake a non-capitalist path of socio-economic development, build socialism and communism. The achievement of these objectives would again call for restructuring of government institutions based on a worker-peasant alliance, which would gradually evolve into the dictatorship of the proletariat.

2. The institutional structure of the PDRE would be based on the universal tenets of Marxism-Leninism and the principles of socialism. Hence, the republic would be supported by democratic centralism, socialist legality and proletarian internationalism. In general, the *modus operandi* of the PDRE as well as the fundamental rights of citizens would be enshrined in the constitution and other laws.

3. WPE would ensure that the National *Shengo* operates as the supreme organ of state power in the PDRE, and the supremacy of the working people would be affirmed in the republic. Moreover, the structures of PDRE would be unitary and take into account the settlement factors and economic conditions of ethnic groups or nationalities. In the republic the organization of government power from the lowest regions to the national government organs would be predicated on popular elections.

4. In view of the proper discharge of duties at different levels in the hierarchy of the republic, government officials would come under close government and public scrutiny as well as control (WPE, 1984: 41-43).

Although there had been a flurry of activities (among the public, the ruling party and government circles) during the process of the making of the constitution, the above guidelines continued to reign all along. In fact, the directives appeared in the different parts of the constitution that contained 119 articles and 17 chapters in 1987. In his opening remarks to the first plenary session of the Constitutional Commission, Mengistu reiterated the guidelines that underpinned the constitution making process:

> ….the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (PDRE) will be organized and run on the basis of the well-known principles of Democratic Centralism, Proletarian Internationalism and socialist legality. It will also be founded for the purpose of the realization of the programs and policies of the WPE. It will accordingly make a vital contribution to finalize our struggle, which is aimed at accomplishing the National Democratic Revolution through mobilization of the working people, and lay the necessary material and technical foundation for the attainment of socialism.
>
> As you well know, intensive and extensive research has been conducted at the Institute for the Study of Nationalities to act as a springboard for the preparation of the constitution. Considerable work has been carried out in this regard primarily with the close attention of COPWE and the Revolutionary Government and later under the guidance of our party (WPE). Useful preliminary ideas have been advanced by examining conditions in light of the characteristics of the revolution and its long-term objectives in order to qualitatively formulate the constitution of the New Ethiopia. Accordingly, the constitution drafting commission is not beginning its work in a vacuum but on the basis of the concrete studies and research on which much labor has been invested. (Herald, 25 February 1986)

The primary task facing the WPE following its formation in 1984 was thus to develop a new national constitution that would lead to the inauguration of the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (PDRE). A Constitutional Commission consisting of 343 members was formed, by a proclamation, to draft a new constitution in March 1986 (PMAC, 1986:3-8). Eventually, the 122 full and alternate members of the WPE Central Committee who had been appointed to its membership dominated the commission (Teferra, 1997). The Constitutional Commission had its origins in the Institute for the Study of Ethiopian Nationalities[17], which the *Dergue* established in March 1983 to seek solutions to problems resulting from Ethiopia's ethnic diversity, to conduct research, and undertake studies leading to the drafting of the constitution as well as the

[17] The Institute for the Studies of Nationalities was established by government proclamation in 1983 to conduct studies on the nationalities of Ethiopia, to draft a new national constitution and prepare and submit proposals for new administrative regions (Hailu, 2003).

restructuring of national and regional organs (Hailu, 2003: 2). Mostly academics from Addis Ababa University and practitioners from different government institutions, who also served as advisers to the Constitutional, Referendum and Electoral Commissions, staffed the institute. Considering the provisions stipulated in the legislation that established it, the Institute was re-organized into five professional groupings, namely, Legal and Constitutional Affairs, Administrative Affairs, Economic and Geographic Affairs, Historical and Nationalities Affairs, and Social and Sociological Affairs (*ibid.*).

Hailu (*ibid*: 4-6), who himself was a staff member of the Institute for the Study of Nationalities, noted that the most important task was the drafting of the constitution, whose preparation began in earnest in 1984 and continued till the beginning of 1985. During this period the staff of the Institute made several short-term visits to 'friendly/socialist countries', including Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, North Korea, Vietnam and India to gather relevant information on state formation, state structuring, organization and conduct of elections, parliamentary systems and regional administrations (*op. cit.*). It was also during this period that 'eight draft constitutions were examined, discussed and revised by the experts in the Institute. In the process, *consultations were made and feedback gained from higher-level organs of the Party and Government*' (Hailu, 2003: 6). After obtaining the seal of approval from high state and party officials, and accompanied by detailed explanatory documents, the 9th draft was presented to the Constitution Drafting Commission. This point to the fact that the so-called National Constitution Drafting Commission, whose members had been selected and appointed by the Head of State (Mengistu), was pressured into endorsing the 9th draft.

Although the commission's diverse membership included religious leaders, artists, writers, doctors, academics, athletes and workers, WPE selected and appointed all of them. For about six months the commission allegedly discussed the details of the new constitution. While the Commission consisted of a congress, an executive committee, coordinating committee at regional, provincial and district levels, most of the discussion was invariably among the executive committee led by key figures in the party leadership. In June 1986 a 120-article draft document was officially issued. The government printed and distributed nearly two million copies of the constitution (to *kebeles*[18] and peasant associations throughout the country), the text

[18] *Kebeles*- were formed after the two consecutive proclamations that turned rural and urban lands to state ownership. *Kebeles* are thus popular terms used to describe cooperative rural and urban neighborhood associations. These institutions provided the basic level of administration in the countryside as well as towns.

of which was translated into languages of fifteen nationalities (PMAC, 1986). During the next two months the draft was discussed at about 25,000 locations. The regime might have used the public discussion to legitimize the constitution-making process. In some cases, people attended constitutional discussion sessions only after pressure from local WPE cadres, but in other cases attendance was voluntary. Where popular interest was apparent, it centered on issues such as taxes, the role of religion, marriage, the organization of elections, and citizenship rights and obligations. By far the most controversial draft provision was the one that outlawed polygamy, which caused an uproar among Muslims (*ibid.*). In contrast, as Teferra (1997: 277) observed, the articles that attracted the largest number of comments and questions were those that provided for the question of nationality, the rights and duties of citizens, socio-economic systems and political order, and ownership of property and leadership of the working class. In any case, the public submitted more than 500,000 suggested revisions (PMAC, 1986). In September the commission was reconvened to consider proposed amendments, and decided that the draft be presented to the Central Committee of WPE. In all, the commission accepted ninety-five amendments to the original draft, notwithstanding the fact that most of the changes were invariably cosmetic.

It has nevertheless been noted that the major decisions regarding the constitution were made personally made by Mengistu and his close associates. In fact, the Central Committee and politburo of WPE were not even involved in the drafting process (Dawit, 1990: 67-68, Andargachew, 1993: 267). Be that as it may, the referendum on the constitution was held on February 1, 1987, and the results were announced three weeks later (Hailu, 2003). 96 percent of the 14 million people eligible to participate (adults eighteen years of age and older) voted (*ibid.*). Eighty-one percent of the electorate endorsed the constitution, while 18 percent opposed it (1 percent of the ballots were invalid) (Hailu, 2003:10). Although this was the first election in Ethiopia's history based on universal suffrage, the heavy presence of WPE cadres throughout the country had complicated the democratic virtues of the constitution-making process (Clapham, 1988; Dawit, 1990). In any case, the constitutional document, which established the normative foundations of the PDRE, consisted of 17 chapters and 119 articles.

An election commission whose major task was to facilitate and oversee the election of deputies to the national parliament (National *Shengo* or National Assembly) was designated by a proclamation in April 1987. According to the constitution, the party, government and mass organizations nominated candidates to the *Shengo*. Voting took place on June 1987, and results

were compiled and delivered to the election commission; accordingly, out of 2466 candidates, 813 deputies were elected to the National *Shengo* (Hailu, 2003). The constitution was officially put into effect on February 22, 1987, although it was not until September that the new government was fully in place and the PMAC formally replaced by PDRE (*op. cit.*).

3.4.2. The implications of the constitution for policymaking

The preamble of the PDRE's constitution traced Ethiopia's origins back to olden days, praised the historical heroism of its people, eulogized the country's unexploited, natural and human wealth, and pledged to continue the struggle against imperialism and poverty (PDRE, 1987:55). The government claimed that its primary concern was the country's development through the implementation of the National Democratic Revolution Program (NDRP), with the primary emphasis placed on setting the material and technical bases necessary for the implementation of socialism (*ibid.*).

It further situated Ethiopia in the context of the movement of proletarian internationalism and progressive states. Critics claimed that the constitution was no more than an abridged version of the 1977 Soviet constitution, although strong powers were assigned to the office of the president (Clapham, 1988; Andargachew, 1993; Teferra, 1987). A second difference between the Ethiopian and Soviet constitutions was that the former declared the country a unitary state rather than a union of republics. The 1987 constitution also pledged to seek solutions to simmering problems of ethnicity within the framework of a single multiethnic state rather than a federation (PDRE, 1987).

The ultimate policymaking power appeared to have resided in the president of the republic and the Council of the State (which largely comprised the highest echelon of *Dergue* members). The articles that follow the preamble largely addressed the political and socio-economic system that the country had to be built to be a member of the family of socialist nations (PDRE, 1987: 55-61). With the republic's commitment to the building of socialism via the accomplishment of national democratic revolution, Ethiopia was seen as a state of the working people established on the basis of a worker-peasant alliance (1987: 55-56). The equality of nationalities and languages within the framework of a unitary state were also assured. Guided by Marxism-Leninism, the Workers' Party of Ethiopia (WPE) was the sole vanguard political organization with a supreme

commitment to determine socio-economic policies of the country as well as with the powers to lead the state and the entire society (article 6). Not only did socialist legality take center stage in the governance of the relationships between the different state organs in the hierarchy of state, on the one hand, and mass organizations, officials and individuals in the society, on the other, but it was also the key political parameter in the selection of the participants and actors in the country's socio-economic policymaking process (articles 5 and 6). Furthermore, the organization of the organs of the state were based on democratic centralism, with the lower organs accounting to the next higher organs for their actions and abiding by the decisions of the higher organs (article 4).

In the economic sphere the state would relieve the country of economic backwardness by strengthening the socialist relations of production and building 'a highly integrated national economy' based on central planning (article 9). While allowing for a limited form of private ownership within limits set by laws, it reaffirmed the pre-eminence of socialist ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange (articles 9 and 12). In the field of culture, the constitution pledged to imbue the working people with socialist morality and the proletarian culture (article 23).

Having provided for equality before the law regardless of ethnicity, sex, religion, occupation, social and cultural status, the provisions dealing with citizenship, freedoms, rights and duties tended to be egalitarian. Citizens were granted the right to work, to receive free education, to have access to health care, to conduct research and engage in creative activities in science and technology. Unlike in an imperial state, the state and religion were separate. Citizens were also guaranteed the freedom of conscience, religion, of speech, press, peaceable assembly, demonstration and association, although in reality citizens enjoyed very little in this regard (articles 35, 40, 41, 42, 46 and 47).

The bulk of chapters eight to fifteen of the constitution described the *modus operandi* of policymaking during the first republic and detailed the hierarchical and horizontal relationships between organs within the republic (PDRE, 1987: 73-92). PDRE was essentially a unitary state comprising of administrative and autonomous regions, with the administrative regions and units of administration hierarchically organized from the highest to the lowest levels (articles 59 and 60). Elected for a five-year term and holding sessions annually, the supreme organ of the Republic was the National *Shengo* (national parliament) with extensive legislative powers (articles 63, 67 and 68). They were, among others, enacting, amending and following up the

observance of the constitution and proclamations, issuing domestic, foreign, defense and security policies; determining the state of peace and war; determining monetary and fiscal policies (*ibid*).

As provided under the constitution, the National *Shengo* was empowered to institute the vital organs of the state such as Council of the State, the Council of Ministers, ministries, state committees, commissions and other government agencies, the Supreme Court, the Office of the Procurator General, the National Workers' Control Committee and the Office of the Auditor General. Electing the President of the Republic, the Vice-President, the Vice-Presidents of the Council of the State, approving the appointment of other high government officials had also been vested in the National *Shengo* (article 63). It is worth noting here that the Council of State, the President of the Republic, Commissions of the National *Shengo*, members of the National *Shengo,* the Council of Ministers, the Supreme Court, the Procurator General, *Shengos* of higher administrative and autonomous regions, and mass organizations through their national organs were designated to propose laws and policies, although in practice the upper reach of the party and executive leadership had exclusive claim on public policymaking (article 71).

Having been assigned to follow up the implementation and interpretation of the constitution, the Council of the State represented the standing body of the National *Shengo*. Its powers included, among others, revoking the directives and decisions of regional government organs that had to account to the National *Shengo,* ratifying and revoking international treaties, granting amnesty, granting citizenship and political asylum (articles 81 and 82). Announcing the date of the election of the *Shengo,* calling its extra-ordinary sessions as well as coordinating the work of its ad-hoc and standing committees, overseeing the discharge of responsibilities by the Council of Ministers, the Supreme Court, the Procurator General, the National Workers' Control Committee had as well been entrusted to the Council of the State. Moreover, the latter had the power to issue decrees in the pursuit of responsibilities assigned by the *Shengo*. Comprised of the president of PDRE, the vice presidents, a secretary and high officials of the National *Shengo*, not only was the Council of the State empowered to issue special decrees between the recesses of the *Shengo*, but also was it empowered to declare states of emergency, war, martial law, mobilization or issue peace decrees (PDRE, 1987: 79).

Although the Council of Ministers was formally the highest executive organ, sweeping executive powers were vested in the President, a position which was held by Mengistu (PDRE, 1987: 81-84). The President of the PDRE was, therefore, the Head of the State, who represented

the Republic both at home and abroad, and the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces (article 85). The constitution also vested additional executive powers in the President, ranging from presiding over the sessions of the National *Shengo* and Council of Ministers to appointing personnel to ministerial and executive leadership, and conferring high military and civilian appointments (*ibid*). He enjoyed legislative powers such as: issuing Presidential decrees in the pursuit of powers provided by the 1987 constitution, promulgating laws approved by the *Shengo*, the Council of the State and the President of the PDRE (PDRE, 1987: 83). Equally, the President enjoyed the privileges of appointing or dismissing the prime minister, deputy prime minister, and members of the Council of Ministers, the president and vice-presidents of the Supreme Court, the Procurator General, the chairman of the National Workers' Control Committee, and the Auditor General and the Judges of the Supreme Court (article 87). Consisting of the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Ministers, Ministers and other members as defined by law, the Council of Ministers was the highest executive as well as administrative organ of the Republic (article 89). Comprised of the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Ministers and other government officials, the Council of Ministers was chiefly empowered to execute policies (articles 91 and 92).

The constitution and other statutory provisions, nevertheless, appeared not to have clearly shown the overwhelming powers of the combined forces of the executive and party leadership in public policymaking during the first republic (i.e. from 1987 to 1991). The powers of legislation and policy initiation had been vested in the National *Shengo,* as provided under the 1987 constitution. In practice, nevertheless, policymaking power resided in the higher echelons of the organs of the Republic and WPE precisely because of the requirement of the principle on which policymaking institutions were premised, namely, 'democratic centralism'. In fact, by default or design, not only had the party and the executive claimed the prerogatives of designating and fielding candidates to the *Shengo,* but they were also the architects and key players to lead the state and society. Apparently, the party (WPE) represented a sustained effort to create a political leadership with a structure though which policy decisions were to be communicated and implemented (Clapham, 1988). Despite the official claim put the members of the *Dergue*'s parliament drawn from the peasantry and urban poor to 48 percent, in reality, however, over 95 percent of the *Shengo* members who had been classified as workers, farmers, state and party functionaries were the members of the party (see Table 3.1., Teferra, 1997).

In addition, the fact that the *Dergue's* parliament could only hold sessions once in a year rendered difficult the exercise of legislative duties, oversight and subpoena over the executive as stipulated in the constitution. In other words, while the National *Shengo* was during the long recess, the Council of the State which drew its members largely from the 'top-notch' members of the *Dergue* chaired by Mengistu, made all the policy decisions (Asmerom, 1993: 87). Assafa writes:

> …Not only was the concentration of power in the emperor transferred wholesale to the new head of state, the president, the same functions of the royal retinue which filled and sustained the imperial state were restated in favor of the only party allowed to exist in the country, the so-called Workers Party of Ethiopia. The absence of any distinction between the state and the party structures and the overlapping powers of the functionaries in both re-created the autocracy at the zenith. Ultimate power resided in the president and in his appointees down the line, despite and because of the confusion and overlap in the powers of the executive, the judiciary and the *Shengo* as well as the party. (2002: 69)

Additionally, while the Council of Ministers, various government bodies and the national leadership of mass organizations received official recognition in proposing policies, in reality, however, enormous powers remained with the executive, the President and the party leadership (Dawit, 1990). In sum, by default or by design, the Presidency, the Council of the State and the inner circles of the WPE leadership remained the repositories of policymaking powers till 1991.

Table 3.1. Composition of the elected members of the National *Shengo*

* Social Composition	Percent
-Workers	12.1
- Farmers	36.5
- State Functionaries	23.6
- Party Functionaries/Cadres	8.6
- Members of the Armed Forces	12.9
- Artisans	1.5
- Others	4.9
*** Age**	
- 21- 30	18.2
- 31-60	79.6
-60 and above	2.2
***Education**	
- Literate	4.7
-Elementary and Secondary	67.1
- Higher (B.A. 8.1 %, M.A. 4.4 %, PhD 3.1 %, and others 12.6 %)	28.2

Source: Peoples Democratic Republic of Ethiopia; Facts and Figures (CSA: 1987: 9)

3.5. State-society relationships and policymaking

Over a period of seventeen years since the *Dergue* took the lever of state power, the official ideology, namely Marxism-Leninism, guided the state-society relationship. Not only were democratic centralism, socialist legality, proletarian internationalism, the hegemony of the working class and the leading role of the WPE inviolable and unchallengeable, but they were also the foundation on which the entire state-society relationships depended. Organized and sponsored by the ruling party, societal forces involving the peasantry, industrial employees, urban residents, women, teachers, the youth and professional associations tended to be subservient to the party and state policies.

In the wake of the promulgation of rural land proclamation that completely wiped out the landlord-tenant relationship in 1975, the peasantry had initially been allowed opportunities for self-administration. Not only had the rural land proclamation made the peasantry the owner of the fruits of its labor, but it also permitted them to establish peasant associations at *Kebele* (neighborhood), district and provincial/regional levels. The peasant associations enjoyed limited powers in such areas as distribution of land, administration of property, building of schools, clinics, and similar institutions essential for local socio-economic development as well as

establishment of judicial tribunals to settle land disputes (PMAC, 1975: 96-97). Among the most important piece of the enactment that has left its vestiges to this day has been the provision that stipulated the setting up of a *Kebele* (neighborhood) association, which represented an incipient from of peasant self-administration. Equally important, though, the Ministry of Land Reform and Administration wielded wide-ranging powers such as the establishment of peasant associations, presiding over district and provincial judicial tribunals of the associations, monitoring their over-all activities and expropriation of peasants' lands for public use (*ibid.*).

At the outset it was not that clear whether peasant associations were self-governing units or merely local agencies for administering the land reform legislation, till a second law was enacted eight months later (PMAC, 1975). The proclamation stipulated that not only were the peasant associations channels through which land legislation and rural development programs implemented, but they were also seen as self-governing administrative and political units with legal personality. In fact, the economic roles of the associations were more boldly pronounced in terms of the organization of service and agricultural producers' cooperatives, notwithstanding these had subsequently led to villagization[19] - a measure that contravened the will of the peasantry and thereby aroused an international outcry (*ibid.*). Additionally, the legislation enhanced the powers of the associations to adjudicate criminal and civil cases that went far beyond dealing with only land reform issues. It further broadened their administrative powers and allowed them to participate in 'revolutionary administrative and development committees', which were established at different levels in the hierarchy of government administrations and strengthened their part in the formulation and execution of a wide variety of socio-economic policies (*op. cit.*). At this stage it would probably be safe to conclude that the peasants as much influenced government policies as they were influenced by government policies and administration. In the early years of the revolution, therefore, it might not be fair to doubt that peasants and their associations functioned as effective self-governing institutions (Ottaway and Ottaway, 1978; Cohen and Koehn, 1980; Clapham, 1988).

With the establishment of COPWE and WPE, however, peasant associations increasingly came under party and government control. The reorganization of peasant associations at a national level in 1977 combined with the establishment of COPWE two years later completed

[19] The next section will discuss villagization and resettlement schemes as integral parts of institutionalized structures of implementing agrarian policies in the countryside.

central management and control. The absence of 'a central leadership of a monolithic political organization of the working class' was considered as the main weakness responsible for the lack of coordination and ascendance of spontaneity among the peasant associations and other mass organizations (COPWE, 1980). In his report to the second plenary session of the Central Committee of COPWE, Mengistu, the Chairman of the PMAC and of COPWE, disclosed that preparations to re-organize mass organizations such as the All Ethiopian Peasant Association (AEPA), Urban Dwellers' Association, All Ethiopian Trade Unions (AETU) and professional associations under the leadership of COPWE had been finalized (COPWE, 1981). Henceforth, not only were peasant associations increasingly bureaucratized and came to be symbolized as the mouthpieces of the state, but they also became institutions of government directives channeling instructions downward (Dessalegn, 1984: 84; Clapham, 1988: 159). Nor had they any significant leverage on government policies in respect of agricultural prices, credit and related services which vitally affected their lives (*op. cit.*). In the late 1970s, party cadres permeated peasant associations and made sure that peasants observed production quotas. Furthermore, party and government control of local peasant associations paved the way for imposed implementation of villagization and resettlement programs on the peasantry from the mid-to-late 1980s. Eventually, the associations had virtually been reduced to becoming agents of party and government structures and provided merely a system of communication between the state and party leadership, on the one hand, and the peasant population, on the other (Harbeson, 1988). Harbeson wrote:

> Peasant associations appear to have become instruments for transmission of official directives rather than institutions though which members' interests and concerns are articulated to government. The existing … evidence suggests that leadership within the associations has been impermanent in duration as well as variable in perceived quality and that the associations have been executive-dominant with the constituent assemblies playing weak, intermittent and passive roles. They have been weakly institutionalized: Operating procedures have not been widely discussed and established on the basis of consensus, and elections have been held irregularly, and members have rarely used the associations effectively to articulate their concerns and those of their fellows. (1988: 204)

Few years after the reconfiguration of COPWE's structure in the entire land, the need to reorganize peasant associations and acculturate them with the ascendant party policy guidelines

(such as augmentation of agricultural production, expansion of the basis of socialist relations of production and broadening the party's support base in rural Ethiopia) was maintained (PMAC, 1982: 115). A third law was therefore issued and completed government and party control over the peasantry. With this end in sight, a national peasant association was reorganized with the leading members of AEPA affiliated to COPWE. Down the line, however, not only were the decisions of peasant associations overshadowed by local party and government agencies, but the latter also determined the elections, who should be removed and who should assume official leadership positions in the peasant associations (Dessalegn, 1984). In general, not only had the process of reorganization and restructuring measures denied the peasantry the bulk of the local autonomy and self-administration that the peasants and their leadership had enjoyed to a relative extent over the previous two years, but also had the institutional transformations taken place since the late 1970s proved the determination of the state and party to assimilate peasant associations as local organs of state administration (Pausewang, 1990). In 1990 AEPA had 5.8 million household members with a total number of 20565 basic level (*kebele*) peasant associations (CSA, 1990: 26) (see Table 3.2).

Table 3.2. The number of neighborhood peasant (*Kebele*) associations (AEPA)

Region	No. of peasant associations	No. of house holds
Arsi	1,027	240,252
Bale	594	113,756
Eritrea	637	141,380
Gamo Gofa	803	209,908
Gojjam	1,778	583,477
Gonder	1,063	363,959
Hararge	1,346	456,913
Illibabor	978	178,113
Kefa	1,621	386,716
Shewa	5,352	1,396,257
Sidamo	1,616	615,506
Tigray	319	143,434
Wolega	2,208	370,762
Wello	1,223	660,969
Total	**20,565**	**5,861,408**

Source: CSA, People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia: Facts and Figures, 1990: 26

Likewise, party- and state-sponsored reorganization of other mass organizations continued till late 1982. Both government and party sought the importance of mass organizations as hotbeds of mass political actions as well as dissemination of the official ideology (COPWE, 1980). COPWE (*ibid.*) further claimed that not only were the mass organizations considered instrumental in the mobilization of the public for national defense and political action, but they were also seen as 'transmission belts of transposing, elaborating government policies and rallying them to implement' state and party policies (*op. cit*). WPE's program encapsulated COPWE's decisions. In other words, adopted in 1984, the program of the Workers' Party of Ethiopia (WPE) designated the Party, the State and Mass Organizations as the three pillars of the new political order (WPE, 1984). The inner circles of the party pledged to rely on the latter for the expansion of party membership and the propagation of party/state ideology (*ibid*: 38).

In fact, the primary potent force that the party and the state kept a watchful eye over was the industrial work force. In the first few years of the PMAC's coming to power, the Confederation of Ethiopian Labor Union (CELU) was one of the strongest civil society organizations that attempted to assert its relative autonomy from the state. Even in the initial years of the revolution, however, the government's attitude toward the industrial work force was unambiguously control oriented. The government dissolved CELU and organized another trade union under the name of All Ethiopian Trade Union (AETU) in November 1977. The latter was continually being restructured to reaffirm that the prevailing values of the party and government leadership such as socialist reconstruction, democratic centralism and socialist legality had been internalized (PMAC, 1982).

Much like rural transformation and peasant associations, the formation of urban neighborhood (*Kebele*) associations coincided with the legislation 'Government Ownership of Urban Lands and Extra Houses' that the PMAC promulgated in July 1975. Over the succeeding years, the Urban Dwellers' Associations was continuously being reorganized to bring them into line with the predominant party thinking that was earlier indicated. Likewise, the youth (Revolutionary Ethiopia Youth Association - REYA), and women (Revolutionary Ethiopia Women's Association - REWA), and eight other professional associations were reorganized under WPE to join the chorus of mass organizations, and expectations run high for such associations to prove themselves worthy of the party and revolutionary government of socialist Ethiopia (see Table 3.3., COPWE, 1986).

Table 3.3. The number of towns, UDAs, basic associations and numbers of members of REYA and REWA

	UDAs		REYA		REWA	
Region	**No. of towns**	**No. of urban neighborhood (*kebele*) associations**	**No. of basic associations**	**No. of members**	**No. of basic associations**	**No. of members**
Arsi	17	37	1,091	186,876	1,093	262,597
Bale	9	18	561	113,380	574	127,146
Eritrea	15	156	313	52,266	637	143,786
Gamo Gofa	7	13	806	155,527	764	156,129
Gojam	24	62	1,822	299,208	1,815	441,544
Gonder	25	58	791	205,235	1,073	194,895
Harerge	25	83	1,373	289,745	1,362	318,329
Illibabor	12	20	973	122,518	1,014	164,106
Kefa	16	46	1,700	371,253	1,693	398,879
Shewa	60	177	5,664	1,485,554	5,669	1,103,648
Sidamo	33	88	1,633	295,010	1,661	414,563
Tigray	28	83	139	28,041	160	61,061
Wollega	26	48	2,270	255,232	2,311	521,567
Wello	26	73	1,234	363,681	1,222	502,454
A. Ababa	1	284	292	163,355	284	183,045
Assab Adm.	1	12	19	10,258	15	9825
Total	**325**	**1,258**	**20,751**	**4,417,139**	**21,247**	**5,003,547**

Source: CSA, People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Facts and Figures, 1990: 28 &30.

Andargachew summed up as follows:

> The non-government organizations which also had the duty to cooperate …were what came to be known as the mass organizations including Peasant association, Urban Dweller's Association, Revolutionary Ethiopian Women's Association, the Revolutionary Ethiopian Youth Association, the All Ethiopian Trade Unions, and the professional associations like those of the doctors, nurses and teachers. The most important of these were the first two which, since their establishment in 1975, were expanded organizationally to embrace the entire population except the nomads and those under the guerilla control.
>
> … The basic organizations of Revolutionary Ethiopian Women's Association and the Revolutionary Ethiopian Youth Association were subordinated to the Basic Peasants' and Urban Dwellers' Associations and, hence, brought under the leadership of the latter two mass organizations. In addition, they were subordinated to their own higher bodies which were established at *woreda*, *awraja*[20], provincial and national levels. The All Ethiopian Trade Unions and the professional associations, on the other hand were

[20] While *woreda* represented the district level of local administration, *aweraja* was the next higher level of provincial administration which had widely been used during the imperial era and the military government.

> established independently from the Peasants' and Urban Dwellers' Associations. This has meant that almost every citizen belonged to one mass organization or another, and often he belonged to more than one organization at the same time. (1993: 260-261)

Hence, all the mass and professional associations that were continuously reorganized under the rubric of 'mass and professional associations' had barely any chance of becoming channels of soliciting new ideas and the generation of inputs into the policymaking process. Instead they were auxiliary structures led by, closely tied to, and monitored by party and government leadership. Put simply, their roles were limited to carrying out directives channeled from the party and government organs, and pass data and/or information to the central political organs (Schwab, 1985). The relationship between leaders and the led, even within mass and professional organizations, was built on fear and subjugation, but not on a partnership to promote the interests of members. The initiative to come up with demands that bear on policies and practices were neither expected, nor was it approved. The mass and professional organizations thus remained exclusively instruments of recruiting support, means of communicating and mass political mobilization for state and party policy initiatives. Nor had the mass and professional organizations the opportunity to operate as interest groups to articulate their interests to policymaking institutions.

3.6. Implementation through centrally guided institutions, 1974-1987

3.6.1. The prelude

The bulk of the implementing agencies and government institutions had been introduced since 1974, notwithstanding the fact that a few agencies were inherited from the imperial government. Most of these structures appeared to be volatile, due in part to the uncertainty characterizing a revolution, partly because clear guidelines to govern the relationships between the *Dergue*, the Council of Ministers, ministries, various other government agencies and the fourteen provincial administrations were almost non-existent (see Map 1). Hence, in the first few years of the revolution, the *Dergue* had to rely on transient government bodies to execute most of its reforms. The *Dergue* depended on, among others, its sub-committees to a considerable degree to preside over and parallel the civilian ministries. Additionally, despite that fact that they had not held official government positions, the PMAC assigned a few of its key individual members such as

liaison to such ministries as transport and communication, housing and urban development, agriculture and settlement and various other ministries and quasi-governmental agencies (Pliny, 1978: 8-9). Pliny wrote:

> From late 1974 or early 1975, in fact, all ministries have had someone who has communicated directly with the *dergue* itself. This procedure has supplemented the practice of calling the ministers and civil servants to attend the relevant *dergue* committee in the Grand Palace. It has meant that the PMAC has been able to keep a close and watchful eye on all day-to-day ministerial activities and interfere at will. At the working sessions between the ministers and the *dergue* committees, the committees can and frequently do override decisions taken by the council of ministers. The *dergue* has always had the final word. (*ibid.*)

In a bid to acquire loyal personnel, the PMAC selected over 250 persons from the army and assigned them to government ministries and nationalized commercial and industrial enterprises in the capital city and the fourteen administrative regions as permanent secretaries, department heads and managers (Pliny 1978; Teferra, 1997). The powers and responsibilities of the vigilante groups, who came to be known as the 'missionaries of change' (*Yelewout Hawariat*), vis-à-vis professional appointees and experts had not been properly defined. Ranking civilian officials usually complied with the orders of the military supervisors, while informally indicating their lack of respect for inexperienced military judgments regarding the professional and technical problems confronting the government agencies (Cohen and Koehn 1980, 296). Although the 'missionaries of change' (*Yelewout Hawariat*) were ostensibly seen as roving cadres upon whom the *Dergue* relied for the implementation of socio-economic reforms, their appointment to various government institutions nevertheless generated perpetual inefficiency and mismanagement in the public bureaucracy, and despondency and mistrust among employees (Pliny, 1978; Andargachew, 1993; Teferra, 1997). Furthermore, having had the objectives of explaining socio-economic policies to the regional administrators, the public and the military units, *Dergue* members took regular tours throughout Ethiopia. In mid-1978, the regular tours through the provinces were replaced by postings of PMAC members as permanent representatives to the regions. Toward the end of 1977 PMAC posted twelve of its members to the provinces to oversee the implementation of socio-economic and political policies (Pliny, 1978: 11). Not only the representatives enjoyed enormous powers and seized ultimate authority in overseeing implementation outcomes, but they also capitalized on their direct contact with the

Standing Committee of the *Dergue* leadership to override the decisions of regional and local administrations (*ibid.*).

However, as the socio-economic transformations and institutional restructuring deepened, and in view of the recourse to Soviet-style government structures, the transitory structures proved inadequate. As a result, the wave of proclamations that the PMAC issued in the mid-70s called for fundamental institutional transformations at the center, and down the line at the regional and local levels. In other words, the post-revolution government had moved forward to strengthen central planning and policy implementation through modifications on the Soviet models and reliance on central level bureaucratic technicians (Cohen and Koehn, 1980: 302).

3.6.2. Molding implementing institutions from top

The Council of Ministers, which the *Dergue* established in the first few years of its coming into power, consisted of civilian ministers and other high-level government officials appointed by the chairman of the *Dergue* (PMAC, 1977, EMI, 1981). Although the legislation assigned the CoM wide-ranging responsibilities, in reality it remained a clearing-house of legislation and channel of communication between the military elites and a network of administrative institutions. In mid-1981, twenty-one ministries, several commissions, authorities and other government agencies were organized under PMAC/COPWE (EMI, 1981).

Following the COPWE/WPE establishment, not only had party establishments overlapped with the bureaucratic structures, but also ministries and other implementing agencies had to account to the party and its leadership for all of their actions. In other words, chiefly because of the ascendance of the party and central planning, the powers of the government bureaucracy had been severely curtailed. Emerging victorious over the Somali invading force and civilian opposition, the *Dergue*'s leverage in reorganizing centrally controlled implementing structures had substantially been enhanced.

Enthused chiefly by the principles of democratic centralism and the centrally led economy, the PMAC launched the National Revolutionary Development Campaign and Central Planning Supreme Council (NRDC-CPSC) in 1978, although CPSC undermined the powers of the Council of Ministers (CoM). It is interesting to note that, unlike its successors, the thrust of the *Dergue*'s economic policy appeared to be driven by a balanced socio-economic development of industry

and agriculture, though the outcome of development was intended to accrue primarily to the peasantry and the urban poor (PMAC, 1978). At the national level the NRDC-CPSC had a cumbersome structure involving a congress consisting of standing committee members of the *Dergue*, the members of council of ministers, the commanders of the armed forces and the commissioner of the police, administrators of the fourteen regions, and leaders of the mass organizations, with the executive committee of the Supreme Central Planning Council (CPSC) chaired by the chairman of the PMAC. At the regional levels, development committees subordinate to the supreme council, provincial and district planning councils were integrated into the central command and control structure.

A government document summed up the importance of central planning as follows:

> The establishment of the National Revolutionary Development Campaign and the Central Planning Supreme Council (NRDC-CPSC) provided the institutional framework for on-going popular undertaking for economic, social, and cultural development in Ethiopia. The nation-wide development drive is being streamlined under the central guidance of the Supreme Council, which continues to exert resolute effort to promote the aims and objectives of the Development Campaign through marshalling and co-coordinating the material, financial and human resources of the nation. … Revolutionary Ethiopia is today striving hard to lay the basis for a strong and independent national economy, by mobilizing all available material and human resources under centrally planned and guided mechanism.
>
> The principle of central planning on the basis of socialist principles followed conscious efforts to release the forces of production relations of feudalism and imperialism that prevailed in the days of fallen regime. The target in development planning now is to ensure balanced growth of the economy on the basis of central planning. This approach conforms to the NDRP, the provision of which relating to economic matters state:
>
> … Since the building of a strong and an independent national economy is possible only through the balanced development of the industrial and agricultural sectors of the national economy, it is necessary to have a centralized national plan based on socialist principles'.
>
> The nation-wide drive to effect economic and cultural development, in which the working people of Ethiopia are taking active part, is being guided and co-coordinated within the framework of these basic principles of socialist construction. (PMAC, 1980)

Not only had the preceding principles set the stage for the re-organization and re-structuring of implementing institutions, but also they set the parameters for implementing a wide-range of socio-economic policies. In fact, with the reorganization of the mass organizations in the early

1980s, the entire Ethiopian population was integrated into highly centralized planning and party-guided and ideologically committed mechanisms. During the period of the central plan campaign (1979-84), five annual plans had been projected and implemented (Teferra, 1997: 221). In the first two consecutive plan periods, i.e., 1879/80 and 1980/81, GDP showed a remarkable increase of 5.2% and 5.5% respectively (*ibid.*). The GDP growth, however, plummeted to 2.9% per annum in the next two consecutive years, and any hope for similar or more improved growth rate in the immediate future was lost because a famine that affected over six million people broke out in 1984. Nonetheless, centrally planned and guided economic policy formulation and implementation continued unabated.

In June 1984 the Office of the National Council for Central Planning replaced Central Planning Supreme Council (CPSC), with the politburo and central committee of WPE dominating it. This was soon followed by an announcement of the so-called Ten-Year Perspective socio-economic plan for the period 1984/85 to 1993/94. The Ten-Year Perspective Plan was an ambitious plan with a projected yearly GDP growth rate of 6.5% (Clapham, 1988). The entire ten-year project was divided into three medium-range plan phases, namely, two years (1984/85-1985/86), three years (1986/87-1988/89) and five years (1989/90-1993/94) each of which was to be further broken down into annual projects (Asmerom, 1991). In retrospect, due in part to the planning councils at the lower echelons not being consulted over the issues of plan implementation and partly due to the failure to incorporate local realities in the comprehensive socio-economic plans, the Ten-Year Perspective Plan with its ultimate objective to accomplish fully-fledged socialist development failed (Clapham, 1988; Asmerom, 1991). However, stretched from the center in the national capital to peripheries in the rural villages, the surge of central planning and the series of efforts exerted to establish socialist socio-economic construction and policy implementation generated huge organizational establishments.

Among the massive restructuring measures that the state and party pursued, the reorganization of rural institutions was the hallmark of rural land reform implementation. Institutional restructuring and transformation in rural Ethiopia started with the proclamation that turned rural land from landlord ownership to public ownership of all rural lands in March 1975, as noted earlier. Certainly, agriculture continued to contribute nearly 50 percent of gross domestic product and provided living for 85% of the work force in Ethiopia. However, the state and party's enthusiasm to control rural society was motivated not just by the fact that land was the mainstay

of the country's economy, but because of 85% the people in Ethiopia constituted the rural population, as in fact is still the case today. A few months before the legislation that made land public ownership was issued, a government policy document noted the following:

> … Agriculture is at present the mainstay of the national economy. Land tenure and agricultural policy will consequently be changed in a manner which will make it possible to abolish poverty and narrow the gap in the level of living. As land belongs to the entire Ethiopian community, the government is the trustee of this important resource. And it is the responsibility of the government to determine land tenure policy in an appropriate manner…
>
> Individuals and communities which have a legal right to operate communal, cooperative, or private farms will be accountable to the government for the good care and management of their holdings. The forthcoming law on land reform will in particular cover this point. (PMAC, 1974: 10)

Furthermore, much like its successors, the peasantry was then seen as the most exploited mass under the imperial regime, the driving force as well as an ally of the revolution and socialist reconstruction (WPE, 1984). The most important agrarian institution, on which the party, central and local government administrations relied for the implementation of agricultural reforms, was the peasant association. In this regard, Stahl wrote:

> *Peasant Association* (PA) is the basic rural institution in post-revolutionary Ethiopia. Initially created for the purposes of defeating the landlords and abolishing the feudal system, the PAs are now semi-official administrative units at the grass roots level. The PA is a territorial organization encompassing 800 hectares or more. All peasant households living in area should be members. … The average peasant membership is 150-300 households. All arable land areas in regions under state control are covered with a network of PAs. … The PA members constitute an assembly which gathers a few times a year. It elects a chairman and an executive committee which run the daily affairs of the association. In addition, the assembly elects a judicial tribunal which functions as a local court adjudicating minor legal matters. There are sub-committees attached to the executive committee to deal with matters such as defense/security, administrative affairs and development. Government, local administration and the Workers' Party of Ethiopia get in touch with the peasant population through the PAs. Information on new directives and proclamations, development campaigns, public work are transmitted to the population and implemented by the PAs. They also mobilise labour for free planting and soil conservation programmes. (1989: 28-29)

Strictly hierarchical and knitted to the party and administrative institutions, the four-tier (namely, national, regional, provincial and district levels) peasant associations became the core establishments on which the state depended for the implementation of its socio-economic transformation. Moreover, several other rural institutions had been established and integrated as subordinate units of government institutions and assisted the WPE's programs of promoting socialist reorganization, construction and the implementation of agricultural policies. *Agricultural producers' cooperatives, villagization and resettlement* were, among others, the key rural institutional measures that the party and government unleashed, although they underwent extensive restructuring over the subsequent years.

Having perceived the backwardness and fragmentation of rural organization and agriculture, state and party authorities urged that only a profound break with tradition would make way for intensive use of modern technology in agriculture and better rural organization (PMAC, 1976; Harbeson, 1988; Stahl, 1989). Established by government proclamation in 1976, *agricultural producers' cooperatives* were seen as essential avenues of rural development (PMAC, 1976). The party tried to substantiate its position on producers' cooperatives both on ideological and technical grounds (WPE, 1984). In ideological terms the government discouraged individual farming for a family-based agricultural system was suspected of proliferating capitalist agriculture. Hence, socialist forms of collectivized agriculture, similar to those peasant communes in China and mechanized collective agricultural endeavors in the former Soviet Union, would be possible through producers' cooperatives. Peasant producers' cooperatives were, therefore, regarded as the yardstick of modernized collective agriculture and crucial instruments of building socialist forms of ownership in the agrarian sector (WPE, 1984).

At a technical level the fragmentation of the rural organization provided the authorities with the ground to promote producers' cooperatives. Government officials argued that the pooling of land, labor and other resources viable for improving productivity as well as production, and adoption of modern agricultural technology would only be possible through peasant producers' cooperatives (Stahl, 1989; WPE, 1984). As a result, the latter had virtually monopolized a plethora of services provided by the government to the peasant associations. It received the Ministry of Agriculture's top priority on its agricultural extension services, supply of agricultural inputs including fertilizer, oxen, high yielding seeds, access to capital, credit and arable land (*op. cit.*). Producers' cooperatives had also been induced to participate in the official economy

through priority access to consumer goods, farm-gate prices from the Agricultural Marketing Corporation, although amid imposed restrictions to sell their produce to the latter, which was a government agency that had established a semi-monopoly over regulating domestic grain and food trade (Harbeson, 1988; Clapahm, 1988; Stahl, 1989). By 1986, however, only 190,372 peasants were willing to form producers' cooperatives, which would mean only 3.3 percent of the peasant population in the country volunteered to be part of the PC scheme, a clear indication of forced incorporation of the peasantry into party-sponsored rural transformation projects (CSA, 1990: 36).

In any case, the government's attempt to generate rural development through control and command had excluded the greatest majority of smallholder rural producers on whom 95 percent of agricultural production and 65 percent of marketed production depended (Harbeson, 1988). In other words, insignificant resources for the agricultural sector and their concentration on producers' cooperatives and state farms eventually excluded the bulk of rural households from participating in the making and implementation of sound agricultural policies. Harbeson further contended:

> The imposition of centralized, command-based development and fundamental transformation of the life at grass roots for millions of rural households effectively replaced the rural development hierarchy envisioned in the original 1975 land reform proclamation. It overlaid and superseded the pyramid of regional and provincial peasant associations that were to be elected from the grass roots under the provisions of the 1975 rural land reform with a hierarchy of military, civil service, and party officials charged with carrying out the military high command in Addis Ababa. Representatives of the elective peasant association pyramid were included in the hierarchy of centrally directed officials but only as a minority without leadership responsibility. The structure of the hierarchy at regional, provincial and lower levels clearly revealed the military regime's expectation that peasant associations would serve primarily as instruments of its authority at the lowest level rather than a principal vehicle of peasants' initiative and political expression at the grass roots…The measures promulgated with the NRDC and afterwards undertook the political organization of the reform's beneficiaries through the imposition of the extensive controls on their economic activities. (*ibid*: 178-179)

Another form of rural reorganization that enhanced and reinforced the state and party's commitment to the implementation of socialization of production and distribution, and a program which was launched in mid-1980s to accelerate transformation from smallholder to large-scale

production and/or from private to social forms of ownership was *villagization*. The official aim of the villagization scheme was to alter the prevailing isolated homestead settlement pattern of peasant rural households, and to move them from scattered dwellings to clustered villages as part of government policies to improve rural life through modernizing agricultural production patterns, rational land use and thereby expedite the delivery of social services (health, education, water, electricity, transport, market, etc.) (Alemayehu, 1990, Lealem, 1991). In other words, villagization aimed at changing the pattern of settlement of rural households by regrouping villages. The government claimed that not only did small and fragmented farms impede the development of mechanization as well as the use of modern techniques in agriculture, but it had also been deterring the socialist transformation of agriculture and development of the socialist relations of production (PMAC, 1981). The scheme became controversial, not because the underlying objectives stipulated in government documents did not make sense, but because the government resorted to villagization as a means of denying 'producers access to private markets and price competition with the government, controlling their consumption and accumulation, and dictating their form of social organization, i.e., the establishment of producer' cooperatives' (Harbeson, 1988). Beginning from the mid-1980s, villagization gathered momentum and became institutionalized in the entire country under the leadership of WPE. With the Ministry of Agriculture providing secretarial services, by late 1989 13 million peasants had been moved to 12, 013 villages (Harbeson, 1988; Teferra, 1997).

A third major rural development strategy that the post-revolution government used to alter and control the social organization, production and consumption of rural society and implementation of a wide range of agrarian policies was the *resettlement* program. At the height of the drought and famine in 1984, the regime was poised to introduce a resettlement program that was designed to relocate rural residents from areas most severely affected by drought (north) to areas in the west and south that had experienced adequate rainfall. Again, the government claimed that relocation of rural households from drought-prone regions to other parts of the country would reduce population pressures and thereby restores ecological balance (Teferra, 1997). Alula (1990: 121) outlined the three perspectives with which the resettlement option would be considered. From an ecological perspective it was seen as a means of redressing population imbalances and reducing population pressures in the drought-prone regions of Wello, Tigray and Northern Shewa; and from an economic point of view it was believed that

resettlement could help to increase productivity and make use of under-utilized fertile lands; and lastly from a social standpoint it was seen as a way of providing land to those without it (*ibid.*). In any case, the government defended its resettlement policy on technical grounds, that it would make good sense to move people from drought-prone, exhausted, overgrazed, over farmed and eroded land to fertile areas; besides, these settlements tended to be in coffee-rich areas, where increased coffee production could significantly help the country's problems with foreign exchange (Keller, 1985). Critics in the international community, more particularly from the West, charged that the government's resettlement program was characterized by undue haste and carried out in the absence of careful planning, although they conceded that there was nothing inherently wrong with the program (*ibid.*).

The real motive for the resettlement program was not so much far from the government's motive attributed to the rationale for establishing agricultural producers' cooperatives and villagization schemes. It offered an appealing model of large-scale government action which would give a prominent role to the party and increase state control over the large segment of rural society, and help it to further the government's plan for transforming the structure of implementing its agricultural policies by putting more people into producers' cooperatives, where farm equipments and other resources were to be utilized collectively (Clapham, 1988; Harbeson, 1988; Teferra, 1997). In this regard, Alula wrote:

> Resettlement was the largest and most complex operation in the history of the state, requiring the coordination of almost a dozen government ministries and authorities. An action programme to resolve the crisis resulting from the famine was formulated by the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the WPE. The resettlement component accounted for 123 million birr[21], or a quarter of the planned expenditure on emergency development. A committee comprising high-level officials selected settlement sites on helicopter tours often led by the Head of State. The whole venture was organized with great haste on a campaign-basis by the newly formed Workers' Party of Ethiopia which took over direction of the programme, and sent out cadres to organize the settlements, much in the same way that a decade earlier students were sent to the rural areas to spread the messages of the nascent revolution. (1990: 124)

Suffice it to say that the planning and the *modus operandi* of its implementation revealed greater political commitment accorded to the program than technical rationale. In addition, the

[21] Birr is the legal tender in Ethiopia; and in the 70s and 80s it had traded 2.09 Birr for a dollar. Currently, one dollar is the equivalent of 8.65 Birr.

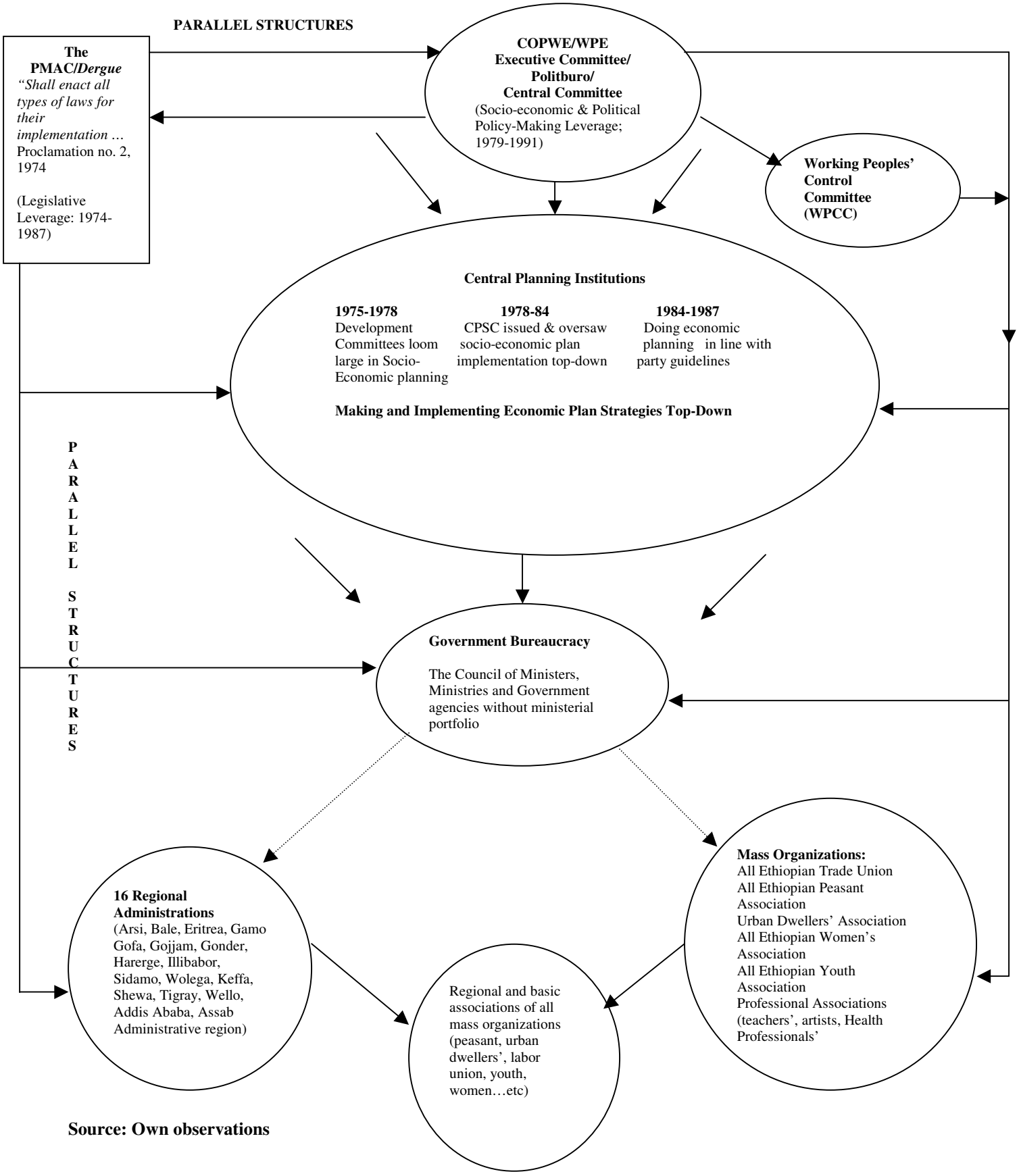
resettlement scheme was largely used as instrument for the formation of more agricultural producers' cooperatives that were accorded high priority for accelerating rural transformation geared to building socialism in the countryside. Overall, since it was believed that the organization of peasants into producers' cooperatives would eventually evolve to collective ownership of the instruments of production; PCs were by and large regarded as the political instruments of bringing about a worker-peasant alliance. The party and state authorities also boosted villagization and resettlement schemes as mechanisms for implementing socialist-oriented rural policies, including the agricultural producers' cooperatives.

Equally, not only did the state control both government and mass organizations, but it also had a virtual monopoly on manufacturing and service sectors, to such an extent that urban establishments, too, came under centrally planned and party-guided implementing structures. With the government as the single most extensive employer, the power of the state and the party was notably high in the civil service. In fact, the state bureaucracy expanded enormously in the first decade of the revolution, and control by the military deepened and expanded in the process. After the formation of the WPE in 1984, the regime established a wide array of government institutions that radiated from the center out to the regional and local levels, as earlier discussed. Leadership positions in these new institutions were used as patronage by the regime to reward loyal supporters or to co-opt potential adversaries in the bureaucracy.

As Figure 3.1 depicts, almost all organizations of the society and social, economic and political activities in the country appeared to have been regimented under the party. Far beyond their imagination and consent, party structures and disciplines captivated ordinary citizens. Premised on the Marxist understanding of the state and party interests superseding the interests of individual citizens, public policies flow top-down unquestioned and unchallenged. Nor had there been any national mechanism of soliciting opinions and critical inputs into the policymaking process. The National Revolutionary Development Campaign (NRDC), for instance, envisaged development in martial terms. Hence, 'development plans were formulated, human and material resources mobilized, and directives formulated at the center. Plans and directives had been disaggregated and implemented at regional level, provincial, district, and local levels, with procedures and parameters determined by party and state leadership (Harbeson, 1988). Taking all the state and party agencies together, therefore, the institutions add up to a controlling capacity to organize the lives of Ethiopians by central directions in ways that had never been seen before. As

the Figure below demonstrates, beneath the high level party and state leadership, almost the entire government structure, the mass and professional organizations, and the entire public had been encapsulated in a standard and centralized state and party structures.

Figure 3.1. Policy Implementation through State and Party-Led Structures: 1974-1987



Source: Own observations

3.6.3. Central and regional policymaking structures of the PDRE

The institutional mechanisms that had over the previous eight years evolved were also used for much of the duration of the first Republic, except that new names appeared to reflect the 1987 constitution of the PDRE. Officially, however, the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (PDRE) replaced the Provisional Military Administrative Council (PMAC). The first congress of the National *Shengo* adopted legislation introducing new state organs including itself, the Council of the State, the President, the Procuracy, the Judiciary and the Council of Ministers, as noted earlier (PDRE, 1987). Designated as the highest executive and administrative organ of government, the latter became responsible for the implementation of policies that the *Shengo,* the standing legislative organ of the Republic (the Council of the State) and the President formulated. The second important institutional mechanism that the Institute for the Studies of Nationalities contributed to PDRE was the reorganization of Administrative Regions into five autonomous regions and twenty-five administrative regions[22] (see Map 2). The reorganization of administrative regions was primarily motivated by the desire to streamline the implementation of policies and legislation made along the then prevailing party thinking.

By 1989 the Council of Ministers became a massive structure spanning the national and regional implementing agencies, with a prime minister, five deputy prime ministers, twenty ministries, two state committees, seven commissions, six authorities, two institutes and a central bank under its jurisdiction. In essentially administrative respects, the newly carved-out five autonomous and twenty-five administrative regions came under 'the highest executive and administrative organ' of the Republic. Much the same as in the Soviet-style republics, the Prime Minister had five Deputy Prime Ministers working under him, with each Deputy Prime Minister heading a division (see Figure 3.2). Assisted by a secretariat and a group of advisors, the Prime Minster was the head of the government with wide-ranging powers, although Mengistu appeared to have eclipsed almost all of the competences of the executive assigned to the CoM as provided under the 1987 constitution (Dawit, 1990).

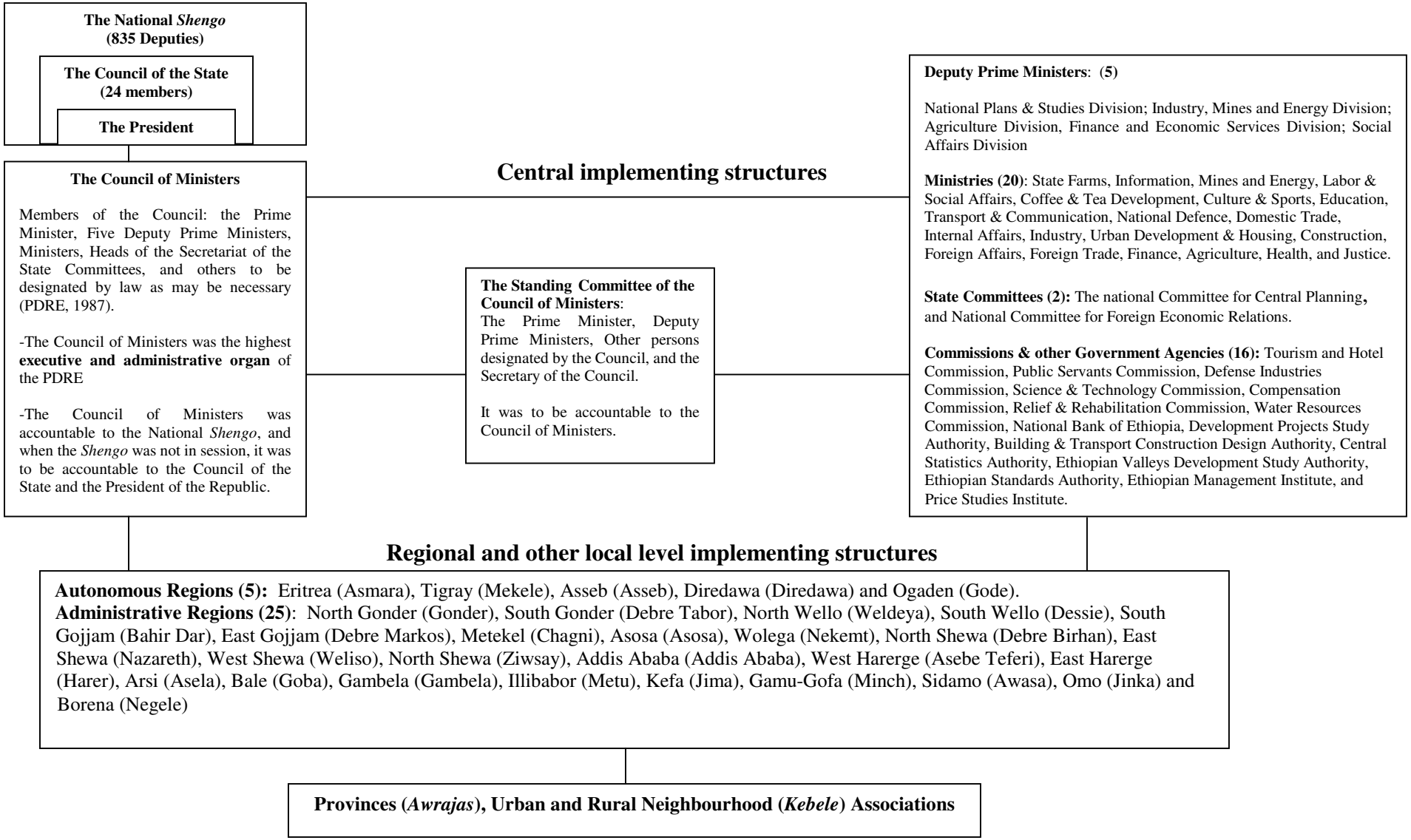
[22] In the immediate aftermath of taking power, the *Dergue* adapted the imperial regime's fourteen 'provinces' (*Teklay Gizat*), and renamed them 'regions' (*Kifle Hager*) so as to dispel any vestiges associated with the feudal order. With the addition of the capital city of Addis Ababa and the port city of Assab, the number of administrative regions rose to sixteen in 1981.

Furthermore, down the line central government establishments had been replicated at different levels in the hierarchy of administrative structures, with a three-tier structure consisting of autonomous and administrative regions (at regional level), provinces *(Awerajas)*, and neighborhood (*Kebele*) at a local level. The district (*Woreda*) that appeared the lowest unit in the hierarchy of the administrative structure in the imperial period, and a very basic institution of the administrative apparatus till 1987, was integrated into the provincial structure *(Awerajas*) after the constitution came into force. However, not only does the *Kebele* (neighborhood) establishment remain the basic unit of administration to this day, but was also was as much at the center of immense socio-economic and political activities during the *Dergue* era as it is today.

Endowed with limited executive powers, the implementing agencies operating below national levels had solely been required to ensure and/or follow up the implementation of policies of the higher state and party organs (FDRE, 1987). Not only had regional and local assemblies very limited legislative powers, but central government institutions such as the CoM could also override their decisions. Nor could administrative organs of the local government implement the decisions of their respective assemblies without the approval of the central government institutions (*op. cit.*). In other words, regional and local government institutions had neither the powers to formulae policies in a very rudimentary and local sense, nor did they have the leverage to use the local initiative to execute policies as local circumstances permit.

By 1989, amidst civil war and a malfunctioning economy, regional *Shengos* (regional assemblies) had been elected in only eleven of the twenty-five newly designated administrative regions and three of the five regions designated as autonomous (Hailu, 2003). Excluding Eritrea and Tigray, where the insurgents grew stronger, the government introduced the structures of the new Republic in Dire Dawa, Assab and Ogaden. Eleven of the 25 administrative regions singled out for introducing the PDRE structure included North Wello, South Wello, Metekel, Asosa, Bale, Gambella, West Hararege, East Hararege, South Omo, North Omo and Wollega (*op. cit.*). In retrospect, WPE dominated the entire election process, and party members filled the positions in *Shengos* and their respective executive committees (*op. cit.*). Eventually, the newly emerging autonomous and administrative regions came under the centralized and strong arm of the party and the national executive structure. The all too familiar, 'the hegemony of WPE, democratic centralism, socialist legality, the primacy of central planning and proletarian internationalism', guided the choices of public policies and the *modus operandi* of policymaking.

Figure 3.2. Central and regional policy implementing structures: 1987-1991



Source: Own observations

3.7. Conclusion

Ethiopia has an impressive history, with two millennia of state sovereignty and independence. Compared to other African states, it is the oldest state that successfully defended its independence against colonial powers, and so has survived as a sovereign country (Clapham, 1969). The state also grew progressively in an internal expansion in the last quarter of nineteenth century (Bahiru, 1991: 60-68). On the other hand, the maintenance of sovereignty and territorial gains through internal expansion in traditional Ethiopia, both of which had been obtained militarily, appeared to encourage authoritarian tendencies in public and political life. Most Ethiopians have also been captured by traditions deeply rooted in the socio-political culture that defined the relationships between policy elites and the society in authoritarian terms (Lipsky, 1962; Perham, 1969). The problem of the relationship between state and society or between the governed and governors are, therefore, entrenched in the country's history and ruling culture (Clapham, 2002). The stark reality that lies at the core of the past is that it has brought to bear enormous influence on the socio-political policymaking processes, institutions, roles and structures at different times in the country's history.

During Haileselassie's era, even the most important legal documents affirmed the executive power and the supremacy of the emperor over the policy formulating and implementing institutions in the entire country. Both the 1931 and 1955 constitutions vested absolute power in the emperor. He was the chief legislator with the power to approve and disapprove parliamentary legislation and dissolve the parliament; he had an indisputable executive power to appoint and dismiss the prime minister and other ministers, as well as to determine foreign relations; he had complete control on the armed forces and the single most important institution and power to appoint or dismiss provincial governors, and judicial powers with the constitutional mandates to supervise courts and grant pardons (under the 1931 and 1955 Revised Constitutions). The parliament remained a rubber-stamping body merely endorsing the policy decisions of the emperor and his entourage. There had never been any channel of communication between the public (members of society affected by policies) and those at the apex of policymaking structures. Therefore, consulting the affected parties both before and after policy decisions was unimaginable. Nor was there any channel of communication between policymakers and the citizenry.

In the absence of an organized body, the void created by the ousting of Hailesellassie's government was filled by the Provisional Military Administrative Council (PMAC/*Dergue*). The latter promulgated a series of laws. PMAC's first legislation did not clearly reveal the state organs with powers to adopt and implement policies, albeit the second set of laws to a limited extent clarified the roles of the Military Council and the Council of Ministers in the legislative process. Towards the end of the 1970s, it became clearer that the *Dergue*, and apparently the Standing Committee came to represent the repository of policymaking power. Not only did the latter issue almost all the statutory enactments, but also made all the appointments to government positions in the entire country. In other words, the *Dergue* spanned on a wide range of policies with far-reaching consequences. Moreover, chaired by the head of the state (who was also the Chairman of the PMAC) the Council of Ministers (CoM) was empowered to follow up the implementation of policies, despite parallel appointments of loyal personnel drawn from the military had circumscribed their leverage. There had, therefore, been very limited circles of elite groups, mainly involving the PMAC and the Council of Ministers (which was comprised of civilian technocrats) which had virtual claims on agenda setting and the policymaking process.

Although the ideological metamorphosis began even before the *Dergue* seized the mantle of power, the official pronouncement of National Democratic Revolution Program (NDRP) in 1976 marked a turning point in the adoption of the teachings of Marx and Lenin. Henceforth, not only were policy choices premised mainly on Marxism-Leninism, but the policymaking institutions and the policymaking process were also institutionalized in COPWE/WPE. Consequently, the program of the vanguard party, WPE, set the preconditions as well as the parameters for the making of the constitution, and the principles on which the PDRE was established. It is worth noting here that the establishment of WPE (1984) preceded PDRE (1987). The 1987 constitution, for instance, unambiguously stipulated that 'the party is the leading organ of the state as well the society' (PDRE, 1987). This would therefore mean that the party made policy choices and decisions in advance, and then these would be processed thorough the organs of the Republic established by the constitution, although in theory it was claimed that the repository of public power resided in the National Assembly (National *Shengo*).

Furthermore, since the mid-1970s farmers, women, the youth, industrial workers, teachers and other professional associations had continuously been reorganized to ascertain their loyalty to the party and the prevailing values guiding state-society relationships. Not

only were the party and central government assured of complete control over mass and professional organizations, but the latter were also turned into auxiliary institutions pegged to state and party structures. Hence, non-state actors had neither the capacity to generate alternative policy ideas nor relative autonomy to influence policies and practices.

Likewise, implementing agencies had been organized and reorganized to enhance central planning and to promote centrally guided policy implementation. Structured from the capital city down to towns and villages, the establishment of the NRDC-CPSC and later the Office of National Planning Council represented the vehicles for the execution of centrally guided socio-economic policies in the entire country, with state organizations, and mass and professional organizations effectively integrated into the system. Furthermore, the reorganization and transformation of rural social life for the implementation of agricultural policies was accorded top priority. Peasant cooperatives, villagization and resettlement schemes, *inter alia*, had rigorously been pursued to promote the ideals of socialism and central planning in the countryside. In the wake of the establishment of PDRE, the newly emerging state organs, administrative and autonomous regions were integrated into the machinery of central planning, party and state institutions. In short, largely drawn from the *Dergue,* the executive leadership (WPE and the Council of State) had claimed virtual control over the entire gamut of public policymaking from 1974 to 1991, as the empirical evidences presented earlier made clear.

Chapter 4. Public policymaking under the EPRDF, 1991-2004

4.1. Introduction

The preceding chapter discussed at length the key institutions and groups that played vital roles in the formulation and implementation public policies in Ethiopia from 1974 to 1991. The assessments made abundantly clear that policymaking power, by default or by design, had been centrally located in the party (WPE) and the executive comprising the coterie of *Dergue* members. Non-state actors had neither the organizational autonomy nor the legal basis to influence policymaking, as Chapter 3 elucidated. Carrying on from 1991, this chapter examines the key players that have come to light over the past thirteen years, and the conditions that set the context as well as the precedence for some groups to play critical roles and create enormous leverage in public policymaking in Ethiopia.

The chapter evaluates two periods with distinct institutional policymaking configurations, albeit the EPRDF spearheaded the agenda setting and determined the policy choices that were made in both periods. The first period is commonly known as the transition period that runs from 1991 to 1995. As will soon be discussed in this chapter, the Transitional Government of Ethiopia is constituted of the Council of Representatives and the Council of Ministers, and passed laws and issued socio-economic policies with enormous impact and consequences, well beyond the transition period. The context of public policymaking from 1995 to the present has obviously been rooted in the preceding period. The policymaking institutions, however, have been restructured, as provided for under the 1995 constitution, into NRSs and Federal Governments, each normally consisting of the legislature, the executive and judiciary, although the executive at every level has assumed a predominant role in the choice of the socio-economic policies and the contexts in which they are to be implemented. This chapter explores, more particularly, the relationship between the executive and the legislature, the role that each played in the legislative process, and the influence that each bore upon policymaking in both periods. Moreover, not only does this chapter examine the impact that a wave of policy reform measures taken in the previous period had on the subsequent period, but it also sheds some light on the executive-legislature relationships a propos the legislative process.

As a prelude, this chapter, first, throws some light on the train of events ranging from the pre-1991 commitments of the groups that subsequently dominated the policymaking scene to the legislative and institutional instruments used, which includes the constitution.

Second, it explores the executive and legislative relationships, and the role as well as the influence that each has exacted in the legislative process since 1995. Third, the chapter examines the major players in the legislative process at the NRSs and local levels, although the central authority has laid down the *modus operandi* of the legislative and/or policymaking process. Lastly, among major socio-economic policy measures sponsored by the new policy elites, it elucidates agricultural development-led industrialization (ADLI) and education policies, which not only have epitomized their ideological obsessions but also manifested a marked imbalance between the benefactors and the receivers of public policies. Hence, ADLI is selected, not only because it forms the centerpiece of the ruling party's ideological commitments to the peasantry, but also because agriculture and rural-focused development policies are currently at the heart of almost all socio-economic policies in Ethiopia. Education policy is nevertheless chosen because it distinctively represents the imbalance between policymaking institutions and the constituents of the policy (i.e., teachers, students, academics and the public), which has over the last ten years been at the hub of the debates among policymakers, practitioners, and academics. Finally, the chapter concludes with a summary.

4.2. Policymaking during the Transition

4.2.1. The Prelude

The backdrop to the leading role as well as the overwhelming influence that EPRDF has had on socio-economic policies over the past thirteen years should be traced to the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), which is the forerunner of the umbrella organization, i.e., EPRDF. Almost immediately after the *Dergue* seized power, urban elites and university students from Tigary established the precursor of TPLF, namely the Tigray National Organization (TNO). The latter drew its inspiration mainly from the radical Ethiopian student movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s (Young, 1997; Kinfe 2001; Clapham, 2004; Vaughan and Tronvoll, 2003). When TPLF was transformed into an armed insurgency in 1975, Marxism, Maoist thinking and national self-determination were the dominant values that the leaders of the movement embraced (Young, 1997). The TPLF believed that 'the Amhara ruling classes ruled Ethiopia in league with and the support of their imperialist masters' (TPLF, 1983: 4). Therefore, instead of class conflict, the national form of struggle was the driving force of the TPLF revolution, and class oppression could

be eliminated only when the national component of domination was primarily addressed. In other words, the national question supersedes all other questions (*ibid*). TPLF, therefore, sought the solution in the usual Marxist motto of the day, 'the state under the leadership of the proletariat', apparently, under the leadership of Tigrian 'proletariat' (TPLF, 1983: 9).

While Tigrian nationalism was the persuasive and critical force that eventually secured the front's victory over the *Dergue*, the political leadership of the TPLF has long espoused Marxian ideology as a guiding principle that culminated in the formation of the Marxist-Leninist League of Tigray (MLLT) in 1984. More particularly, the Leninist and Maoist variants proved viable in terms of organizing the administrative apparatus and streamlining propaganda work in the liberated areas (Young, 1997:33). MLLT became a highly influential organization that gained the support of urban elites, the peasantry and mass organizations in Tigray. Furthermore, the peasantry was the largest and strongest social base from which TPLF/MMLT's leadership drew the bulk of its fighting force that *ipso facto* brought about a crushing defeat of the *Dergue*'s mighty military power. According to Young (1997), the TPLF/MLLT's commitment to the peasantry stemmed from 'an appreciation that the revolution's success depended upon its ability to militarily challenge the *Dergue* and for this it needed the unreserved support of the peasants'. As shall be discussed in some detail later, while it is certainly clear that the TPLF/MLLT/EPRDF victory drew the inspiration and strength from the peasantry, the predominant ideological precept of the new policy elites – revolutionary democracy – and the post-1991 socio-economic policies on which these policies are premised tended to preclude the participation of non-state actors in the policymaking process (see Chapter 5).

Two years after liberating the entire Tigray in 1989, and in a bid to advance southward, TPLF formed a united front with the Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement (EPDM), a splinter group from the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP). The Oromo Peoples' Democratic Movement (OPDO) and the Ethiopian Democratic Officers' Revolutionary Movement (EDORM) also joined the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) before a large-scale assault on the *Dergue's* army to oust it began in 1991. Each affiliate had a Marxist-Leninist group as counterparts of TPLF's MLLT. While the Marxist-Leninist recipe, by then, was abandoned with the collapse of the Soviet block three years before the EPRDF forces came to power, ironically, the three Marxist-Leninist groups established an umbrella Marxist-Leninist party under the name of the Ethiopian Workers Revolutionary Party in December 1991 (Reporter: May 2001, 4: 10-11). The Marxist rhetoric nevertheless was dropped from the EPEDF's lexicon soon after

they entered Addis Ababa. Not only did this make clear the commitment of the new elites to Marxism-Leninism and Maoist thinking, but the latter also subsequently had an enormous impact on nearly all socio-economic policies. It, too, left its indelible imprint on the 1995 constitution.

A few days before the *Dergue*'s seventeen years of brutal dictatorship ended, peace talks were held in London between the *Dergue*, TPLF, OLF and EPLF under the auspices of the US in May 1991. In fact, because of the abrupt collapse of the *Dergue* regime, the London peace talks ended before they even got going. Nevertheless, one of the major outcomes of the London peace talks was the decision to organize a 'broad' national conference in the capital Addis Ababa that would represent various shades of political views[23]. Prior to the conference, and following the fall of the *Dergue* regime, EPRDF established an interim government that lasted a month. The interim administration of EPRDF was in full and exclusive control, which elevated its leverage to have unrestricted access to the massive power and resources of the government. When the national conference was held in early July 1991, the EPRDF was in a comfortable position to determine the participants, including the additions and subtractions to the coalition in the Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE). In other words, the EPRDF used the power in its favor to build or break coalitions and promote its agenda. When the conference was convened, the representation of many ethnic groups was fragmented into different forces and most of these forces were fractious[24], and some were even quickly formed for the occasion with the assistance of the EPRDF, including those selected minor multi-national groups and individuals to attend the conference. Political groups, which in the view of EPRDF were considered as anti-peace and anti-democratic, notably the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP) and the All Ethiopia Socialist Movement (AESM), were excluded from participating in the Conference. By and large the EPRDF's leverage to push its policy agenda through, either through the Council of Representatives (CoR) or the Council of Ministers (CoM), were unassailable.

In any case, the outcome of the July 1991 national conference was a five-page public policy document or quasi-constitution and the establishment of the Transitional

[23] Kife Wodajo (2001: 142), who was appointed by the EPRDF to be the Head of the Constitution Drafting Commission, noted that EPLF, EPRDF and OLF leaders met in Asmara two weeks before the National Conference was held to decide 'the formula for allocating seats to participating organizations' and draw up an agenda for the Conference.

[24] Organizations that participated in the July Conference representing the Oromo ethnic group included Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), Islamic Front for the Liberation of Oromoia (IFLO), United Oromo People's Liberation Front (UOPLF), Oromo Abo Liberation Front (OALF), and Oromo Peoples' Democratic Organization (OPDO) (CoR: the Minutes of the First Regular Session, July, 1991).

Government of Ethiopia (TGE). The Charter should, however, be credited probably as one of the most egalitarian policy enactments that Ethiopia ever had. While the provisions in the Charter are laden with a high dose of self-determination and independence for 'hitherto neglected' ethnic groups, the recognition accorded to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations, and the provisions acknowledging the freedom of conscience and the right to organize political parties were some of the departures from the past. In the pursuance of the Charter, the TGE consisted of the Council of Representatives (CoR) and the Council of Ministers (CoR) (*ibid*). The organizations that participated representing different ethnic groups in the July conference formed the CoR, albeit EPRDF took the preponderance of seats (see table 4.1. below). An EPRDF Prime Minister was appointed by the President to preside on an eighteen-minister council of ministers.

In summary, firstly, through the majority seats it had in the CoR, EPRDF successfully organized the voting system to have an EPRDF President elected, who was the Chairperson of CoR as well as the commander in chief of the army, which gave him extensive power and influence in the policymaking process[25] (TGE, 1991). Secondly, not only did the President preside over the legislative body, but he also had the powers to nominate the prime minister and preside over the CoM, at his convenience. The Prime Minister not only had executive and administrative power over the bureaucracy, but he was presumably also a second strongman in the EPRDF leadership (the 4th and 5th Plenary Sessions of the CoR: August, 1991). Thirdly, EPRDF effectively used the power vested by the Charter in the CoR and the President to such an extent that it assumed important ministerial positions in the executive ministry such as Prime Minister, the Minister of Defense, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Home Affairs, and had placed its representatives as permanent secretaries in the ministries where the EPRDF did not have positions with ministerial portfolios. Lastly, EPRDF had the CoR approve its proposal for the EPRDF army to be the defense force of the country during the transition (the 1st Plenary Session of the CoR, July 1991). The Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) was therefore both the umpire and the guardian of statesmanship. The above picture demonstrates that beyond the orbit of the ruling party (i.e. EPRDF) the prospects for non-state actors to influence the policymaking process were bound to appear dim. It is, therefore, against this backdrop that the new policy elites'

[25] The Minutes of the 1st Plenary Session of CoR, July 1991.

leverage in the policymaking process in 1991 and beyond and the imbalances thereof have to be examined.

Table 4.1. Seats in the TGE's Council of Representatives (CoR)

Names of Political Organization	Seats in the CoR
Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF)	(32)
Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF)	10
Ethiopian People's Democratic Front (EPDM)	10
Oromo People's Democratic Organization (OPDO)	10
Ethiopian Democratic Officers' Revolutionary Movement (EDORM)	2
Oromo Liberation Front (OLF)	12
Islamic Front for the Liberation of Oromia (IFLO)	3
Representatives of Workers	3
Afar Liberation Front (ALF)	3
Benshangul People's Liberation Movement (BPLM)	2
Gambela People's Liberation Movement (GPLM)	2
Gurage Peoples' Democratic Movement (GPDM)	2
Hadiya Nation Democratic Organization (HNDO)	2
Kembatta Nationality representative	2
Omotic Peoples Democratic Movement (OPDM)	2
Sidama Liberation Front (SLM)	2
Wolayta People's Democratic Front (WPDF)	2
Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF)	2
Kefa People's Democratic Union (KPDU)*	2
The Adere People's Representative	1
The Ethiopian Democratic Action Group (EDAG)	1
The Ethiopian Democratic Coalition (EDC)	1
The Ethiopian Democratic Union (EDU)	1
Ethiopian National Democratic Organization (ENDO)	1
Horayal	1
Oromo Abo Liberation Front (OALF)	1
Issa and Gurgura Liberation Front (IGLF)	1
United Oromo People's Liberation Front (UOPLF)	1
Addis Ababa University Representative[26]	1
The Yem Nationality Representative*	1
The Gedeo People's Representative*	1
The Burji People's Representative*	1
The Agaw People's Representative*	1
Total Seats in the Council of Representatives	87

Source: The Minutes of the First, Second and Thirteenth Regular Sessions of the CoR.

* The decision to apportion 6 seats to 5 different ethnic groups, most of which were from the South, was made in early September 1991, although it was less clear why and how these organizations were selected.

[26] CoR's Chairperson tabled a proposal to annul Addis Ababa University's seat from the Council at its 36th Plenary Session held in March 1992, which ensued a relatively heated debate between members who debated for and against the proposal. Eventually the CoR passed a decision to cancel the University's seat voting 29 against 15 (The Minutes of the 36th Plenary Session of CoR, March 1992).

4.2.2. The major actors during the transition, 1991-1995

In the wake of the fall of the *Dergue*, the Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE) promulgated scores of policy and legislative enactments. A total of one hundred thirty-three (133) proclamations providing for regional restructuring and regional elections, the powers and duties of central and regional government agencies, annual and emergency budget legislation, terminating the institutions of the defunct regime and ratification of multilateral and bilateral relations with foreign governments had been promulgated during the transition period (the Minutes of CoR: 1991-1995). The CoR held 114 sessions, 109 plenary and 5 ad-hoc sessions, with each session extending to two or more meetings. Held in April 1994 for a series of twelve days to deliberate on the draft constitution, the 94th Plenary Session marked the highest such extended meeting. Although the minutes of every session were regularly recorded, it was not until several months later that they were subject to approval, to such an extent that redressing the soundness of the records proved beyond reproach. Attendance of all the sessions was properly recorded and incorporated into the minutes, albeit the volatile nature of the TGE coalition rendered continuous membership unlikely.

The CoR began its sessions in July with 80 active members, save Addis Ababa University's representation, whose seat remained vacant till in fact its representation was annulled in January 1992 (the 36th Plenary Session, March 1994). In September 1991 CoR decided to distribute six seats to 'hitherto neglected' nationalities and thereby expand the number of active CoR members to 86. However, amidst acrimonious conflict and armed pressure, the major partner in the TGE coalition, namely the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), withdrew from government in June 1992. The expulsion of five-coalition partner-political organizations from south Ethiopia in February 1993, apparently for their part in the Paris peace conference[27], reduced the active number of CoR member organizations and individual members to 22 and 66 respectively (see Table 4.2. below).

[27] The Paris Peace Conference was organized by opposition forces based both at home and abroad. The outcome of the Conference was a demand for a re-constitution of an interim government representative of all parties. Participants also urged for an international conference for peace and national reconciliation as a first step for more democratic institutions and development. A group of political parties which participated in the Paris conference were expelled from the COR, and formed the Southern Ethiopian Democratic Union. The latter joined the Council of Alternative Forces for Peace and Democracy in Ethiopia (CAFPDE).

Table 4.2. The decisions and sessions of the Council of Representatives (1991-1995)

Year	No. of Plenary and Ad-hoc Sessions Held	No. of Meetings conducted	No. of Proclamations/Laws Passed	Average No. of members Present		Average No. of members Absent	
				No.	%	No.	%
1991	14	20	6	60	74	21	26
1991/92				53	62	33	38
	39	72	21				
				55	74	19	26
1992/93	23	48	47	50	75	16	25
1993/94	23	35	28	48	73	18	27
1994/95	12	17	31	46	69	20	31
Total	111	192	133				

Source: Compiled and computed by the author from the achieves of the House of Peoples' Representatives (HPR)

Table 4.2 depicts the average number of CoR members present and absent in percentage and absolute figures. Taking 1991 as a benchmark, making judgments about the stature of CoR's non-EPRDF political organizations and their role vis-à-vis policymaking could to some degree be complicated. After the withdrawal of the OLF and the expulsion of South Ethiopia's coalition partners, EPRDF achieved close to fifty percent majority over the remaining divided and fractious non-EPRDF members of the CoR. It was thus self-evident that EPRDF had increasingly ascertained overwhelming leverage to push any agenda and policy decisions through the Council of Representatives after the latter half of 1993. Nonetheless, this should not give one the impression that EPRDF was not well positioned to put its agenda through before mid-1993. Certainly it was, but the withdrawal and expulsion of 20 non-EPRDF members of the CoR (in an 87-seat legislature) absolutely guaranteed EPRDF a monopoly on policy agenda setting, and emboldened its control over the voting system in the CoR and the entire policymaking arena during the transition in Ethiopia.

Additionally, the legislative enactments that EPRDF had the CoR endorse bolstered its role in the legislative process. The President of the TGE had in fact been empowered to preside over the CoR to ensure the implementation of policies, to confer positions on high civil and military officials, to appoint the Prime Minister and the members of the cabinet, and to call the sessions of the CoM at his leisure (TGE, 1991). Having had the highest executive and administrative eminence during the transition, the competences of the latter

inter alia included ensuring the implementation of socio-economic policies, controlling and supervising the activities of the country's bureaucracy, preparing the national budget, initiating legislation to be approved by the CoR (TGE, August 1991). Except for three positions and one deputy ministerial appointment that went to the OLF and a member of the South Ethiopia coalition partner respectively, the rest of the cabinet positions with and without portfolios had been assigned to the EPRDF and its close allies (Kinfe, 1994). Answerable to the President and the Council of Representatives, the Prime Minister was the head of the CoM and the entire civil service that provided the EPRDF with the leverage to see whether government agencies and civil servants observed policies and legislation. In other words, which individual and institutional players in the TGE commanded a legally mandated (or otherwise) influence on the policymaking process depended a lot on which group had ample access to the conduits of the massive powers of the state and its resources.

Hence, despite the fact that the CoR's vice-chairmanship and the secretary had been assigned to non-EPRDF members of the CoR, whose organizations held not more than two seats each and who also had neither the power nor the leverage to influence agenda setting and policymaking, the two vital positions, the Presidency and Prime Minister, with enormous powers and leverage, went to the leaders of EPRDF. Furthermore, apart from having a strong military power that installed it at the top of the policymaking pyramid, EPRDF allocated itself a controlling number of seats that earned it and its allies (friendly organizations, so to speak) a comfortable majority to have the TGE legislature endorse its legislative proposals. So, till the end of June 1992 the EPRDF had 32 seats (37.2%), and its control over the agenda and voting system with the same seats steadily grew to 42% after the withdrawal of 12 members of the OLF; the proportion was scaled up even further to 48.5%, following the expulsion 8 members from the south Ethiopia Coalition partners (see Table 4.1.). This attests to the fact that the EPRDF was in firm control of the carrot and the stick, so much so that the few friendly organizations which remained to its side were rewarded with power and amenities (i.e. the carrot), but had little effect in influencing policies. In contrast, the many others that resisted EPRDF's positions, terms and conditions were either outmaneuvered to withdraw or face their outright expulsion (i.e. the stick)[28].

[28] Interview held with a former member of the Council of Representatives.

As is evident from the foregoing discussion, through the majority seats in the TGE legislature and the key leadership positions in the executive, the new policy elites were poised to propose and scrutinize the agenda and check their feasibility against EPERDF's policy blueprints. Despite the fact that the TGE Charter empowered the transitional legislature to initiate and promulgate laws and policies, to all intents and purposes, reframing policies to match their designs increasingly became the exclusive preserve of the new policy elites. Evidence for this abound. Nobody would probably contest that the economic policy during the transition was one of the key policy measures taken during the transition to transform the country from a command and control economy to a market economy. Nevertheless, the economic policy of the transition period was put into effect as of November 1991, despite the fact that the members of the CoR had not adequately deliberated on the sprit of the policy, nor was it tabled as a motion so that the members of the CoR vote for or against its approval (19th Plenary session, October 1991). In fact, despite repeated pleas from several members of the CoR that valuable economic scenarios and proposals were generated from non-EPRDF member organizations for example, the Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce and professional economists had not yet been incorporated into the policy – they were left unheeded (21st Plenary Session, November 1991). Probably, by then the EPRDF leadership decided that it was needless to canvass for more ideas, mainly because only the intelligentsia and urban elites who knew that they had the right to speech and expression could only exercise that right. This, in their view, was not regarded as public participation (*ibid.*). A former member of the CoR recollected:

> Before the transition period economic policy was issued, I remember there was this draft policy document proposed by the then Prime Minister Tamrat Layne. Every member organization of the CoR was also encouraged to develop its own draft. Every one of us including organizations outside of the CoR (such as Chamber of Commerce) canvassed and brought on board all the available resources and expertise to develop and present our visions and policy scenarios that would probably contribute to the economic development of the country. We were also told to induce professionals and experts in the area/in the field to give their views and/or comments on the proposed policy as panelists. We did what we could possibly do. Most of us presented our economic policy proposals in booklet from. By the end of all these exercises, however, the economy policy document originally/initially drafted by the EPRDF Prime Minister Tamrat Layne was published and became TGE's official economy policy during the transition. The same tradition has continued to this day;

and this points to the fact that the system is not permissive for a genuine public participation in the policymaking process.[29]

Additionally, although a consensus had been reached among the members of the CoR that preparation soon should begin for teaching subjects in the primary schools in the many nationality languages, all the designs and strategies of the controversial education policy were nonetheless carried out behind the back of the CoR; neither were they put through the CoR for deliberation, decision and approval (17th and 66th Plenary Sessions, April 1994). The members of the CoR, for example, protested to no avail, though the discussions were held in the Ministry of Education (MoE) sponsored by EPRDF and chaired by its permanent secretary in the MOE to determine the modalities of teaching subjects in ethnic languages in the absence of broad public and party representations (the 17th Plenary Session of the CoR, October 1991). Despite the proclamation (7/1992) to provide for the formation of regional self-governments approved by the CoR provided for fourteen regional states to be constituted, the pleas of the non-EPRDF members of the CoR that the legislature's decision was eclipsed by administrative fiat when five ethnic regions in South Ethiopia were amalgamated into one, also went unheeded (cf. 70th Plenary Session, May 1993, TGE, 1992). Furthermore, members of the CoR had not been aware that there was an 'Economic Reform Steering Committee' comprised of the President (the Chairperson of the CoR), representatives of the IMF and World Bank, the governor of National Bank, the Prime Minister, and ministers heading the economic sectors (agriculture, finance, industry, etc.), which made vital policy decisions, including macro economic restructuring measures, till a draft law on privatization was proposed for CoR's approval (the 90th Plenary Session, February 1994). In other words, the CoR did not establish the economic steering committee, nor had it known that such a committee existed which decided on such fundamental economic policy issues, nor was it informed about the economic reform programs that it [the economic steering committee] introduced (*ibid.*).

There had been lengthy discussions, and in some instances even bitter debates, on some of the issues in the CoR, despite the debates invariably being between the Chairperson and the non-EPRDF members of the CoR. While there had not been any meaningful debate and/or discussions for much of the sessions, the most fiercely debated issues in the CoR at different points in time are indicated below.

[29] Interview held with Ethiopian academic and prominent opposition leader, Addis Ababa, December 2003.

1. The government's excessive use of force when Addis Ababa University students protested the administration of the referendum in Eritrea that left several students dead or injured in mid-1993, which was immediately followed by the expulsion of academic staff from the University the same year (71st Plenary Session, June 1994).

2. Notwithstanding the fact that the economic policy during the transition deferred the issue of land ownership (i.e. whether or not land should be under state or private ownership) till a referendum sponsored by a constitutionally instituted government would be held, a bill to introduce a lease system of allocating urban land stimulated bitter debate between the Chairperson and non-EPRDF members of the CoR. According to non-EPRDF legislators, the legislation was designed to preempt a referendum on the land ownership issue, when the Chairperson made the unsolicited revelation that he, in fact, was in favor of state ownership. The legislation that introduced a lease system into the urban administration had been approved with 38 deputies voting for, 3 against and 4 abstentions (TGE, November 1991, 83rd Plenary Session, November 1994).

3. The most acrimonious debate in the CoR took place when the draft constitution was discussed in April 1994. The most contentious and controversial provisions, namely, articles 37 and 38 (articles 39 and 40 in the finally approved constitution), unleashed fierce debate between the Chairperson and non-EPRDF members of the CoR (the 94th Plenary Session, 1994).

4. The fourth such debate took place when the executive proposed a law to restructure and organize the media institutions, namely the Ethiopian News Agency, Ethiopian Radio, Ethiopian Television and Ethiopian Press Agency under the Ministry of Information. The non-EPRDF members of the CoR proposed a fundamental modification to the bill to the effect that administering the media agencies by an independent board that was accountable to the parliament would stem the unfair influence of the ruling party and the state apparatus which had an overwhelming control (100th Plenary Session, February 1995). It is worth noting that the same issue prompted heated debate in the HPR, and it has been the only such agenda item to reappear three times (comparable to a third reading) in the history of the EPRDF parliament (see Chapter 5).

In all of the cases, not only did the President almost always use his position to interrupt debates and discussions for voting, but the EPRDF also won all of the debates with a wide margin. In view of the composition of the Council of Representatives, any private bills and/or initiatives were much less likely to be tabled. The Ethiopian National Democratic Organization (ENDO)[30], which had only one seat in the CoR, nonetheless, came with a legislative proposal to provide for monetary subsidy to political organizations fielding candidates for the 1995 general election. This was the only bill proposed by a non-EPRDF member of the CoR, and it became law (102nd Plenary Session, March 1995). This would means that out of 133 proclamations and the numerous policy issues discussed and debated in the CoR throughout the duration of the TGE (i.e. July 1991-August 1995), a non-EPRDF member of the CoR proposed only one law.

Furthermore, when EPRDF seized power in 1991, Ethiopia had yet to emerge from a quagmire of civil war. In the pre-1991 period, as noted in Chapter 3, there was little room for organized and independent civil movements, nor was there any freedom of expression. In the wake of 1991 the relationship between state and non-state actors and fledgling civil society organizations (CSOs) was volatile. In other words, the conflict that had ravaged the country together with the *Dergue*'s muffling of the civil society and/or the poor state-civil society relationship undermined the latter's role and influence on the policymaking process during the transition. On the flipside, the new policy elites' leverage for comprehensive and overwhelming influence on policymaking was guaranteed, partly because of the pre-1991 hangover (civil society and other political forces were either very weak or disunited to able to pose any challenge to the new elites), and partly due to EPRDF's military might that emerged victorious over the *Dergue* army. To put it differently, organized and proactive civil society – in the sense of asserting and countervailing the new policy elites and thereby regenerate the policymaking process and/or influence policies – was non-extent.

Moreover, while the statutes including the Charter were geared towards democratization, the EPRDF embarked on a crackdown on any challenge to stem opposition and/or any dissent. In the immediate aftermath of 1991, the academic community of the oldest institution of higher learning in the country, Addis Ababa University, was branded as center of chauvinists, in much the same way as Hailesellasie's

[30] Kifle Wodajo was the leader of ENDO (see foornote 24).

and Mengistu's regimes branded the University as a center of communism and counter-revolutionaries respectively. As a result, the party (EPRDF) adopted a negative attitude towards the University community, so much so that the research outputs of the University staff had little effect, at least as input into the country's socio-economic development programs[31]. In fact, the CoR's plenary sessions that deliberated on Addis Ababa University were invariably vindictive of the hostile attitudes adopted by the EPRDF leadership towards the University's academic community (36th, 48th, 49th, 63rd, 71st, 86th Plenary Sessions of the CoR). Furthermore, by orchestrating splits in the national trade union and teachers associations, not only did EPRDF destabilize their potential to countervail state forces, but also prevented them from influencing the policymaking process[32]. The opposition, which attempted to challenge EPRDF's positions in the CoR, was faced with forced withdrawal at best, or expulsion at worst.

The above assessments show that, through its overwhelming control over the key policymaking institutions during the transition, the CoR and CoM, the EPRDF enhanced its leverage in the entire process of policymaking. The fusion of the party with the executive institutions militated against the chances of non-state actors influencing the policymaking process. The influence of non-EPRDF members of the CoR (who were the leftovers after the expulsions and withdrawals) on the policymaking process was marginal and ineffective. It was certainly clear that EPRDF opted for absolute control of the legislative process in CoR due chiefly to its overriding obsession with the exclusion of non-EPRDF political forces and nascent civil society organizations (CSOs) from the policymaking process. The above pictures of the immediate post-1991 Ethiopian policymaking process did not appear to augur well for an inclusive and participatory policymaking process, and the struggle between the EPRDF and non-government actors in influencing the policymaking process had been tilted towards the former.

[31] The speech made by the head of the Research and Publication Office of Addis Ababa University marking the 50th Jubilee Anniversary of the Founding of Addis Ababa University, January 2000.

[32] Questionnaire Responses from Ethiopian Teachers' Association (ETA) and Confederation of Ethiopian Labor Union (CETU), April 2003.

4.2.3. The making of Ethiopian mega-public policy[33], the Constitution-making process

A constitution sets out the relationship between individuals and the government, and it defines the powers of the state and its agencies[34]. It also forms the very foundation of public life and regulates the relationship between those who govern and those who are governed, and the latter place the former in a position of trust and authority (Wessels, 2001). This relationship therefore necessitates the participation of civil society and the entire citizenry in the constitution making process (*ibid.*). Wessels reasons:

> …it is in times of crises that constitutions are really tested. If a constitution is not perceived to be legitimate and if it does not accommodate the hopes and fears of the peoples that have to live under it, it will not be respected-nor will it ever become a living document adequately addressing the interests of the entire citizenry. At this point, politicians may tear the constitution to shreds and political violence and coups may become the order of the day. Conversely, if a constitution is legitimated and organically grows to become a living instrument, it can be the vehicle for ensuring representative, responsible and good government. (2001, xii)

To add to this, a constitution as a mega-public policy or at the summit of all public policies (a basic law, as lawyers would call it), not only offers principles and the spirit to steer the policymaking process, but also it patterns institutional and state-society relationships with respect to public policymaking. It is thus such a vital issue that it can only be of value when people who live under it establish ownership over it. The constitution-making process, therefore, must be able to bring all actors and stakeholders on board, regardless of creed, religion, sex, ethnicity, color and political views. It took South Africans, for instance, seven solid years (from 1989 to 1996) to produce a constitutional document in 1996 in many respects 'pioneering borrowing from the constitutional jurisprudence of all parts of the world, and yet uniquely South African' (Haysom, 2001: 111). According to Mbete-Kgositsile (2001), the South African constitution has something for everybody that heralds a triumph to all South Africans, and it is this constitutional basis

[33] Sponsored by EPRDF, the 1995 constitution affirmed that the constitution is the supreme law of the land; and further spells out: 'any law, customary practice or a decision of an organ or a public official which contravenes this constitution' is null and void. Besides, citizens and all associations should abide by the constitution, and thus 'all citizens... political organizations as well as their officials have the duty to ensure observance of the Constitution and obey it' (FRDE, 1995:4).

[34] On line at http://confinder.richmond.edu/, accessed on July 24, 2003

that has transformed the country into one of the most democratic countries on the African content. While the constitution-making process had gone through tortuous trajectories from 'talks about talks' in 1989 to November 1996, when it was signed into law, due mainly to gracious leadership and the wisdom of its people, the South Africans have a Constitution which is hailed as model and inspiration to other countries. Most of all, the constitution is recognized as one of the most advanced constitutions in the world, 'entrenching a constitutional democracy based on an extensive and progressive bill of fundamental rights' (Haysom, 2001).

In August 1992 the CoR promulgated a law that established a Constitutional Commission whose competences revolved around writing and submitting a constitution to the CoR, organizing and conducting educational symposiums on constitutional principles, distributing the draft constitution to the public for discussion, canvassing for comments and suggestions on the draft and reporting that to the CoR (TGE, August 1992). The legislation spelt out the structure as well as composition of the Commission. It consisted of a general assembly, an executive committee and many other committees. Despite a high membership attrition rate[35] all along, the general assembly had 29 members, drawing 7 members from CoR, seven from different political organizations, Ethiopian Labor Union, Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce and women's representatives each having 3 members; and Ethiopian Lawyers and Teachers Associations each comprising 2 representatives (*ibid.*). Not only did the Council of Representatives appoint the chairperson, the deputy chairperson and the secretary of the Commission to lead the executive committee as well as the entire constitution-making process, but it also selected all the delegates who participated in the drafting process (The 50th Plenary Session of CoR, August 1992; Kifle, 2001).

According to Kifle (2001), since negotiations behind the scenes continued for OLF's return, work on the actual drafting of the constitution was not begun till three months later. Three committees were formed to augment the drafting process, one dealing with human rights, the second working on state structure, and the last working on other constitutional matters that could not be categorized in either of the other two (the 69th Plenary Session, May 1993). Moreover, not only was a team of six local legal professionals assist the Commission, it also benefited from international experiences of constitutional experts who

[35] In a certificate award ceremony held in the hall of the Council of Representatives in May 1995 to salute the services that the members of the Constitutional Commission contributed, only 20 of the 29 who had initially joined it showed up (the 105th Regular Session of the CoR, May 1995; Kifle, 2001).

came from India, France, the USA, Spain, Germany and Egypt (*ibid.*). In pursuance of their mandates provided by the legislation, the Commission took the draft constitution to the people down to the neighborhood associations *(Kebeles)* to solicit ideas and comments, to such an extent that 'as many as 30% percent of the general population are thought to have participated' in the consultation process (Kifle, 2001: 137-138). Moreover, CoR had several sessions hearing the Commission's report and following up the development of the constitution[36]. The last such sessions, as noted earlier, on the constitution were held in April and May 1994, where it was debated and a decision taken to send it to a Constitutional Assembly for ratification. While the last session witnessed a very lengthy debate, probably the most heated and acrimonious of all the sessions that CoR had ever held, nevertheless the Chairperson and few non-EPRDF members of the CoR who opposed EPRDF's positions dominated much of the deliberations (CoR: the Minutes of the Plenary Sessions, July 1991 to August 1995).

In any case, the available international and local experts may have been brought on board, the Commission may well have 'consulted' the public, though Kifle himself seemed to doubt whether 30% of Ethiopian public were reached, the issue at stake is: was the Constitutional Commission in fact independent, as Kifle has tried to portray? Had the constitution-making process been inclusive, in the sense of bringing all the stakeholders and parties on board, as South Africans did? Which groups or players among the actors had a paramount and overwhelming influence as well leverage, to such an extent that they somehow wielded the prerogatives of determining the options as well as parameters within which the principles of Ethiopian mega-pubic policy (i.e. the constitution) and the provisions thereof were to be decided in their favor?

There are two diametrically contrasting views concerning which group, amongst the many political forces and actors, had a paramount influence as well as an imprint on the constitution-making process in Ethiopia. Some argued that EPRDF had only two of its members in the Constitutional Commission, and therefore, during discussions and debates in the Commission and in the process of drafting the constitution the former 'was one among other actors' (Andreas, 2001; Kifle, 2001). Accordingly, the predominance of the 'EPRDF was first felt in the constitutional assembly' and it was only in the Constitutional Assembly that 'the debate strictly followed party lines', so much so that one gets the impression that the constitution-making process was more representative and participatory

[36] The 47th, 49th, 50th, 69th, 84th, 93rd, 94th Plenary Sessions of the CoR.

in the Council of Representatives as well as in Constitutional Commission than it was in the Constitutional Assembly *(ibid.)*. Others contended that the entire constitution-making process which instituted the second republic was flawed, because the constitution-making process, ranging from appointment of persons to the Constitutional Commission and the process of drafting it to its ratification by Constitutional Assembly were rather crafted as well as selfishly guarded by the EPRDF (Kassahun, 1995; Abbink, 1997; Vestal, 1996; Merera, 2003). 'Owing to the absence of political space for peaceful involvement of opposition groups having alternative views in the process of formulating the constitution' (Kassahun, 1995: 134), and EPRDF's predisposition to incorporate 'its ideology in the new constitution…and consolidate its vision of the future for the nation-even if that vision conflicted with that of the majority of the people' (Vestal, 1997: 29); and the sponsors of the constitution, therefore, used their military might to consolidate and legitimize their hold on power through a constitutional engineering mechanism (Merera, 2003: 127). Putting it differently, the preceding argument suggests that the playing fields were never level for all the actors (state and society) in the making of the constitution, casting serious doubts on the impartiality, viability and credibility of the constitution-making process.

To begin with, the Constitutional Commission had almost immediately been deprived of its independence when CoR and its chairperson insisted on appointing 7 members from the EPRDF dominated CoR. Installed at the apex of the Commission, the chairman, vice-chairman and the secretary of the Commission, which were such influential leadership positions, were known for their loyal support and allegiance to the EPRDF (the 50th Plenary Session, August 1992). Secondly, the opposition elements were either forced to withdraw or were expelled from the CoR, and others that had no seats in the CoR were effectively excluded from the constitution-making process through harassment and coercive measures of one kind or the other (Abbink, 1995, 1997; Marina, 1995; Merera, 2003). Thirdly, as earlier noted, the EPRDF orchestrated a split in the leadership of the relatively strong civil society organizations in Ethiopia such as Teachers' Associations and Labor Union, and loyal supporters were co-opted and appointed as members of the Constitutional Commission. In fact, it turned out to be unsuccessful, though the proposal by the Chairperson of the CoR to appoint two persons to be members of the Commission from the breakaway teachers' association was challenged by non-EPRDF members (the 84th Plenary Session of CoR, December 1994). Lastly, the parameters set by the new policy elites left no meaningful option, with the public playing no significant role in the process, nor were there any meaningful public participation in the constitution-making process. In

response to whether or not the Constitutional Assembly should consider the draft as a valid constitutional document and begin deliberating, an independent representative[37] in its first session contended:

> In first place, fruitful, fair and meaningful debates on the draft constitution in the CoR had been marred by the absence of wisdom and gracious leadership. … Moreover, I toured through my constituency as well as other constituencies in Addis Ababa while the people were discussing the draft constitution, the majority of the people vehemently objected 'self determination and up to and including secession' and state ownership of land'. More particularly, the turn out of people in my constituency, namely, District 12, 06 neighborhood association (*Kebele*), for instance, was only 19, while actually the number of residents are 17, 770. Even the 19 teen aged, high school completes, came to the district office wanting to be employed in the police force, after having heard announcement from Addis Ababa Police Commission which was to recruit them on the same day, the constitution was to be discussed. The residents in my and other districts, therefore, not only are very well aware of the fact that the constitution is the work of a single party, but also they showed their outright objection by not coming to the assembly halls of the districts. Besides, elections for the Constitutional Assembly have not been free and fair. After all, holding elections after having thrown your opponents or the opposition to jails is not only tantamount to galloping on a horseback across a field, and declaring one a winner where there is no contestant, but also it is undemocratic. The options are, therefore, either to articulate the genuine demands of people into the constitution, or to put the demands of the organization first, even if this conflicts with the interest of the people. Surely, an EPRDF zealot will choose the latter; I would rather go for the former. (Volume 1, the Minutes of the Constitutional Assembly, October, 1995)

Abbink added:

> The drafting of a new constitution, although announced as a democratic process whereby all the civilians would have a significant say, was dominated by the TGE (i.e. EPRDF) and the commission it had appointed. Open discussions in the *k'belles* (the urban dwellers' associations and the peasants' associations) did not yield substantial changes, nor were they meant to. The meetings themselves were only visited by an estimated five percent of the total population. Even so, they allowed for the voicing of serious criticism of the draft constitution, yet they made no significant impact upon the final text. Since the discussions started in the media and in the Constituent Assembly, the clauses on the land law, on 'the right to secession' of disaffected ethno-regions and on some religious rights for Christians, proved controversial. But they were not rescinded or reformulated in the final version, approved in December 1994. (1995: 155)

[37] The late Captain Admase Zeleke, an independent MP, voicing his objections to the contentious issues provided for in the constitution in October 1995.

After having received the draft constitution from the Commission early in April 1994, the CoR deliberated on every article. Much more extensive discussions, even acrimonious debates, however, were held on the controversial articles 39 and 40 (issues of independence and land) than on other provisions in the draft constitution. Much of the debate was a repetition of what had taken place in the Constitutional Commission, and it eventually proved unable to achieve consensus on these issues. CoR, too, decided to send the competing 'majority' and 'minority' drafts on the two controversial issues to the Constituent Assembly (The 94th Plenary Session of CoR, April 1994). The 'minority views' that first originated in the Constitutional Commission, extended to the CoR as well as the Constitutional Assembly, suggested alternative resolution mechanisms to nationality (ethnic) problems, without completely shunning secession when and if the issue arises (the Draft Constitution, April, 1994: 18-20). In fact, they detailed legal and constitutional proceedings should a nation recognized under article 39, sub-article (5) as such, initiate secession for such justifiable reasons as if and when the rights of a nation provided under sub-articles (2) and (3) are denied, or suppressed, or when national wealth or fruits of national development have not been equitably distributed (*ibid.*). The alterative provisions included: a) presenting the case to a constitutional court, which examines the validity of the reasons and suggests compromise solutions, including awarding compensation for a nation that perceived itself disadvantaged; b) presenting the decisions of the constitutional court to the joint sessions of both houses of the national parliament; c) the decisions of the parliament shall next be forward to the legislative council of the nation's self-government; d) if the latter rejects the decision of the national parliament, it shall by two-third majority vote suggest either other compromise solutions, short of secession, or shall decide to secede; e) if the nation's legislative council decides in favor of secession by a two-thirds majority, the demand for secession will materialize three years after the demand for secession is supported by a majority in a referendum held by people of the concerned nation (ethnic group) *(ibid.)*. The second contentious issue was Article 40, sub-article 3 that provides for land ownership. The 'minority's' alternative article was even bolder:

> Every Ethiopian citizen, including rural and urban land, has the right to ownership of private property. This right shall include right to acquire, to use, to dispose of such property by sale or bequest or transfer otherwise. (Draft Constitution adopted by the CoR, April 1994: 19)

Spelt out in the current constitution, the 'majority's' views represent the hallmarks of the ideological precepts of the TPLF/EPRDF. These political values which the latter had nurtured, and on which 'it staked its political fortunes', and the ideological values which it had spelt out in its programs both before and after 1991, have now boldly been stipulated in the mega-public policy, the national constitution that guides policymaking as well as state-society relationships. In the *Tehadesso* (Resuscitation)[38] sessions in which the EPRDF's weaknesses and strengths were appraised, its success in having its program integrated into a national constitution has been hailed as one of 'the proudest of all the achievements over the last ten years' (EPRDF, undated). Distributed to its leadership before it was to be adopted at the second congress held in Awasa from December 20 to 25, 1994, the EPRDF draft program stated:

> 3.1. Peoples' right to self-determination including session should be guaranteed through statutory provisions. (EPRDF, 1993: 13)

It continues:

> 10.1.1. Land should be public property, its sale and exchange as well as land mortgage are to be prohibited (*ibid*: 16)[39]

A question that will logically follow therefore is: why was it that the same arguments that figured prominently (on the controversial articles of 39 and 40) in the Commission, reappeared in the CoR, and in the Constitutional Assembly, in the exact same fashion as they did in Commission? This points to the fact that because the EPRDF dominated the whole constitution-making process, and it culminated in its ratification by the Constitutional Assembly. In fact, even the EPRDF-dominated CoR made no significant changes to the draft constitution, other than the minute reformulations and reshuffling of

---

[38] EPRDF acknowledged that political life at every level in the hierarchy of the ruling party hibernated from 1991 to 2001 for ten years, with the organization plunging into decadence as well as stagnation and its leadership and cadres engaged in widespread corruption and misappropriation of government funds (EPRDF, 2003a). The *Tehadesso* campaign was, therefore, professed to have carried out to reverse the scenario that contravened the philosophy and values of revolutionary democracy. The wave of dismissal measures that targeted both the key leadership and rank-and-file cadres of the EPRDF following *Tehadesso*, nevertheless, enhanced the ascendancy of a selected elite group of leaders in the policymaking process. The civil service and the executive structure were overhauled to reflect the unambiguous dominance of party and executive leadership in policymaking.

[39] EPRDF's draft program was issued nearly half a year both before its Second Congress adopted it, even much earlier before the Constitutional Assembly ratified it.

articles; it rather fine-tuned and extended it, but did not reinvent it. Most of EPRDF's 'organizational operation', as it came to be known during the infamous *Dergue* era, was effectively applied to the Constitutional Commission, rather than in the CoR. Nor would one contest the little effort required in this context in the Constitutional Assembly[40]. When the latter was convened in October 1994, EPRDF members constituted an overwhelming majority. Hence, EPRDF and its allies won 96.8% (539) of the 557 Constitutional Assembly seats, and independent candidates and other parties 3.2% (18) (HPR, August, 1995). Andreas (2001) and Kifle (2001) also noted that the deliberations in the Constitutional Assembly were virtually captured by party disciplines, leaving no room for creative discourse. In other words, the entire process of public policymaking during the transition, including, of course, the making of the Constitution, was dominated by the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) (see Chapter 5).

Adopted on 8 May 1996 and amended on 11 October 1996 by the Constitutional Assembly, the explanatory memorandum of the South African Constitution states:

> This Constitution was drafted in terms of Chapter 5 of the interim Constitution (Act 200 of 1993) and was first adopted by the Constitutional Assembly on 8 May 1996. In terms of a judgment of the Constitutional Court, delivered on 6 September 1996, the text was referred back to the Constitutional Assembly for reconsideration. The text was accordingly amended to comply with the Constitutional Principles contained in Schedule 4 of the interim Constitution. It was signed into law on 10 December 1996.
>
> The objective in this process was to ensure that the final Constitution is legitimate, credible and accepted by all South Africans.
>
> ***To this extent, the process of drafting the Constitution involved many South Africans in the largest public participation programme ever carried out in South Africa. After nearly two years of intensive consultations, political parties represented in the Constitutional Assembly negotiated the formulations contained in this text, which are an integration of ideas from ordinary citizens, civil society and political parties represented in and outside of the Constitutional Assembly.***
>
> ***This Constitution therefore represents the <u>collective wisdom of the South African people and has been arrived at by general agreement</u> (emphasis mine).***

[40] For comparison, see the Draft Constitution presented to the CoR by the Constitutional Commission in April 1994 and the Draft Constitution approved by CoR in May 1994, which was submitted to the Constitutional Assembly for ratification.

While historical contexts may differ, compared with South Africa, the constitution-making exercise in Ethiopia, nevertheless, was far more rigid, with the agenda much more influenced by pre-commitments of the victorious sponsors of the process, namely the EPRDF (Hyden, 2001; Jhala, 2001). By the virtue of the fact that the constitutional process began after the latter's victory over the *Dergue* would mean that not only the victors controlled the parameters within which the process occur, the number of options for non-EPRDF actors were also already foreclosed (Hyden and Venter, 2001; Jhala, 2001). In other words, not only did the overthrow of the *Dergue*'s regime by the EPRDF create a scenario in which the hegemony of the EPRDF was impregnable, but so also did the pre-commitments that its victory institutionalized limit the choices available to the drafters of the constitution.

The foregoing discussions have therefore revealed quite clearly that this would have far worse consequences in terms of the relationship between the executive and the party, on the one hand, and the legislature and non-state actors, on the other, invariably limiting the role and influence of the latter in the policymaking process.

4.3. The role of the legislature and the executive in the legislative process

4.3.1. The legislative process in HPR

The Ethiopian parliament consists of two chambers, the House of Federation (HoF), and the House of Peoples' Representatives (HPR). However, unlike countries practicing a parliamentary form of government, the former has no legislative powers. The members of the HPR are elected for 550 seats in parliament for five years from electoral districts constituted as such, with each district or constituency having a population of 100,000 (FDRE, 1995). For instance, deputies won 546 and 547 seats in the general elections held in 1995 and 2000 respectively. Despite objections by the opposition for unfairly allocating advantages to the parties having uninhibited prior access to state and power resources, deputies to the HPR are elected by the first-past-the-post system (plurality of votes cast) (FRDE, 1995; Dessalegn and Meheret, 2004). Twenty seats are, however, reserved to provide for representation of minority ethnic groups in the HPR. MPs, as is presumably the case around the world, enjoy immunity from prosecution and/or will not be subject to any criminal and civil proceedings while attending to legislative duties or be reprimanded unless caught in *flagrante delicto.* Members of the HPR shall have the liberty to pay their allegiance to the constitution, the wish of the people and their conscience, although most of

the opposition and independent members of HRP questioned whether the ruling party's (EPRDF's) members of HPR abide, *inter alia*, by their conscience[41]. The twice-weekly (Tuesdays and Thursdays) plenary sessions of the HPR start towards the beginning of October and continue to the 9th of July of the following year annually.

The HPR is the highest authority with a wide range of legislative functions (FDRE, 1995: 18). Its powers evolved from the broad federal jurisdictions assigned to it and the executive. Its competences include passing laws on: utilization of land, rivers and lakes crossing national boundaries and connecting two or more national regional states (NRSs); inter-state and foreign trade; air, rail, water transport operating in two or more NRSs, postal and telecommunication services; enforcing the rights enshrined in the constitution, including legislating electoral procedures; enacting labor and commercial codes. The HPR also enacts civil laws, when it so desires and/or requested to do so by the HoF; declares a state of emergency and state of war as and when the executive demands; approves the broad socio-economic and fiscal policies of the country, and passes laws on such issues as local currency, the national bank and foreign exchange; levies taxes and collects duties reserved for the federal government, and approves the central government's (federal) budget; ratifies international agreements concluded by the executive; approves the appointment of judges, ministers, commissioners and other officials seconded by the executive; establishes the institutions of human rights and ombudsman; and questions and/or investigates the Prime Minister and members of the executive (*ibid:* 21-22). In view of the stringent party lines and discipline that EPRDF deputies have in fact been enjoined to observe, the latter has never taken place and is probably unlikely to materialize in the immediate future[42]. The Speaker of the HPR, and in his absence his deputy, presides over the plenary and *ad-hoc* sessions, and on behalf of the House acts as liaison with domestic and international agencies, leads, and administers its affairs and coordinates the various committees (FDRE, 2002).

The catalog of government institutions that have the power of initiating legislation include: the Speaker of the HPR and his deputy, at least twenty members of the HPR, standing and *ad-hoc* committees, and government organizations responsible to the HPR, the Council of Ministers and other government agencies, and the judiciary (*op. cit.*). All draft bills are introduced to the HPR via the Speaker. At least twenty members of the HPR

[41] The author's interview transcripts and notes.
[42] Questionnaire responses from the members of HPR, who are also the members of SEPDU and OPDO, both of which are affiliates of EPRDF, March 2003

can propose a bill a week before the latter tending to it for a first reading, though the independent and opposition MPs consider this as a constraint limiting their participation in the legislative process[43]. Upon receiving a draft bill, the Speaker of the HPR presents the general content and spirit of the bill, and the next stage in the legislative process, namely, first reading starts forthwith. The first reading is a preliminary discussion on the draft legislation by a plenary session before referring the bill to a relevant standing committee, which begins with reading out of draft legislation by the Speaker or the person he delegates. If the bill is too voluminous for reading, however, the secretariat of the House distributes copies to every deputy before the date fixed for the reading, and this is soon followed by a discussion on the general spirit of the draft. Following the first deliberation, either the bill is referred to a relevant committee, or if MPs decide by two-third majority to deliberate in a plenary session, it will rather not be referred to any committee (*ibid.*). For most of the plenary sessions, which this author had been allowed to attend, deliberations on draft bills during the preliminary readings were speeded up, and *ipso facto*, MPs' participation in the discussions, and the decision which relevant committee should the draft bill be referred to have invariably been marginal[44].

Be that as it may, the standing committee that the draft bill is referred to primarily contacts the drafters, which in the majority of cases are the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and the legal affairs departments of line ministries, consults them or even organizes a public gathering to elicit 'public opinions'. Bills can also be referred to two or more standing committees, among others, vagrancy and labor laws, and the proclamation relating to the System of Intervention of the Federal Government in the NRSs are points in this case[45]. The committees' consultations with the public and the drafters are translated into recommendations, though only the Addis Ababan public and relevant government agencies in the capital are conferred with. In any case, this stage of the legislative process is designated as the second reading, the stage where a committee or committees' leadership organizes opinions, and presents to the plenary session of the HPR by way of recommendations, although the recommendations have never contradicted the bill originally proposed. A third reading will follow, if the Speaker sees that a clash of opinions are rampant and the session designated as the second reading, generally, fails to achieve complete deliberation on the bill, albeit there has never been a bill transcending the

[43] Questionnaire responses from the independent and opposition MPs, April 2003
[44] Observation sessions attended, March, April, November and December 2003.
[45] Observation sessions attended in 2003.

latter stage in the legislative process since the HPR has commenced business in 1995[46]. With the committee presenting the amended version, the third reading brings the legislative process in the HPR to a close, although the law cannot become a law till it is signed by the Head of the State (i.e. the President) and published in the official law reporter - *Negarit Gazeta*. Following the decision of the HPR to adopt a law by a simple majority, it is submitted to the President for signature. However, the President's marginal power with respect to the legislative process to use his power of not signing it could prolong the official adoption of the legislation for fifteen days from the day of submission; nevertheless, after that the law takes effect with or without his signature (FDRE, 1995, 2002; Fasil, 1997).

4.3.2. Committees and legislative oversight in HPR

The HPR has the power of legislation, the power to question the Prime Minister and other top officials of government agencies, to examine both the executive's handling of its powers and discharge of its duties, taking measures should these have been misused (FDRE, 1995). However, party discipline and structure combined with a lack of competence among the bulk of the MPs, militated against the exercise of their legislative duties detailed in the constitution and other by laws[47]. In any case, calling the executive to account for its behavior and actions, and investigating its performances, are the responsibility of the HPR. The Chief Executive (the Prime Minister), for instance, annually presents himself twice before the House, in October to map out his plans for the year and in early July for the assessment of his government's performances during the year. Nevertheless, in essentially substantive sense of the word-debate (vivacious debate, as such) - in the HPR takes place, and in some cases acrimonious debate often flares up between him and the opposition, each time the Prime Minister appears before the House to deliver reports[48]. Likewise, the head of each ministry or government agency annually delivers reports outlining action plans for the year, and presents budget appropriations in

[46] The author's observation sessions and talks with minute recorders, interviews with MPs and questionnaire responses from deputies, and the minutes of the HPR.
[47] Ironically, EPRDF, Opposition and Independent MPs share almost the same understanding in this regard, questionnaire responses from members of the HPR, January 2003.
[48] The Minutes of the HPR, October 2001 (2nd year, 2nd Plenary Session), January 2002 (2nd Year, 13th Plenary Session); July 2003 (3rd Year, 1st Special Session); and October 2003 (4th Year, 2nd Plenary Session); and regular and live transmissions of the events in the HPR on Ethiopian Television

some detail, which in most cases are followed by an outline of the accomplishments and problems encountered in the course of the year (FDRE, 2002).

Standing committees are the key clearance points at which decisions are taken at each stage of the legislative process. The HPR had nine such committees for much of the first term. In the wake of the *Tehadesso* (Resuscitation) campaign, nonetheless, they have been reorganized, which also coincided with a major restructuring of the executive government agencies. Charged with legislative duties and oversight over the executive ministries and government institutions, twelve standing committees have since been reorganized. These are:

1. Capacity Building Affairs Standing Committee
2. Trade and Industry Affairs Standing Committee
3. Rural Development Affairs Standing Committee
4. Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Affairs Standing Committee
5. Infrastructure Development Affairs Standing Committee
6. Budget and Finance Affairs Standing Committee
7. Legal and Administrative Affairs Standing Committee
8. Foreign, Defense and Security Affairs Standing Committee
9. Women's Affairs Standing Committee
10. Information and Culture Affairs Standing Committee
11. Social Affairs Standing Committee
12. Pastoralists Affairs Standing Committee.

Each committee consists of 13 MPs, and elects a chairperson, deputy chairperson and a secretary. A proclamation has also empowered committees to subpoena and exercise oversight over more than eighty ministries and government establishments (FDRE, 2002). The Capacity Building Affairs Standing Committee, for example, has been assigned by law to supervise the Ministry of Capacity Building, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology Commission, Civil Service Commission, Management Institute and Civil Service College. Similarly, all others are assigned to exercise supervision responsibilities over relevant executive agencies, the highest such organizations being fourteen government ministries and agencies supervised by the Legal and Administrative Affairs Standing Committee. Not only are they empowered to scrutinize bills referred to them, but

also are entrusted with the follow up of the implementation of national socio-economic policies and strategies, although their mandate to take measures of redress and/or take such 'necessary measures' should discrepancies materialize has always been dubious. In fact, statutory provisions make no specific references as to what measures, if any, that the HPR or the standing committees should take in case of implementation failures and/or if the executive fails to account for its actions.

On the recommendation of the chairman of the party having the majority seats in the HPR (i.e. EPRDF) at the first session of every term, not only do the Speaker and his deputy preside over all the sessions, but they also coordinate the work of the various committees in the HPR (FDRE, 2002). Nevertheless, the election of the Speaker and his deputy as recommended is a foregone conclusion, for the EPRDF has well over 85 percent of the seats. The Speaker and his deputy, both of whom are members of the ruling party, have assumed the HPR's leadership over the last two consecutive terms. Members of EPRDF run all committees and their leadership, except for Pastoralists' Standing Committee, whose members are largely drawn from Somali, Benishangul-Gumuz and Afar NRSs, and which are particularly primed for these regions. Of the 156 MPs assigned to the twelve standing committees, the ruling party MPs controlled 86.5% of the committee membership; leaving the balance (i.e. 13.5% or 21 MPs) for the opposition, independent and friendly parties[49]. Additionally, a committee comprising of the Speaker, Deputy Speaker, chairpersons and secretaries of the standing committees coordinates the supervision exercise. The latter appears to have wielded major leadership responsibilities on matters concerning a review of the action plans of committees, the harmonization of workflow in the HPR, and even deliberating issues that the Speaker wishes discussed which might well include the agenda for the plenary sessions.

As part of the duty to exercise oversight over the executive, each standing committee instructs a head of a pertinent ministry or government agency to deliver an annual report to committee members, although other MPs may well attend such hearings. Overall, the executive has since 1995 delivered 140 reports, 103 and 37 during the first and second terms respectively (see Table 4.3.). Furthermore, between 1995 and 2003, the HPR had 333 Plenary Sessions and approved 377 proclamations, despite the fact that the executive sent a preponderant number of the bills, and none has so far been rejected.[50]

[49] The minutes of the Plenary Session of the HPR
[50] The Minutes of the Plenary and Special Sessions of the HPR, July 1995 to June 2003.

Table 4.3. Plenary sessions in HPR, legislation approved and the executive's reports to the HPR from 1995 to 2003

Year	Number of Plenary Sessions	Number of Laws approved	No. of Reports to HPR by the Executive
	First Term (1995-2000)		
1995/96	46	45	21
1996/97	58	44	33
1997/98	40	38	26
1998/99	35	52	12
1999/00	24	38	11
Total	**203**	**217**	**103**
	Second Term (2000-2003)		
2000/01	32	38	20
2001/02	31	37	7
2002/03	47	85	10
Total	**110**	**160**	**37**

Source: Complied by the author from the minutes and archival sources in the HPR

Table 4.4 portrays the regional and sex compositions as well as the educational levels of the members of the HPR. MPs from Oromia, Amhara, South and Tigray NRSs won 477 (87%) of the 547 seats in the 2000 general election, and apparently most of the MPs are the members of the ruling party. The remaining 70 (13%) MPs have come from 'less developed' NRSs of Afar, Benishangul-Gumuz, Somali, city regional state of Harari as well as Addis Ababa, Dire Dawa. Covering the largest territory as well as population, Oromia NRS's MPs have the highest representation in the HPR, followed by Amhara, South and Tigray NRSs.

Table 4.4. The educational level and sex composition of the HPR for the second term

Region	No. of HRP Members	Percentage	Educational Status: Higher Education	High-School Complete	Primary School Complete	Read & Write	Sex Composition: Male	Female
Oromia	178	32.5	23	93	24	38	165	13
Amhara	138	25.2	39	71	5	23	124	14
SNNP	123	22.5	58	53	7	5	117	6
Tigray	38	6.9	20	7	1	10	34	4
Somali	23	4.2	11	5	1	6	23	0
Afar	8		1	2	4	1	7	1
Benshangul Gumuz	9		1	4	1	3	9	0
Gambela	3	4.4	1	-	2	-	3	0
Hareri	2		2	-	-	-	2	0
Diredawa	2		-	-	2	-	2	0
Addis Ababa	23	4.2	18	5	-	-	19	4
Total	547	100	174	240	47	86	505	42
Percentage			31.8 %	43.9 %	8.6 %	15.7%	92.3%	7.7 %

Source: Complied by the author from the minutes and archival sources in the HPR

Besides, membership in the HPR exhibits severe gender imbalance, which may have probably undermined women's capacity to advance the cause and goals of gender equality as provided in the Federal and Regional constitutions. While the educational attainment of the members in the HPR is adequate by Ethiopian standards, the table nevertheless demonstrates glaring gender disparities in HPR. In fact, Somali, Benshangul-Gumuz, Gambella, Hareri NRSs and Diredawa have virtually no women representatives in the HPR. In brief, within the competence of the federal government's jurisdictions, the House of Peoples' Representatives has the power of legislation as provided for under the 1995 Ethiopian constitution. Not only are the standing committees empowered to supervise the executive, at least nominally, they have also the power of initiating laws. However, contrary to what statutes stipulated, except the few laws that the office of the Speaker initiated, neither the fractious independent nor opposition members of the HPR nor the standing committees have so far proposed legislation. The stark realty of the policymaking process in Ethiopia, therefore, appears to have left little room for independent initiative, nor is there any space for citizens to have a say in the legislative process (see Chapter 5).

4.3.3. The House of Federation (HoF): a non-legislative chamber

Elected for five years, the second chamber of the Ethiopian parliament, the House of Federation (HoF), has come to symbolize ethnic representation and the embodiment of nations, nationalities and people (NNPs). Although critics claim that the phrases have entirely been borrowed from the earlier works of Joseph Stalin, the new constitution defines the NNPs as 'a group of people who have or share a large measure of common culture or similar customs, mutual intelligibility of language, common or related belief of identities, a common psychological make up, and who inhabit an identifiable, predominantly contiguous territory' (FDRE, 1995: 14, Assafa, 2002). Not only does a member represent each ethnic community in the HoF, one additional member for every one million of its population can also represent each ethnic community. As provided under the new constitution, each state legislature, or, State Council elects representatives to the HoF, or may opt to have the people elected their representatives (FDRE, 1995, 2001). Two terms having been served, no popular elections have so far been held to send representatives to the HoF. Hence, NRSs' parliaments appointed 108 and 112 members representing 59 and 66 NNPs, during the first (1995-2000) and second (2000-2005) terms respectively[51].

In much the same way as the members of the HPR, the members of the HoF also enjoy parliamentary immunity from prosecution. Furthermore, while the presence of two-third of the members constitutes a quorum, decisions are rather made by a simple majority vote (FDRE, 1995). Although its term of mandate, as the HPR, is five years, unlike upper houses the world over, it can only sit for two sessions annually.

Statutes empower the HoF, *inter alia*, to interpret the constitution, to organize the Council of Constitutional Inquiry that can assist it in the interpretation of the constitution, to take decisions on the self-determination of NNPs, including secession as provided for under the constitution, to promote the equality of the peoples of Ethiopia, to settle disputes, if and when they arise between two or more NNPs, to determine the division of revenues evolving from central and NRSs tax sources, to determine formula applicable for the apportionment of subsidies that the central government earmarks for NRSs (FDRE, 1995, 2001). Of all the responsibilities entrusted to the HoF, the one that vividly marks the constraints of not being a legislative chamber is that it merely identifies, but does not legislate, civil matters to be enacted by the HPR (*ibid.*). It can also order the central

[51] The Speaker of the HoF's Report delivered at its Plenary Session held in the 2nd term, First Year, Second Plenary Session, June 2001.

government to deploy its military forces to an NRS, if a constitutional crisis occurs. The previous term and the current term, which is due to expire in June 2005, the HoF constituted three committees that by and large reflect its multiple responsibilities, and with each committee comprising eleven members. The committees include: the State Affairs Standing Committee, which deals chiefly with overseeing the rights of NNPs for self-determination up to and including secession; the Revenue Administration Committee helps members determine revenues that arise from joint tax sources and determine the apportionment of central government's subsidies to NRSs; and the Legal Affairs Standing Committee, which examines and calls on the members to attend to civil cases and constitutional oversight (HoF, 1998). To fill the deficit caused by the ethnic criteria on the basis of which members to the HoF are appointed, the constitution provided for the establishment of the Council of Constitutional Inquiry (CCI) to enhance constitutional interpretation. The latter consists of the President and the Vice-President of Supreme Court, ex-officio president and vice-president of the CCI, six legal professionals appointed by the Head of the State, and three members elected by HoF (FDRE, 1995, 2001). Election of the Head of the State (ceremonial President), listening to his annual address, a perceived constitutional disorder in any of the NRSs, and constitutional amendment bring both houses of the Ethiopian parliament for a joint session (*ibid*).

In view of the power of legislation, and compared with countries that have long instituted a parliamentary system of government as Ethiopia has recently had, the HoF is, nevertheless, not an upper chamber in its true sense of the functions that an upper chamber is called upon to perform. Canada and the United Kingdom are the leading model parliamentary democracies on which the framers of the Ethiopian constitution professed to have modeled the Ethiopian parliamentary system of government (Kifle, 2001). To the contrary, the Canadian Senate enjoys the power of legislation in much the same manner as the House of Lords of the UK and the Council of Provinces of the South African Parliament, although the ultimate decisions and much more policymaking powers lies in the lower chambers (the House of Commons in Canada and UK, and the Legislative Assembly in South Africa) than the upper houses. In fact, the House of Lords in the UK is also the highest court. To all intents and purposes, the Ethiopian 'upper house' the House of Federation, is nothing but a house of nations, nationalities and peoples (NNPs), and it simply epitomizes the pre-commitments that the sponsors of the current Ethiopian constitution cherished during their protracted war with the *Dergue.* Put differently, both in spirit and in practice it is an embodiment of ethnic representation, but with the formula

predetermined by the sponsors. The HoF, therefore, unlike its counter-parts in the UK, Canada, South Africa and most other upper chambers around the world, has no power of legislation, albeit with an extraordinary stubborn commitment to the NNPs, as the pronouncements in the constitution by and large stipulate.

Moreover, in the upper chambers of Canada, the UK and South Africa the opposition and the independent MPs have unrestricted access not only to be elected as members, but also have an unreserved right to participate in the debates on policy and legislative matters. On the contrary, while it is difficult to ascertain the exact figures of party affiliation for all the members of the HoF, the appointments of members of the HoF by NRSs' Councils, which are overwhelmingly dominated by the ruling party, with all the seats won by EPRDF affiliates as in Amhara and Tigray NRSs, would attest to the fact that it is much less likely for the opposition and independent elements to make their debut in HoF. Far worse, the house, which decides on vital issues such as the interpretation of the constitution, self-determination up to and including secession, and the sharing of national wealth, is totally inaccessible to civil society and the public at large, nor has there been any channel of communication linking the non-state actors to the HoF, so much so that the former have little or no space for influencing the critical policy decisions of such serious of fundamental importance that affect their lives.

4.3.4. The executive: spearheading the legislative/policymaking/ process

The 1987 PDRE's constitution vested the ceremonial and executive powers in the Head of the State (i.e. the President), although some portion of the executive and administrative powers had also been assigned to the Head of Government (i.e. the Prime Minister) (PDRE, 1987). The current constitution entirely reversed the allocation of powers, assigning the Head of the State (i.e. the President) and the Head of Government (i.e. the Prime Minister) ceremonial and enormous executive powers respectively. Nominated by the HPR, the joint session of the two houses of the Ethiopian parliament elects the President of the FDRE by a two-third majority. Unlike the parliament whose term of mandate expires after five years, the president's term of office is for 6 years, and he can continue in office for another term. The constitutional design for the parliament and the executive's stay in office a year less than the President is to establish a continuity of government and linkage between the preceding and the forthcoming terms (Fasil, 1997). In any case, the latter's duties are invariably nominal. Among others, these include addressing

the joint session of the parliament annually, appointing ambassadors, granting high military titles, and decorating high domestic and foreign dignitaries with medals and prizes, of course, after having been recommended by the Prime Minister (FDRE, 1995). The constitution assigned the President little role in the policymaking process. He signs bills into laws following their approval by the HPR, although laws can still take effect within fifteen days with or without his signature (*ibid.*).

Enormous policymaking power in Ethiopia is vested in the executive. The latter is comprised of the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers (CoM). Although the 'election' of the President and the Prime Minister is often concluded at the party forums behind the parliamentary scenes, the joint session of parliament and the HPR designate the President and the Prime Minister respectively as provided for in the constitution.[52] Hence, elected by the HPR for five years, the Prime Minister is the chief executive officer, the chairman of the CoM, and the commander-in-chief of the armed forces of the country (FDRE, 1995). The current constitution limits the Head of State's term of office to two; ironically, it is silent on the Head of Government's term of stay in office, though the latter possesses such a huge responsibility and enormous powers that are susceptible as to be misused. The Prime Minister can have the HPR approve his nominees for the ministerial positions who, together with him, constitute the second leg of the executive (*ibid.*). He presides over the entire implementation process of laws and socio-economic and foreign policies of the country.

Consisting of the Prime Minister, his deputy, heads of the ministries and other government officials whom the PM wishes to be members, the second aspect of the executive constitutes the Council of Ministers (CoM) (FDRE, 1995, PMO, 2003). Its competences revolve around the initiation, formulation and supervision of the implementation of socio-economic and foreign policies (*ibid.*). In fact, despite being subject to approval by the HPR, the CoM has control over the power of the purse, essentially because the latter remains in the limelight for much of the formulation, arrangement and the execution of the budget. The CoM holds regular sessions once in a week, and conducts emergency sessions when situations requiring such meetings arise. Besides, performance evaluation sessions are scheduled quarterly, or four times annually. Half of the members the Council of Ministers constitute a quorum, and decisions are made by a simple majority vote (*ibid*: 22).

[52] Interview held with a senior member of EPRDF affiliate organization- South Ethiopia Peoples' Democratic Movement (SEPDM), Awasa, April 2004.

The three critical elements which attest to the executive's prime role in the policy and/or legislative process are that it: formulates and issues new policies or modifies old ones; sends draft proclamations to be approved by the HPR; and issues regulations and publishes them in the official legal reporter - the *Negarit Gazeta* (FDRE, 1995, 2001; PMO, 2003).

One should not fail to stress that, in the Ethiopian context; the machinery of the legislative process starts rolling from the premises of the executive and is concluded with the seal of approval in the parliament building. To begin with, each ministry is empowered to initiate and/or formulate laws and policies (*ibid.)*. Every ministry can, however, initiate and formulate laws and policies in line with procedures and modalities spelt out by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO, 2003). Accordingly, each minister requests the Cabinet Affairs Minister in the PMO for the specific legislation and/or policy that his ministry tends to propose, and have the former incorporated into the legislative program which often comes at the beginning of the Ethiopian calendar year in September. The Legal Advisory Group, based in the PMO, sets up the programs and prioritizes them in light of the urgency and importance that they are accorded, and mostly priorities are set based on the information ascertained from executive government agencies (*ibid.*). If the former is satisfied about their urgency and seriousness, the Legal Affairs Department of the ministry can propose a new law or modification of an old one, drafts and sends it to Cabinet Affairs Minister/Legal Advisory Group. The Cabinet Affairs Minister presents it to the next CoM plenary session, if it is satisfied with the formalities and technical trustworthiness of the legislation (*ibid*: 30-31). Following a first reading of the legislation under consideration, the CoM may well refer it to one of the relevant standing committees. At all stages of the clearance points that the draft legislation passes through, each (i.e. the ministry initiating the law, the Legal Affairs Advisory Group, the relevant standing committee that the law is referred to, and the CoM) should make sure that the bill does not conflict with the constitution, other laws and the international laws that the country has ratified (*ibid.*). The plenary session of the CoM decides whether a draft bill should be sent to HPR.

The structure of the CoM includes:

1. A General Assembly/Plenary Session;
2. Standing and Ad-hoc Committees;
3. Cabinet Affairs Minister and Departments organized under it (PMO, 2003: 6).

Although the new operating guideline that has recently been issued by PMO did not mention the standing committees that the CoM has established, a previous guideline specified three such committees as follows:

1. The Economic Affairs Standing Committee that includes ministers heading the economic sectors;

2. The Social and Administrative Affairs Standing Committee that involves ministers heading social and administrative affairs; and

3. The Legal Affairs Standing Committee is a composite of several ministers chaired by the Minister of Justice (PMO, September 1995).

Before the 2001 restructuring measure that fundamentally reorganized ministries and other government agencies, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) had three major divisions directly answerable to the PM. Not only did the divisions serve as the linchpins of the entire socio-economic policymaking process, but also they bypassed the powers of the ministers and the CoM, in much the same manner as Haileselassie's private cabinet overshadowed the powers of the cabinet of the then Prime Minister, Aklilu Habtewold, – in the early 1960s. Hence, the PMO supervised the relationship between central government and NRSs through its Regional Affairs Division, and controlled the work of huge ministries functioning in the economic and social sectors through its Economic and Social Affairs Divisions till 2001[53]. By and large, the PMO remains the most authoritative and influential organ of the executive to date.

Currently, supported by advisors of high professional caliber in economics, social and legal affairs, the PMO is the most powerful institution in the executive structure (PMO, 2003). The institution has three major divisions, each led by a minister directly accountable to the PM. These are Ministers in charge of PMO, Cabinet Affairs and Economic Affairs. The functions of the first include leading, coordinating and controlling the administrative affairs of the PMO; advising the PM on factors relating to strategic and administrative issues, including proposals about whether new government establishments should be constituted, old ones reorganized and/or merged with other establishments, or become

[53] Interview held with Head of the Administration Division of Prime Minister's Office, January 2003

separate establishments. His responsibilities also include advising the PM about the magnitude of the structural and manpower requirements of a reorganized government institution, if any (*ibid.*). The Economic Affairs Minister, on the other hand, advises the PM on a range of macro-economic and monetary policies, and evaluates their implementation. Accountable to the PM, the Cabinet Affairs Minister leads the entire policy and legislation-making process ranging from arranging and making available logistical support to the CoM to maintaining and safeguarding the confidentiality of the cabinet decisions, from documentation and record keeping to maintaining the quality of the outgoing and incoming documents, and to dispatching draft bills to the HPR for approval. The competences of the Cabinet Minister largely revolve around the issue of making logistical support available to the CoM and mapping out action programs for legislative and policy decisions (PMO, September 2003: 10-15). Excluding the closest advisors to the PM, till September 2003 the PMO had well over 250 employees. For much of the legislative and policy-making process, however, the Prime Minister not only presides over the plenary sessions of the CoM, but also closely scrutinizes the agenda items. In other words, the Cabinet Minister heading the operational and logistical support in PMO should ensure that the PM approves the agenda items well before a plenary cabinet session commences (*ibid*: 13).

Table 4.5. The new nucleus of executive leadership and answerable executive ministries and government agencies

Ministries	Answerable Executive Agencies
The Prime Minister's Office	
Capacity Building*	Ministry of Education Science and Technology Commission Civil Service Commission Management Institute Civil Service College Justice and Legal Order Institute
Trade and Industry*	Investment Commission Quality and Standards Authority Coffee and Tea Authority Government Owned Development Enterprises Supervising Authority Basic Metallurgic and Engineering Authority Ethiopian Foreign Trade Promotion Agency Livestock Marketing Authority
Rural Development*	Ministry of Agriculture Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission Social Rehabilitation and Development Fund Plant Genetic Industry Agency Agricultural Research Organization Bio Diversity Protection and Research Institute Rural Energy Development and Promotion Center
Development Infrastructure*	Ethiopian Road Authority Civil Aviation Authority Road Fund Office National Fuel Depots Administration Ethiopian Postal Service Ethiopian Telecommunications Agency Ethiopian Telecommunications Corporation Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation Agency for the Administration of Rental Houses
Finance and Economic Development*	Central Statistical Authority Mapping Authority Population and Housing Census Commission Office for the Sale of Government Houses
Federal Affairs*	Police Commission Prisons Administration Urban Planning Institute Addis Ababa City Administration Dire Dawa City Administration
Revenues	Inland Revenues Authority Customs Authority National Lottery Administration
Information	Broadcasting Agency Mass Media Training Institute
Sports, Youth and Culture	Authority for Research & Conservation Heritage National Archives and Library Agency Ethiopian Conference Agency Ethiopian National Theatre
Defense	
Mining	Ethiopian Geological Survey
Labor and Social Affairs	
Justice	
Water Resources	
Foreign Affairs	
Health	Drug Administration and Control Authority

Source: FDRE, 2001;
***Major Ministries and the 'new nucleus of executive leadership'**

Recent times have witnessed a massive restructuring of line ministries and other government agencies, which have also been replicated by NRSs. While the restructuring measure might have shifted huge oversight responsibilities from PMO to major ministries (sarcastically described as 'the ministers of ministers'), it has nevertheless appeared to expand, institutionalize and bolster the power of the executive. Six such ministries designated to lead and control a wide range of government agencies include Capacity Building, Trade and Industry, Rural Development, Development Infrastructure, Finance and Economic Development and Federal Affairs (see Table 4.5.). Not only are the heads of the major ministries the confidantes loyal to the PM, who is also the chairperson of the ruling party, in the wake of the '*Tehadesso*' (Resuscitation) they also form a new nucleus of top executive and party leadership together with the PM. Furthermore, statutory and constitutional provisions allocate massive powers to the Prime Minister and the new nucleus of the executive leadership (FDRE, 1995, 2002). Hence, by default or design, the executive, essentially the Prime Minister, Prime Minister's Office and the Council of Ministers, have over-arching roles in public policymaking in Ethiopia.

4.4. Actors in the legislative process: the core NRSs under purview

For much of its plenary sessions from July 1991 through April 1992, the CoR had in fact been preoccupied with the setting up of an entirely new local government structure to fit into the pre-commitments of the core constituent of the EPRDF, the TPLF (CoR, July 1991-August 1994). Party and government officials sought a legal fine-tuning for their pre-commitments work, which culminated in Proclamation Number 7/1992. The latter provided for the formation of fourteen regional administrations including the capital Addis Ababa, although the constitution abridged the states from fourteen to nine (cf. TGE, 1992, FDRE, 1995).

The nine NRSs, as provided in the 1995 constitution, include Tigray, Afar, Amhara, Oromia, Somali, Benishangul-Gumuz, Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples, Gambela and Harari (see Map 3). Having provided for a federal republic, not only does the new constitution delineate government structures and/or relationships between central government and NRSs, but also appears to have demarcated power relationships among the three streams of government, whether of the central government or of NRSs' levels (FDRE, 1995). Recently, high government officials have nevertheless acknowledged that, in practice, there has not been any such separation of powers over the previous ten years

(EPRDF, undated, 2003a, 2003b). This prompted a wave of revisions of the NRSs' constitutions towards the end of 2001 and early 2002. In any case, not only are NRSs' parliaments the highest organs of government and sources of authority, but also a wide range of powers are invested in them to allow them pass legislation that falls within their jurisdictions (FDRE, 1995: 18, *Zikre Hig*, 2001, 35, *Megelta Oromia*, 2000, 22). Unlike the national parliament, each NRS has a unicameral legislative chamber, although the SNNP NRS has since 2001 established a council of nationalities to reflect the extent of the ethnic diversities in the region. Comprised of 62 representatives from 56 different ethnic communities, the latter is the exact replica of the national House of Federation (HoF). The SNNP NRS has 54 representatives in the HoF, the highest number of such representation from an NRS (HoF, April 2004).

Elected for five years, NRSs parliaments hold sessions twice annually, *ipso facto* making their legislative oversight role all the more difficult. The regional constitutions, both the old and revised ones, replicated the federal constitution. In fact, a thorough look at the constitutions of both the Amharic and English versions of the core NRSs gives one the impression that there are minute differences, except that each differs in the adoption of the flag, emblem, language and capital city (see *Megelta Oromia*, July 2000, *Zikre Hig*, November 2001, SNNPRS' Revised Constitution, November 2001, *Negarit Gazeta Tigray,* November 2001).

The NRSs' constitutions, however, detail the legislature-executive roles vis-à-vis the legislative processes, despite these having been broadly enshrined in the national constitution (FDRE, 1995: 19-20). While the legislative chambers have the power of making laws in matters that fall under NRSs jurisdictions, the highest powers of the executive are vested in the NRSs heads and council of the governments, the regional equivalents of prime minister and council of ministers. In much the same way as the federal structure, over the past two and half years each NRS has fashioned an elite corps of executive leadership in ways that subsume most of the executive government agencies under the bureaus for capacity building, rural development, infrastructure development, industry and trade, and mass participation and mobilization. The latter is particularly known for the mobilization and organization of the so-called 'civil societies', such as youths, farmers and women[54]. Having revised their constitutions towards the end of 2001, the four NRSs parliaments established separate secretariats and/or offices under the

[54] Interview held with Deputy Heads of the Amhara and SNNP NRSs' Mass Organizations and Mobilization Bureaus, January and April 2004 respectively.

leadership of the speakers and deputy speakers, which otherwise had been administered by the chief executive of the NRSs. A far more significant departure in terms of the prospects for the separation of powers, not only has each parliament formed from 3 to 5 standing committees, but the speakers and their deputies also hold permanent tenure in the parliamentary secretariats[55].

Despite the difference in nomenclature, NRSs' constitutions vested executive powers in the administrative or executive councils consisting of the president, his deputy and the heads of bureaus (*ibid,* SNNPRS, 2001: 113). In much the same fashion as the national legislative and policymaking process, the executive and party leadership dominate the legislative process in the NRSs. Apart from the laws proposed by the speakers that mainly deal with matters of procedure in the parliaments and secretariats, legislative proposals have originated from bureaus and executive government agencies[56]. Virtually, no single piece of legislation has so far originated from private initiative in the entire core NRSs, nor has there been any such expectation[57]. The parliaments of the four core NRSs have since 1995 approved 302 proclamations, but most of these are replicas of legislation passed by the HPR (see Table 4.6.). Inhabited by well over 86.5% (58 million) of the Ethiopian population, the core NRSs are the strongholds of the ruling party affiliates, OPDO, ANDM, SEPDM and TPLF operating in Oromia, Amhara, SNNP, and Tigray National Regional States. The independent and opposition candidates contested all except less than 25 seats of in the 1329 seats of the four core NRSs parliaments. In fact, ANDM and TPLF contested all of the 294 and 152 seats in Amhara and Tigray NRSs respectively. It is therefore accurate to say that EPRDF has as much predominance in the NRSs' policy and legislative process as in the national process.

[55] Interview held with the Speaker of the Council/ Parliament of Amhara National Regional State and Legal Advisor to the President of Amhara NRS, Bahirdar, January 2004.
[56] Interview with the Public Relations Officer of Tigray and Head of the Secretariat of the '*Caffe*' Oromia February and May 2004 respectively. *Caffe* is the Ormogna language version of the regional parliament in Oromia NRS.
[57] The author's interview notes.

Table 4.6. The number of population, districts, *Kebeles*, and total seats of the core NRSs parliaments, and date of adoption of the revised constitutions in the core NRSs

NRS	Population*	No. of Zones	No. of Districts (*Woredas*)	No. of Neighborhood/ *Kebele* Administrations	Total Seats	No. of Proclamations Approved	Dates of Adoption of the New NRSs Constitutions
Oromia	25,088,000	14	197	6663	537	73	October 27, 2001
Amhara	18,143,000	11	113	3234	294	85	November 5, 2001
SNNPRS	14,085,000	13	104	3725	346	75	November 12, 2001
Tigray	4,113,000	6	45	672	152	69	November 16, 2001
Total	61,429,000	44	459	14294	1329	302	

Source: Compiled by the author from the secretariats of regional parliaments
*** Population and Housing Census Commission, 2004.**

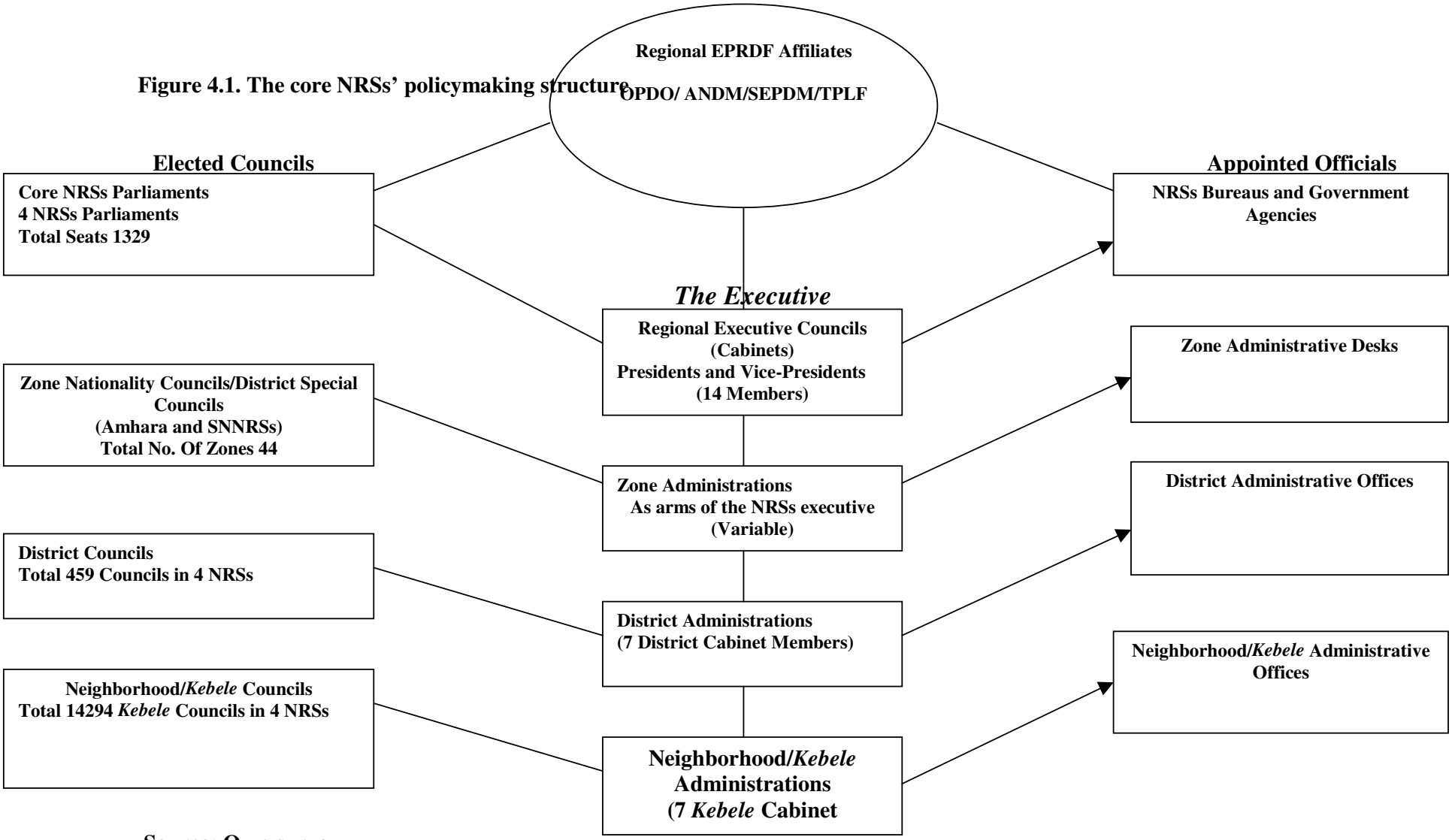
It is interesting to note that NRSs' parliaments allow non-members to observe their plenary sessions, despite participants having little influence and role in the deliberations. Additionally, the Amhara NRS, at least nominally, assures the public to participate in the legislative process by way of diffusing the initiation of legislation, although there has so far been no proposal from the public (*Zikre-Hig*, March 2002). In any case, most of the decisions, including those draft bills sent by the executive, are invariably adopted unanimously, except again the Amhara NRS parliament rejected the executive's draft legislation to provide for the establishment of Regional Revenue Authority by majority vote at its Seventh Regular Session in June 2003 (the Minutes of the 7th Plenary Session of the Amhara NRS Council, June 1993).

Figure 4.1 depicts a schematic representation of the policymaking process and structure of the core national regional sates (NRSs), where party and key government institutions increasingly become the linchpins of the policymaking process. Whereas there is an imperceptible hierarchical relationship between the legislative councils, the executive structures extend from the regional capitals to neighborhoods/*Kebele* and further down the line to governmental groups (*mengestawi buden*). Apparently, the legislative councils at each tier in the hierarchy have a closer relationship to the executive team than they have to each other. Hence, both in terms of statutory privileges and structure, the executive is much more advantageously situated than the legislature to put through policies and laws. In the language of one of the NRSs' revised constitutions:

> The highest executive power in the Oromia Regional State is vested in the President and the Regional Administrative Council. The Regional Administrative Council comprises the President, the

Vice President, Bureau heads and others as determined by law. The President is the chairman of the Regional Administrative Council. (*Magalta* Oromia, 2000: 26-27)

Figure 4.1. The core NRSs' policymaking structure



Source: Own survey

The NRSs' cabinets include the President, the Vice-President and Heads of 14 Bureaus[58]. Like in the PMO, a team of experts and professional civil servants support the secretariat of each executive. Heads of Bureaus and government agencies and their deputies in the entire core NRSs are political appointees. Assigned to oversee government institutions, the civil service in the Amhara NRS, for instance, had 1252 political officials, all whom were members of the ruling party affiliate, ANDM (Amhara Civil Service Commission, January 2004).

Be that as it may, the NRSs' governments involve legislative councils, and administrative and judicial organs at each tier in the hierarchy. Three nationality zones in Amhara, and thirteen zones and six special districts in SNNP NRSs have currently elected legislatures, but all of the zones in Oromia and Tigray and seven zones in the Amhara NRSs are simply the executive arms of the regional government answerable to the chief of the NRS executive (see Table 4.6. and Figure 4. 1). It is worth noting, however, that while the NRS cabinets appoint the team of administrators assigned to the zone offices in Oromia and Amhara NRSs, zone administrators in Tigray are rather drawn from and appointed by the NRS legislature, though in all cases they are answerable to the executive (*Magalta Oromia*, July 2000, *Negarit Gazeta Tigray*, March 2002; *Zikre-Hig*, November 2001, *Debub Negarit Gazeta*, November 2001).

Likewise, the district legislatures are elected for a period of five years from the *Kebeles* that each district administers. Having been organized below the NRS legislature, not only is the district lawmaking body the highest organ of the local government in the district, but also it elects the speakers and deputy speakers from among the elected representatives (*ibid.*). The district executive arm consists of the principal district administrator and persons heading a few sector ministries. The lowest tier in the policymaking structure in Ethiopia, the *Kebele,* organizes local government units, with the legislative, executive and judicial arms patterned accordingly. Oromia and Tigray NRSs have till recently 197 and 6 districts and 6663 and 45 *Kebeles,* the highest and lowest figures in the core NRSs (Table 4.6). The sectors that constitute the cabinets at the district and *Kebele* levels include the principal administrator, deputy administrator, heads of

[58] Although nomenclature is different, concepts essentially convey the same meanings. In the Amhara NRS the term Head of Government is used for President and in the SNNP NRS Chief Executive Officer is used.

capacity building, rural development, administration and security, mass mobilization and participation, information, and youth, sports and culture[59].

Moreover, much like the national policymaking process, the executive and the ruling party's absolute control over the legislature have appeared to have complicated policymaking in the NRSs. Not the least, not only does the executive team in each NRS form part of the core leadership in the ruling party affiliates in each region, but there is also the constitutional requirement that the leadership of the legislatures (speakers and deputy speakers) at each level in the hierarchy should be the members of the dominant party, which imposes limits on the checks and balances and separation of powers between the executive and the legislature. In summary, the NRSs' constitutions have been revised primarily considering the fact that the revision would rectify the anomaly prompted by the absence of the checks and balances that the old constitutions failed to redress. The worst scenario in this situation, however, is that this tends to embolden the ruling party to increase the powers of the executive and the party in policymaking.

4.5. Policies: a review of rural-centered development and education policies

4.5.1. ADLI, at the apex of all socio-economic policies

After having it incorporated into the constitution, EPRDF appeared to be poised for settling the issue of land in favor of state ownership[60]. However, it is such an issue of paramount importance that the controversy surrounding it continues to simmer. One of the contentious issues, as indicated, the land issue became the subject of heated debate both in the Constitution Commission and the CoR. While the 'minority' favored retaining the private ownership of land, the pro-EPRDF 'majority' emerged at age by promoting the state ownership of land. Article 40; sub-article 4, of the current Constitution states:

---

[59] Interviews held with Amhara and Tigray NRSs Public Relation Officers, September 2003 and February 2004 respectively.

[60] The ruling party and government claim that restoring private ownership of land can induce Ethiopian farmers to sell their land, resulting in large-scale landlessness and the large-scale influx of the peasantry to the towns. The government argues that not only is there little employment in towns, but also that the large-scale peasant migration can lead to a social crisis in the towns (EPRDF, March 2000). On the other hand, the clamor for the private ownership of land has been driven by a belief that this will augment economic development via a market economy and ownership security, and secure rights means that landholders have the right to dispose of their land in any way they please (Dessalegn, 1999; Terefe, 2001). While some acknowledge the decline in agricultural productivity and produce because of government intervention, land fragmentation, rising population pressure and lack of support to the peasantry in terms of modern agricultural implements, others appear not to condone the restoration the private ownership of land (Assafa, 2002). The latter reasoned that the middle ground rather lies in pushing back the government from meddling in land distribution and the affairs of the peasantry, but not in privatizing land (*op. cit.*).

> The right to ownership of rural and urban land, as well as of all natural resources, is exclusively vested in the state and in the peoples of Ethiopia. Land is a common property of the Nations, Nationalities and Peoples of Ethiopia shall not be subject to sale or other means of exchange. (1995, 14)

Afterwards, almost all socio-economic policies in Ethiopia are tied up with rural and agriculture-related policies and strategies. Since the mid-1990s agricultural development-led industrialization (ADLI) has become the centerpiece of EPRDF commitment to the peasantry, and thus is the cornerstone of government policies and strategies (EPRDF, 1995). Not only are the government institutions which have direct links with the economic sector such as agriculture, industry and infrastructure organized in ways to meet rural and agricultural development goals, the health and education sectors are similarly patterned primarily to enhance rural development and growth. Few would probably contest that this again is another ideological carry-over of the TPLF's commitments to the peasantry (Young, 1997; Befekadu and Berhanu, 2000). In other words, like the NNP and land issues, ADLI is in the lexicon of EPRDF's pre-commitments, which has dominated all the socio-economic policy spaces.

Having bitterly denounced its predecessors (Hailesellassie's and Mengistu's regimes) for failing to pursue sound socio-economic policies and strategies, and holding them responsible for the woeful economic performance that the country has registered over the past number of years, the EPRDF government sought the solution to the Ethiopia's past economic ills in what it called 'correct development policies, strategies and instruments' (EPRDF, 1995, 2000). Party and government leaders see ADLI as the most fundamental palatable route to come out of the age-old economic problems that have long plagued the country (EPRDF, 2003a, 2003b, FDRE, 2001). A government white paper notes (FDRE, November 2001) that agricultural development–led industrialization (ADLI) aims at structural transformation of the economy whereby a rapid growth of the agricultural sector is envisaged to raise the share of industry and social services in terms of output and employment. Since it accounts for about 50% of the GDP, more than 90% of the export earnings and engages over 85% of the population, ERPDF believes, as did the *Dergue*, that agriculture is the backbone of the economy (cf. PMAC, 1974, EPRDF, 1995).

Hence, the EPRDF-led government claims that if and only if socio-economic policies that are rural and agriculture centered, in infrastructure, industry, education and health

sectors are advanced, that accelerated economic development occurs, which at the same time can the benefits of all this accrue to the vast masses of people in Ethiopia. A government policy document recently stated:

> Ethiopia's existing realities reveal that there is an acute shortage of capital. In contrast, the country is endowed with a large number of working age population and potentially cultivable land ... It is believed that faster growth and hence economic development could be realized if the country adopts a strategy that helps raise the employability of our labor resources and enhance productivity of land resources aimed at capital accumulation. Pursuing a development strategy that does not make extensive use of manpower and intensive use of land resources forfeits the considerable contribution that these resources could make to growth and capital accumulation. ADLI is seen as a long-term strategy to achieve faster growth and economic development by making use of technologies that are labor using, but land augmenting, such as fertilizer and improved seeds and other cultural practices. (FDRE, 2002: 37)

EPRDF further argues that a development policy that does not primarily aim at benefiting the rural and urban poor will only risk creating havoc and instability in the country (EPRDF, 2001). In other words, not only is targeting the people as the prime beneficiaries of development a fundamental economic issue, but it is also an issue of critical importance for peace, stability and national security. A government document further notes:

> Unless we ensure rapid development in the rural areas where the majority is poor and where the worst type of poverty plagues rural people, there can not be any meaningful measure to alleviate poverty. Rural and agriculture-centered strategy ensures rapid development in these poverty-stricken rural areas and makes the poor people prime beneficiaries of the development process. …Although not as far worse as the rural Ethiopia, urban areas also beset with poverty. ADLI is also the only remedy to relieve the urban poor of poverty. (FDRE, 2001: 15)

Furthermore, as agriculture experiences a rapid growth, different agricultural products will be produced in large amounts, eventually leading to price reductions from which the urban poor benefit (*ibid.*). The government further claims that agricultural development can create an environment conducive to the development of trade and industry. It accelerates trade and industrial development by creating opportunities for the supply of raw materials, capital accumulation, a work force as well as a broad domestic market. In other words, propelled by large-scale as well as accelerated growth in

agriculture, and following the accelerated growth in trade and industry, the urban population will benefit much from the job opportunities emanating from rapid development (*ibid.*).

The prevailing claim, therefore, not only places a high premium on agriculture and rural-centered development strategies to lead the entire economy, but industry and the service sectors can also register accelerated growth through backward and forward linkages. With agriculture at the hub of every facet of economic development, it sets up a train of inter-linkages and a chain of growth and development reactions. Put differently, the strategy underpinning the adoption of a rural-centered strategy appeared to be driven by a conviction that accelerated and sustainable growth in agriculture leads to increased quantity and quality of agro-industrial raw materials supplied (forward production linkage) to the industrial and export sector, thereby increasing the demand for agricultural products as well as the standard of living of the farmers (FDRE, 2002). Furthermore, this encourages farmers to use improved technologies, which will in turn 'increase the demand for agricultural inputs such as fertilizer, improved seeds and farm implements (back ward production linkages)' (op cit). In the final analysis, industrialization and services can be promoted and gradually assume their inevitable lead in the economy if agriculture and rural-centered development strategies are firmly established in the long run (FDRE, 2001, 2002). The ruling party and government, as leading protagonists, vowed to support only the domestic and foreign investors that will pay attention to the recipe and invest their resources to contribute primarily to agricultural development (*ibid.)*.

In the industrial sector, EPRDF claims that Ethiopia's industrial development should be patterned after those of countries that have registered the fastest economic growth such as Korea, Taiwan and Thailand (South East Asian Countries). Similarly, export-oriented industries also lead those industries that are primarily import substitutes or are not export oriented in the industrial development sector. The EPRDF government is skeptical about the Ethiopian private sector's endurance to withstand the cutthroat competition that characterizes the world market and be able to emerge as winners. The government's intervention has thus been justified on the grounds that bringing about propitious conditions for the few domestic investors who dare to be involved in the daunting task of joining the competition in the world market, which government claims can only be done with its support and leadership (EPRDF, undated, FDRE, 2001, 2002). Hence, not only is export industry the leader of the led, but it is also another key economic locus of government intervention.

While the arguments and justifications proposed from the ruling party and government circles favoring ADLI appear appealing, many academics, Ethiopian economists and the opposition questioned the viability of the policy on various grounds. To begin with, although the government exerted enormous effort as well as made considerable investments, agriculture has failed to show any significantly improved performance over the last ten years (Befekadu and Berhanu, 2000; Befekadu *et al*., 2002). Befekadu and Berhanu write:

> … despite massive efforts by the government to improve the sector's performance, agricultural production under EPRDF did not show a significant improvement over the *Dergue* years. In fact, … the sector's performance was worse under EPRDF compared with the last ten years average of the *Dergue*. Even when we discount the first year, the average rate of growth of agriculture under EPRDF was 2.27 % per annum; not a significant improvement over the 2 % achieved under the *Dergue*. In any case, the rate of growth is much lower than the growth of population and its fluctuation with the rain is unabated. (2000, 156)

Berhanu and Said further argue:

> The case for ADLI was made repeatedly on the basis of the standard arguments such as the need to increase agricultural incomes to generate demand for industrialization, to generate more domestic saving for investment, the possibility of getting more out of investment in agriculture owing to the high capital output ratio, the requirements of addressing poverty directly where it is most prevalent and the like. These arguments were complemented by promises of rapid economic growth that would be engendered by this strategy. These seemed reasonable arguments at the time and the public (including professional economists) were willing to wait to see the promised results. Accordingly, not much criticism was raised against the strategy at least in the first few years of its implementation".

They continued:

> Things start to change, however, as time passes and the promised results failed to materialize. Broadly, the criticisms against ADLI rest on both empirical and theoretical considerations. The empirical argument is that ADLI failed to deliver on its promise of rapid growth of output and productivity in agriculture and in the rest of the economy. While in the first few years following its implementation (particularly in 1995/96 and 96/97) output increased substantially mainly because of good cooperation from nature and significant expansion of cultivated area, it was soon followed by significant declines as a result of drought confirming the structural dependence of Ethiopian agriculture on the vagaries of nature. The absence of significant increases in productivity during this period further emboldened critiques of the strategy to question the core claims of the strategy that

> assigns agriculture to play the lead role in the country's transformation to an industrial economy. Furthermore, the strategy's sole dependence on the expansion of green revolution inputs to increase output and productivity without addressing institutional issues, its assumption of price neutrality of supply side increases, its total neglect of demand side constraints that emanate from a very low level of urbanization of the country, its lack of consideration of the effect of population pressure on the available cultivable land and the decrease in average holding that it engendered, were all presented by critics to show why the strategy will not work in Ethiopia. (2004, 1-2)

The dismal economic performance in agriculture over the past twelve years has been attributed to smallholder farming and/or diminishing farmlands and absence of land security[61]. The latter is largely precipitated by the state ownership of land in Ethiopia. Serious doubts concerning ADLI persist primarily because Ethiopian agriculture employs technology/tools and implements which are too archaic and backward for a competitive modern economy. Secondly, the land policy that the government currently pursues appears to be problematic in ways that renders ownership security impossible. Thirdly, worse still, agricultural products are faired less in the world markets. Over the last ten years, for instance, despite the enormous efforts that have been exerted to improve the quantity and quality of coffee, Ethiopian exporters cannot get good prices for coffee mainly because multinationals dominate 70% of the market. In fact, the state ownership of land together with the rural-centered development policies is rather designed to clutch the Ethiopian peasants, who currently constitute the 85% of the population (Mesfin, 2004: 11; Befekadu and Berhanu, 2000: 199). In this regard, a resident manager of an international NGO reasons:

> Primarily ADLI focuses on smallholder agriculture. To share my grass root experiences, land in Sidama and Wolayita[62] have over the years been distributed and redistributed quite a number of times to such an extent that farmers possess land almost equal to the size of a bed. How would one expect a farmer possessing such a minuscule plot of land to be productive? How would you imagine thus land of such miniscule size becomes productive, and at the same time lead the economy as well as the industry? Lurking behind all the sugar coating exercises surrounding state ownership of land and accompanying policy strategies (such as ADLI) merely serve none other than bolstering the EPRDF's leverage in the socio-economic policy process. EPRDF has always made use of the land policy for its political gains. EPRDF often brings land issue to spotlight when elections approach. So it uses the land issue to alert the farmers to keep it in power. Or EPRDF uses land as a vehicle for

[61] Interview held with Ethiopian academics and a resident manager of one of the international NGOs in Ethiopia, April and June 2004 respectively.
[62] Densely populated regions in SNNP NRS

> perpetuating power. For the peasantry, anybody who has the power to provide land and related resources is the king. The deal between EPRDF and the farmer is therefore 'I (EPRDF) provide you land and you (peasant) elect and keep me in power'. Thus, EPRDF has a very fundamental tool with which it can buy votes from the farmers. In contrast, if land were private property, the peasantry could have become independent, and could decide whom to elect and whom not to elect. Now, election is harnessed with the power that gives or withholds land. In Oromia NRS, the ruling party awards land certification when elections are approaching. The farmers elect the government that owns the land, for land is under state ownership, or face the consequences. In my view, the ruling party leaders have firm grips on land and agriculture related issues, not because they like the peasantry or agriculture, but because they knew that they would not have come to power without the support of the peasantry, nor do they stay in power without its support. Land has such a paramount political significance. (interview response, June 2004)

The overriding obsession of the party and government with land and concomitant policies seems to be precipitated primarily by a political and ideological rationale. The above discussion underscores the fact that, despite declining performance in agriculture, the government continues to adhere to agriculture-centered policies. This attests to the fact that ideological commitments have superseded the economic rationale and/or the routes for material achievements in development are substituted for socio-economic policies that primarily buttress the policy elites' leverage in policymaking (see Chapter 5).

4.5.2. Education policy: an archetype of imbalance in policymaking

4.5.2.1.The predicaments in the making of the education policy

The disenchantment with past education policies and the poor performances of the education system seemed to have precipitated the drawing up of a new education and training policy. Not only were schools in the pre-1991 education system badly managed, poorly equipped and overcrowded, but the curriculum also fell far short of addressing the socio-economic realties of the country (Seyoum, 1996; TGE 1994). The poor performance of the education system in the past was partly attributed to the deteriorating working conditions and badly organized teaching career system, although teachers' social and material statuses have not shown any significant change ten years after the new education

policy was put into effect (cf. TGE, 1994: 4, Mulugeta,[63] 2002: 104). The organization and administration of the education system were not adequately decentralized in ways to render the utilization of local initiative and reassure the realization of the potential of local administrative endeavor. The flaws embedded in the past education system has been described as follows:

> …It is known that our country's education is entangled with complex problems of relevance, quality, accessibility and equity. The objectives of education do not take cognizance of the society's needs and do not adequately indicate future direction. The absence of interrelated contents and mode of presentation that can develop student's knowledge, cognitive abilities and behavioral change by level, to adequately enrich problem-solving ability and attitude, are some of the major problems of educational system. …Inadequate facilities, insufficient training of teachers, overcrowded classes, shortage of books and other teaching materials, all indicate the low quality of education. (TGE, 1994: 2-3)

It was to redress the discontent with past policies and programs that the new education and training policy was launched in April 1994, although two years earlier CoR authorized the execution of a significant part of the policy's component, namely the teaching of subjects in ethnic languages[64]. The policy pledged to pay more attention to the acquisition of scientific knowledge and the inculcation of problem-solving capacities as well as a culture that would engender the realization of the full potential of the educated youth (TGE, 1994). It also touched on the importance of establishing a relationship between education, training, research and development, on the one hand, and the institution of a decentralized administrative system to enhance a coordinated and efficient management in the education system, on the other *(ibid.*). The school structure has been transformed from 6-2-4 (six years of primary, two years of junior secondary and four years of high schooling) into 8-4 (eight years of primary and four years of secondary schooling). The primary and secondary schooling phases have each been divided into two cycles, with the primary education offering basic education in the first cycle (1-4), and which is followed by general education in the second cycle (5-8). Despite almost unanimous objections from the teaching establishment, a self-contained system of a teaching-learning process in which a single teacher undertaking the teaching of all the subjects in the first

[63] The author was involved in a research to assess the implementation problems of the new education policy and its concomitant program (ESDP) in 1999. The survey covered two major NRSs (Oromia and SNNP NRSs) and Addis Ababa.

[64] The transition period legislature, the Council of Representatives (CoR), decided that primary schools begin teaching subjects in nationality languages at its 16th Regular Session in September 1992.

cycle (1-4) of primary education has been instituted. Likewise, secondary education introduces two cycles of a general secondary education in the first cycle (9-10) accompanied by preparatory senior secondary schooling in the second cycle (11-12) (*ibid.*). In the past, the maximum duration of undergraduate degree programs at tertiary level was 4 to 6 years, but the new policy abridged that from 3 to 5 years.

The new policy stipulates several commendable objectives and lays down broad strategies to reach the goals. Revitalizing the education system with a measure of emphasis on democracy, respect of human rights, culture and the environment are, among others, lofty objectives boldly stated in the new policy (TGE, 1994). Bringing education into line with the development requirements of the economy, broadening education at the primary level and eventually universalizing it, imparting relevance into the curricula, introducing a more equitable system of education, improving the quality as well as the professional competence of teachers and ensuring the linkages between education, research and development again are distinctly valuable objectives (*ibid.*). Substantial measures to execute the policy, however, were not taken till the policy was disaggregated into a program of action under the name of the Education Sector Development Program (ESDP I) in 1997/98. Under the auspices of the Prime Minister's Office, financed largely by the government and supported by donors, the program (ESDP I) covered a period of five years from 1997/98 to 2001/2002. Not only did it target expanding chiefly primary education and a more equitable distribution of educational services, but also its proposed strategies such as the decentralization of educational administration, curriculum reform and school buildings professed to rectify the severe problems that had been lingering for many years in the past (FDRE, 1998).

It is interesting to note that there are resemblances in the conventions in which three regimes organized teams to draft education policies. The manner in which a group of expatriate and Ethiopian educators who drafted the Education Sector Review were assembled in 1972 is as much the same as the one organized to draft the Evaluative Research of the General Education System in Ethiopia (ERGESE) in 1983 and the Education and Training Policy in 1993, although unfortunately the former was preempted by an outbreak of a revolution in the country and did not see the that light its successors did. Put differently, the Imperial Government's Education Sector Review's obituary had been written long before its benefactor's demise in 1974 (Seyoum, 1996). It should also be noted that in less than a generation the Ethiopian public saw three different educational policies under three different governments.

In 1993 the TGE's Prime Minister Office commissioned a group of persons largely drawn from the Ministry of Education and Addis Ababa University to draft a new education policy (Seyoum, 1996:42, Martin *et al*., 2000:62). Led and appointed by the PMO, a core task force that was comprised of eleven members, including the leaders of six sub-task forces, was set up to spearhead the formulation of the education policy. The six sub-task forces in which the 42-member team was re-organized to include: curriculum and research; teacher training, training methods, including professional development and working conditions of teachers; educational measurement and evaluation; language in education; educational organization, management and finance; educational materials and support inputs (Martin *et al*., 2000). An additional seven committees, mainly meant to support the work of the 42 Ethiopian scholars, were also constituted from 22 different line ministries and other government organizations.

To begin with, in the wake of 1991 the pre-commitment of the benefactors of Ethiopian public policies set both the precedents and the context in which all policies, including education policy, were to be formulated. First, the supreme law of the land during the transition, namely the Charter, underscored the self-determination of ethnic communities and up to and including secession, and, second, a year earlier the Council of Representatives, which acted as the legislature during the transition period, approved a policy proposed by EPRDF and OLF that half a dozen ethnic languages should be the medium of instruction in the primary schools and in the respective ethnic communities. It was against this backdrop that the new education policy was introduced in 1994. Hence, a quick look at the Education and Training policy document reveals without any doubt the tone of the usual commitments of the EPRDF, for there is a tone of NNP and rural and agricultural focus in most of the policies that the EPRDF has so far promoted. Therefore, while the 1991 TGE charter formed the context of the new education policy, the EPRDF's policy centered on agriculture and rural development preceded the ESDP, and each was fine-tuned to fit into the frame of references cherished and espoused by the benefactors. In this regard, government white papers issued in 1994 and 1996 on New Education and Training Policy and ESDP respectively stated:

> Cognizant of the pedagogical advantage of the child in learning in mother tongue and *the rights of nationalities to promote the use of their languages*, primary education will be given in nationality language.

> Making the necessary preparation, *nations and nationalities can either learn in their own language* or can choose from among those selected on the basis of national and countrywide distribution. (TGE, 1994: 23; emphasis added)

> Any sound educational policy should be conceived in the context of the country's overall development objectives and strategies. The relevance of education to *the emphasis now being placed on agriculture and rural development* should be clearly established and the new strategy of economic development should, in turn, contribute towards the transformation of the educational system. Students at various stages of education must acquire skills and training that contribute in various ways to the new economic objectives. *With the current policy of channeling more resources for the development of rural areas*, the system of education, as has been perceived in the past, is distinctly irrelevant. …*Emphasis has thus been placed on increased enrolment in primary education which provides the essential link with the country's major resource base-agriculture and the masses of the peasantry*. The focus on the primary education is in order to link up the spread of education with *the objectives of economic growth which is based on the strategy of prioritizing agriculture* in which the country possesses definite comparative advantages at present. The essential requirement, therefore, is *a fundamental restructuring of the present system of education so as to create conditions for a rapid growth of basic education and to make it more relevant to the needs of the vast majority of Ethiopia's population and the requirements of an agrarian economy*. (FDRE, 1996: 42-43; emphasis added)

Despite the fact that a series of literacy campaigns had been conducted in local vernacular languages since the latter half of 1970s, the policy accorded bold recognition of local or ethnic languages as medium of instruction at the primary level. The most important element that distinguishes the new policy from its predecessors is that not only is there a close association between the recognition of the political rights of ethnic communities and the subsequent right of such entities to use their languages as a medium of instruction for the entire period of primary education (Tekeste, 1993), but also there is a remarkable emphasis on reorienting education towards rural and agriculture development strategies, as the preceding section indicated. Hence, the new policy elites' commitments to the NNPs and the peasantry figure much more prominently in education policy and programs than in other socio-economic policies.

In much the same way as its predecessors, nevertheless, the formulation as well as the implementation of both the new education policy and the ESDP benefited little from and were nurtured with few inputs from the relevant stakeholders and the general public (Seyoum, 1996; Mulugeta, 1999). The officials in the Ministry of Education (MOE) attempted to create consensus on the policy pronouncements with some of the teachers, the

public in Addis Ababa and in limited number of NRSs, which distinctly set the benefactors apart from their predecessors, albeit government authorities aggressively campaigned for their constituencies to give their backing to the policy wherever such meetings were held[65]. Not only were alternative ideas that aimed at changing or modifying the fundamental stipulations of the policy pronouncements discouraged, but audiences for the policy dialogue were also reluctantly arranged as public relations exercise, nor was the selection of participants representative[66].

The few educators who participated in the workshops on the policy contended that the discussions on the draft education policy were by and large of an informative nature and permitted no opportunity for alternative views to be deliberated, nor were they meant to[67]. Even the ideas, views and comments that appeared fruitful and constructive were never aggregated in the policy. Representation of grassroots interests and the genuine constituencies of the policy left a lot to be desired, aside from the failure to incorporate their commentary[68]. By default or by design, the haphazard manner in which the workshops and discussions on the policy had been organized would give one the impression that the sessions were probably meant to recruit support for the policy, but not to capitalize on the creative initiatives of the educators**.**

Although he resigned from the team in the early phase of the process, a senior Ethiopian academic and educator who was appointed as a member of the team which drafted the policy characterized the making of the new Education and Training Policy as a top-down exercise, apparently with little input from the public and relevant stakeholders (Seyoum, 1996). Civil society organizations such as teachers' associations contributed very little mainly because of the split within the association at about the same time as the campaign in favor of the new policy was launched (*ibid.*). It is interesting to note that the TGE President told the transitional legislature, the CoR, in April 1993 that a group of scholars had been grappling with the study and drafting of a new education policy, and pledged that the draft policy document was to be presented for approval as soon as the drafting work was over. The policy document, however, was officially published exactly a year later

[65] Interview and questionnaire responses from school principals and teachers in Bahirdar, Mekele, Awasa, Dessie, Nazreth and Addis Ababa, September to May 2004

[66] Interview responses from school principals in Amaha and Tigray NRSs in December 2003 and February 2004 respectively

[67] Interviews held with two educational administrators at Mekele Special Zone Education Office in Tigray NRS, February 2004.

[68] Interview held with two principals of secondary schools who participated in the workshops on education policy dialogues in South Wollo, Amhara NRS, December 2003.

without the seal of approval of the parliamentarians; and neither was it discussed in any of its regular nor special sessions (66th Plenary Session of the CoR, April 1993).

The making of the Education Sector Development Program (ESDP) was by far an even more exclusive than the policy. ESDP was perceived and formulated by the highest government actors and a cluster of funding or multi-donor agencies (Martin *et al*., 2000: 9). The lower-level echelons in the education structure, and the ultimate beneficiaries of the program such as teachers, students and parents were distinctly excluded from the formulations as well as the laying down the modalities of its implementation (Mulugeta, 2002: 104). The Prime Minister's Office (PMO), the Ministry of Education (MOE), representatives of some selected government institutions, representatives of NRSs' educational bureaus, the World Bank and the team members of international technical assistance missions and donors were among the major actors actively involved in the making of the program and mapped out action plans for its implementation (JRM, March 2003; MRM, March 2001; Martin *et al.,* 2000). It is interesting to note the bizarre circumstances that transpired due in part to the conflict that arose between the World Bank representatives and the multi-donor mission in Ethiopia, who competed for the control of the preparation of the ESDP and the mechanisms of its execution (*ibid.*). Not only did the World Bank have the sanction of the PMO and MOE to commission several of its employees as active members of the various technical teams, but also it had greater role both in influencing the shape of the ESDP and exercising leadership in its implementation (Martin *et al*., 2000: 9). This became the major source of resentment among the multi-donor missions, who would have clearly liked to be included as partners in influencing and shaping ESDP (*ibid.*).

While the PMO and the MOE claimed the political and organizational leadership, the World Bank together with the multi-donor mission (though accorded less profile compared to WB), played leading roles in the technical aspects of the ESDP. In fact, not only were the PMO and the MOE responsible for the coordination and organization of ESDP preparation, but the PMO also became the linchpin in setting the regional budget ceiling after consultation with the regional presidents and communicating the ceilings of the educational budget to the NRSs (*ibid.*). Any lower-level participation below the NRSs, if it existed at all, entailed communicating information, soliciting support and endorsement, but not for consultation and contributing to the ESDP planning process (Martin *et al*., 2000; Mulugeta, 2002; JRV, 2003). Involving the lower levels and the relevant public in shaping the ESDP aside, information about the ESDP had not even been disseminated below the

top NRSs' party and government officials, nor were there any significant attempts to rectify this (*ibid.*). In fact, in its own admission, an unpublished government policy document described ESDP as an outcome of a consultative process between central government, NRS governments and the donor community (FDRE, 2002: 2). Seyoum argued:

> It is strongly held that for educational reform to be effective, it is not only necessary but also essential that the target population, which is to be affected directly or indirectly by the reform, be involved in the reform process. This is in line with the idea of participatory decision-making, an essential element in a democratic process. It advocates that such involvement helps develop in the people the sense that they are not mere pawns to be manipulated as objects of reform, but are rather subjects of reform who have a voice and stake in the reform process. This is no doubt contrary to the age-old thinking that government alone knows what is good for people. As such, it rejects the paternalistic and parochial attitude of those in power towards the people. Thus, it subscribes to a bottom-up approach of reform that strongly advocates participation at grass roots level, a principle that ideas for reform could emanate from the bottom to the top. This in complete contrast to the top-down approach that maintains a principle that what is good for the people should be handed down from those in power to the ones below. (1996:XVI: 12-13)

In brief, not only did policy elites and their donor partners conceptualize and formulate both the education policy and its concomitant program, but they also determined the *modus operandi* of the implementation process. Neither the educators, on whom the bulk of the implementation of the policy depended, nor did the public play any significant role in generating the policy. Ironically, implementing agencies, below the top NRSs bosses, who would have had a vital role in the execution both of the policy and the program, were peripheral actors for much of the conceptualization and formulation processes of the ESDP. The adverse consequences of this imbalance, as we shall soon see, were manifested in the shape of a chain of negative downward effects that affected the outcome of education policy implementation.

4.5.2.2.The downward effects of the flaws in the education policy formulation

The effective implementation of the education policy and the ESDP would have depended as much on winning the constituency of the education policy (teachers, students and parents), as on a carefully planned preparation and program to implement it. The Ethiopian

government had neither the policy constituency, which could back up sustainable implementation, nor the preparation to do it[69]. Hence, nearly ten years after the ESDP has been in full swing, Ethiopian policymakers have over the last five years been locked in a situation that is much like fighting fire to cope with the pressures of a lack of facilities, a dire absence of qualified and untrained teachers in the upper-primary and secondary schools, overcrowded classrooms at all levels of the education system, unprepared as well as over-worked teachers[70] with the challenges that the policy set to institutions and actors. Rampant frustration and loss of interest in teaching and/or a widespread declining morale as well as motivation to teach, the influx of teachers to well-paying private schools, and even many of them increasingly leaving their teaching jobs in favor of other job opportunities have not augured well for an education system that is probably courting another crisis[71]. In SNNP NRS, in one zone alone 44% of teachers in the primary schools did not for some reason report for teaching duties at the beginning of the school year in 2000/01 (MRV, 2003: 12). Educators (teachers) in three major NRSs have attributed the poor performance of the education system over the past ten years chiefly to the low importance accorded to the role of teachers and ordinary citizens in the making of the education policy[72]. In other words, the little effort exerted on widely and broadly involving the major stakes in the formulation process of the education policy as well as the program set in motion a chain reaction that severely jeopardized the process of implementation. Urging educators, usually under duress, to execute the pronouncements of the policy and the program, when they have not participated in its formulation, backfired in several ways.

The primary school gross enrolment both in absolute figures and proportionally, as the table below shows, has by far exceeded the target set for 2001/02. A considerable number of educators saw this as the most remarkable achievements of the education system over the last ten years[73]. Thus the total primary school enrolment expanded from 3.7 million in 1996/97, to 8.1 million in 2001/02, well over a million pupils higher than the target established for the program period. Furthermore, the qualification of teachers for

---

[69] Questionnaire responses from the Pro-Government Ethiopian Teachers Association's leadership, May 2003

[70] A survey carried out among 300 teachers in 1999 showed that well over 83% of them would not hesitate to abandon their teaching duties in favor of other job opportunities, pointing to the dissatisfaction with the education system coming to head (Mulugeta, 2002: 103).

[71] These are concerns universally shared by most educators (teachers) and academics who were interviewed by the author.

[72] The responses of teachers to research questionnaires from Tigray, Amhara and SNNP NRS and Addis Ababa, September 2003 to April 2004

[73] Questionnaire responses from primary school teachers in Addis Ababa, Dessie, Combolcha, and Bahirdar, September 2003 to January 2004

lower primary school has also improved a little over the target; although most of the educators with whom this author had talks felt that the figures seldom represented the true situation of the primary schools[74]. In 2001/02 primary schools constituted the largest portion of the system with 12,087 schools servicing an all-time high student population of a little over 8.1 million. The education system, however, performed far worse than expected when measured in terms of the most critical ingredients, which implies that the system is faulty. The primary and secondary schools, as the table depicts, are plagued with overcrowded classrooms, under-qualified teachers for both primary and secondary schools, and inadequate textbooks. The dire shortages of resources in the face of highly expanding enrolment and declining teachers' qualifications have even accentuated the problem of program implementation. While the share of education in the national budget has been set at 19%, it plunged to 10.5% in the year 2001/2002, nearly 5% below the base year of 1996/97.

[74] The author's interview transcriptions

Table 4.7. Targets, achievements and performance indicators of the ESDP (1996/97-2001/02).

Indicators	Target for 2001/02	Base Year (1996/97)	Achievement in 2001/02
Total number of Primary Schools	12, 597	9670	12, 087
Total Primary School Enrollment (1-8)	7, 000, 000	3, 788, 000	8, 144, 000
Gross Primary Enrollment Ratio (1-8)	50 %	34. 7 %	61.6 %
Percentage of Qualified Teachers (1-4)	95.0 %	85.0 %	95.6 %
Percentage of Qualified Teachers (5-8)	54.4 %	20.9 %	25.5 %
Percentage of Qualified Teachers (9-12)	61.6 %	40.4 %	33. 7 %
Pupil/Section Ratio at Primary (1-8)	50	57	73
Student/Section Ratio at Secondary (9-12)	50	65	80
Dropout Rate at Grade 1	14.2 %	29.0 %	27.5 %
Repetition Rates (4-8)	6.4 %	10.5 %	10.4 %
Textbook/Pupil Ratio*	1:1	1:5	1:1.5
Girls Share of Primary School Enrollment	45.0 %	38.0 %	41.4 %
Education's Share of the National Budget	19.0 %	14.6 %	10.5 %

Source: Compiled by the author from Annual Educational Statistics (MOE, 2002/2003); Mid-Term Review Missions (2001); Joint Review Missions (2003).

*** There is a huge variation between NRSs varying from 1:1 to 1:5**

The national consolidated figures do not adequately indicate, probably even distort, the true picture and/or the worst performances of the education system in the NRSs. Multi-donor review missions (2003) reported that, while pupil/textbooks ratios in Amhara and SNNP NRSs varied from 1:5 to none, pupil/teacher ratios rather varied from 75:1 to 120:1 in Amhara and from 30:1 to 330:1 in SNNP NRSs. This attests to the fact that the hallmarks of the new education policy, continuous assessment of the pupils performance and a pupil-centered education system, have hardly been achieved, for educators seldom have any opportunity to give individual attention to different students, and interactive and communicative teaching-learning process are also impossible to implement (MRM, 2001; JRM, 2003).

At the primary and secondary levels, the steadily declining morale among the educators (teachers) and a disappointingly low implementation capacity have aggravated the deteriorating quality of the education system. Over the past ten years this has been manifested in terms of inadequate textbooks, overcrowded classrooms, many unqualified teachers and insufficient funding. Although the Career Structure[75], which has been operational since the end of the 90s, has been received positively by many educators, in

[75] Initiated and adopted by the MOE, the Career Structure was intended to provide teachers with monetary rewards commensurate to their teaching performances (MOE, 1999).

principle, as a means of rewarding good teaching performance and professional competence, it has effectively been abandoned in favor of *Gimgema*[76], a mass evaluation system that the ruling party has long adopted to control the behavior of its leadership and cadres. Recent years have, in fact, witnessed that the criterion of teachers' performance becomes not how most effectively they discharge their teaching duties and contribute to the actual teaching-learning process, but rather how far have they been close to the administration, and thus benchmarks such as the latter are increasingly getting precedence over those that have to do with real teaching responsibilities. Put differently, the so-called evaluation (*gigema*), in which teachers have hardly any say and on which they have not been consulted, have replaced the Career Structure. As a result, the policy has contributed only marginally to the promotion of the teaching profession and good teaching-learning environment. In fact, a study carried out in Oromia NRS (Abdi, 2003) has confirmed that not only does the Career Structure fail to contribute to the improvements of teachers' social and economic statuses, but it has also not prevented teachers from leaving teaching for other jobs with better career opportunities, nor have salary increments been commensurate with the standard of living and/or compared with the pay in other government organizations.

It would probably be possible to rectify some of the problems as the implementation progresses, had there been qualified and professionally capable implementers. But as it stands now, the administrators appointed by government to oversee the implementation process merely serve as transmission belts of channeling information and instructions from the higher to the lower levels, or are simply mediums through which instructions flow from the higher to lower levels[77]. Poignantly, the situation in this case is that the very officials whom government has assigned to guide the implementation process do not even have a good knowledge either of the policy or the program (MRS, 2001; JRM, 2003). How would one therefore expect effective policy implementation to take place while the personnel leading the implementation process do not have a sound grasp of the policy and program objectives (*ibid*)? How would one imagine effective implementation to take place when the

[76] *Gimgema*: an institution that derives its origins from Maoism, a traditional means of accountability employed by TPLF leaders while they were in the armed struggle against the *Dergue* (Young, 1997: 203). The TPLF also made regular use of long, and usually well attended, mass meeting evaluations known as *Gimgema* to achieve a high level of agreement on the goals of the revolution and the means to pursue them *(ibid.)*.

[77] Interview held with a secondary school principal in September 2003 in Bahirdar, Amhara NRS.

technical and managerial capacity of program (ESDP) administers at different levels in the educational structures to provide with guidance and support leaves much to be desired[78]?

In fact, educational administration and management have over the past ten years been a dumping ground of unqualified persons, who after having served a considerable number of years in teaching, are assigned to oversee the implementation of the policy. They are often persons who found their positions safe havens rather than a place to discharge their duties responsibly, persons with little knowledge of the policy as well as the program, little competence and experience of educational administration and with little capability of tackling the challenges of implementation[79]. Putting it differently, the leadership at every level in the hierarchy of educational structure is filled with political zealots who possess hardly any capability to lead educational institutions and with little knowledge or the means to rectify the complex problems of education policy implementation. As a result, they have become part of the problem, instead of resolving the many problems of education policy as well as program implementation.

An expatriate review mission (2003) reported an all-round lack of implementation capacity to execute the ESDP. Another multi-donor review mission (Mid Term Review Mission) reported:

> In almost every region, zone and Ministerial departments visited, the lack of adequate capacity was raised as the number one problem hindering implementation of ESDP, and the achievements of the educational quality improvements planned. In schools there are both insufficient numbers of teachers, and amongst those that there are, many do not have the required qualifications. At the *Woreda* (district) there are insufficient supervision visits to schools to support the teachers there. At the Zone there are too few civil works technicians and qualified accountants to manage the school construction activities needed, and account payments made. Those who are employed at this level do not have the necessary tools and transport to support their work. At the region, curriculum development, educational planning, budgeting, and accounting manpower are in short supplies leading to delays in the launching of annual programs. At the federal level, the professional personnel needed to provide technical support to the decentralized units have been decreasing as the program expands and the need for such personnel grows. The ESDP secretariat in the Ministry of Education (MOE) has fewer staff than at the beginning of the program and the engineering panel fewer architects. All procurement specialists have left the PPD (Planning and Programming Department), and the higher education department staff have not been increasing despite the creation of four new universities and a large increase in enrolments. Currently, there are 53

[78] A senior educator and academics in the felid expressing his concern with the implementation capacity of program administrators, June 2004

[79] Interview held with a member of the old Ethiopian Teachers Association, June 2003, Addis Ababa

vacancies in the MOE, almost all of which are at the higher levels… (Mid Term Review Mission, 2001: 8)

Suffice it to say that continuous evaluations have rarely been carried out to keep track of implementation activities. Even if foreign missions have been conducting continual assessments, government and party officials have so far paid little heed to them, despite the reports revealing that the process of education policy implementation is imperiled. It should, however, be solidly stressed that most of the problems that have prevailed in the education system could have been averted had there been astute leadership, careful planning of educational programs and broad consultation with the educators, independent civil society organizations and the public[80]. The empirical evidence makes abundantly clear that the dismal performance of the education system, and the disillusionment with the implementation process, chiefly emanate from the little attention accorded to the consultation process as well as to the participation of the constituencies of the policy (i.e. teachers, students and other relevant stakeholders) at the formulation phase both of the policy and the ESDP. In other words, the absence of genuine ownership of the policy from its ultimate beneficiaries resulted in the poor performance in the education system that has over the past ten years been manifesting itself in terms of poor-quality education, dire shortage of facilities and dissatisfied teachers with little motivation to support the Education and Training Policy and the implementation of the ESDP.

4.6. Conclusion

This chapter assessed and analyzed the policymaking leverage that the groups and institutions have had on public policymaking since 1991. Not only did the policy choices made by the EPRDF dominate the entire transition period, but the Council of Representatives and the Council of Ministers had also been the major institutional mechanisms that EPRDF used to translate its choices into policies and programs. Having been assured of a majority control over the CoR, the EPRDF framed legislation, proposed policies and ensured their feasibility in the light of its pre-commitments. The making of the Ethiopian mega-public policy, among others, was the salient feature of the transition period. The constitution-making process exercise in Ethiopia, as earlier noted, was far more rigid, with the agenda being influenced much more by the pre-commitments of the

[80] The author's interview notes.

victorious sponsors of the process, namely the EPRDF. With hindsight, the overthrow of *Dergue*'s regime by EPRDF not only created a situation in which the hegemony of the EPRDF was established, but so also did the pre-commitments that its victory institutionalized limit the choices of other players located outside of the machinery of party and state structures.

Having been endorsed by a Constitutional Assembly in December 1995, the Ethiopian Constitution established a federal republic (FDRE) comprising of nine NRSs and a federal government (see Map 3). The constitution vests wide-ranging policymaking responsibilities in the central government. It also introduces a parliamentary form of government, with separate executive, legislative and judicial institutions (FDRE, 1995). The Ethiopian legislature has two chambers, namely the House of Peoples' Representatives and the House of Federation. Although the power of making legislation is invested in the HPR, the executive sponsored almost all of the legislation. Neither the independent nor the opposition members of the HPR, or the standing committees proposed any legislation. Likewise, the executive and party functionaries in the NRSs have distinctly dominated the legislative and policymaking process.

In effect, the House of Federation is not an upper house. By default and by design, it is a house of nations, nationalities and peoples (NNPs), for it simply endorses the pre-commitments that the sponsors of the current Ethiopian constitution have espoused and nurtured during their protracted struggle against the *Dergue.* In other words, unlike its counterparts in the UK, Canada, South Africa and most other upper chambers around the world, it does not have the power of legislation. Nor has there been any space for independent initiative to influence deliberations in HoF. Put differently, the house that makes decisions on such vital matters as the interpretation of the Constitution, self-determination up to and including secession, and the apportionment of national revenues has seldom been accessible to civil society and the public at large, nor has there been any channel of communication between it and the non-state actors.

This chapter also evaluated views for and against the government's rural- and agricultural-centered policy, namely ADLI. The government claims that an accelerated economy can only be achieved through a rural- and agriculture-centered development process (FDRE, 2001). In other words, industrialization and services can be promoted and gradually supersede agriculture only if agriculture- and rural-centered development strategies are well-established in the long run (FDRE, 2001, 2002). To this end the government and the party guaranteed support only to those domestic and foreign investors

that invest their resources in and contribute primarily to agricultural development (*ibid.).* While professional economists have hardly contested the government's claim that agriculture is the backbone of the country's economy, they did question the viability of ADLI on the grounds that there has been disappointing performance of the agricultural sector over the previous ten years, leading the economy off track (Befekadu and Berhanu, 1999; Berhanu and Said, 2004). Moreover, smallholder farming, the absence of ownership security and diminishing farmlands have also contributed to the dismal economic performance in agriculture. This, therefore, points to the fact that political and ideological values appear to propel the government and the party's obsession with ADLI, rather than a sound overriding economic rationale (see Chapter 5).

Additionally, the insignificant attention paid to the articulation of the demands of the major constituencies during the formulation of the education policy as well as the attendant program has severely jeopardized its implementation outcomes. Hence, the empirical evidence proves that ten years after ESDP implementation began, the education system is replete with a dire shortage of qualified and trained teachers in the upper-primary and secondary schools, overcrowded classrooms at all levels of the education system, widespread lack of motivation and decreased morale among educators. The influx of teachers to better-paying private schools, and even many of them increasingly leaving teaching jobs in favor of other job opportunities bodes well for an education system, which is probably risking another crisis. At the center of the disappointing performance of the education system, the imperiled process of education policy implementation and/or imbalance, as the empirical evidences clearly attested, is chiefly the failure to garner the support of the major constituencies of the policy during the process both of formulation and implementation of the policy and the ESDP.

Chapter 5. The party, ideology and public participation in policymaking, 1991-2004

5.1. Introduction

The previous chapter discussed in some detail the relationships between the executive and the legislatures at different levels of the policymaking structure, and further assessed the legal and political parameters that have turned the executive into a formidable force in the policymaking process over the years. But the ruling party (EPRDF) 'is the brain of the revolutionary democratic system, the trendsetter, and the fulcrum of all decision-making organs. Policy objectives, strategies and fundamental socio-economic policies that guide and forge state-society relationships originate in the party. It also allocates candidates for elections, appoints, promotes and assigns members who hold key positions in the executive leadership' (EPRDF, undated: 131). The party and the ideological doctrines that it promotes, therefore, provide the guiding principles for all socio-economic decisions and are the driving forces behind public policymaking in Ethiopia, as this chapter sets out in the sections that follow.

Informed by the ruling party's unofficial as well as unpublished documents and other empirical sources, the next two sections unravel the interplay between the ruling party and government structures, and how the ideological doctrine that it promotes steers the organization of the state, the values that guide the course of policymaking process, the content of public policies and the context in which they are made. Particularly, the second section analyzes how the overriding obsession of the new policy elites with revolutionary democracy serves to enable them to lay exclusive claim to the power of policymaking and commits them to a specific set of socio-economic policies that leads to the exclusion of other players.

The third section illuminates how the combined forces of ideological doctrine and party discipline, on the one hand, and statutory provisions, on the other, accorded the ruling party enormous leverage to sway all policy and legislative decisions both at the national and regional levels. The next section sheds light on how the unified forces of clientelism, the ideological preoccupations of policy elites and a constellation of vulnerable and weak CSOs/NGOs militate against the growth of civil society and any pressure that they could exert on policy elites for meaningful changes and reforms in public policies. Put differently, not only do the omnipresent workshops, conferences and public hearings on government policies and practices appear to have functioned more as pro forma exercises

in public relations than as serious efforts to incorporate public demands and preferences into the draft legislation and public policies, but public participation has not been transformed into a force to have a bearing upon policies and practices. Finally, the concluding remarks recapitulate the core issues discussed in the chapter.

5.2. The party: structure and operational principles

In a bid to control larger constituencies beyond Tigary, the core constituency of the EPRDF, TPLF had long sought for a formation of a united front (TPLF, 1983: 6). This dream came true with the establishment of the Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Democratic Front in 1989 (Young, 1997, Vaughan and Tronvoll, 2003). Except for the first plenary congress, EPRDF held four of the five plenary congresses after the fall of the *Dergue,* the last such plenary session being the Fifth Plenary Congress, which took place in August 2003. The structure of the umbrella front is comparable to other Marxist-Leninist fronts (see Figure 5.2). Composed of political cadres, fighters and representatives from mass organizations that are invariably drawn from each member organization, officially the highest body is the Congress. Equal numbers of members from each affiliate are elected for the Congress, Central Committee and Politburo (EPRDF 2003b). The Congress elects a Central Committee, which operates as the highest political organ, between Congresses, as well as an audit commission that monitors whether procedural regularities and scrupulous use of party resources are adhered to (*ibid.*). The number both of Central Committee (Council) and Politburo (Executive Committee) members has been highly expanded over the last three years. At the most recent Congress held in Amhara NRS capital Bahirdar in August 2003, the Central Committee and Politburo grew from 72 and 20 (in 1994) to 180 and 36 respectively[81] (see Table 5.1). Both in terms of political clout and organizational strength, the TPLF has always been considered as the strongest partner within the EPRDF coalition, although its credibility has severely been shaken in the wake of the split within its leadership in mid-2001. Having suffered very little from the factional struggles that rocked the entire EPRDF apparatus, ANDM emerged considerably stronger than any other coalition partners. Yet it ranks as the second strongest group within the coalition, and its political importance and power appear to be steadily rising. For the most part, the senior member organizations of the front emerged as apparently the most powerful parties, both

[81] From the author's field interview notes.

in terms of mass mobilization and access to resources, for both are connected with big commercial parastatals (Paueswang *et al*., 2002; Vaughan and Tronvoll, 2003).

Not only are OPDO and SEPDU less influential and autonomous, but the wave of continuing dismissals of members have also undermined the confidence of the members of both organizations. As a result, the two junior partners remain weak and relatively marginal to the core of the federal power structure. What is more, both appeared to be junior partners of the coalition, despite the fact that party rules stipulate otherwise. In any case, the structures of all of the affiliates have well been established throughout the four NRSs with local units/basic cells instituted in every peasant village, and industrial establishments and government institutions in the towns and as well as cities[82], although the opposition have been emerging stronger in a neck-to-neck competition with the EPRDF affiliate, SEPDU, in the SNNP NRSs. SEPDU had 21 separate ethnic political organizations, with chaos and factionalism characterizing almost all of them. As of September 2003, the smaller ethnic parties were all disbanded, reorganized to form a single political entity and represent EPRDF in the SNNP NRS under the name of South Ethiopian Peoples' Democratic Union (SEPDU).[83]

Despite the fact that the EPRDF's strategy from the transitional period seems to have been to win political control over the four key regions of Oromia, Amhara, Tigray and SNNP NRSs, all the parties ruling the peripheral regions have always remained friends and allies of the EPRDF (Vaughan and Tronvoll, 2003). In the regions of Afar, Somali, Harar, Benishangul-Gumuz and Gamebella, the ruling parties - Afar National Democratic Front (ANDF), Somali People's Democratic Party (SPDP), Harari National League (HNL), Benishangul-Gumuz Peoples Democratic Unity Front (BGPDUF), and Gambella Peoples Democratic Party (GPDP) - have been loyal allies of the EPRDF (*op. cit.*). In fact, several members of the ally parties are appointed to key ministerial and government positions in the executive leadership.

In the immediate aftermath of *Tehadesso* (Resuscitation)[84], the EPRDF leadership issued an internal party constitution that effectively institutionalizes party hierarchy, disciplines the behaviors of member organizations, reinvigorates party ideology and inspires the internal party life. It stipulates a number of points

[82] Interview held with party officials in Awasa, Bahirdar, Mekele and Addis Ababa.
[83] Interview held with a senior member of the SEPDU, April 2004.
[84] See footnote 39.

1. Democratic order and rapid economic development can be built in Ethiopia when the objectives and ideals of revolutionary democracy are translated into practice. Hence, not only should revolutionary democratic organizations (affiliates) stand resolute in the achievement of these objectives, but also should be prepared to struggle loyally as well as firmly for the implementation of the front's objectives and its internal constitution.

2. Since Ethiopia is a multi-national state, justice to NNPs can be done not by a pan-Ethiopian organization that draws its members regardless of ethnic denominations, but by a front that brings NNP organizations under an umbrella front. EPRDF is, therefore, a united front of NNP organizations, but does not admit individuals separately as members.

3. EPRDF is a united front of NNP organizations that adopt revolutionary democracy as their guiding principle.

4. Not only should each member organization ensure internal democratic life, but should also apply democratic centralism and self-criticism, and institute the system of *Gimgema*[85].

5. NNP affiliate organizations cannot pursue political and ideological objectives other than revolutionary democracy, nor should they have any different program other than the EPRDF's program. Member organizations are, therefore, required to execute policy decisions made by the EPRDF central leadership in their respective NRSs.

6. Member organizations have equal rights of participation in the front's leadership and its decisions (EPRDF, 2003b: 3-5).

As we shall soon see, these principles set the basic guidelines as well as the *modus operandi* within which the entire party apparatus, member organizations and individual members operate.

Although the Congress assumes the highest authority in the structure formally and structurally, in reality, however, the Political Bureau/Executive Committee has sweeping powers, exercises control over the central issues such as organizational and propaganda works, agenda setting for EPRDF-wide functions, superintending with complete authority

[85] See footnote 76.

over the implementation of the 'decisions' of the bodies constituted at the center. All EPRDF affiliates are duty bound to observe and implement the decisions of the Politburo (*ibid*, 2003b: 19). EPRDF's decisions are executed through member NNP organizations, and so are duty bound to implement all policy decisions, programs and plans issued by the center. Furthermore, the Politburo (Executive Committee) bears overarching responsibilities on such key central organs of the party as EPRDF Secretariat, Propaganda and Organizational Divisions, Parliamentary structure, the Addis Ababa City Government division, Cadre Training Institute, and International Relations Division, Lower Bodies[86] (EPRDF, 2003b). Party constitution also imposes obligations on all member organizations to observe and execute the decisions of the Politburo (EPRDF, undated).

Since the *Tehadesso* (Resuscitation) campaign in 2001/02, not only have all EPRDF affiliates adopted the EPRDF's central socio-political program, but have also rewritten their internal regulations to replicate the central party constitution. Apart from this, each EPRDF member organization has an identical structure embracing a congress/assembly that meets once in two years, a central committee that sits twice a year, and a politburo that meets four times annually. The latter has sweeping policymaking, organizational and propaganda responsibilities. Furthermore, EPRDF reaches the remotest peasant villages through its regional affiliates. Its hierarchies are therefore stretched beyond regional capitals to encompass areas ranging from government units/organs in the capitals to small cell units in the peasant villages[87] (Figure 5.2). Mostly, EPRDF hierarchies overlap perfectly with government structures so much so that the lines between party and government structures appear indistinguishable, although it claims that corrective actions have been taken in the wake of *Tehadesso*. In Amhara and Oromia NRSs, ANDM and OPDO co-opted district legislatures and local government executive leadership through party functionaries that run district conferences[88]. Similarly, not only are the entire local government administrative personnel at the district and *Kebele* levels members of each regional affiliate, but there is also a newly established government organization, namely Mass Mobilization and Civil Society Organization, which co-opted the leadership of mass organizations such as the youth, women, peasant associations and peasant cooperatives[89].

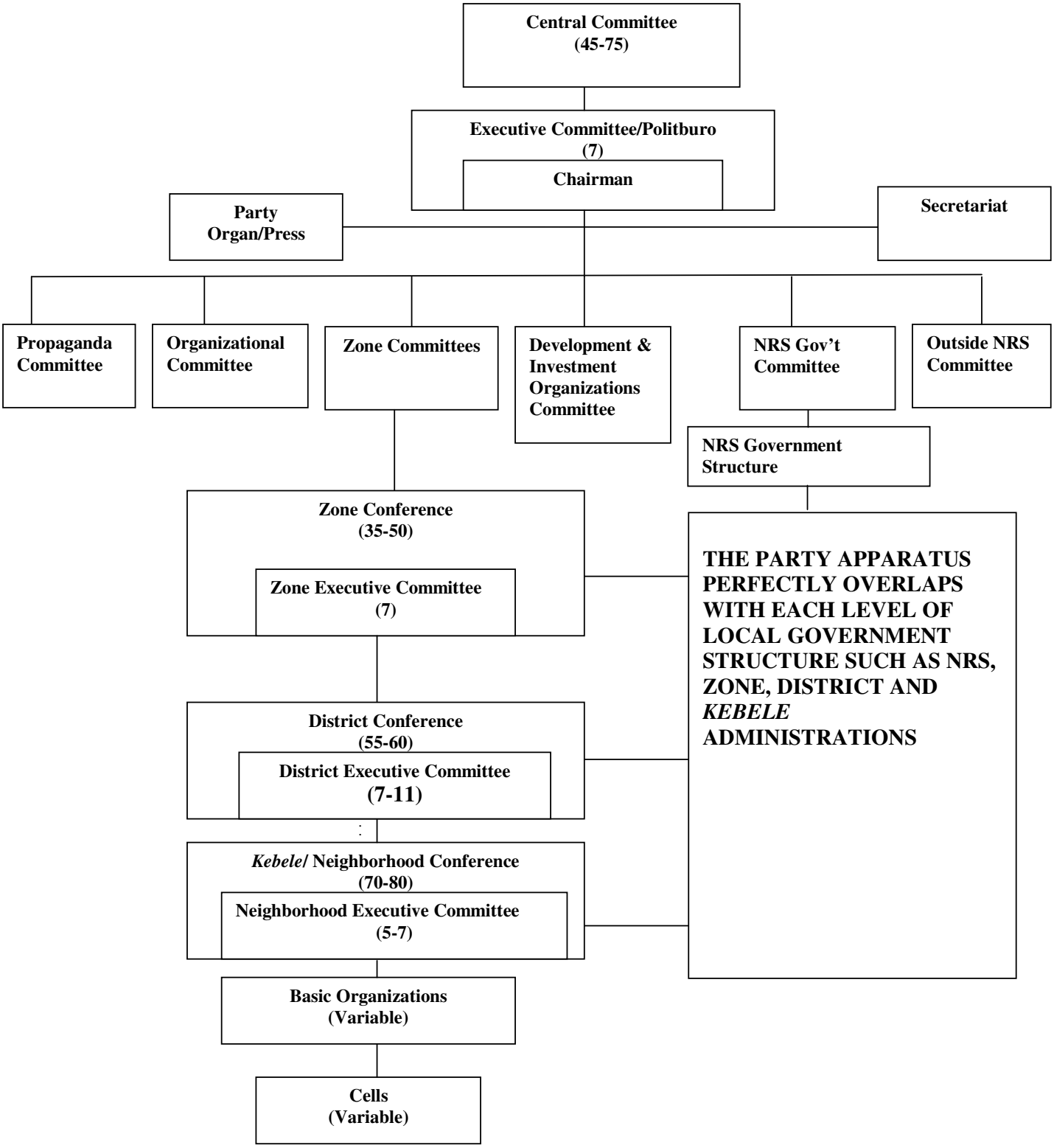
---

[86] The Lower Bodies Division is a key segment of the party that exercises influence as well as leadership on such key organizations as Mega Publishing Company, Ethiopian Civil Service College, Trade Union, Teachers Association and other civil society organizations (EPRDF, 1998).
[87] The author's interview notes.
[88] Interview held with Heads of Organization and Propaganda Divisions of OPDO and ANDM.
[89] Interview held with the senior manager of CRDA.

Over the last thirteen years since 1991, as indicated earlier, the government seems to have established a two-faceted structure of governance at all administrative levels. While it has built up a formal structure of government institutions to keep in line with constitutional provisions, in parallel the regime has built a party structure that retains a degree of control to the extent that it would be difficult to use these government institutions effectively to challenge the power of the ruling party (Pausewang *et al*., 2002; Vaughan and Tronvoll, 2003). Therefore, the key policymaking power structure is 'the combined administration and party system. There is no tradition of an independent bureaucracy, functioning as a tool of administration, with a political layer of elected leaders deciding on the policy issues. It is difficult to separate the party, the state, and the administration[90]'. This has nowhere been saliently featured than in the so-called core NRSs, where well over 85 percent of the Ethiopian people live (see Figure 5.1).

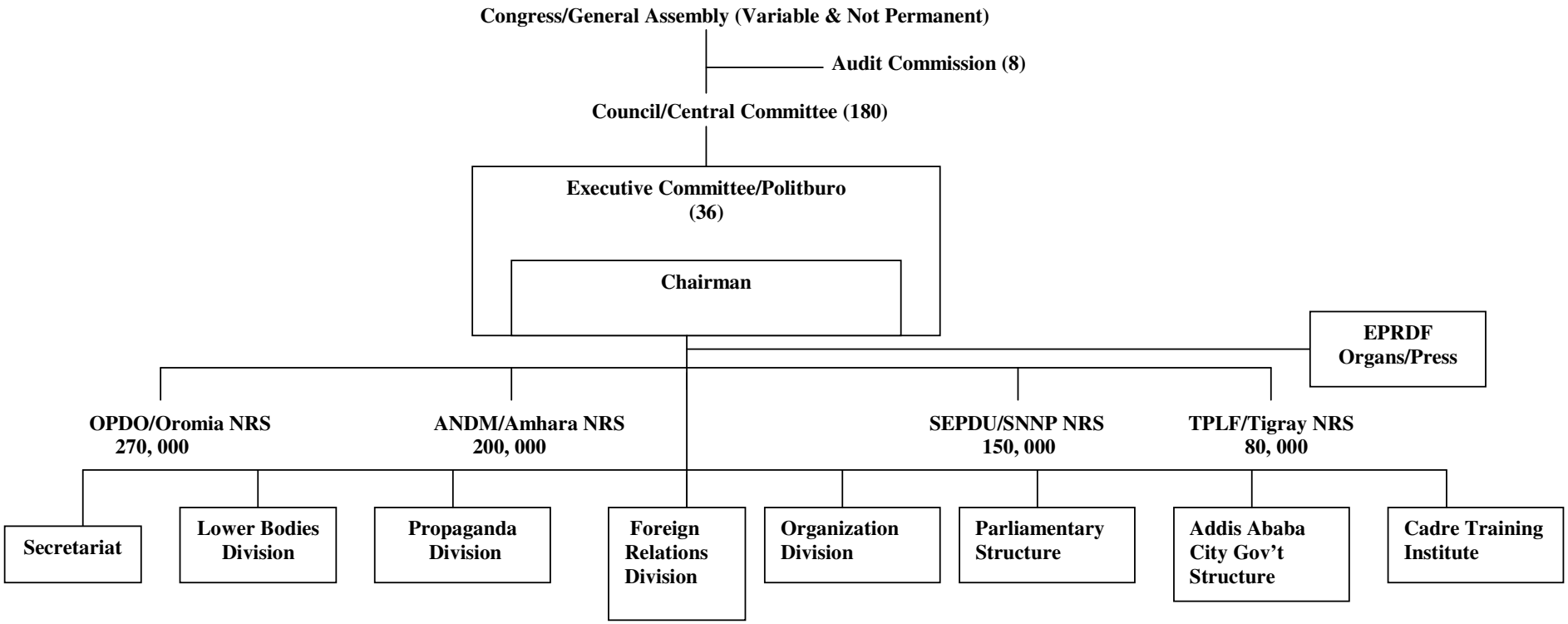
[90] Questionnaire response from Svein Ege, a Norwegian social anthropologist and Senior Researcher, who has been doing research over the last seventeen years on socio-economic policies in Ethiopia, August, 2003.

Figure 5.1. A standard structure of EPRDF member organizations



Source: **Base data: EPRDF's unpublished archival documents and internal party regulations**

Figure 5.2. The Central Structure of Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) in 2004



Source: Base data: EPRDF's unpublished archival documents and internal party regulations

Party and state structures as yet remain indistinguishable; first, membership in the party structure guarantees government positions, and second, the ideological precepts have prompted the pursuit of specific socio-economic policy goals which at the same time establish party principles underpinning the control of policymaking institutions. Markakis (2001: 52), nevertheless, cited historical and political traditions that have been cherished in the past as the major attributes of the continuance of state-party fusion. He noted:

> The model is, once more, the TPLF experience in Tigray during the armed struggle, where a parallel provincial state administration was founded and staffed by the government's members. This model was replicated by the EPRDF affiliates in Amhara, Oromia and Southern regions, and effort is made to do the same in the other regions. Nearly all the officials in the state administration, from the *Kebele* to the federal government are EPRDF members, having joined the party before or soon after election to their post. Government business is discussed and decisions are made in party meetings that precede meetings of state bodies. In view of the party-state merger, it is understandable that Ethiopians have difficulty distinguishing between them.

Down the line, a group of central committee members preside on the socio-economic and political dynamics of the core NRSs. Since government is seen as an instrument in the advancement as well as realization of the party's policy objectives, a group of Central Committee members is appointed by each party affiliate to run party and administrative responsibilities below the NRS structures (see Figure 5.1.). The Central Committee usually consists of the Head and Vice-Head of Council of NRS Government, Heads of Capacity Building Bureau, Rural Development Bureau, Urban and Industrial Development Bureau, Information Bureau, Finance and Economic Development, Justice and Administration Bureau, and the Speaker of the NRS parliament[91]. The members of the Executive Committee (Politburo) include the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson (most of whom are Politburo members of the EPRDF), and NRS Head of Government, Heads of Propaganda and Organization Affairs of each affiliate. Below the NRS, each zone has a group of 3 to 5 Central Committee members, which form a nucleus of party leadership that usually comprises the zone party chairperson, heads of zone organization, and propaganda departments. From this level down to the minute basic organizations and cells, the party sets up a web of close-

[91] The author's interview notes.

knit organizational networks whose members unequivocally observe party disciplines and internal procedures meticulously mapped out by the higher echelon of the EPRDF leadership (Figure 5.1).

Table 5.1. The estimated number of members of each EPRDF affiliate and percentage of social composition till May 2004

EPRDF Affiliates & NRS	Population	Members Represented in the Central Committee/ Council	Members Represented in the Politburo/ Executive Committee	Number of Members	Percentage of Rural Residents	Percentage of Urban Residents
Oromo Peoples' Democratic Organization (OPDO)-Oromia	25, 098,000	45	9	270,000	60 %	40 %
Amhara National Democratic Movement (ANDM)-Amhara	18, 143, 000	45	9	200,000	89 %	11 %
South Ethiopia Peoples' Democratic Movement (SEPDM)-SNNP	14, 085, 000	45	9	150,000	60 %	40 %
Tigray Peoples' Liberation Movement (TPLF)-Tigray	4, 113, 000	45	9	80,000	85 %	15 %
Total	61, 439, 000	180	36	700,000	72.0 %	28 %

Source: Compiled from interviews with the heads of public relations (propaganda) and organization affairs of each party affiliate in Addis Ababa, Bahirdar, Awasa and Mekele

The above table shows that the EPRDF is probably the first of its kind in Ethiopia to recruit the largest number of members from the rural residents and the peasantry. Membership has preponderantly been drawn from farmers. Not only does this clearly show EPRDF's leadership commitment to the peasantry, but it also demonstrates the patron-client relationship between the two that developed during the armed insurgency. The over-emphasis on the peasantry, nevertheless, essentially has strategic significance, for the party's frequent claims harness its survival and continuance of power with the population that currently constitute eighty-five percent of the Ethiopian populace. Thus, the senior member organizations of

EPRDF, ANDM and TPLF, had up to May 2004 recruited 89 and 85 percent of their members from rural residents respectively. That is followed by OPDO and SEPDU, which have each enlisted 60 percent of their members from the peasantry. The bulk of EPRDF's urban members have, however, been recruited from civil servants working in the government institutions and schoolteachers. In much the same way as its predecessor, namely WPE, EPRDF failed to attract an intellectual corps of professional and academic people to its ranks, partly because of the uninviting internal party life, and partly because of excessive ideological fixation (EPRDF, 2003a). In fact, for most learned people in the Ethiopia, EPRDF is comparable with WPE of the *Dergue* era in terms of ideological obsession, organizational patterns and internal party life, a grim reminder of Ethiopia's recent past. Be that as it may, OPDO, ANDM, and SEPDU and TPLF till recently had an estimated 270 000, 200 000, 150 000, 80 000 number of members respectively, making up 700 000 in total[92]. Its access to the corridors of the state power as well as government sources combined with the multi-million-dollar business enterprises that each member organization is connected with makes EPRDF the strongest ever political organization that spans socio-economic and political policies in the entire country. Through its coalition partners, EPRDF controls well over 86 percent of the Ethiopian population, although it uses ally parties, government structures and resources to extend its influence to the remaining 14 percent of the population living in the so-called peripheral NRSs (see Table 5.2).

5.3. The significance of ideology in public policymaking

Over the last thirty years since 1974 in Ethiopia the ideological commitments, which policy elites at different points in time embodied, have critically determined the parameters and principles within which public policies have been forged, and the nature and the type of socio-economic and political policies pursued. During the *Dergue* rule Marxism-Leninism became the official ideology of the state, and the Workers Party of Ethiopia (WPE) was the vanguard party reorienting policies along the lines of the official ideology (WPE, 1984, FDRE, 1987). Statutes, including the Constitution, reaffirmed the leading role of the only party and the inviolability the ideology, as Chapter 3 elucidated. Not only did almost all policies strictly follow the lead of the ideology, but the policymaking institutions were also patterned accordingly. Land and rural development reforms were typical of policies formulated and executed in a classic Marxist-Leninist style.

[92] The author's interview notes.

In much the same manner as its predecessor, the EPRDF has over the last thirteen years advocated revolutionary democracy, although it was not in the spotlight till 2001. Not only is EPRDF the sole architect, designer and promoter of fundamental socio-economic policies such as urban, rural land policies, and including of course ADLI, but its ideology also sets guidelines as well as the preconditions for policy making, as well as making and unmaking government institutions[93]. In fact, although there are clear signals that EPRDF has been staunchly committed to Marxism-Leninism, its leaders have nevertheless cleverly avoided the official use of such concepts as class analysis, class struggle and the advent of communism for fear of reprisals from donors and such powerful financiers as the World Bank and the IMF[94]. Obviously this sets EPRDF leaders apart from their predecessors.

Unofficial and unpublished party documents and pronouncements professed that EPRDF put an end to its Marxist-Leninist wing few years before it held its Second Plenary Congress in Awassa in 1994, chiefly because of the loss of value that transpired immediately after the downfall of the communist block (EPRDF, undated, 2003a). However, the secrecy shrouding the way in which the undoing of the Ethiopian Workers Revolutionary Party (EWRP) and the shading of its attendant guiding principle (i.e. Marxism-Leninism) have been dealt with was amongst the chief causes for the split within the party leadership that led to untold havoc in 2001 (*ibid*, Reporter, April 2002). Party pronouncements that have wider circulation within and among the most educated elements of the party asserted that the 'Revolutionary Democratic Program' was primarily seen as an instrument of uninterrupted transition to socialism (EPRDF, undated: 1, EPRDF, 2003b: 8). Hence, membership in the front was claimed to have been an eclectic mixture of Christian parishes, Moslem sheiks, non-communist revolutionary democrats and Marxist-Leninists, although it is acknowledged that the Marxist-Leninist forces had their party, namely Ethiopian Workers Revolutionary Party (EWRP) (*ibid*). Not only had Marxist-Leninist forces have a party designated as such, but they were also almost all members officially and universally recognized it as the vanguard organization of the EPRDF. The revolutionary democratic front - EPRDF and forces coalesced under it, therefore, acceded to and endorsed the leadership role of EWRP, and this had enormous influence on the EPRDF's program and the ideological tools used to guide and analyze that program (EPRDF). EPRDF wrote:

[93] Interview held with a leader of the Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce, Addis Ababa, May 2003.
[94] Interviews with an opposition MP, and human right activist, January and April 2004 respectively.

> The fundamental rallying objective underpinning the leading role of the party was primarily the completion of the transition to socialism via democratic revolution. In other words, EWRP was well positioned at the helm of the democratic revolution and spearheaded the socialist revolution and the uninterrupted transition to socialism. Moreover, having been situated at the center of democratic and socialist revolution, EWRP, mapped out the EPRDF's program, controlled and steered all its activities along these lines. Therefore, not only was the EPRDF's program a minimum program of the party of a Marxist-Leninist type, but also was an essential tool of a transition towards socialist socio-economic formation… More importantly, communists had central place in the EPRDF, not only because Marxist-Leninist ideology guided the analysis and interpretation of programs and policies, but also because the whole gamut of organizational leadership in the hierarchy of the EPRDF was controlled and led by the communists. The members of the EPRDF who had not accepted Marxism-Leninism as their guiding principle were thus regarded as revolutionary democrats which set the latter apart from the communist elements who represented as the potent forces of the EPRDF. (EPRDF, undated: 19).

EPRDF also claimed that the peasantry is the fundamental social base of the revolutionary democratic revolution, with the urban petty-bourgeoisie and the industrial workers rallying around the revolutionary democratic cause. Despite the official claim that places the peasantry as the fundamental base and the ultimate beneficiary of the revolution, the peasantry is organizationally scattered at best and intellectually ill equipped at worst; yet the communist intellectuals bestowed on them 'the historic responsibility of leading the revolutionary democratic revolution' (EPRDF, 2003b). EPRDF asserted that that historic role had till 1991 been assumed by EWRP.

The abrupt change in the global alignment of socio-economic and political forces that followed the jettisoning of communism towards the end of the 1980s produced a re-thinking of the opportunities and challenges among the EPRDF leadership, although it was a belated move as well and left a lot to be desired. Choices were made, but they were far too few and too insubstantial to represent any substantive departure from the ideological values it ostensibly claimed to have abandoned. In the aftermath of 1991, EPRDF asserted that it had unfettered the relations of production towards the development of capitalism (EPRDF, undated: 22). However, EPRDF appeared to have resented this for "uninterrupted transition towards socialist socio-economic transformation has effectively been aborted by a legion of dramatic and unexpected changes that have occurred following the fall of social imperialism, under the leadership of former Soviet Union" (*ibid*, 23). Having acknowledged the emergence of the United States 'as a dominant imperialist force', EPRDF further argued that not only has the 'US become a militarily unmatched force, but also is economically the wealthiest country in the globe. What are more, the most powerful international organizations

that set the rules governing World economic order such as the World Bank, IMF and World Trade Organization came under the control of the US and thereby complicating the fate of the poor countries such as Ethiopia' (*ibid.*).

In an attempt to rationalize the circumstances underlying the shedding of Marxism-Leninism in favor of revolutionary democracy, which had been pegged to development scenarios in Ethiopia, EPRDF authors argued:

> The underlying favorable condition that boded well into the socialist revolution, namely, the prevalence of antagonistic contradictions between the imperialist camps will be unthinkable at least for the coming several decades. Not only has this situation been recognized, but also is that there no room for socialist socio-economic transformation and construction, though resentfully, has been accepted by the Ethiopian Marxist-Leninists. While the former Soviet Union was not a genuine socialist state", EPRDF contended, "its abrupt collapse not only had detrimental consequences on socialist revolutions and transformations in the globe, but also had sowed lethargy and severe frustrations among the ardent believers of the doctrine of Marxism-Leninism. (EPRDF, undated)

According to EPRDF, the negative attitudes that people around the world adopted towards socialism together with the meticulous propaganda campaign that the enemies of socialism relentlessly waged against it had enormous negative effects on Ethiopia (EPRDF, 2003a: 23). Over and above the global circumstances, Ethiopian people's distaste for socialism was even more aggravated by the *Dergue*'s 17 years of dictatorial rule under the guise of socialism, EPRDF aptly reasoned (*ibid.*).

Given that the routes for socialist revolution and socialist socio-economic construction are thwarted, 'at least for the next several decades', as EPRDF argued, what other options are there for EPRDF? Who should lead the 'revolution'? Who are the friends and the enemies of the revolution? Choices within the innermost circles of the EPRDF had to be taken to switch ideological course to revolutionary democracy in 1991, although the latter essentially, had as yet not moved beyond the basic tenets of Marxism-Leninism[95]. In any case, according to EPRDF, instead of the socialist option, the capitalist way of socio-economic development is indisputably successful (EPRDF, undated, 2003b). The capitalist road to development, EPRDF argued, in much the same way as socialist socio-economic construction, is 'a product of incessant process of class struggle. Put it simply, it is a product of a class struggle between

[95] Questionnaire responses from Teachers Association leaders, Independent and Opposition MPs, Ethiopian academics at Addis Ababa University, Bahirdar University and Civil Service College.

revolutionary democratic forces on the one hand, and dependents (to mean counter-revolutionary democrats) on the other' (*ibid*).

The gist of EPRDF's ideological obsession, which lies at the center of its exclusive claim as well as leverage in public policymaking process, nonetheless rests squarely on its economic and agricultural policies. It presents itself as the only and exclusive option to lead the country along the road to capitalist development, and furthermore embraces a conviction, which has over the last three to four years (since 2001) appeared to have been transformed into an obsession, that it is the only organization that can resolve the deeply rooted agricultural structural problem of the country and steer it to rapid market-oriented development as well as prosperity. Having presented itself as the single most revolutionary democratic organization that has defended the interests of the peasantry, EPRDF has situated itself in the limelight of political leadership, whose survival is inseparable from the rapid economic prosperity of the peasantry (EPRDF, 2003a: 27). The question is whether or not adopting agriculture-centered development policies is entwined with survival, being or not being and it is an issue of survival and national security. Strongly advocated among the inner circle of the EPRDF, this is the most fundamental distinguishing characteristic of revolutionary democracy that set the party apart from all other political opponents (EPRDF, 2003b: 26). In other words, resolving the structural problems of agriculture is seen as the most critical revolutionary democratic economic objective and the pillar of all socio-economic and political policy objectives whose achievements are claimed to have solely due to EPRDF leadership (*ibid.*).

EPRDF, therefore, rules out the liberal bourgeois style of capitalist development led by the national bourgeoisie: first, because it is inappropriate to the Ethiopian realties; second, by mere virtue of the level of socio-economic development that Ethiopia has attained, the national bourgeoisie's contribution to the capitalist development has left much to be desired (*ibid*). Nor can it lead the capitalist style of development in Ethiopia. The other potent force in this regard could probably be the dependent bourgeoisies (or comprador bourgeoisies[96]), although EPRDF sees the latter's engagement in the economy as subversive to the extent of adversely affecting the development scenario through bribery, corruption, rent collection with little or no value accruing to the economy (EPRDF, 2002, 2003a, 2003b). In other words, instead of producing new wealth and values to bump up the national wealth, the dependent

[96] 'Comprador' is a Portuguese derivation that literally denotes 'buyer'. In current usage, however, comprador is a business group, which employs its economic stance to streamline transnational (foreign) capital without engaging itself in any significant way in the productive economic activities that promote domestic capital accumulation (Frieden and Lake, 1991).

bourgeois rather maneuvers subversive mechanism to amass the wealth already created, and so is alluded to as 'anti-development' (*ibid*).

In much the same as the revolutionary democratic version of the economy, EPRDF has its own version and understanding of democracy, which by and large differs from the type of democracy favored and prevailing in the west. Suffice it to say that its conception of democracy has been absolutely different from the liberal bourgeois variety based on individual participation, embodiment of a diversity of interests and plurality of participation and representation (see Dahl, 1998; Vaughan and Tronvoll, 2003). In fact, the liberal capitalist type of democracy has been regarded as sham and unpropitious for the Ethiopian reality (EPRDF, undated).

EPRDF's authors further argued:

> The liberal democracy option under the leadership of the bourgeoisie is foreclosed. Given that the road to liberal democracy option is closed for the next several decades, Ethiopian state should only rely on the peasantry. Only a party or government that primarily depends on the peasantry as a social base and rallies the industrial workers and the urban poor can become the champion of democracy and at the same time successfully carries out capitalist socio-economic construction in Ethiopia. Therefore, not only should there be an organization which can usher in democracy and accomplish capitalist construction in radical and revolutionary fashion, but also should ensure that the broad masses of people (the peasantry, the industrial workers and the urban poor) are the primary beneficiaries of the outcomes of revolutionary and radical reforms. This order or social system can be labeled as revolutionary democracy, for the revolution is rigorously carried out in a radical and revolutionary fashion. It can also be considered as a petty-bourgeois democratic revolution, for the core social base of the revolution is the peasantry. The only political organization that has exclusive claim on building a revolutionary democratic political order in Ethiopia is, therefore, EPRDF. (EPRDF, 2003a: 31)

EPRDF, therefore, sees itself as the only pioneer and champion of democracy in Ethiopia. Furthermore, having situated its socio-economic and political policies within the ideological context of revolutionary democracy, often using the Marxist-Leninist conceptual and analytical tools, EPRDF considers individuals and groups (apparently, the opposition and CSOs) who deviate from its thinking as the enemies of the state, EPRDF and the revolutionary democratic order that it has ardently been striving to build (EPRDF, 2003a: 97).

Regarding the way it perceives itself, EPRDF goes on to say:

> EPRDF unequivocally and firmly stands for the most radical and fundamental socio-economic reforms in the country. ... EPRDF is in the driving seat of these reforms. The successful accomplishments of the re-forms are clearly linked with the existence of EPRDF. In the absence of EPRDF, neither basic socio-

> economic development nor radical reforms materialize, nor do the prospects bode well for a thriving society in Ethiopia…. Moreover, EPRDF is the only political organization that addresses NNPs' sovereignty and unity based on the will of the people. … Considered from this vantage point, EPRDF possesses an enormous political clout in the determination of the fate of the country and its people. It has much more exceptional role than other political organizations around the world.

EPRDF continues:

> The roles of most of the parties around the world are limited to the continuance of socio-economic development policies that have already been embedded in the past. Their roles therefore transcend very little beyond maintaining the *status quo*. In contrast, EPRDF's role is all out unique as well as daunting. Not only is it striving to install a socio-political and economic system that has never existed before, but also is building a democratic and revolutionary socio-economic and political order. This calls for an organization that espouses correct revolutionary and democratic objectives and the competence to achieve these objectives. Currently, there is neither any such organization, other than EPRDF, to assume such daunting challenges and responsibilities in Ethiopia, nor will there be any organization that can substitute for EPRDF in the immediate future. … Till the socio-economic and political orders that EPRDF has struggled and stood for are engrained and rooted in the society, there will hardly be any organization which can promote and further such radical and historic role and avail astute leadership. EPRDF plays special and enormous historic role not only because it adopts revolutionary and democratic missions, but also because it has exceptional alignment and relationship with the classes and groups whose interests shall be met by revolutionary democratic order under the leadership of the EPRDF. This has given EPRDF sweeping as well as enormous leverage, and the exercise of patronage and thereby elevating its unique and historic role/ and or leverage. (EPRDF undated, 120-121)

It is worth noting that the Marxist-Leninist conceptualization of a political party is one that formulates its programs to address the interests of specific social groups (or classes) to the exclusion of others. The party of a Leninist type is, therefore, established to provide benefits for the social groups from which it perceives itself to be drawing its inspiration and support, and neutralizes those that are considered vacillating and unwieldy; it will also isolate and attack, and even destroy, the protagonists of social classes that are perceived as the enemies of the revolution. As a result, led by revolutionary democratic intelligentsia, the revolutionary democratic movement is considered essentially a peasant movement that fosters the alliance of the industrial workers and the urban poor (EPRDF, 2003a: 38). On the other hand, the opponents of the revolutionary democratic order include the vacillating national bourgeoisie, comprador bourgeoisies, the constellation of parties that constitute the opposition and imperialism (EPRDF undated, 93 EPRDF, 2003a, 38).

This preponderance of evidence make it unambiguously clear that revolutionary democracy both in conceptualization and approach is rooted and wedded to the ideological and theoretical postulates of Marxism-Leninism. Worse by far, and the starkest reality that lies at the bottom of the belief system, is the notion that it has clearly bred exclusions in public policymaking, for EPRDF supposes that 'revolutionary democracy is the ***only*** belief system that underpins the entire process of socio-economic policymaking, and EPRDF is the ***only*** political entity in the country that can forge the ***only*** acceptable public policies and thereby lead the people and the country to development, peace and democracy'. Not least, the hallmarks of the ideology, namely, the class analysis and attendant class struggle, apparently position the EPRDF center stage in the socio-economic policymaking process.

5.4.The legislatures as legitimating institutions of policy decisions

The predominance of the party in every sphere of public life, coupled with the zeal with which revolutionary democratic objectives are advocated, generate an exclusive interest in, and claim on, public policies. Party ranks at higher levels primarily decide policy matters, for the most part immediately preceding the adoption of the same by legislative bodies. Once consensus has been reached on the lunatic fringes in the party and executive leadership, policy decisions are pushed through for government institutions to formalize, legitimate and implement them. The parliaments, both national and NRSs, are the chief instruments of legitimizing the policy decisions of party and executive leadership, although concerns and questions still persist among the civil society leaders and academics concerning how far legislatures of such stature overcome the overriding challenges of the imbalance between policymaking institutions and policy beneficiaries in Ethiopia[97].

For some, the party and executive leadership's overwhelming leverage in public policymaking as much rests on constitutional guarantees[98] as on the majority seats in the parliament[99]. In other words, the Constitution sets the rules and defines parameters for how

[97] Questionnaire responses from civil society leaders.

[98] Paraphrasing Harold Laswel's statement 'who gets what, when and how', Hyden and Venter (2001, 15) state "who sets what, when and how"- to mean, who sets which rules, when and with what effects. Although the chapter that provides the bill of rights in the current Ethiopian Constitution represents a significant departure, most of the provisions on power and policymaking structures nonetheless give the new policy elites overwhelming leverage to sway policymaking.

[99] Interview held with a member of EPRDF and Chairperson of Budget Standing Committee; and an Ethiopian Political Scientist and Senior Educator, AAU, March 2003 and January 2004 respectively.

should policies be made and executed, and who should do so; thus not only are the party and the executive acting accordingly, but also do they see no wrong in this exercise[100].

An interviewee argues:

> Technically, they (the EPRDF) are formulating policies according to the dictate of the constitution. A constitution is a legal system that permits a government to institute a political order of its preference, and transform its political program into government policies and strategies. Thus, when any government seizes the lever of power, it launches its own constitutional making process, for the constitution permits the government to establish a political system of its own design. That was why *Dergue* annulled Haileseassie's constitution, and like wise, EPRDF repealed the *Dergue*'s constitution and substituted for its own constitution in 1995. The present constitution thus sets the context that allows them institute a socio-political order of their own desire. The constitution has made the establishment of such government structures possible favorably and in the interest of the party. I have seen them pursuing this constitutional order consistently.[101]

EPRDF, in its own assertions, reinforces this point:

> Only when a political party seizes state power that it can translate the demands of the social group that it represents into concrete deeds. Since a political party is established based on the good will of the forerunners who adopt and promote its objectives, it hardly accomplishes the objectives it sets out till the vanguards are elected to assume government offices. A political party should therefore target political power as a major goal, and then use that power to translate its program into effect. ***This can range from having its program objectives and strategies incorporated into the constitution to transforming it into government policies and strategies. Not only does it use state power to make laws and policies, but also should advantageously use it to implement policies and programs.*** The assumption of state power *per se* therefore is both a goal and an essential tool for the achievement of party objectives. … (EPRDF, 2003a: 6, emphasis added).

However, the making of the constitution has largely been flawed, and the socio-political order that evolves from it is bound to be suspect, as empirical evidence showed in Chapter 4. Although constitutional and statutory provisions have clearly bolstered the leverage of the executive and party leadership, the issue at stake and of vital importance is how far has this affected the legislatures and with what effects. The party, in practice often but not always led by the Prime Minister, controls the government; the parliament is totally dominated by the

[100] The present Constitution stipulates that a political party or coalition of political parties that have the greatest number of seats in the House of Peoples' Representatives shall form the executive and lead it (Article 56, FDRE, 1995:22)

[101] Interview held with an Ethiopian academic and political scientist, January 2004.

EPRDF, and in practice is only an organ to rubberstamp government decisions[102]. Furthermore, the party controls the local administration, particularly in rural areas, and by that the population and the elections. Officially Ethiopia is a parliamentary democracy, but much takes place behind the scenes, and the key party figures, with the Prime Minister as the outstanding figure, have the power to make and unmake the power base of any participant in the system, whatever that base may be (popularity shown in elections, prominence in the public discussion, leading administrator, etc.)[103].

The anomaly lurking behind the constitutional order, however, is that it breeds a glaring imbalance between the legislature and the executive. The constitution introduces a parliamentary form of government, and one probably would see little problem with the EPRDF instituting a parliamentary structure, for it is one of the most democratic systems. Similar structures abound the world over; the UK, Canada and Israel are classic cases, just to name a few of the well-established parliamentary democracies. Apparently, the parliamentary form of government requires the PM and the bulk of the associates of the executive to be drawn from the parliament, and thus they are accountable to the parliament[104]. Nevertheless, in countries without a well-developed and nurtured democracy, and pluralistic political culture are significantly absent, vibrant civil society organizations (CSOs) and a strong opposition are non-existent, such as Ethiopia, the system is likely to promote the exclusive power of the executive leadership. What makes the Ethiopian political system even more interesting than similar situations elsewhere, is that a single party occupies well over 95% of the seats in the parliament (see Table 5.2).

As a result, not only does the party establish the government, but the members of parliament and the executive also belong to one party. Therefore, instead of the parliament controlling the executive, ironically, the executive is effectively controlling the parliament in Ethiopia[105]. Additionally, the Prime Minister is the leader of both the party as well as the executive, for the PM has to balance all relevant institutions. The party and the executive have, certainly, a predominant role as well as leverage in policymaking in Ethiopia. In contrast, despite the fact that the UK has a similar structure, the opposition parties are so strong that they can counter-balance and challenge the actions of the executive. Equally important, if value conflicts within the party in power in the UK, the ruling party MPs have

[102] Siegfried Pausewang, a German sociologist, who has done research and written on Ethiopia since 1967; questionnaire response, August 2003
[103] Svein Ege, Norwegian social anthropologist and senior researcher, questionnaire response, September 2003.
[104] The current Constitution permits the PM to submit his nominees for the CoM from within and without the HPR (Article 74).
[105] Interview held with Ethiopian academic and senior educator in the Faculty of Law, AAU, November 2003.

virtually no fear in challenging their party and its leadership if they find their party advocating misguided policies, nor do the opposition MPs fear any harassment and reprisals if they challenge the ruling party[106]. Put differently, the ruling party MPs in parliamentary democracies, unlike in Ethiopia, are more accountable to their conscience than to party ideology. This by far sets the Ethiopian parliamentary system apart from other parliamentary democracies.

Table 5.2. The ruling party's leverage in the House of Peoples' Representatives (HPR), 1995 to 2004

Name of Party	Number of Seats in HPR		Percentage of Seats		EPRDF's Leverage with Ally Parties in the Peripheral NRSs	
	1995-2000	2000-2004	1995-2000	2000-2004	1995-2000	2000-2004
Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF)	483	481	88.5	87.9	98.5 %	95.2 %
Afar National Democratic Party (ANDP)*	8	8	1.45	1.46		
Benshangul-Gumuz Peoples' Democratic United Party (BGPDUP)*	9	9	1.65	1.65		
EPRDF's Ally Parties	38	23	7.0	4.2		
Opposition	None	13	None	2.38		
Independent MPs	8	13	1.47	2.38	1.5 %	4.8 %
Total	546	547	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %

Source: Compiled and computed from the archives of the House of Peoples' Representatives (HPR).

* EPRDF's ally parties whose loyal support to have buttressed EPRDF's leverage in the national legislature (HPR) include, Afar National Democratic Party (ANDP), Benishangul-Gumuz Peoples' Democratic Party (BGPDUP), Harere National League (HNL), and Gambela Peoples' Democratic Front (GPDF) and Somali Peoples' Democratic Party (SPDP)

With the opposition and most independent candidates boycotting the 1995 election, usually under duress and harassment, EPRDF won all the elections[107], both national and local.

[106] The author's interview notes.

[107] Pausewang *et al.* (2002) and Dessalegn and Meheret (2004) documented several incidences of irregularities in the elections and electioneering in Ethiopia.

The EPRDF coalition won 88.5% (483) of the seats in the legislative chamber, the House of Peoples' Representatives. With the EPRDF ally parties supporting the voting, its leverage in the legislative and decision-making processes in the HPR scaled up to 98.5% during the whole of the first term, as the above Table depicts. Likewise, with only thirteen independent[108] and opposition MPs each winning seats in the lower chamber, the EPRDF's leverage in the decision-making process has remained intact during the second term (i.e. 2000-2004). EPRDF's absolute leverage in the legislative process, therefore, continues into the second term with 87.9% and 95.2% of the HPR seats at its disposal with and without the ally parties, as the Table demonstrates.

Accordingly, there has hardly been a bill that goes beyond a second reading in the HPR, for it is certainly taken for granted that a bill will immediately be approved when a standing committee presents it to the HPR for a second reading. The Ministry of Information's mass media board establishment proposal was, nonetheless, the only exception in that it reappeared in the House for a third reading. This was the only case that has so far been documented where the members of EPRDF united with the opposition, for the first time, in a debate against the media board's exclusive dominance by the executive, for which the EPRDF MPs were severely admonished (EPRDF, 2003a: 66). The mass media board case came at a time when the EPRDF was emerging from the quagmire of the split within the party in 2001[109]. Having their confidence shaken by the havoc this caused, the EPRDF MPs allied with the opposition and independent MPs for the first time and voted against their party's motion. But when the media board issue reappeared for the third time, the opposition MPs only too discovered 'reneged' by the EPRDF members who ardently argued against the media board composition being dominated by the executive. This time the EPRDF MPs voted for the issue that they had voted against a weak earlier[110].

For all practical purposes, EPRDF and the executive have, over the last nine years since the legislatures officially began deliberations in 1995, swayed almost all the decisions and voting, as Table 5.3 depicts. All bills – except in 1995/96 and 1996/97 in the first term and 2000/01 in the first term – were received from the executive. Up to 2003 the HPR approved 377 laws, 97 percent (366) of which had been sent by the Council of Ministries. The office of the House Speaker proposed the remaining eleven bills (3 percent). Up until May 2004 no

[108] In the Ethiopian lower chamber, an opposition MP contended, currently there are only thirteen serious opposition MPs (out of 547). Most opposition MPs, therefore, claim that independent/private MPS are more akin to the EPRDF than the opposition.
[109] Interview with a non-EPRDF MP
[110] The Minutes of the Eighth and Ninth Plenary Sessions of the HPR, December 2001; questionnaire responses from the MPs, March 2003

private bill has been initiated, for party rules and statutory regulations impose severe limitations on private initiatives, as noted in Chapter 4. 96.3 percent and 98 percent of the bills during the first and second terms respectively have thus been proposed by the executive and endorsed by the legislature. All of the bills have been approved by a large majority, although the second term witnessed a steady diminution of voting unanimity. 83.4 percent of the laws during the first term, and 77.5 percent of the bills during the second term were approved unanimously and published in the official legal reporter, i.e., *Neagrit Gazzetta*.

Table 5.3. Voting and the executive's leverage in the legislative process, 1995- 2003

Year	Total no. of laws approved	Laws sent by the executive	Bills drafted by the office of the speaker	Bills approved unanimously	Laws passed with abstentions and/or voted against	Percentage of bills approved unanimously	Percentage of bills sent by the executive and approved
			First Term (1995-2000)				
1995/96	45	38	7	33	12	73.3. %	84.4 %
1996/97	44	43	1	35	9	70.5 %	97.7 %
1997/98	38	38	0	33	5	86.6 %	100 %
1998/99	52	52	0	48	4	92.3 %	100 %
1999/00	38	38	0	32	6	84.2 %	100 %
Total	217	209	8	181	36	83.4 %	96.3 %
			Second Term (2000-2003)				
2000/01	38	35	3	32	6	84.2 %	92.1 %
2001/02	37	37	0	24	13	64.9 %	100 %
2002/03	85	85	0	68	17	80.0 %	100 %
Total	160	157	3	124	36	77.5 %	98. 13 %

Source: Compiled and computed by the author from the archival sources of the House of Peoples' Representatives (HPR).

This attests to the fact that, while there appears to be a separation of powers in theory, in practice, however, there is unity of power[111]. In other words, the establishment of separate

[111] Ethiopian academic and senior educator at AAU raised his concern about the executive-legislature relationships in Ethiopia, interview, January 2004.

legislative and executive institutions in Ethiopia is considered as the division of labor within the EPRDF, whereby a segment of the EPRDF and its supporters constitute the legislature and another subdivision forms the executive. The balance of power and attendant checks and balances that underpin the separation of power in its substantive sense is left nothing to be desired. One party has dominated the legislative as well as the executive, so much so that national and NRS parliaments symbolize a single party state in all substantive and imaginable senses of the concept[112]. The last thirteen years has, therefore, witnessed a single party dominating the entire process of policymaking in Ethiopia.

This would mean that the legislature has little choices of exploring alternative public policies beyond the confines of the established party lines. Moreover, this has been complicated by the inner party 'democracy' and discipline that militate against creative initiative, for party members are barely allowed to promote ideas other than those of the party.

Personal choices made otherwise are considered seditious actions against the party, so are subject to admonitory measures, which may include severe reproaches at best, and expulsion from party and parliamentary membership at worst[113] (EPRDF, 2003a). In other words, conceived primarily on the basis of revolutionary democratic ideals, party members have virtually been assigned seats in the legislatures in so far as they promote these goals. The same party document resentfully cited several incidences party members in the HPR acting in breach of the basic belief system of EPRDF. Among others the bills sent by the executive (PMO) to provide for the revision of the Charter of Addis Ababa City Government, anti-corruption legislation and the motion put forth to augment the executive's leverage in the mass media board were classic cases in which the loyalty of EPRDF MPs faltered and for which they were severely chastised (EPRDF, 2003a: 66).

Not only has this been seen as an infringement of the constitutional guarantees of free expression of one's views, but the MPs have also been reduced to party puppets who should put their hands out when they are told to do so, in support of party-sponsored legislation and motions[114]. In other words, MPs are merely considered as manufacturers of party-sponsored proclamations and professional attendees of wearisome executive narratives. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note, on the other hand, that for most EPRDF MPs, it serves no purpose to be

---

[112] Questionnaire response from an international non-government organization (INGO) Development Officer, November 2003

[113] In the immediate aftermath of the *Tehadesso*, national and NRSs MPs whose loyalty was called into question were expelled from both the parliaments and the party in 2001.

[114] Interview held with a senior government official in the Oromia NRS cabinet, April 2004. This view is also universally shared by academics, CSOs/NGOs leaders, both old and new teachers associations, independent MPS and opposition parties' leaders.

a member of a party, unless one firmly promotes the goals of the party and supports it in all its dealings. The opposition parties should rather table any challenge to the proposals of the ruling party, but not the EPRDF members[115].

Having seen no difference between party and the executive leadership, some ruling party members of the HPR have bestowed enormous trust on the executive, in terms of the capability to articulate policies and the competence to implement them. They are very strongly and candidly of the view that not only they have no objections to the executive presiding over or prevailing on the entire policymaking process, but there is also nothing wrong for the executive to command an overwhelming influence, for many of the persons in the executive are members of the HPR representing their positions. They further contended that officials in the executive are also in the political leadership (or are party leaders); thus they are in a better position than the legislature to be able to articulate and forge policies along party lines. The members of the executive, EPRDF MPs contended, are close to the world of politics as well as knowledgeable, so much so that they are better placed to initiate laws and formulate policies. What is more, these EPRDF MPs see nothing unconventional for the party and the executive leadership having overwhelming influence in the policymaking and legislative process, not only because the party and the executive leadership possess expertise, knowledge and competence in formulating policies and legislation by far better than MPs, but they also have the statutory power and access to resources to be able to marshal them for the execution of laws as well as policies.

Some EPRDF MPs have, on the contrary, perceived that the party has been engaged in a disciplining and muffling exercise, through a series of evaluations (*Gimgema*) carried out continuously around the residential areas. In other words, party rules and discipline, which have little official recognition in the HPR, weigh against the free expression of views in the parliamentary deliberations[116]. In fact, for some of EPRDF MPs even a slightest deviation from party lines may endanger one's career, may even mean the loss of one's parliamentary seat, and so they are careful 'not to make any mistake' that would embarrass party branch functionaries assigned to monitor and defend the ruling party's interests. Stuck between their personal conscience and public political life, some EPRDF MPs, therefore, continue to live in a climate of fear and angst.

In search of empirical evidence, this author spent well over eight months in the parliament building at Arat Killo in Addis Ababa. While he enjoyed a great deal of

[115] Questionnaires responses from EPRDF MPs, March 2003
[116] Questionnaire responses from EPRDF MPs, March 2003.

cooperation all along from the MPs with whom he had a long acquaintance, the secretariat, the administrative staff (support staff) working in the archival center and the minutes and documentation divisions, interviewing and talking to EPRDF MPs was nevertheless less successful. At some point, after having met EPRDF MPs and having fixed appointments for interviews, the author found only too often that his appointments with them had been cancelled, promises were broken and/or meetings declined on numerous occasions. When he run into many of the MPs inside the compound of the parliamentary building, he found them bizarrely apologetic, for they had been waiting to hear what their colleagues in the standing committees or the party structures would comment about the interview and even filling in questionnaires, for which, in contrast, the author got immediate cooperation from the opposition and independent MPs. In fact, a member of the Social Affairs standing committee and an EPRDF MP who declined his request to interview him said:

> We (members of the HRP) are not policymakers; we only approve detailed legislation/proclamations that enhance the execution of policies when the executive sends them to the parliament. We barely play any significant role other than a public confidence-building exercise for the central (federal) government. At the same time, one has to bear in mind that approving draft bills does not necessitate professional and educational competence, nor does such competence or qualification exist in the HPR. Apparently, the executive makes all the policies and the bulk of the laws/proclamations, but not the HPR. Personally, I see nothing wrong with this exercise.

The author was then forewarned not to squander his time in the parliament building and solemnly advised to contact the PMO for him to get his research well done. He certainly did this, but due mainly to the secrecy shrouding the PMO, he got much more significant information which had a bearing on the executive as well as the party by lying low in the parliamentary building than from the PMO itself.

Suffice to say that the prevailing condition has bred an interesting phenomenon that has over the last thirteen years dominated the entire legislative process and the decisions in the HPR, namely that the EPRDF initiates, approves, adopts and executes legislation and policies. Put simply, it is an incestuous condition of policymaking process where EPRDF (party or the executive) initiates and sends to EPRDF MPs (HPR), and few days preceding the plenary sessions the EPRDF MPs (EPRDF) discuss and take a stand at the caucus, and next they endorse the policy at the plenary session in the HPR (by EPRDF)[117].

[117] The author's interview notes

In short, the legislative process is far more complicated than one would imagine. The Ethiopian lower house, the HPR, has been fraught with a legion of problems. Primarily, the MPs are not meant to question the laws and other proposals delivered to them from the party and the executive, although MPs are accountable to the electorate, to their conscience and to the Constitution; as provided under the current Constitution. To say the least, stringent party requirements are imposed on the EPRDF MPs, who constitute the great majority in the HPR, to vote for any legislation sent to the House by the executive, regardless of their consent. Second, while there is division of labor between the legislature and the executive, the separation of power, which is at the hub of checks and balances between the former and the latter, is non-existent. Third, even if the House has constitutional guarantees to closely control the actions of the executive, the ability and expertise among most of MPs for such an oversight role has left much to be desired. Nor is the Secretariat of the House staffed with experts, so much so that they get the assistance/advice from the experts that this endeavor calls for or to be able to adequately discharge their legislative responsibilities over the executive. In other words, not only is there a dire shortage of professional and administrative support staff, but the available employees have not been well enough organized for the MPs to be able to subpoena the executive. Till the end of May 2004, for instance, only 31% of the required staff had been acquired. A more glaring and acute staff shortage has conspicuously surfaced in the areas where it has been badly needed, namely in the fields of professional legal support and research. Of the 329 support staff employed by HPR, professional staff constitutes only 18.5% (61 employees)[118] of the total support staff, with low pay and declining morale characterizing almost or all of them.

Fourth, led and controlled by the Speaker and his deputy, the parliament's secretariat is less one of providing effective leadership, which could have brought the MPs with more experiential learning and capacity-building exercises, than of protecting party interests, although there has been cautious optimism in this regard over the past two years. The Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the HPR more often than not discourage lively discussions and debates in the HPR. In fact, thorough deliberations have been discouraged, especially when the opposition and independent MPs raise queries and contentious issues, for which they have been very swiftly undermined[119].

[118] Employment and personnel statistics obtained from the Manpower Department of the HPR, May 2004.
[119] The author's observations notes from the plenary session of the HPR.

Last, the weak intellectual capacity of most of the opposition MPs to be able to generate meaningful alternatives as well as the political skills to garner support in the House's legislative debates, coupled with the preeminence of one party, have reduced the HPR into being a mere manufacturer of legislation, and MPs into professional consumers of mind-numbing annual reports of heads of the executive agencies.

Likewise, EPRDF's leverage in the NRSs legislatures have over the past ten years increased far more than the national ones, as Table 5.4 illustrates. Together with the ally parties in the peripheral NRSs, EPRDF has been swaying almost all the voting and decisions. In Tigray and Amhara NRSs, the party controls all of the seats (100%) in the parliaments. In Oromia and Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' regional states, it has an overwhelming majority of seats, 99.6% and 93.4% respectively; with the opposition in SNNP NRS increasingly appearing to have an edge in the competition. As the Table below depicts, with 98 percent in the core NRSs, and 97 percent among its friendly parties, EPRDF leverage in the legislative and decision-making processes has clearly been unmatchable.

Table 5.4. EPRDF's leverage in the NRSs parliaments in 2000-2004.

Region	Total	Male	Female	Opposition or Independent	Percentage of ruling party seats in the NRSs Parliaments	
Oromia	537	467	70	2	99.6	
Amhara	294	250	44	0	100	
SNNPRS	346	308	38	23	93.4	**98 %**
Tigray	152	110	42	0	100	
Afar	87	85	2	3	96.6	
Somalia	168	166	2	15	91.1	
Benshangul-Gumuz	80	67	13	5	93.8	
Gambella	55	55	0	0	100	
Hareri	36	29	7	0	100	
Total	1755	1537	218	48	97.3	

Source: Own survey and Polhemus, 2003.

In much the same manner as the national legal system, NRSs parliaments elect their Speaker (who is one of the leading figures of the NRS party affiliate of the EPRDF) upon the recommendation of political party, or political parties that have the greatest number of seats in the parliament. The constitutional rule applies to all councils established at district and *Kebele* levels with constitutional and legal provisions enhancing the leverage of the party and the executive. The function of both the national and NRSs parliaments is currently more one of approval, than of initiation, debate and rejection, for their statutory leverage are more severely

circumscribed by the overriding concerns of party rules and disciplines than legislative institutions.

Although the NRSs' revised constitutions provide for a separation of the executive and the legislature that goes down all the way to the *Kebele* levels, reluctant legislative oversight and weak attendant checks and balances persist, chiefly for the following reasons:

1. Seats in the NRSs' parliaments are seized by the ruling party affiliates, entirely as in Tigray and Amhara, although the opposition has won only 2 and 23 seats in Oromia and SNNP NRSs respectively (see Table 5.4). In much the same way as the national parliament, deputies in the NRSs legislature are captives of stringent party discipline. In fact, not only are the lines between government and party far less distinguishable in the NRSs than the national (federal) structures, but their oversight role on the executive has also become wishful thinking. This has certainly detracted from the supposed virtues of separation of power.

2. There may have been some scrupulous ruling party MPs who ventured to challenge some of the proposals, but this was nevertheless thwarted by a conflict of interest that characterize most of the NRSs parliaments that enjoy double incumbency, in the legislature as well as the executive[120]. Putting it simply, apart from the Speakers and their deputies, the entire team of the members of the standing committees, who could have been better placed to exercise legislative oversight and the bulk of the deputies, are at the same time heads of government agencies at different levels of the regional executive government structures down the line to districts[121]. The most glaring anomaly reported in this case is the Amhara NRS, where 104 (35 percent) of the 294 MPs are government appointees working in the executive government leadership at different levels in the executive structures (Polhemus, 2003).

3. Except for Speakers and their deputies, the NRSs' legislatures are not permanent, for they are required to hold ordinary sessions twice a year to approve the draft laws and decisions that the NRSs' executive and party leadership had earlier made. Furthermore, sessions in excess of five, six days are the exception, or sessions of two

[120] Interview with the Head of the Secretariat of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' NRS Parliament, April 2004.
[121] Interview with Legal Advisor to the President of the Amhara National Regional State, December 2003.

or three days are unusual and, therefore, two regular meetings of less than a week's duration per year is barely enough time for the NRSs' parliaments to do a good job of carrying out their myriad legislative responsibilities (Polhemus, 2003: 15). More apparently for such a big assembly of MPs as the Oromia and SNNPRS, with 537 and 346 respectively, even weeklong sessions would not be enough (see Table 5.4). These factors have imposed severe limitations on the NRSs legislatures' competence to seriously subpoena and scrutinize the work of the executive.

The above assessments reveal that the process of policymaking in Ethiopia, ranging from agenda-setting to the system of voting to institutionalize decisions both in the national and NRSs parliaments, is entirely controlled by the inner circles of the party that also make up the executive leadership in the government structure. This pattern has also been replicated all along the policymaking structures down to the villages. In short, despite the ruling party seemingly to have emerged from its renewal process with greater enthusiasm for openness and transparency, in reality, its political ideology, revolutionary democracy, and the socio-economic policy and legal framework have over the past thirteen years been bolstering exclusionary leverage in the public policymaking process.

5.5.'Public participation' in public policymaking: the anomalies

Citizens' participation in the policymaking process is the *sine qua non* of both democratic governance and successful policy implementation, as the theoretical chapter noted. A policymaking process has to call for public participatory actions involving direct representation, empowerment and active decision-making (De Coning and Cloete, 2000). Participation in policymaking is a process, through which stakeholders' influence and share control over development initiatives, and the decisions and resources which affect them (Brinkerhoff and Crosby, 2002). The Ethiopian Constitution stipulates that not only have citizens the right to participate in the national policymaking process, but they also have legitimate claims to put demands on government to be consulted with respect to policies and projects affecting them (FDRE, 1995: 16). Moreover, constitutional principles impose demand that the state encourages the public to participate in the making of public policies and programs (*ibid*). Genuine public participation should influence the direction of the policy as well as pattern of its implementation. If the course of the policy and its implementation have

not been influenced, changed, or modified to any significant extent, the trivial enterprise of exchanging words in the meeting halls does not constitute participation[122]. One's clout in influencing the direction of the policy, and its implementation in terms of values that citizens and the autonomous organizations that represent citizens' interests cherish, represents real public participation.

However, the goals that the political leadership has exclusive claim and it promotes determine the outcomes of public participations in authoritarian states (Huntington, 1976). The more decisive influence on political participation *ipso facto* comes from those elites who are able to command the offices and resources of government, and apparently, the decision to limit or intensify political participation depends on the calculus of policy goals to be achieved and elite interests to be served (*ibid.*). In fact, most policy elites would like to have the benefits of participation, in terms of support for themselves and their policies, but they would rarely like to incur the costs entailed in the participation, in terms of limits on their power, the time and effort required to win acquiescence, and the demands that participation produces for the allocation of scarce resources, as has been argued in the theoretical chapter (*op. cit*).

Public policy nonetheless presupposes the existence of various, divergent and multiple interests and groups that represent these interests; and the groups discuss, argue publicly and assess the opinions of the public in several ways to be able to articulate these interests in public policies[123]. Sadly, in an authoritarian system such as ours, aggregation of divergent interests and representation as well as recognition of the plurality of interests could not be realized, for public policies have come to represent the interests of power holders[124]. Therefore, considering the fact that policy dialogues that aim at accommodation of interests, and with good will to give and take, have hardly been part of the agenda of policy elites, public participation in the policymaking process becomes illusory[125].

Hence, the unified forces of clientelism, ideological preoccupations of policy elites and a constellation of vulnerable and weak CSOs/NGOs militate against the growth of civil society and resilient pressure that it could have exerted on policy elites for meaningful change and reforms in public policies. Nor has any fruitful outcome emerged from the public dialogue forums, conferences and parliamentary hearings. Primarily the legal and political milieus have inhibited critical civil initiative and civil society organizations from thriving,

---

[122] A Resident Managing Director of an International NGO in Ethiopia defining public participation in policymaking, June 2004.
[123] Interview held with a longtime Ethiopian academic.
[124] Interview with an Ethiopian human rights activist, April 2004
[125] The author's interview notes.

although constitutional pronouncements appear to motivate public participation in the policymaking process. Additionally, the official ideology of the ruling party sets the framework or context in which the public should participate in the policymaking process, as the discussions in the previous sections indicated. EPRDF professed that CSOs and peoples' organizations can work towards the satisfaction of their interests and demands when they primarily promote and support EPRDF's revolutionary democratic objectives and/or only when they operate within the ambit of revolutionary democratic socio-economic policy objectives (EPRDF, 2003b: 53). The dominant assertions within the ruling party leadership also claim that the broad national development objectives can only come true when the revolutionary democratic doctrine is disseminated and diffused amongst the bulk of Ethiopian society. National development objectives, including ADLI that lies at the center of socio-economic development, can effectively be put into practice when the ideals of revolutionary democracy are deeply entrenched in the broad masses of the people. The efforts and resources of the party and government, therefore, primarily target organized groups, mass organizations and CSOs to ensure that they rally around EPRDF, and support and execute its socio-economic development policies (*op. cit.*).

The ideological prescriptions and values have thus appeared to have inhibited the ability of NSAs to play a meaningful part in the policymaking process, although it has not been as frustrating as in the *Dergue* era. Due chiefly to the ideological premises on which public policies are based, the political leadership encourages public participation in ways that generate controlled diffusion of EPRDF policies and strategies, and discourages independent initiative in the policymaking process[126]. While public participation in policymaking presupposes dialogue, give and take and a win-win situation, the preconditions imposed by the ideological parameters of policy elites foreclose such options, as the preceding sections have made unambiguously clear.

Party and government, for instance, pose legal and administrative hurdles to be able to control the activities of non-state actors and to force them to adhere to the prevailing values of policy elites. Government regulation, for instance, imposes restrictions that exclude both international and national non-government organizations (NGOs)[127] from participating in

[126] The author's interview notes

[127] Currently, there are well over 1800 NGOs/CSOs (national and international) that have officially been registered by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), Ethiopian Television (ETV), August 2004.

public policymaking. NGOs are entitled to registration and certification by the Ministry of Justice only when they adhere to the following restrictions[128]:

1. NGOs shall not and cannot conduct political activities, for instance, conducting public surveys on social issues;
2. NGOs are not allowed to organize debates around policy and political questions;

3. NGOs are not allowed to provide financial and material support to political parties.

The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) will have the NGO's registration and certification revoked and close down its operations should any international or national NGO violate these regulations. The foregoing regulation alone demonstrates that NGOs' participation in the policymaking process is closed off. The claim that the policymaking process is participatory means in fact that only the party and its supporters have consensus and an understanding on policy questions. Consequently, there is no space for autonomous, independent CSOs and independent-minded civil society organizations to make their critical inputs into public policies in Ethiopia. In other words, there is no favorable climate for creative thinking and critical contribution to public policies and genuine participation in the policymaking process in Ethiopia[129]. And there are no conditions where independent and autonomous CSOs participate in the policymaking process and debate on public policy issues.

In fact, instead of recognizing the differences and working together on the common goals that both sides, namely government and CSOs, share, the former rather continues to undermine the latter's independence[130]. The prevailing circumstances characterizing the independent CSOs' politico-administrative climate over the past thirteen years range from constituting government- and party-sponsored rival organizations to introducing regulatory measures and bureaucratic hurdles that have made registration and licensing difficult, and to applying punitive measures on CSOs that get involved in policy and rights advocacy ventures

[128] Derivative regulations to govern the operations of national and international non-governmental organization, Ministry of Justice
[129] Questionnaire response from the president of Ethiopian Teachers Association, March 2003
[130] A senior member of in the management team of Christian Relief and Development Association (CRDA), an umbrella organization that incorporates well over two hundred international and national NGOs in Ethiopia, June 2004

such as Ethiopian Human Rights Council (EHRCO)[131]. On the other hand, establishing communication with policymakers to able to sell one's views and proposals by way of lobbying, and getting involved in the policymaking process have even been bedeviled by the combined forces of the existing monolithic legislative-executive structure and overwhelming dominance of these structures by a single party[132]. Nor does there appear to be any prospect of nurturing a culture of lobbying, selling one's proposals and soliciting support through the legislative channels.

Moreover, these have even been more complicated by the fact that state has always been an overwhelmingly dominant actor in this country. The government has been provider, guide and trendsetter. The government sets the rule of the game in the way that suits itself, with party and the executive leadership invariably superintending how and when people organize, behave and engage in official public activities. Apparently, the present government did not at the outset assume power by popular election, neither was there any consensus on policy agenda setting. Not the least, it showed no commitment to civil society and organizations, because the government aggressively promotes a philosophy in the name of nations, nationalities and peoples, which values individual freedom very little. The values it has nurtured and the philosophy that it promotes strengthens its exclusive claims to determine who should participate, how and with what effects. On the other hand, the independent CSOs and private sector are seen as peripheral actors who merely fill the void left by the incapacity and infirmity of the state.

As far as the history of NGOs in Ethiopia is concerned, while the NGOs sector was predominantly run by international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) before 1991, currently Ethiopians run 67% of the NGOs, and thus NGOs are associations of citizens who exercise their constitutional rights (CRDA, 2003). Not only should NGOs' participation be considered as citizens' participation, but they are also the architects and owners of development process, rather than peripheral actors. Ironically, the government does not appear to see its citizens working in the various NGOs/CSOs constellations as its citizens, for they are not integral parts of the government civil service, and there are no mechanisms to ensure the loyalty of personnel working in the voluntary sector. So their participation in development and policymaking process is regarded with suspicion. On the other hand, government- and party-sponsored CSOs enjoy better support, access to the conduits of

[131] Established in 1991, the Ethiopian Human Rights Organization (ERCHO) is the first independent and autonomous human rights monitoring organization in Ethiopia.
[132] Interview held with a senior manager of CRDA, June 2004.

government resources and information[133]. Considered from this point of view, the relationship between government and NGOs/CSOs is a strained one, although it has not so far been on a collision course.

On the contrary, participation in policy dialogue forums or discussions is dominated by particularistic and clientelstic participation or particularistic and clientelistic groups, who have neither the capacity nor the courage to seek fundamental changes in public policies, are more persuaded to participate in the policymaking than autonomous and independent civil society groups. Organized, monitored and managed by the ruling party, civil society organizations that have come to be known as government-organized NGOs (GONGOs) such as the Relief Society of Tigray (REST), Tigray Development Association (TDA), Organization for Rehabilitation and Development of Amhara (ORDA), Amhara Development Association (ADA), and youth, women and farmers associations' participation in the policy discussions forums strike government's cord. In other words, the government wishes to see these CSOs dominating the entire civil society space in the country[134]. Apparently, the party- and state-sponsored organizations do not have any influence on policies and practices, nor do they make any critical inputs to the public policies and policymaking in Ethiopia. The claim that GONGOs are discussing public policies is, therefore, as much a waste of time as a mockery of participation, for they have not made any difference[135].

On the contrary, government officials argued that civil society organizations are not as yet well organized in the sprit of a favorable milieu. They are in the making, but they had not been there and are not already there[136]. Furthermore, not only do the CSOs lack proper organization, but they are also incoherent and disoriented as to their policy preferences and direction. In fact, for most part they are drawn into the civil movement in a muddling-through fashion, as are they far from articulating as to what they seek to attain in the public policymaking domain[137].

Currently, there are no strong civil society movements and organizations that can make a significant difference in this country[138]. Interest groups in the US, for instance, have such strong and extensive lobbying power that they can prevent legislation that negatively affects their business operations from being issued. Likewise, they lobby for a certain policy or legislation that furthers their interests to be passed by the Congress. The wealthiest American

[133] The author's interview notes.
[134] Questionnaire response from a managing director of international NGO, November 2003
[135] Interview with a member of the management team of CRDA, June 2004
[136] A senior cabinet member of the Tigray NRS, February 2004
[137] A senior government official in the cabinet of Oromia NRS, May 2004
[138] Ethiopian political scientist and senior educator at AAU, January 2004

businesspersons, who own multi-million dollars worth of investments in China recently lobbied in the Congress for China to be granted a preferred trading status, and they succeeded. Interest groups lobby directly with the lawmakers. This would certainly mean that independent interest groups influence policies and policymaking. This is chiefly because interest groups have money, strong organization and are very strong and powerful in many ways, although this represents a typical Western model. In contrast, interest and pressure groups in Ethiopia are weak, not only because they lack strong organization, but also because they function with meager resources, and within an unpropitious legal, political and administrative environment. Moreover, interest and pressure groups do not know the members of parliament. Even if they know them, the MPs in Ethiopia are members of EPRDF who approve legislation and policies that have only been made by their party, and accord primary importance to the party's preferences and not the preferences and demands made on them by the people. In fact, they have such a tightly knit political party that the EPRDF MPs are weighted on the strength of the unflinching support that they give to their party's policy proposals (EPRDF, undated, 2003a). In other parliamentary democracies, despite the fact that one is a member of a governing political party, one would not be afraid of opposing or even participating in a vote against the decisions of one's own party. There is, therefore, neither a sound political culture nor the experience of a participatory policymaking process in Ethiopia. Although there are neither robust CSOs nor strong political pressure groups that can force government into changing the direction of policies, they are clearly vociferous. In so far as they do not influence policies and practices in any significant degree, the government wants them to remain vocal[139].

However, women's organizations whose major agenda and objectives address gender and related issues, such as Ethiopian Women Lawyers' Association (EWLA)[140], have made a remarkable debut in the Ethiopian public policymaking scene. Women's organizations have over the last three years successfully put their imprints on family law, criminal procedures and criminal laws, not only because these groups were strong, but also because the state knew that the change or modification of such laws bring no harm to the party and executive leadership[141]. In fact, in this way the EPRDF enhances its image among the women, who currently constitute half of the Ethiopian populace.

---

[139] Interview with Ethiopian academic and senior educator in the Faculty of Law, Addis Ababa University, November 2003

[140] Founded by a group of women lawyers in 1996, Ethiopian Women's Lawyers' Association (EWLA) is an advocacy group devoted to the social, economic, political and legal rights of women.

[141] Interview held with a historian and senior educator at the University of Bahirdar, Amhara NRS, March 2004.

Hence, success stories in the all too familiar issues of gender, HIV/AIDS and child protection have certainly been documented, chiefly because the party and government tacitly approved them (CRDA, 2003, 2004; Dessalegn, 2002). EWLA, however, has come to represent one of such fortunate CSO, whose objectives barely differ from the parameters set by the ruling party and the executive. In contrast, the Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce, Teachers Association and Labor Unions, which represent hundreds of thousands of members, have not been successful in influencing government's policies, because allowing to do so has probably been well perceived by policy elites as entailing the loss of their virtual control over public policymaking power. In other words, while the government and the party reluctantly accommodated and tacitly approved public participation that has resulted in change or modification of legislation on 'soft issues' (gender, HIV/AIDS, child protection), all the talks and participation of the past thirteen years on the substantive policy issues, that is, the 'hard issues' such as land security, federal structure, and the practices of the education policy, failed to produce any breakthrough.

It should, however, be noted that EPRDF's rule has never dissuaded discussion on its policies and programs. In fact, the last four years have witnessed discussions and debates on major party-sponsored policies and strategies, with most of these forums organized and chaired by key figures in the party and executive leadership. This author, as a student of public policy, has over the last thirteen years been closely following, with a great deal of enthusiasm and zeal the debates and public policy discussions on the mass media and live discussions including most of the public hearings on draft legislation conducted in the Ethiopian parliament building. Hundreds and tens of hundreds of such meetings, discussions, which have pondered on a plethora of government policies and programs; mostly the gatherings involve government and non-government organizations, persons from all walks of life ranging from the rural and urban poor to the university professor have been conducted over the last thirteen years. For the most part the meetings take hours and hours of discussions and deliberations. Certainly, this sets EPRDF apart from its predecessors. But none of these forums result in any significant breakthrough in terms of change and/or modifications of the direction of government policies[142]. In short, the many hours of meetings, 'consultations' and discussions have failed to produce any substantive policy changes: first, because the new policy elites chiefly see such meetings as plebiscites on their policies; second, the values and ideological precepts that the sponsors of Ethiopian socio-economic policies have long

[142] The author's interview notes.

cherished clearly deter a culture of promoting win-win situations and/or mutual accommodation in public policymaking in Ethiopia (Assafa, 2002).

A classic point in this case which most CSOs devoted time and resources in bringing government and relevant societal stakeholders together in a year-long 'policy dialogue course' is the Sustainable Development for Poverty Reduction Program (SDPRP), though the latter by and large involved urban stakeholders. Funded and supported by the IMF, World Bank and European donors, SDPRP is a large-scale and pervasive socio-economic program aiming at assuaging poverty in the country by 10% by the year 2005 (FDRE, 2002). Due in part to the wary attitudes that government has over the years adopted towards CSOs in general, and particularly to those that are professionally and intellectually equipped such as CRDA, Forum for Social Studies (FSS)[143] and Ethiopian Economic Association (EEA)/Ethiopian Economic Policy Research Institute (EEPRI)[144], and partly because the bulk of the researchers are drawn from Addis Ababa University or are retired professionals from academics, and largely because of the ideology that the inner circles of the party and the executive leadership promote, policy elites are predisposed to adopting a more exclusionary approach. Except for such crosscutting matters as gender, HIV/AIDS and environmental issues, whose incorporation into the poverty strategy program that most of the voluntary sector to have claimed credit for[145]; SDPRS was made in a typical EPRDF fashion. What is more, not only do most of the CSOs lack trustworthy constituencies with whose active engagement and pressure salutary effects on policymaking could have come about, but also they have hardly reached the most vulnerable citizens of misguided policies, such as the rural community. In other words, the constituencies of most the research-based independent institutions, including those of the highly professional ones, have not gone far beyond the urban cognoscenti. This has therefore been emerging as a dominant deterrent factor impeding the contributions that these independent civil institutions could have made to public policymaking in Ethiopia.

Furthermore, the public hearings and policy dialogue forums are primarily limited to the Addis Ababa community; as yet these forums are dominated by party stalwarts of both sides of the equation, the ruling party and the opposition[146]. Worse still, public hearings have never

---

[143] A group of independent minded Ethiopian researchers and academics established Forum for Social Studies in 1998.

[144] The couple of closely linked independent organizations, namely, Ethiopian Economic Association (EEA) and Ethiopian Economic Policy Research Institute (EEPRI) have been established by Ethiopian economists towards the beginning of 1990s.

[145] Interviews with EWLA's public relations officer and head of FSS's secretariat, April and May 2004 respectively

[146] The author's observations of plenary sessions and public hearings in the Ethiopian Parliament building, March to December 2003.

changed the direction of government policies, nor are they meant to. However hard one tries, however many new and alternative and incisive ideas one comes up with, at the end of the day the original legislation as drafted by the executive, which more often than not emerges as the final enactments and are published in the *Negarit Gazeta*[147].

In fact, video footage made on July 9, 2004, from the Parliament plenary session hall and screened live on Ethiopian Television (ETV), shows that in response to an opposition MP's inquiry, Prime Minister Meles reaffirmed his unflinching stand on government policies when he told deputies: 'Any compromises on such programs as land can only be made on the corpse of the EPRDF'. This attests to the fact that public participation in the development and policymaking process is translated to mean managed and controlled dissemination/diffusion of the EPRDF's program via a seamless party fused with the state and through a lengthy consultation in which the sovereign consensus of party leadership translates into the will and consensus of the people (Vaughan and Tronvoll, 2003).

Considered from this perspective, the participation drives that we have been through for thirteen years now in Ethiopia are tenuous at best and a travesty of public participation at worst. The thrust of our participation has never gone beyond sharing information on the policy decisions that have already been made by the policy elites or seeking consensus as well as holding a 'plebiscite' on the ascendant revolutionary democratic values of the ruling party, but it was never meant for eliciting views and ideas that can be brought to bear on fundamental change of policies in the ways that result a voluntary and collaborative move to joint (government and stakeholders) actions toward effective policy implementation. A classic case in this point is education policy. As analyzed in Chapter 4 in some detail, the exclusion of the very fundamental potent forces (teachers) in the formulation and implementation of education policy and program has stalled the implementation process.

The all too familiar and ubiquitous workshops, conferences and public hearings on policies and practices have certainly functioned more as pro forma exercises in public relations than serious efforts to incorporate participants' input and their perspectives into the draft legislation and public policies. As a result, the interest to participate in such public discussions has increasingly waned, or some persons probably do so, as jokingly remarked, for 'capacity-building exercise'[148]. The challenge facing public participation in the policymaking process has, therefore, as much to do with the authoritarian nature of the regime

[147] Response from opposition MP

[148] To mean the good food lavishly and freely served intermittently and following such public discussions, as this author has been informed in one of the conferences which himself participated for information gathering in June 2004.

on the supply side as the infirmity of the civil society on the demand side of the equation. In other words, not only does the supply side of the equation involving the policymaking institutions lack the will to open the accessibility of the policymaking structure, but the weakness of the civil society organizations and citizens on the demand side to articulate their interests and become countervailing force persists.

In the NRSs the last four years since 2001 (in the aftermath of *Tehadesso*) have witnessed government- and party-induced participation, which has invariably been structured, monopolistic, and corporatist. They are structured because the ubiquitous Mass Mobilization and Participation Bureaus[149] in each region sets the rules and parameters of participation and have the mass organizations such as youth, women and farmers organized. Second, they tend to be monopolistic because administrative hurdles preclude competing groups that represent similar or identical interests from forming similar associations or even joining them. As argued in the theoretical chapter and reinforced by the empirical evidence in the chapters that follow, party and government officials promote corporatist participation whereby the former designate clientelistic groups, from among the civil society organizations, to participate or orchestrate splits within them, as in the case of national teachers and labor associations and co-opt and made them tame 'participants' in the policymaking process. Therefore, the strength of the government's and party's claim that the policymaking process in Ethiopia is participatory is much more rhetoric than practice, more one of form than substance, as the foregoing assessments have made abundantly clear.

5.6.Conclusion

The EPRDF's structure virtually represents a party of a Leninist type, as the empirical evidence earlier indicated. Additionally, although its congress holds plenary sessions every two to two and half years, and is ostensibly seen as a supreme decision-making organ of the coalition, in practice key policy decisions are made by the central committee and politburo. Firstly, unlike the latter two organs, membership in the congress changes every two years for it does not allow for a relatively permanent tenure. The congress's ability to influence policies is, therefore, much less, apart from the few days of fanfare during which the members meet to attend to the reports of the top party officials and rubber-stamp the decisions of the highest party leadership. Secondly, the unwieldy and large allocation of membership to congress

[149] Mass Mobilization and Participation Bureaus in the NRSs organize farmers, youth, cooperatives, women and so forth in much the same as Provisional Office for Mass Organizational Affairs (POMOA) did during the *Dergue* era, with the party and executive shadowing all the activities of the government organized CSOs.

together with the stringent rules that the rank-and-file members are required to adhere have little or no substantive influence on the policies and decisions of the party leadership, whose daily lives are engrossed with the day-to-day activities of the party and mapping out of its doctrines.

EPRDF also asserts that the liberal democracy ascendant in the West is inappropriate to Ethiopian realities. The only realistic option to liberal democracy in Ethiopia is, therefore, revolutionary democracy. At the heart of the revolutionary democratic doctrine lie the economic objectives, with the rural-focused agriculture-led industrialization policy being the touchstone of the doctrine as well the party's commitment to the peasantry. The single most political organ that presents itself as a redeemer and insurer of the country against potentially incessant civil strife (which would stem from loss of development) and guarantor of fast socio-economic development modeled after Asian tigers are EPRDF. It also asserts that it has an exclusive claim on democracy and democratic order in Ethiopia (EPRDF, undated, 2003a, 2003b)**.** Hence, on all counts, namely, in terms of structure, leadership and ideological frame of references, the party and the network of the leading persons in the party leadership emerged as the single most important policymaking institutions.

Apparently, the dominance of the party in every sphere of socio-economic and political life in the country and the rigor with which ideology has been pursued generate the exclusivist claim as well as leverage in public policymaking. This has nowhere been more conspicuously manifested than in the legislatures. To say the least, the ruling party and the executive that constitute the inner circles of the party leadership have been almost unanimously swaying the votes and policy decisions made at every level of the country's legislatures (national, NRSs, districts, and *Kebeles*). Admonished to observe stringent party rules and muffled by continuous evaluation exercises (*Gimgema*), EPRDF MPs must vote for their party's proposals, regardless of the fact that these stand to contradict their personal values (i.e. conscience). The prevailing situation not only encourages absorption of party mistakes in the name of, and support for, the party at any cost, but it also stifles creative and research-based generation of policy ideas and innovative policy options[150]. Nor do the opposition MPs possess the intellectual caliber and organizational capacity to challenge the imperiousness of the ruling party in the policymaking process. Thus, as opposed to what the statutes provide, in practice the legislative process follows the following route: the party proposes legislation and policies – the CoM deliberates – the party MPs adopt the prevailing ruling party consensus on

[150] The author's interview notes.

the legislation/laws or other proposals preceding the HPR plenary session at caucus – the HPR sits for plenary session to adopt and formalize the legislation and other issues with little further ado[151].

With EPRDF as the leading organ of the public policymaking process, inspired by democratic centralism and imbued with Marxist rationalization of policy pronouncements, the prospects for cooperative policy dialogues and public participation in the policymaking process are grim. In fact, the absence of commitment to liberal values on which civil society chiefly rests and the experience of fighting a protracted guerilla war predisposed it to authoritarian approaches (Clapham, 2004). Despite EPRDF claims that it alone represents the interests of the peasantry and broad masses, opportunities for the growth of independent and autonomous civil society movements have nonetheless been thwarted by authoritarianism. In effect, the ruling party weighs the participation of the various civil society organizations not on the basis of how many alternative policy scenarios they generate that have a bearing upon policies and practices, but on how far additional resources they can contribute to an economic and social development process within the strictures defined by the party and the executive leadership.

On the other hand, not only do the people lack the organized enterprise in ways to countervail the paramount power of the party and the executive leadership, but they are also immersed in attending to daily survival needs (refer Chapter 2). The absence of proactive civil society organizations coupled with docile legislatures that only rubber stamp the decisions of the party and executive leadership certainly reduces the citizenry's role in the policymaking process. In other words, the CSOs' participation in the policymaking process has been hampered as much by the legal and political contexts as by weak capacity, insufficient resources and weak motivation to contribute to public policymaking. As a result, government- and party-sponsored CSOs have predominantly dominated the public participations in the public policymaking process, which are simultaneously structured, monopolistic and corporatist. Hence, the participation processes that we have been experiencing over the last thirteen years tended to be sham, not realities; they have largely been frothing of words, which have not been transformed into forces brought to bear upon policies and practices.

[151] The author's interview notes.

Chapter 6. Institutions, roles and leverage in public policymaking summed up

6.1. Introduction

This chapter starts with an reappraisal of the significance of the theoretical framework. It offers a succinct explanation of how the pertinent conceptual and analytical theories, with roots in the mainstream of public policy analysis can be used to assess, examine and explain the data collected for the study. The chapter further presents a summary of the findings, reviews the hypotheses and the research questions, and explores potential mechanisms of dealing with the recurrent problems of public policymaking in Ethiopia. The first sub-section (6.3.1) assesses the dictates of ideology, and the limits it has imposed on the choice of public policies and programs, and on the institutional means of implementing policies. It uncovers the main phenomena and events that have provided policy elites with the justifications to sway the entire policymaking process over the past thirty years.

The next sub-section (6.3.2) revaluates the emergence and ascendance of a couple of closely linked institutions, namely the ruling party and the top echelon of the executive leadership, and the disproportionate influence they have on government, non-government institutions and overall public policymaking. The third section (6.3.3) recapitulates how the combined elements of ideological predilections, party and the executive leadership forestalled the participation of the non-state actors in public policymaking. Considering the empirical facts, phenomena and events discussed in the preceding chapters, the last section (6.3.5) also confirms the hypotheses. Finally, in view of the formidable challenges that Ethiopian public policymaking has been experiencing over the years, the chapter suggests potentially fruitful scenarios that policymakers (6.4) and academics (6.5) may find helpful in future.

6.2. The significance of the theoretical framework

To begin with, the theoretical chapter at the outset explored various definitions of public policy and adopted Gerston's definition (Gerston, 1997). The latter sees policymaking as a middle ground between the extreme ends in the continuum of the policymaking process, namely, between those 'who hold government positions of authority', and those who demand change and are affected by the decisions of the policy elites, at least in the context of the developing countries. The rationale for selecting the definition is not only because it emphasizes that policymaking institutions should be subject to possible redirection in

response to pressures from those outside of government, but also because understanding the linkage between policymaking institutions and policy receivers are as vitally important as for searching ways of rectifying the imbalance between the two (see Chapter 2, section 2.2, cross-referenced with Chapters 3, 4 and 5).

Furthermore, the theoretical and analytical framework adopted germane conceptual explanations with roots in the mainstream of public policy analysis. Empirical data have shown policymaking as an essentially elite preference. This correlates with the realities of public policymaking in Ethiopia as has been amply illustrated over a period of thirty years since 1974 (cross-reference Chapters 3, 4 and 5). As indicated earlier, in Ethiopia the roles of the ruling parties and state institutions in public policymaking have always been extensive, with the *Dergue*, WPE, EPRDF and the executive determining socio-economic policies and superintending their implementation (cross-reference Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5). Policy elites in Ethiopia have been as suitably placed to pursue specific policies and have room to maneuver reform initiatives, as have the elites elsewhere in developing countries. In other words, the actions of policy elites in Ethiopia have always been visible and central in determining policies and their outcomes, for they have centrally been placed to propose policies and to determine the nature of institutions to implement policies (see Chapter 2 sections 2.3 [2.3.3] and 2.5 [2.5.1], and cross-reference Chapters 3, 4, 5). Ethiopian policy elites have, however, made strong ideological commitments to Marxism-Leninism, democratic centralism and revolutionary democracy. These predispositions colored the perceptions of almost all socio-economic policies (see Chapters 3 and 4). In the end, not only have these ideologies guided the *modus operandi* of policymaking for much of the last three decades, but also have helped to substantially enhance policy elites' leverage in and control over the policymaking process.

Secondly, although interest groups normally exert pressure on government for policy actions, societal elements in Ethiopia remain as much bystanders and peripheral actors as in the bulk of developing countries (see Dror, 1968, 1986; Grindle, 1980; Horowitz, 1989; Grindle and Thomas, 1991; Turner and Hulme, 1997; Cloete, 1991, 2000). In Ethiopia, as has invariably been the case in most of developing world, civil organizations may well be organized and vociferous in the wake of 1991, but in reality they wield much less political influence. Party and government officials induce corporatist participation of a select group of party- and state-sponsored CSOs with much informal interaction behind the scenes that served to exclude and isolate critical and autonomous organizations (see Chapter 2, sub-section 2.5.2). As a result, neither the autonomous CSOs nor those backed by the party and the government wields influence on policies through votes or more visible lobbying activities, as

argued in Chapter 2 (sub-section 2.5.2). In other words, organized civil activities in Ethiopia depend on clientele organizations of the government, and have little capacity to press a policy agenda, change or influence policies on their patrons in government (cross-reference empirical facts on Ethiopia, Chapters 3 and 4). Organizational interests and specific groups are not well institutionalized in Ethiopia and most of the developing countries, and the dispersion and separation of power within government, particularly through legislatures and regulatory bureaucracies, offer little formal access to interest groups (Chapter 2, sub-section 2.5.2). In fact, the *Dergue'*s National *Shengo* (Assembly) and EPRDF's HPR represented less as the expression of public preferences for more policy actions than a legitimization of elite-driven policies. In other words, the parties and the executive use the national and NRSs legislatures to legitimize their actions, but will keep the legislators distant from actual policymaking (see Tables 5.2. 5.3 and 5.4).

The pluralist model as integral part of liberal values, on the other hand, upholds the direct participation of groups and individuals in policymaking. From the point of view of development, a developmental state that combines pluralism and market-led economic development is relevant to Ethiopian circumstances. However, the Marxist-Leninist approach and its variant revolutionary democracy, which are anchored in class and class struggle and democratic centralism, are antithetical to the pluralist model of accommodating interests in the policymaking process both in Ethiopia and developing countries. This Marxist-Leninist approach will therefore have to change in order to implement the elements of the pluralist model of policy-making.

This has even been more exacerbated by the dismal socio-economic performance and woeful socio-political and cultural conditions prevailing in the developing countries (see Cloete, 1991, 2000; Grindle and Thomas, 1991; Turner and Hulme, 1997). Information is limited, needs are great, resources are scarce and responsibilities are extensive (*op. cit.*). In almost all developing countries, national governments, highly centralized in large capital cities, make most of the decisions that affect people down the most remote village. Centralization of decision-making responsibilities tends to increase the government's power and decrease its accountability to the citizenry. Reasons for this abound. First, the population of most of the developing countries is heavily rural, as for example, 85% the Ethiopia populace is rural (Chapter 2, section 2.4). A population that is both scattered and remote from government is less likely to have any significant influence on policymaking. Second, knowledge of what government is doing is more difficult to obtain. Structural conditions such as the low level of education, a large illiterate adult population, and limited communication

and information flow would mean that a much larger percentage of the population is out of touch with what is happening, especially when government is strongly centralized (see Smith, 1971, 1985; Cloete, 2000; Grindle and Thomas, 1991; Horowitz, 1989). This ultimately enhances the role of policy elites, while tending to isolate them from critical information about what is occurring in the society, and thereby widening the gap between policy elites and societal actors (*ibid.*).

According to internationally accepted development indicators, for instance, Ethiopia is one of the poorest countries in the world, ranking 171st out of 174 countries. Every aspect of socio-economic indicators reflects this dismal performance (World Bank Development Report 2002, 232-239). The real per capita GNP measured in dollar terms is at an all-time low, i.e. US$100 (USD). According to the Bank's development report 2001/2002, 31.3% and 76.4% of the Ethiopian population live under one dollar and two dollars a day respectively (World Bank, 236).

The adult literacy rate for Ethiopia stands at 35.5% as compared to 49.2% for all the least developing countries. Life expectancy at birth for the same year is 42, which is far below the 64.7 average for all developing countries. In 1998 only 25% of the population had access to safe water and 19% to sanitation, while the infant mortality rate stands at 166 per 1000 live births. Primary health coverage stands at 50%. Additionally, the current structure of the economy is not much different than it was nearly four decades ago. Agriculture, for instance, still contributes more than 50% of the country's GDP, with industry contributing 11% and services accounting for the balance (Befekadu and Berhanu, 1999). Hence, centralization of decision making in combination with socio-economic and political factors place policy elites in critical roles in policymaking, with societal elements having little or no influence on policymaking in Ethiopia (cross-reference Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5).

6.3. Public policymaking in Ethiopia: the challenges

The supremacy of the executive and its claims on policymaking had been pervasive during Haileselassie's years, with absolute executive powers vested in the monarchy and the person of the Emperor. The combined forces of party and executive leadership and their overwhelming dominance in the public policymaking are nevertheless relatively new conventions, phenomena and constructs that evolved and became ingrained in the Ethiopian political system after 1974. Ideology (Marxism-Leninism and revolutionary democracy) has since been a critical element guiding and as well as justifying policy elites' claims on the

choice of public policies and the institutional and structural mechanisms of implementing them. Wedged between staggering financial and organizational capacity, on the one hand, and inhospitable politico-administrative and legal milieu, on the other, the civil society, a network of civil society institutions and the public have over the three decades remained at peripheral end of the policymaking process.

Hence, the most difficult challenges that the Ethiopian public policymaking process has been experiencing over the past thirty years can be encapsulated into three thematic issues. First, not only ideology has played critical role in the choice of public policies and institutional instruments for implementing them, but also laid the ground-work for policy elites to justify their claims on policy actions. While ideological precepts and the justifications underpinning them provided policy elites with overwhelming leverage in policymaking, it precluded civil society from making salutary contributions to the policymaking process. Second, the emergence and consolidation of a coterie of party and executive leadership (policy elites) have been the dominant phenomena in the realm of public policymaking over the last thirty years, with the ruling party institutions overlapping with the formally constituted policymaking government structures.

Third, the preceding two phenomena kept the civil society and other non-state actors at bay from the virtual process of formulating and implementing policies, albeit the weaknesses within the ranks of the CSOs simultaneously contributed to the imbalance. All these events have certainly prompted and/or accentuated the imbalances between the policymaking institutions and policy beneficiary civil society in Ethiopia, as the discussions in preceding chapters attempted to illuminate (see Chapters 3, 4 and 5). In view of the theoretical context set down in Chapter 2 and the empirical evidence discussed in the preceding chapters, the finings are summed up below.

6.3.1. The dictates of ideology

After a desperate search for outlook in the previous two years, 1976 heralded a turning point in Ethiopian history, not only because it witnessed the official introduction of scientific socialism, but also because it represented the genesis of the institutionalization of policymaking structures in the officially adopted ideology during the *Dergue* era. The ideological metamorphosis, which began before the *Dergue's* ascension to power, culminated in the National Democratic Revolution Program (NDRP) and was in full sway in the aftermath of 1976. Predicated on the tenets of Marx and Lenin, the NDRP was a radical

departure from the tenets of both 'Ethiopian socialism' and 'Ethiopia first'. This further set the stage for the *Dergue* to situate itself in an analogous position of a vanguard organization, spanning the entire process of formulating and implementing policies.

The nationalization of industries, banks and insurance companies, rural and urban land reforms were premised on and guided by these belief systems. The prevailing frame of references, too, influenced the organization of policymaking institutions. The restructuring of the *Dergue,* towards the last quarter of the 1970s into a standing committee, central committee and congress marked the culmination of the ideological metamorphosis and was an epitome of Soviet-style socialism. Consequently, not only did policymaking follow the lead of the official ideology, but also it featured prominently in guiding socio-economic policymaking, having no expectations, of course, of being challenged.

With the establishment of COPWE, the *Dergue* became increasingly engrossed with the orthodoxy of socialism and Marxism-Leninism, while simultaneously insisting on its originality. COPWE's establishment represented a phenomenal resort to further integration and regimentation of government and non-government actors into highly centralized party mechanisms. For the most part, the revolutionary elites used Marxian ideology and socialist institutions such as the Workers Party of Ethiopia (WPE), the hierarchical structures of the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (PDRE), NRDC-CPSC and the innocuous mass organizations to formulate, implement and legitimize policies.

The *modus operandi* of policymaking, the organization of policy-implementing institutions and the mobilization of 'civil society' behind government policies had been based entirely on the teachings of Marx and Lenin. Nationalization of the means of production and the re-organization of the economy based on central planning and a command structure, and the promotion of (anti-West and pro-East) proletarian internationalism, too, were dependent on this ideology. Not only did the latter set the parameters and *modus operandi* of public policymaking, but also provided opportune moments for the party and the executive leadership for setting the priorities for agenda setting, public policy choices to be made and selection of organizational instruments to put policies into effect. Put simply, policy elites adopted Marxism-Leninism, whose analytical tools steered the design of policy goals and the institutional means of formulating and implementing public policies.

In brief, the clamor for adopting and promoting Marxism-Leninism emanated from the fact that it served as an essential tool for mobilizing the 'apathetic' public behind the government-sponsored socio-economic transformations. What is more, the ideology was perceived as the only reliable conceptual tool and guiding principle for formulating the 'most

appropriate' socio-economic strategies and policies, and thereby determining the course of the country's socio-economic and political development. The overriding goal of WPE was, therefore, building socialism and moving towards communism via a prolonged process of socialist construction and transformation. However, these mammoth objectives were seldom achievable without the leading role of the WPE and the principles of Marxism-Leninism (WPE, 1984). Both the constitution and WPE's program vividly underlined the centrality of WPE, the vitality of democratic centralism and proletarian internationalism as keystones of PRDE (WPE, 1984, FDRE, 1987).

On the other hand, the primary impetus for the EPRDF's protracted armed struggle against the *Dergue* regime emanated from the radical Ethiopian student movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s (Young, 1997; Balsvik, 2003). Having been members of the Ethiopian student movement, the leaders of the EPRDF were, therefore, much more predisposed to Marxism-Leninism than their predecessors were (Bahiru, 1994, Young, 1997). The establishment of EPRDF-wide Ethiopian Workers Revolutionary Party (EWRP) in 1991 represented a consummation of EPRDF's allegiance to Marxism-Leninism, despite the latter having already lost currency. In any case, EWRP was seen as the guardian of the interests of the peasantry and the urban poor and the cutting age of the uninterrupted transition to socialism (EPRDF, undated). Particularly the communists played vital roles in guiding the analysis and interpretation of programs and policies along Marxist-Leninist lines and monitoring the relationships between major players in the hierarchy of the EPRDF (*op. cit.*).

Although the Marxist rhetoric disappeared from the EPEDF's lexicon soon after they seized power in 1991, due chiefly to fear of reprisals from Western donors, powerful international organizations and the US, and to a lesser degree because of its lack of currency, its variant - revolutionary democracy - was adopted in the mid-1990s and gathered momentum in the wake of the 'resuscitation' campaign in 2001[152].

In much the same way as its predecessor, WPE, a Leninist style of organizing left its vestiges on the entire apparatus of the ruling party, EPRDF, as discussed in the preceding chapters. Hence, the politburo (executive committee) has sweeping powers in the determination of central guidelines that apply across the board and to all member organizations, in terms of setting the agenda for EPRDF-wide functions, exercising complete authority over its overall functions, and ensuring politburo decisions are implemented as well as adhered to, although the Congress that meets once in two years has formally been

[152] The author's interview notes.

designated ‘as the reservoir of powers’ (EPRDF, 2003b). In the wake of *Tehadesso* (Resuscitation), not only have all EPRDF affiliates adopted the EPRDF’s central socio-political program, but they have also revised their internal regulations to replicate the central party constitution. In line with the national structure, each EPRDF member organization has an identical structure involving a congress that meets once in two years, a central committee that sits twice a year, and a politburo that meets four times annually. The latter has sweeping policymaking, organizational and propaganda responsibilities. Moreover, EPRDF reaches the outmost peasant villages through its regional affiliates. Its hierarchies have been stretched beyond regional capitals to span areas ranging from government units in the NRSs capitals to small cell units in the peasant villages, with party hierarchies superimposed on government structures to such an extent that the lines between party and government structures are blurred (see Figure 5.1).

Since the mid-1990s EPRDF has resorted to revolutionary democracy, which stems from its second plenary congress held in December 1994. The latter adopted an EPRDF program, which for the most part discounted the Marxist-Leninist rhetoric. Revolutionary democracy provides EPRDF with the best prospects of representing itself as the sole architect, designer and promoter of all socio-economic policies. Furthermore, revolutionary democracy assigns exclusive leverage to the EPRDF to set structures for policy making, and the making and unmaking of government institutions. Having completely discounted the liberal capitalist road to socioeconomic development as irrelevant and inappropriate, EPRDF leadership envisioned rural- and agriculture-focused development options as the panacea for the country’s pervasive socio-economic ills, with the ruling party as the prime mover of all socio-economic and political decisions. The peasantry is therefore considered as the fundamental social base of the revolutionary democratic revolution, with the urban petty bourgeoisie and the industrial workers rallying behind the revolutionary democratic cause.

Manifold factors motivated the EPRDF’s commitment to embrace a rural social base or constituency, as the empirical evidence in Chapters 4 and 5 showed. Primarily, the EPRDF claims that it is a party of the peasantry, and thus other social groups such as the urban poor and intellectuals (under the label of petty bourgeoisie) are relegated to secondary status vis-à-vis the peasantry. The class analyses, which have over the last three years been dominating EPRDF literature, are more akin to the works of Marx, Lenin and Mao-Tsetung than the prevailing liberal values in the mainstream social sciences. So, EPRDF's 'love of the peasantry' is primarily impelled by this ideology, for it professed that the peasantry is the most fundamental constituent of revolutionary democracy.

Equally important, its pre-commitments as a peasant insurgent movement, which drew the bulk of its fighting force from this social class, has probably prompted its present stand. It is worth mentioning here that currently EPRDF draws over 70 percent of its members from the peasantry (see Table 5.1). By default or by design, this, too, demonstrates that EPRDF clings to the rural constituency. In other words, EPRDF targeted the peasantry (the client) as the key social base of revolutionary democracy, partly because a rural social base has situated the EPRDF (the patron) at the hub of the policymaking process, with the latter setting all socio-economic policy agendas in the name of the former at its own free will. A classic case, among others, is ADLI, which was outlined in Chapter 4. Apparently, the peasantry is also the largest social group (85%) in Ethiopia, and therefore, much like its predecessor, EPRDF has always relied on the peasantry to validate its socio-economic policy decisions. After having reviewed the most recent unpublished and unofficial party documents and interviewed party officials, the author can safely construe that the urban constituency counts little vis-à-vis the peasantry, which has frequently been praised and/or flattered for having blessed their stay in power, and it has even been purportedly accepted, among the protagonists of revolutionary democracy, as the only social group to provide the imprimatur for EPRDF's continuance in power (EPRDF, 2003a). Not only has this provided the EPRDF with the opportunities to re-assert absolute autonomy over the largest social class in Ethiopia, but it has also provided it with leverage to enforce all socio-economic policy decisions, including ADLI, which EPRDF claimed to have advocated in the interests of the peasantry. Not least, EPRDF presents itself as the single most important political organization that can set the only palatable public policies and lead the country to development, which has meant over the last thirteen years the exclusion of non-state players, who have little or no allegiance to revolutionary democracy, from public policymaking.

Since the *Tehadesso* (Resuscitation) campaign in 2001, EPRDF emerged with a renewed commitment to its political ideology, revolutionary democracy, with the rural-focused socio-economic policies, NNP self-determination and secession at the heart of public policies and EPRDF at the centre of the socio-economic policymaking process. Despite the fact that the *Tehadesso* campaign was professed to have been launched to uproot factionalists that contravened the values of revolutionary democracy, the wave of dismissals that targeted both the key leadership and rank-and-file cadres of the EPRDF following *Tehadesso*, it nevertheless, also enhanced and consolidated the power of a selected elite group of the party and executive leadership, and emboldened them in their exclusive claim over the choice of types of policies to be adopted and institutional instruments to implement public policies.

6.3.2. The ascendancy of a corps of policy elites (party-melding-with-executive leadership).

For thirteen years after 1974 the *Dergue* unilaterally controlled the legislative process and the executive structure. Having begun as an Ad-hoc Supreme Coordinating Committee, a small group of military officers emerged as both legislators and collective executive personnel spanning the entire process of legislation and policy implementation (see Chapter 3). Both the powers of legislation and execution had been united and invested in the *Dergue.* It is worth noting here that the repository of real policymaking power, however, rested in the Ad-hoc Supreme Coordinating Committee, and later in the Executive Committee of the *Dergue*, which came to be known as the 'Politburo'.

By 1984 the merger of the executive (*Dergue)* and the party (COPWE/WPE) was indisputably evident. Mengistu was the chairman of COPWE/WPE and of the *Dergue*; the seven members of COPWE/WPE's politburo members, led by Mengistu, were all members of the *Dergue;* more than 79 of the 117 full and alternate CC members of COPWE were members of the armed forces; all members of the *Dergue*'s standing committee and central committee, and all fourteen of COPWE's regional committees, were headed by the *Dergue's* representatives (Schwab, 1985). This made clear that that the party (COPWE/WPE) and the executive (the *Dergue*) were fused, although the latter was the single most important lawmaker till 1987**.** This, however, left the civilian ministers neither with the role to set policy agendas nor the power of influencing the directions of policy implementation. In any case**,** the same key figures in the *Dergue* leadership became the core constituents of party leadership and prime movers of parallel administrative and party structures, with all the civil mass organizations pegged with the party as well as administrative institutions.

Schwab further noted:

> Besides being responsible for organizing a vanguard political party and dealing with the issue of class formation, COPWE, in alliance with the *Dergue*, is in charge of developing the ideological parameters of the state and is also responsible for the affairs of the state. It is in latter two areas that real problems of policy-making and organization exist. As centralized as the political order is, lines of political and bureaucratic responsibilities are blurred, and it is difficult for those who fill roles in the *Dergue*, COPWE and the government bureaucracy, to decide where their political territory begins and ends. (1985: 52)

Having achieved a remarkable power consolidation, the *Dergue* appeared to have been well poised to assert its powers in the wake of 1987. A government structure befitting a Soviet-style republic, namely, the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (PDRE), was officially established. The ruling party (WPE) rose well beyond constitutionally constructed state institutions to lead the state and society along socialism and affirm the legitimization of policies and practices. Above all, this period coincided with a consummation of a communist style of governing in all aspects of the political, social and economic systems, with all government and non-government institutions virtually becoming subservient to the party and the state (Vestal, 1997).

After the official inauguration marking the establishment of PDRE, government structures that reflected the new republican set up, as provided in the 1987 constitution, were put in place. Despite the fact that a unicameral legislative chamber (National *Shengo/*National Assembly), which was purportedly to enjoy extensive legislative powers, had been designated, the real policymaking power and the doing and undoing of government institutions remained with the very same top *Dergue* officials who simultaneously filled positions in the Council of the State, WPE central command and the Council of Ministers. Although a more ambiguous process of institutional structure appeared to have been running during the *Dergue* era than during that of its successors, not only was the unity of the party and the executive clearly obvious, but also the supremacy of the party-fused-with-the executive leadership in public policymaking was far bolder than 1991 and beyond.

In summary, for the thirteen years after the *Dergue* took power in 1974, the Standing Committee had performed as legislator formulating a plethora of policies with far-reaching consequences. A series of pieces of legislation also vested enormous executive powers in the Standing Committee, with the civilian ministers, who had marginally influenced the policymaking process, operating as the clearing-house of legislation. Towards the end of the 1970s, not only did the establishment of COPWE/WPE, almost immediately represent a perfect blending of the executive administrative structures with the party, but it also set the precedent for the exclusive leverage as well as dominance of the combined institutions of party and the executive leadership over the entire gamut of public policymaking in Ethiopia. The period following the establishment of the PDRE in 1987, however, witnessed a constitutional means of affirmation and institutionalization of the dominance of the party and executive leadership in policymaking[153].

[153] The author's interview records

By the same token, the wedding between the ruling party (EPRDF) and the executive began during the EPRDF's interim administration, gathered momentum and was consummated during what came to be known as the four years of transition from 1991 to 1995. After ousting the *Dergue* from power in 1991, the EPRDF was well positioned to build and break the coalition in the TGE and make and unmake the participants in the CoR. Challenged very little, it pushed all its proposals through both the Council of Representatives (CoR) and the Council of Ministers (CoM).

Discounting the support that it exacted from individuals and ally parties, EPRDF had a progressively growing majority seat in the TGE legislative chamber, the CoR, up from 37% in 1991 to 50% in 1995. As a result, not only did EPRDF successfully organize the voting system to have an EPRDF President elected, fill vital ministerial positions in the executive ministry such as Prime Minister, the Minister of Defense, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Home Affairs, and assigned its representatives as permanent secretaries in the ministries where it had no ministers with ministerial portfolios, but also had CoR recognized its army as the defense force of the country during the transition (see Chapters 4 and 5).

Suffice it to say that EPRDF swayed all the socio-economic and political decisions during the transition. This period also witnessed the growing fusion of the EPRDF's structures with the apparatuses of the state institutions. This set the stage for EPRDF to recast the constitution, and establish the second republic (FDRE) and the attendant network of institutional relationships in its own image. In fact, EPRDF had no qualms about laying claims on the institutionalization of its programs and ideological beliefs (revolutionary democracy) in the 1995 constitution and other bylaws, albeit issues and controversies surrounding the making of Constitution persist to this day (see Chapter 4). In summary, after 1991 a transitional government consisting of the Council of Representatives and the Council of Ministers was organized, with the EPRDF permeating both the institutions, and the head of the state and EPRDF leader coordinating the set of connections between the transitional legislature, the executive and the party. In fact, this period had seen a resurgence of the ascendancy of the executive and the party leadership across the country after the fall of the *Dergue*.

Following the ratification of a constitution in 1994, a government in which EPRDF ascertained overwhelming and unchallengeable leverage in policymaking was reconstituted in 1995. In other words, with EPRDF claiming the overwhelming majority of seats in the legislative chamber, HPR, the ruling party and the executive have reasserted and maintained sweeping powers. Supported by a team of advisors on a range of socio-economic issues, the

PMO is the most powerful institution with a massive proportion, and it has remained the most authoritative and influential organ of the executive to date. Not least, with the PM at the helm of the party and executive leadership and the PMO as the most active and key institution spearheading the legislative process, the executive's influence in the policymaking process has been every bit as exclusive as during the *Dergue*'s period. Albeit the executive was reorganized and the PMO, as a result, ceded some of its functions to major ministries in the wake of *Teheadesso*, both institutions nonetheless retained virtual control over the choice of public policies and the making and unmaking of government institutions (see Chapter 4). It is worth noting, however, that the center of power is the person of the Prime Minister, who coordinates the key players in the policymaking process, although the network of the leading persons in the party and executive leadership determine the policies and the institutional means of execution[154].

The constitutional and statutory provisions have further enhanced and institutionalized the fusion of the party with the executive and/or the hegemony of the party and the executive leadership in the policymaking process. The Constitution guarantees a political party or coalition of parties (EPRDF) the right to exercise executive powers, which gives it enormous leverage in the legislative process. Likewise, the constitutions of the four NRSs entail similar provisions that bolster the power of the executive and the party, enabling the ruling party to dominate the whole policymaking process radiating from Addis Ababa through the regional capitals down to district, *Kebele* and village levels. The tainted process of constitution making, additionally, bred not only exclusive policymaking leverage for the party and the executive, but has also over the last thirteen years generated a corps of legislatures, both at the national and regional levels, that rubber stamp the decisions of the executive and party leadership. As a result, the legislatures and the executive appear to be different in designation but are kindred and united in the person of the Chief Executive Officer (PM) and key party figures in Ethiopia.

The NRSs, further, replicated the same structural and operational patterns for much of 1995 and beyond. Down the line, the lines between the executive and party are far less distinct, with the NRSs party officials' simultaneously taking control of leadership positions in the executive, managing and monitoring policy implementation. Empirical evidence has made clear that this has nowhere figured more prominently than in the EPRDF-administered core NRSs, namely Oromia, Amhara, SNNP, and Tigray NRSs. Party and government

[154] The author's interview notes.

structures are closely entwined, with the party permeating the entire policymaking process. In other words, not only does ideological recipe prompt the pursuit of a specific package of socio-economic policies (such as ADLI, state ownership of land, self-determination of ethnic communities up to secession, and so forth), which at the same time ensures control of state policymaking structures, but also party membership almost automatically guarantees executive positions at all levels on the ladder of government institutions. Apparently, the historical and political traditions, which began during the *Dergue* rule, have additionally set a precedent for the continuance of state-party fusion.

Despite the fact that the EPRDF came forward with a commitment to empower districts and to build a strong government in the wake of the resuscitation after 2001, the 'strong government drive' has nonetheless imposed severe limitations on the degree of decentralization, so much so that it has led to a diminution of the regional and district-level local governments' involvement as well as their leverage in policymaking. Notwithstanding the dominant claim within party and government circles favoring decentralization, was that constitutional guarantees of equality through ethnic federalism could tone down the fear of NNPs that had suffered from decades of repression and exploitation under the centralized power structures. The commitment to regional autonomy, which translated into formal moves towards the devolution of powers to the regions, was nonetheless contradicted by the center's control of the political process at the regional level through the network of regional parties allied to the EPRDF[155] (cross-reference Chapters 2, 4 and 5). Compared with other federal arrangements, such as in Germany, where federalism has been built bottom-up, and has in fact evolved over many years, Ethiopian federalism has rather been thrust on the population top-down[156]. In the EPRDF-administered core NRSs, the decentralization process therefore has more of a propaganda dimension, with the EPRDF and its NRSs affiliates running and controlling the entire process of decentralization top-down. Hence, while in fact the thrust of Ethiopian decentralization should have allowed political forces, other than the EPRDF and its allies, to participate in the policymaking process, policy elites rather used it to exclude these forces and simultaneously develop 'a very positive image' among the donors and powerful international organizations. Nor does it permit space for the civil society and faith-based institutions to participate in the decentralization drive. In other words, not only is the current decentralization process without participation, but it is also still in many ways

[155] Interview held with a director of International NGO.
[156] The author's interview notes.

decentralization without devolution, although a block budgetary grant to the district governments that has been awarded since 2002 has prompted cautious optimism.

On the other hand, in the peripheral regions where EPRDF has allegedly been elliptically ruling, a range of mechanisms has been used to influence the policy processes, some of which are described as follows:

> First, there is direct membership of elected EPRDF representatives on state councils, such as currently exists in Benishangul-Gumuz and Afar states. Secondly, there have been key EPRDF political 'advisors' attached to the executive in each of the four peripheral states, who have played an active, and some claim decisive, role in political affairs. Third, the EPRDF provides a wide range of seminars, courses and educational functions for state party officials and bureaucrats, disseminating and streamlining an EPRDF 'way of thinking'. Fourth, the EPRDF seems able directly to discipline members of its affiliated organizations and remove them from their political positions. EPRDF wears the 'government hat' to remove and discipline power holders in the peripheral NRSs (non-core NRSs) and replace them with loyal authorities. Much of this authority has since 2001 been delegated from PMO to the Ministry of Regional Affairs. Finally, the federal armed or security forces have intervened to assume direct control in various 'unstable' peripheral parts of the country, such as the Somali, Afar, Gambella and Benishangul-Gumuz NRSs, and within the troublesome Borena zone of Oromia NRS. (Vaughan and Tronvoll, 2003: 134)

Wedged between dependence on the central government for the bulk of their revenues and constitutional tangles, NRSs appear to enjoy far less devolved decentralization than de-concentration (Meheret, 1999, 2002). A recent publication by the World Bank has also described the decade-old decentralization process in Ethiopia as more of de-concentration than devolution (2001). Notwithstanding the sweeping assertions of the FDRE constitution, the dependence of NRSs governments on financial transfers and the manners in which these transfers are negotiated reinforce the skeptics in their view that in reality the latter hardly possess unrestrained discretion to spend on development projects as they please (Lister, 1998). Hence, the four peripheral NRSs (Gambella, Benishangul-Gumuz, Afar and Somali) depended for well over 70 percent of their revenues on central government transfers in 2002/03 (i.e. 1995 E.C). Similarly, the four EPRDF-administered (Oromia, Amhara, SNNP, and Tigray) and Hareri NRSs drew over 65 percent of their revenues from the federal government transfers, with the total NRSs' financial dependence on central government scaling up to 67 percent in the same year (see Table 6.1). Moreover, central government's stringent and arbitrary financial powers, the constitutional requirements that impose demands

on NRSs to accede to the norms of central government[157], and the absence of competence among the members of the HoF to negotiate for better deal and formula have not augured well for the autonomous and self-administering NRSs, as widely provided for in the national and regional constitutions.

[157] The FDRE constitution imposes a requirement that any organ of government, including the NRSs, observe the principles and norms detailed under Chapter 10 in the implementation of the constitution, other laws and public policies (FDRE, 1995: 32-34).

Table 6.1. The NRSs' governments' revenue dependence on the central government subsidy transfers 2002/03 (1995 E.C) in millions of Birr*[158]

Item/NRSs	Tigrai	Afar	Amhara	Oromia	Somali	Benishangul/ Gumuz	SNNRS	Gambella	Harari	Regions' Total
1. Regional Revenue	90	18.5	230.0	374.5	36.0	20.2	188.0	8.6	10.7	976.5
2. Recurrent Budget Transfer	291.2	159.0	789.0	1030.4	198.0	127.7	722.7	98.0	54.2	3470.2
3. Total (1 +2)	382.2	177.5	1019.0	1404.9	234.0	149.0	910.7	106.6	64.9	4448.8
4. Recurrent Budget	382.2	177.5	1019.0	1404.9	234.0	149.0	910.7	106.6	64.9	4448.8
5. Capital Budget transfer	86.4	90.0	186.0	243.7	172.4	60.0	96.0	71.3	16.1	1021.9
6. Foreign Loan & Assistance	107.5	70.9	277.4	362.5	105.3	53.4	232.9	40.9	20.0	1270.8
7. Capital Budget (5+6)	193.9	160.9	463.4	606.2	277.7	113.4	328.9	112.2	36.1	2292.7
8. Total Transfer (2+5)	377.6	249.0	975.0	1274.1	370.4	187.7	818.7	169.3	70.3	4492.1
9 Total Budget (4 + 7)	576.1	338.4	1482.4	2011.1	511.7	262.4	1239.6	218.8	101.0	6741.5
10. Transfer as % of Total Budget	65.5 %	73.6 %	65.8 %	63.3 %	73.4 %	71.5 %	66.0 %	77.4 %	69.6 %	66.6 %

Source: Base data, compiled and computed from MoFED's documents, and typology adapted from Lister, Stephen 1998.
*** Currently Ethiopian legal tender, Birr, is trading at 8.645 against 1 US Dollar**

[158] The 2003 sample is taken to show the NRSs dependence on central government, nevertheless, financial data earlier than 2003 demonstrate NRSs' far higher dependence on central government's revenue sources.

6.3.3. Civil society: the peripheral end in the continuum of policymaking

Although the *Dergue*'s socialist manifesto and the wave of rural and urban reforms that it had unleashed in the first few years appeared to project grassroots participation, these reforms nevertheless in effect were designed to enhance centralized control over the ordinary citizens. At the outset the legislation that the *Dergue* issued immediately following the land reform proclamation vested relatively autonomous powers in urban and rural *Kebeles*; yet parallel party and government administrative jurisdictions, which evolved over the years, overshadowed their powers. As a result, the urban dwellers' and peasant associations, the labor and teachers' unions, the women and youth associations served policy elites as channels of clientelistic connections to the ordinary citizens and transmissions belts of party and government directives, but not institutions through which the demands and interests of members were articulated into policies and programs (see Chapter 3). In other words, though they mushroomed in the wake of the reforms, party- (WPE-) sponsored grassroots 'civil' institutions had neither the autonomy nor the liberty to articulate their demands to influence public policies. The manner in which the reform measures had been managed fostered little public participation in socio-economic transformation. This was nowhere more conspicuously evident than in the rural Ethiopia, where the *Dergue* unleashed three-pronged campaigns (namely, collectivization, villagization and resettlement programs) that effectively inhibited grassroots participation.

On the other hand, bizarre and ambiguous processes had been used at once and simultaneously during the *Dergue* era. Most often than not policies had been launched, while in fact there had rarely been any thorough study prior to the adoption of the policy, or policies were adopted irrespective of the fact that they were sound or appropriate. No one knew the process of how the agenda was set, who proposed motions and how they were initiated, for there was virtually no functioning parliament to deliberate and approve legislation. There has, however, been little doubt that the key figures in the executive and the party leadership promulgated laws only when they wished so, or policies were formulated based on the whims of policy elites. As a result, public policies reflected the realities on the ground much less, chiefly because, while critical information concerning policy issues remained at the grassroots level, policymakers were at the top (cross-reference Chapter 2, section 2.5.2). Consequently, data and/or information that had a bearing on one's reasoned judgment as to whether or not to make decisions on the agenda, by then could probably be filtered as it traversed up the

hierarchy, having had neither validity nor significance. Eventually, not only did the policies that had been conceptualized and formulated lead the public astray, but the implementation process was stalled and mostly rendered ineffective, for policies had been conceptualized by the elites at a higher level, but the real process of implementation took place at the lower levels in the peasant villages, workplaces and shop floors. In other words, the policymaking process during the *Dergue* era was not participatory and thus policies hardly addressed the interests of the public at the grassroots level at all. This set in motion a train of negative reactions that added to the social costs and reached crisis proportions, as most of the policies such as villagization, resettlement and the green revolution turned out to be experiments in "social engineering" that failed[159]. However, the brunt of all the failures and the crises that emanated from misguided policies ultimately fell upon the common citizenry, who had neither the opportunities nor the freedom to articulate their interests.

Accordingly, the major flaws of socialism were that party dogma and ideology almost entirely guided policymaking; as a result, opportunities to express or implement alternative ideas and policies were very slim. The values embedded in the system, such as democratic centralism, socialist legality and proletarian internationalism, and sole leadership role of a vanguard party of a Leninist type, did not allow any room for the citizenry to participate in the policymaking process. Hence, initiating agendas, conceptualizing public policies, adopting and implementing them had exclusively been the preserve of the executive and WPE leadership.

The *Dergue* was, therefore, statist all through, with all the negative implications of a statist style of leadership, with sloganeering and expediency characterizing its policy positions[160]. Not only were public policies based on, and implementing institutions established along, Marxist-Leninist lines, but the policy process was also completely centralized in the party and executive leadership. The stringent requirements of party ideology had absolutely discouraged civil society's participation in the policymaking.

Bahiru summed this up:

> …At no other time in Ethiopian history has a government had such total control over its subjects as in this period. The peasants were controlled by the peasant associations. The urban dwellers were under the tight supervision of urban dwellers associations. Neither labor, nor the youth, nor the press-in short no component of what is understood by civil society was allowed even a whiff of autonomy. It was one big exercise in recasting society in the image of a political regime. (1994, 10)

[159] The author's interview notes.
[160] A senior cabinet minister of the Tigray National Regional State, and a member of the CC of the ruling TPLF.

In summary, policy decisions were made in a top-down fashion with absolutely no democratic participation, even when local issues were concerned, and without any possibility of contesting a controversial decision. Authoritarian implementation of policy, with little opportunity for critical input and feedback, also characterized the policymaking process. Not only was the scope for stakeholders' participation in the policymaking process inhibited, but any room for demand articulation and aggregation by civil society was almost non-existent. Hence, policymaking was neither transparent, nor had there been any sincere institutional arrangement for public hearings, which could have promoted a sense of awareness as well as accountability about misguided policy initiatives amongst the beneficiaries and promoters of policies alike. To put it mildly, policymaking during the entire period of the *Dergue* era had been completely top-down. Nor had it been possible to ascertain the outputs, outcomes and the impacts of policies, for the system did not allow for any professional review of policies through *ex-ante*, *ex-post facto* and concurrent evaluation arrangements. Poignantly, various policy alternatives had barely been assessed before they were put into effect; *ipso facto,* they were either reversed or terminated after huge costs had been incurred, with the ordinary public bearing the brunt of all the consequences[161].

In terms of the liberty that citizens enjoy to form civil associations and the countenance it has shown associations to determine their own governance systems, EPRDF's approach to CSOs has certainly been a phenomenal departure in positive directions compared to its predecessors. EPRDF has nonetheless used its power resources to impede a potentially fruitful use of the official policies by CSOs. In fact, in reality EPRDF sees associations which have been less predisposed to revolutionary democracy as enemies of the second Ethiopian revolution as much as they saw the opposition and the private press in this way (EPRDF, undated, EPRDF, 2003a, 2003b). Most leaders of CSOs designate the current drive for associational life and the attendant participation cynically, though; as the saying in Ethiopia goes: '*Endayamah Tiraw Endayibela Gefaw*'[162]. Hence, CSOs are invariably 'allowed to form, but not to perform', as Chapter 5 indicated.

Although EPRDF situates itself in an analogous position as a guardian of the interests of the oppressed people and the guarantor of democracy in Ethiopia, the series of punitive measures together with the ideological predispositions it adopts have for some years now

[161] Ethiopian academic and educator at AAU.

[162] The nearest English equivalent could probably be "to invite someone to a meal or party, of course, in a bid to forestall potential gossiping/backbiting; but simultaneously, though, the 'host' cynically contrives ways to prevent the same person from partaking of the meal or party".

been deterring the growth and movement of a vibrant civil society. The ideological assertions lay great stress on the omnipotence of the government, the party (EPRDF) and state institutions as the only channels through which citizens' demands for policy preferences are marshaled. The executive and the party have increasingly been emerging as menacing forces that societal forces have not been able to reckon with[163]. Instead of the independent civil society organizations that could have mustered the potential power to challenge and countervail state actors, clientelistic groups are rather considered as the true bearers of the revolutionary democracy, much as in the days of the *Dergue,* with the latter having marginal influence on the formation and implementation of policies, and apparently with little capacity and resilience to press demands for policy reforms on their patrons. On the contrary, civic movements, which opt to assert their autonomy, have either been excluded or neutralized, and have found their connections with the extant or potential constituencies severed. They have not had access to the policymaking institutions, nor have there been opportunities for civil movements to exert pressure on the state and party for policy changes or reforms (see Chapter 5).

In fact, working with and affiliating one to civil society is politically a very sensitive and threatening activity in Ethiopia. Most indigenous civil society organizations have mostly been reluctant to recruit openly and develop a popular base, or to address civil society issues such as autonomy, democratic culture or accountability to their constituents, despite the fact that the recognition of freedom of speech and the right to associate are provided for in the Constitution (Sisay, 2002). As a result, there has invariably been a tense and complex interaction between continuing authoritarianism and opportunities for autonomous civil society activity (Clapham, 2004).

Especially most rural institutions, to the degree that they exist, are weak and have very little leverage, although the official assertions suggest quite the contrary[164]. They may at best be able to organize people around collective interests of no avail to the government. As soon as they challenge any activities of the local authorities, their leaders and members are harassed, find themselves excluded from services, or exposed to arbitrary administrative decisions, arrests, concocted accusations and so forth[165].

Suffice it to say that patron-client relationships predominantly characterize the bulk of the civil societies of developing countries such as Ethiopia, as argued in Chapter 2. Governing

[163] The author's interview transcripts.
[164] The author's interview notes.
[165] S. Pausewang, questionnaire response.

elites and the higher echelons of the executive are expected to relate to the society and distribute the benefits through these patron-client channels, in exchange for which the patrons deliver their support and the compliance of the clients to the regime. The state selects or works through patrons who can take care of their followers and keep them under control; resources and access provided by the government enrich the patron, reinforce the patron's authority and stabilize the regime (Esman, 1991).

Similarly, EPRDF has embraced the conviction that it alone represented the 'genuine interests of the people', and especially of the peasantry who provided the backbone of its protracted war against the *Dergue*, and instituted party- and government-sponsored 'civil organizations' with aggressive funding and patronage characterizing all of them (Clapham, 2004). Public participation in policymaking in EPRDF Ethiopia have not so much had public empowerment significance as much as having instrumental value as propaganda (see Chapter 5). As a result, public participation in the policymaking process has not as yet generated any substantive outcome, precisely because participation is a channel to recruit support and solicit consensus for the policies that have unilaterally been formulated by the party and the executive. Nor has participation provided opportunities for genuine citizens' empowerment. In fact, in part due to the spur of clientelistic links and patronage, and partly due to the absence of commitment to a more open institutionalized participation, state- and party-sponsored participation reinforced exclusions. Suffice it to say, thus, that there a huge imbalance has been developing between policymaking institutions, on the one hand, and civil society and civil society organizations, on the other.

It is worth noting, however, that voluntarism, independence and autonomy are the hallmarks that form the basis for the CSOs' being and the critical ingredients that underpin whether they should have a meaningful role, and make inputs and contributions to public policymaking. The *Dergue* as much precluded CSOs from forming as well as functioning voluntarily, as the EPRDF presents obstacles to the autonomous and independent existence of CSOs. The latter used a range of mechanisms from forming marionette 'civil society and development associations', to orchestrating splits in the CSOs, with the former having clearly overwhelming advantages over independent ones.

The trend appears more chiefly point to the fact that an iron curtain has appeared to be descending over the last thirteen years, with revolutionary democracy as the central bulwark of the fence. Behind this fence lies the EPRDF, the gatekeeper of the fence and of the bulk of state structures that have evolved over the years, as well as the party-business conglomerates and constellations of EPRDF NGOs, leaving the peasantry, in whose interests the EPRDF

purported to have forged all the socio-economic policies, and most independent CSOs and most NSA peripheral actors as by-standers to public policymaking.

6.3.4. Concluding remarks from a comparative perspective

On balance, the WPE/*Dergue* and EPRDF had more in common than they had differences, as Table 6.2 below depicts. Till 1991 there appeared few differences between them, except for the fact that while the WPE/*Dergue* sought a solution to the simmering national conflicts through an exercise of some form of regional autonomy within a unitary state, the EPRDF rather promoted the rights of NNPs to self-determination up to secession and thereby radically altering the *status quo*. Both parties (WPE and EPRDF), however, exerted extraordinary efforts to have their ideological values integrated into the constitutions, and formally institutionalized these values. Both parties perceived themselves as the only cutting edge, prophets and architects of socio-economic transformation and policymaking in Ethiopia, albeit the current global context has made any official propagation of the teachings of Marx, Lenin and Mao-Tsetung obsolete.

Equally, caught up in the nitty-gritty of Marxism-Leninism, revolutionary democracy provides the *raison d'être* for EPRDF to assume a virtually exclusive claim on the socio-economic and political policymaking process in the wake of 1991. Not only is the peasantry seen as the core constituent of the second Ethiopian revolution, exactly as the *Dergue* did, but also far-reaching socio-economic policies to safeguard its interests, such as state-ownership of land and ADLI, have been promoted in its name. Tasks appear to be daunting and the resources are gravely inadequate but the market orientation – which sets EPRDF apart from its predecessor – means that optimism within the ruling party circles is running high to build a market-oriented economy with ALDI situated at the heart of all socio-economic development. The non-liberal style of capitalist development has continued in earnest, ironically as government and party parastatals permeate the commercial and private sectors. In short, in view of the efforts exerted to recast policies in the image of revolutionary democracy and the obstinacy with which this has been promoted to guide policies and practices, EPRDF has a lot more in common with its former nemesis, WPE (see Table 6.2).

On other hand, with the *Dergue* at the highest echelon of the executive leadership, the civilian ministers influenced agenda setting marginally. In fact, the responsibilities of ministers were limited to deliberating and advising than conceptualizing and initiating legislation and policies (PMAC, 1976, 1977). Nor had they the power of influencing the

direction of policy implementation. In contrast, not only do the ministers currently possess overwhelming legislative and policymaking powers, but top ranking officials of the ruling party also have the power to set policy agendas and determine the socio-economic policies. On the other hand, over the past three decades, a range of legal and constitutional provisions has endowed the executive and party leadership with overwhelming leverage in policymaking. The 1987 and the 1995 constitutions, the *Dergue*'s PDRE and EPRDF's FDRE constitutions respectively, are typical cases in point, though the latter in many ways entails significant departures from the *Dergue*'s. While the 1987 constitution empowers the ruling party to lead both government and society across the country, the national and NRSs' constitutions invested the ruling party with overwhelming powers to influence socio-economic and political life after 1995 (PDRE, 1987; FDRE, 1995; NRSs constitutions, 1995, 2001). In other words, the constitutions appeared to have been designed to enhance the fusion of the party and the executive and the dominance of the combined forces of the party and the executive in policymaking. Notably, the making of the 1987 and 1995 constitutions attest to the fact that so much effort has been exerted by the ruling parties to recast government structures in the images of the executive and party leadership (policy elites). In both regimes the party and executive leadership have absolutely been dominating the legislatures (national and regional), so much so that the latter have been relegated to 'legitimating houses' of the decisions of the party and executive leadership. There has, therefore, been a huge gap between the executive and the legislature at the national and regional levels, with the balance of power tilting to the former.

Not only have the Chief Executive Officers, in both regimes, represented an embodiment of the ascendancy of the joint force of party and executive leadership, but they have also been advantageously situated to provide leadership and coordinate a network of relationships among key institutional and individual players in the policymaking process. Mengistu was, for instance, the Chairperson of the *Dergue*, the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, and the President of the country and the leader of the party (WPE). In other words, one person coordinated the range of networks of relationships between party and government, the army and government, the legislature and the executive. Similarly, Meles is currently the leader of the ruling party, EPRDF, the Chief Executive Officer and the Commander-in-Chief of the national armed forces. This places him in an auspicious position to use his executive status to lead the legislative process and at the same time coordinate the relationship between the parliament and the executive. Having become a party leader that has an overwhelming majority of seats in the HPR, he is further poised to get his party's policy proposals through

the parliament and the CoM, although most of the politburo and all of the CC members of the EPRDF are also members of the Council of Ministers[166]. In summary, the centrality of both party and the executive leadership in the policymaking process has been vested in the persons of Mengistu (1974-1991) and Meles (1991 and beyond).

Moreover, the wave of radical reform measures that the *Dergue* launched in the early years of its establishment originated from the demands of the public and civilian activists, although there had not been any channel of communication between the public and policymakers. Nor had there been any consultation between the affected parties and the government both before and after a certain policy was conceived and formulated. This combined with the terror that *Dergue* carried out in the last half of the 1970s demobilized civilian activists and civil movements that at the outset challenged the regime. As a result, the *Dergue*'s absolute leverage in formulating and implementing policies in accordance with the mainstream of socialist ideology continued unchallenged. In other words, the terror generated 'popular acquiescence' for policies centrally made and implemented by the military elites (Schwab, 1985).

[166] The author's interview notes.

Table 6.2. Party nomenclature, ideological commonalities and policy implications

Assessment parameters	Parties/Regimes		
	Dergue	EPRDF	EPRDF after 1991
	Till 1991		
Nomenclature of Party	Workers' Party of Ethiopia (WPE)	Ethiopian Workers Revolutionary Party (EWRP)	Ethiopia Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF)
Claimed social base	Industrial workers, peasantry, broad masses, with worker-peasant alliance as the driving force of the revolution.	The proletariat, peasantry, urban poor, and progressive intellectuals …etc	Mainly the peasantry, but also includes the urban poor and revolutionary democratic intellectuals…etc
Officially espoused ideology	Marxism-Leninism	Marxism-Leninism	Revolutionary Democracy
Class partisanship	Primarily to industrial workers	To the proletariat of each nation, nationality and people	Primarily to the peasantry
Theoretical and analytical tool	Marxism-Leninism	Marxism-Leninism	Marxism-Leninism
Vanguard class	Industrial workers	The proletariat of each nation, nationality and people	Petty bourgeois and revolutionary democratic intellectuals of each nation, nationality and people
Goal of the revolution	Building socialism via bourgeois democratic revolution	The same	Building capitalism, but with measures/actions ensuring more benefits which accrue to the peasantry and the broad masses of the people, with ADLI at the center of the socio-economic development
Land ownership	State ownership	The same	The same
Rights of nationalities	Regional autonomy	Self-determination, including secession	Self-determination, including secession
System of the economy	Command and control	The same	Market-economy with close state scrutiny, party parastatals dominating the spectrum of businesses in the private sector, and with ADLI as the center piece of economic development
Enemies of the revolution	Imperialism, bureaucratic capitalism and feudalism	The same	Imperialism, the national and comprador bourgeoisies
International alliances	Soviet Union and world socialism	China and World socialism	Tactical alliance with imperialism, and is characterized by both cooperation and struggle

Source: Base data, unpublished and unofficial party and government documents, and typology provided by the author.

As indicated earlier, policies were conceived, formulated and adopted by the same *Dergue* leaders, with Marxism-Leninism, democratic centralism and Soviet-style government structures chiefly characterizing the polity. Likewise, state-society relationships were forged along the same lines. By default or design, the proliferation of government-sponsored mass organizations on a grand and national scale provided the *Dergue* elites with the basis as well as the instrument to pre-empt any civilian dissent. Mass organizations (such as All Ethiopian Trade Union, Urban Dwellers' Associations, All Ethiopian Peasant Associations, Revolutionary Ethiopia Youth Association, and Revolutionary Ethiopia Women's Association) became instrumental in the mobilization of civil society under the *Dergue* and WPE, although the former had virtually no part in policymaking.

On the other hand, the current Ethiopian constitution contains the most democratic bill of rights which has never been legislated in the history of Ethiopian policymaking, except, of course, for the provisions on land ownership and the question of nationalities, which continue to be controversial (see FDRE, 1995: 5-16). Additionally, in terms of the freedom that citizens enjoy to form civil associations and the tolerance that the government has shown civil institutions to decide on their internal governance systems, EPRDF has demonstrated a relatively far more positive approach than its predecessor's. However, the clamor for a more active engagement of citizens in the making and shaping of policies that affect their lives has not succeeded, due in part to the limits imposed by the reigning ideology (i.e., revolutionary democracy) and also because of the prevailing deficiencies in the Ethiopian democratic system. Popular sovereignty over the state, the accountability of leaders to the people, guarantees for the protection of human rights in practice, independent access to complaint and redress, the free expression and formation of public opinion, and social and economic rights are all established on paper, by law, although in everyday life they come second to the needs of the ruling party and executive leadership (Pausewang *et al*., 2002).

6.3.5. Running through the hypotheses and research questions

Stretching back thousands of years in history, the imbalance/gap between policymaking institutions and policy beneficiaries persists to this day (see Chapter 3). The indigenous traditions evolved over several hundred years and the values that have long been embedded in the political culture encouraged neither opposition nor reasoned criticism of government policies, even if these entail potentially fruitful alternatives and/or outcomes. Rooted in the

past, traditional and indigenous political values have adversely influenced the dynamics of public policymaking and state-society relations in contemporary Ethiopia.

Beginning in earnest with the coming into power of the *Dergue* in 1974, the fusion of the ruling party leadership with the top echelon of the executive gathered momentum in the wake of 1991 (see Chapters 3, 4 and 5). This together with constitutional and legal regimes has provided policy elites with paramount leverage over the formulation of socio-political and economic policies and the management of implementation. Over the past three decades, therefore, the loci of policymaking powers have been squarely vested in the party stalwarts and the executive leadership, with overlapping membership invariably characterizing both institutions (cross-check with research question 1). The national and regional legislative institutions have merely represented rubber-stamping organs of the party and the executive's decisions, and have indeed become fig leaves to cover their elitism. Not only have the parties (WPE and EPRDF) and their ideologies (Marxism-Leninism and revolutionary democracy) inspired and legitimated policy actions, but they have also added the dynamism for institutionalizing policymaking and configuration of implementing structures (cross-check research question 2).

The public policymaking process in Ethiopia has, therefore, seen glaring imbalances at two levels over the last three decades: first, between the executive and the legislature, and second, between the policymaking institutions, on the one hand, and ordinary citizens and civil society organizations (CSOs) representing various interests, on the other. At both levels, the party and the executive exact enormous power leverage. On the other hand, the ordinary citizens are as highly disorganized as they are tied up with attending to their daily survival needs (cross-check with research question 3). Hence, they have little time to become fully and actively involved in holding government institutions accountable and responsive, articulating policy demands to policymaking institutions aside. The legislatures have become detached from society and rubber-stamp party and executive decisions.

The empirical evidence and the preceding discussions have, therefore, clearly substantiated the hypotheses as follows:

1. Not only has ruling party-fused-executive leadership (policy elites) emerged as disproportionately dominant in public policymaking in Ethiopia, but also the effort that they have been exerting on initiating, influencing and legitimizing policies circumscribed the potential contributions of the legislatures and non-state actors to public policymaking (cross-check research questions 1 and 3). This has certainly

created gaps and/or imbalances between policymaking institutions and policy beneficiaries.

2. The dominant ideologies (Marxism-Leninism and revolutionary democracy), which policy elites have embraced and promoted over the past three decades, set the parameters for the type of socio-economic policies to be pursued and the institutional means of implementing them. In other words, policies and institutional structures chosen for implementing them follow the lead of the ideologies and the prevailing frame of references. The dictates of ideology in public policymaking have clearly fostered exclusive leverage for ruling party-fused-executive leadership in the policymaking process (cross-reference with research question 2).

3. Hence, formulating and implementing sound policies and engaging citizens more fully in the public policymaking process obviously calls for forging a balance between the state and civil society in Ethiopia (cross-reference research questions 3, and see also 6.4).

In summary, first, the emergence of a powerful and monolithic party-fused-executive policymaking structure over the last three decades in Ethiopia has permitted little space for societal demands and pressures to influence and shape policies and their outcomes. Second, not only have the tenacity with which Marxism-Leninism and revolutionary democracy been pursued and promoted dictated the nature and type of socio-economic policies, but the latter ideologies have also enhanced and ensured exclusive leverage in the policymaking process, apparently, for the parties and executive leadership. Third, the absence of a countervailing force of organized, articulate and proactive civil societal groups and associations in Ethiopia result in imbalances between policymaking institutions and policy beneficiaries (cross-reference research question 3). Fourth, sponsored by the policy elites, and premised primarily on the ideological pre-commitments that they embraced, not only have constitutional and statutory provisions promulgated over the last three decades bolstered their leverage, but also set parameters under which public policies are made, with the non-state players having little or no influence on policies and practices (cross-check with research question 2). Last, the means for legitimizing the power of policy elites has clearly been institutionalized in the parties and the ideologies that the ruling parties have been upholding.

6.4. The way forward: options and recommendations for policymakers

The black box of Ethiopian public policymaking has been unraveled, and the inherent defects of public policymaking have also been studied. The dominant forces, institutions and their leverage in policymaking in Ethiopia based on the practices, and against the background of developing countries have been identified and assessed. Next, proposals are put forward to address the most salient problems of policymaking in Ethiopia (cross-check research question 4).

The concept of public participation has formed part of development, public policy and academic discourse for a very long time now, although it raised a pervasive concern and entered the spotlight of the Ethiopian policymaking scene only after 1991. Policymaking and legislating in Ethiopia has so far exclusively involved 'elected representatives' and bureaucrats. In addition, organized citizens can initiate laws through less significant outlets. Nor are there sufficient and viable channels through which individual citizen's demands can be marshaled to the national and NRSs legislatures for these demands to be articulated in the from of legislation, laws and policies. There is, therefore, a compelling need to create better direct input opportunities to give Ethiopian citizens of all walks of life a chance to influence policies and implementation outcomes. Put differently, greater and genuine public participation in the policymaking process results in much more representative policy-making as well as enhancing the quality of services provided by policies and programs.

Not only have public involvement practices, including the public hearings by the HPR and NRSs legislatures, so far been lacking sincerity in their intent, but they have also failed to empower the public. Neither the professional associations' annual workshops, nor government-sponsored public meetings nor those sponsored by CSOs bring about any substantive policy changes. What is more, direct, binding and referenda mechanisms of involvement by the non-governmental institutions and CSOs for rulemaking, changing or modifying and influencing policies in Ethiopia have not been institutionalized (cross-reference Chapter 2). Nor have the national and NRSs constitutions provided for citizens to exercise such direct and binding decision-making, except for call-up elections and plebiscites on disputed internal borders. In fact, these plebiscites have so far been manipulated for highly charged propaganda purposes[167].

[167] The 2001 call-up elections held in Tigray NRS to replace party factionalists and the 2004 referendum conducted by the National Election Board (NEB) ostensibly to resolve internal border dispute between Oromia and Somali NRSs are recent cases in this point.

A true public participation exercise should, therefore, extend beyond manipulation of the public by government and party policy preferences to actual control of decisions by citizens. Public involvement is meaningless unless it accords true decision-making power to citizens. Participation has come to mean more than voting and can include writing or calling on elected officials, attending public hearings, contributing written comments on agency rules, lobbying, educational efforts aimed at informing public opinion, general petitions from the public regarding their policy preferences, lobbying for or against legislation, and actual delegation of decision-making power to stakeholders in decision-making processes (Toddi and Ascher, 1997).

Despite their widespread use, public hearings and comments that have been conducted over the last ten years (since 1995) are not held in high esteem. The most common critique made by academics, participants and MPs alike is that citizens' commentary does not influence policy outcomes[168]. In other words, sponsored by the party, the executive and the legislatures, a plethora of public hearings and public meetings that have been held since 1995 did not appear to extend beyond soliciting token inputs into legislation and these were invariably tenuous (see Chapter 5). Not only has citizens' participation in the policymaking process been far from sufficient, but citizens have also not been accorded direct and binding leverage to deliberate on policies. Almost all of such public hearing exercises have been conducted with a very small segment of the Addis Ababa community, with almost over half of the audience of the public hearings often dominated by the ruling party MPs. Stakeholders and communities outside of the capital have not, therefore, been consulted enough, nor does there appear any prospect of involving as wide a public as possible outside of the capital in the future[169]. The HPR approved several laws hastily, and with little input from affected parties, for public hearing exercises offered citizens little chance of influencing legislation. Vagrancy laws and the System for the Intervention of the Federal Government in the NRSs' affairs, and anti-corruption legislation are classic cases in point, and the political fallout emanating from these pieces of legislation persist to this day[170].

Public deliberation and participation are nevertheless keystones in nurturing democratic culture, and thus policymakers and the public alike should perceive public involvement in the policy process as an unassailable good (Adams, 2004). The government structures at each

[168] Interviews and questionnaire responses
[169] The author's observation note on the plenary sessions of the HPR, and public hearings held in the Ethiopian parliament building, between October and December 2003.
[170] The author's observations of the HPR plenary sessions and public hearings at the Ethiopian Parliament building

level of the hierarchy can be more accountable, responsive to citizens' policy preferences and more concerned with the quality of services that policies and programs deliver only when well-designed and multi-channel institutions that provide relevant stakeholders, CSOs and active citizens with direct, binding and deliberative participation methods are devised, institutionalized and earnestly practiced, for the standard and conventional policymaking through elected representatives such as the HPR and NRSs parliaments alone allow Ethiopians little direct influence on policies (cross-reference Chapters 4 and 5) . Nevertheless the latter can still be used to complement and supplement the more direct and binding citizens' participation in the policymaking.

A range of options is available in this regard. Non-binding direct involvement, as in public hearings and comment periods, means that the public will influence policymaking less directly. Their comments are non-binding and will be mediated by the administering bureaucratic agency or mostly by single-party dominated legislatures, as the cases of the national and core NRSs parliaments amply testified. Referenda permit each stakeholder or participant in the process to represent their own interests, and as a result there may be less chance of biased representation in the process (cross-reference Chapter 2). In contrast, the use of public comments and hearings means that vested interests may be represented unevenly, as in the widely held public hearings by the HPR, for participation can be much less universal than in a general election and can be biased towards favoring particularly vocal, persistent constituencies and party stalwarts (see Chapters 3, 4 and 5). Therefore, both in terms of degree of openness and the high potential to exact wider latitude of public involvement, referenda can best empower the citizenry (Adams 2004, Toddi and Ascher, 1997). A referendum process may be a very blunt public involvement and policymaking tool, although small and manageable public hearing deliberations and roundtable discussions guarantee technically competent outcome due in part to the expertise that such exercises potentially involve (Toddi and Ascher, 1997).

Moreover, the potential for the decisions to be accepted as legitimate also varies, depending on the public involvement method selected and the context of the decision. In most democratic situations a referendum results in a decision that will be accepted as legitimate, where the rules for the voting process are transparent and the principle of majority rule is widely accepted (*ibid.*). In contrast, not only are the decision rules associated with non-binding public hearings, public meetings and comments more opaque, but they are also more likely to be 'democratic rituals' that lack the deliberative qualities and have even clearly failed to give citizens a voice in the policy process (Toddi and Ascher, 1997; Adams, 2004).

Because of this opacity, the decision-making process stands a greater risk of being perceived as illegitimate.

Not only are most of the public participation modalities that have so far been practiced in Ethiopia non-deliberative and non-binding, but they also entail a high risk of being manipulated by the party and the government (policy elites), as argued earlier. Hence, participation has not had the objective of empowering citizens to have their demands incorporated by public institutions, and at the same time influence policies, nor have the participation mechanisms been institutionalized in the Constitution and other bylaws.

Additionally, disillusionment reigns when government solicits public input without much regard for the function it is to play in developing policy, for there has been a lack of clear guidelines by the legislatures or any government agency as how public inputs generated through public meetings and public hearing exercises are to be handled. Not only has this definitely challenged the legitimacy of public policymaking in Ethiopia, but it has also predisposed the process to a controversial outcome. Therefore, clear scenarios should be developed with regard to how public inputs should be structured and how they will affect the final decision, with the support of unambiguous statutory provisions.

However, this is not to write off the merits of public hearings as channels of voicing policy concerns as well as preferences. Public hearings can be effective avenues for citizens' expressions of concerns and for policy demands, if they involve a much wider public than Addis Ababa and in the NRSs as possible. They should therefore encompass as representative a sample of the relevant public in the entire country as possible, so that they provide citizens with a constructive role in voicing their concerns on policy matters and influencing policy decisions. Otherwise public hearings will remain hollow rituals that merely provide a façade of legitimacy, as has in fact been the case over the past ten years (since the HPR has started functioning in 1995). In fact, public hearings could probably afford citizens high chances of influencing policy agendas, for they provide citizens with the opportunity to convey information to policymakers about the prevailing public views on public policies, influence public opinion, set future agendas and communicate with other citizens, although they have still been ill-suited for fostering a direct and binding influence on the policy process. In short, public hearings, public meetings and comment periods have the best chance of success in Ethiopia, only if they complement such deliberative, direct and binding public participation mechanisms as referenda, citizens' advisory commissions[171], round table forums and joint

[171] Citizens' advisory commissions are also known as blue ribbon panels, citizens' councils, advisory boards, and so forth (Adams, 2004).

citizen-legislature committees, networks committed to enhancing civic life, and so forth. A multiple institutional design whereby Ethiopians can be provided with the opportunities to participate effectively and influence policies and implementation outcomes can forge the balance between state and society in public policymaking.

Public participation in the policymaking process can be enhanced when the public's access to information and knowledge of what a government does is readily made available to the ordinary citizens. The adult literacy rate (i.e., 37.4%) in Ethiopia remains the lowest in Africa, and public participation in policymaking will not go far enough with an illiterate public. Educating the public en masse is, therefore, as critical and important as delivering the information in boosting public participation.

Additionally, a nascent but burgeoning civil movement since 1991 appeared to indicate a growing interest and enthusiasm among the Ethiopian CSOs to assume more responsibilities in policymaking, although this has not as yet been buttressed by a greater flexing of capacity. In other words, the emerging global phenomena of renewed emphasis on democratization and the empowerment of civil and social movements and fledgling civil society organizations in Ethiopia offer the opportunity for a repositioning of the policymaking process to get the social movements involved in the deliberation, formulation and implementation of policies. The civil service reforms that the EPRDF government has been implementing over the past five years to make the public bureaucracy more accountable and responsive can become fruitful and successful, if the independent and autonomous civil movements are provided with space extending well beyond the realm of the state.

Although both government circles and active civil society groups have presumably recognized a well-functioning and strong civil society as the hallmark of good governance, due in part to an inauspicious politico-legal environment, and partly to socio-historical and political hangovers, the relationships between state and party, on the one hand, and the bulk of CSOs, on the other, have largely remained less one of mutual reinforcement than of polarization.

A balance between state and society vis-à-vis public policymaking would, nonetheless, be inconceivable where only the centripetal forces (EPRDF, and government bureaucracy, NRSs government and party structures) are allowed to function without balancing centrifugal forces (non-state actors, CSOs, NGOs, the opposition, independent organizations of the various sections of the society such as farmers, youth, labor, teachers, etc.). Furthermore, neither the public bureaucracy accountable to the public, nor responsive service provisions, nor participation in governance is imaginable in the absence of an active and vibrant civil society

and civil society organizations and a politico-legal framework well suited to a functioning civil society, as argued in the theoretical chapter. In fact, the government has recently recognized the profound changes that have been achieved over the past decade in the civil society landscape are difficult to accommodate within the institutional and legal framework, which was developed for an earlier and more limited understanding of CSOs (FDRE, 2004), notwithstanding significant measures to rectify the legal and political limbo has persisted to date.

It may, therefore, be most appropriate to view the government-civil society relationship in Ethiopia as one of supply and demand in which beneficial/salutary outcomes are possible only if both elements of the equation are capacitated. Civil society's important role as an articulator of social demands cannot be effectively played in the absence of required state capacity (Friedman, 2003). Thus, while civil society is often seen as a check on an overweening state or one which is unresponsive in the sense that it can respond to social demands but chooses not to - prompting an emphasis on strengthening civil society in relation to the state to see the growth of civil society and state capacity as complementary, not antagonistic (*op. cit.*). In summary, building a market economy, rectifying the deficiencies in public accountability, addressing the issue of good governance through its manifold dimensions such as devolved decentralization, more openness in government, and effectively fulfilling governmental functions depends as much on a less interventionist state as on an active and vibrant civil society.

Furthermore, although instituting a policy analysis unit near the higher echelons of the executive of the government has already been recommended (Alemayehu, 1998), it will be unlikely to solicit critical inputs into the policymaking process, partly due to the high potential of this unit being manipulated by the party and the executive, and partly due to the growing pessimism with the dominant ideological belief system, as argued earlier. Nor can it objectively balance the policy demands of the state and society (see Chapter 2). Therefore, professionally calibrated, private, interdisciplinary and independent arms-length policy think-thank institutions are more likely to resolve the growing shambles in public policymaking in Ethiopia. Civil society institutions such as Ethiopian Economic Association/Ethiopian Economic Policy Research Institute and Forum for Social studies can probably provide added significance to professionalizing and pragmatizing of policymaking in Ethiopia (cross-reference Chapter 2, section 2.7). However, neither civil society organizations that are primarily committed to advocating and lobbying for a set of improved socio-economic policies nor government-sponsored organizations such as Ethiopian International Institute for

Peace and Development (EIIPD) can substitute for the work of an independent think-thank that should be organized outside of the machinery of government and civil movements. It is only advanced and intellectually equipped think-thank institutions such as Rand Corporation, Brookings Institute and the Dutch Scientific Council on Government Council (DSCGP) that can professionalize and pragmatize Ethiopian policymaking and simultaneously provide policy counseling to government, CSOs, private companies and to all individuals and groups who seek its professional service for fees.

Additionally, there has so far been no institution or center for public policy studies in any of the institutions of higher learning in Ethiopia. Establishing a center or centers for public policy studies at the universities, therefore, not only further enhances the blending of empirical rigor with sound theoretical/analytical tools in the fields of public policy analysis, political and policy sciences, but also the research freedom accorded to such institutions further professionalizes and pragmatizes the policymaking process. For instance, the severe flip-flop mistakes that the current government committed over Ethio-Eritrea border conflict would probably have been assuaged and/or averted, if such research-based institutions had long existed and operated in the country.

Moreover, forging the balance between state and society and making government responsive as well as accountable calls for improving the policymaking capacity of government (cross-reference Chapter 2, section 2.7). For the policymaking system to accommodate the demands of the public as well as have a high chance of success not only necessitates significant redesign of the central policymaking process, but the initiative can also serve as an effective mechanism for the institutionalization of policymaking and analysis in the entire governance structure (Dror, 1986). However, the increased capacity in government should under no circumstances be allowed to substitute for a viable and well-functioning legislature and a vibrant civil society. The Ethiopian Civil Service College has since its establishment been used to train party cadres, and some government employees. It should now be reorganized with a measure of academic independence and autonomy to train professionally competent government civil servants.

What is more, the 1995 Ethiopian constitution appears to limit and separate governmental powers, as it appears to institute checks and balances. In reality, there is little chance of one branch (say, the legislature) thwarting the power of another (say, the executive) should it threaten to become too powerful and take steps beyond its mandate as invariably is the case, chiefly because by default or design, power is invested in the ruling party. The latter represents a linchpin for a network of relationship among all the branches of government both

at the central and at NRSs levels. Hence, the separation of the party and the executive leadership is as complicated as separating Siamese twins. In other words, instituting constitutional amendments is not nearly as complicated as separating the party and the executive, although the latter process will certainly rectify many critical problems of public policymaking in Ethiopia.

6.5. Areas of future research and recommendations for academics

There are manifold challenges and daunting tasks that the Ethiopian public policymaking process has to contend with. Among others, future academic research may have to reckon with the following:

- Ethiopia has witnessed a 'policy explosion' since the mid-1970s and/or a large number of radical socio-economic policies have been formulated and executed over the last three decades. Not only does over 70% of the Ethiopian populace still live below the poverty line, but also food insecurity persists, affecting millions of Ethiopians. Thirty years on, why have the policies not resolved this grim reminder of national ignominy?

- Although problems of implementation have increasingly been used as excuses for misguided and ideologically driven policies, the content of policies and the socio-political and administrative context in which the policies are implemented warrants thorough study. Among others, academic research should pay attention to the social-cultural and administrative context of implementing a range of agricultural extension programs, cooperatives, low-cost housing and the lack of policy on housing, education policy and practices that have diminished educators' contributions at all levels of the education structure, the malfunctioning of urban management and the attendant urban services that have increasingly been deteriorating over the last three decades, and the dangerous trend our diversity as a national state has been trading. Particularly, attention may have to be given to the impact of changing global forces on the choice of policies and the processes.

- Policymaking is centralized and is not subject to scrutiny by the bulk of Ethiopian populace. The public is remote geographically, educationally and in terms of receiving information from the locus of policymaking and this militates against the direct

involvement of the most wronged section of the Ethiopian public in policymaking. Research should focus on how the extremely peripheral beneficiaries in the policymaking process in Ethiopia, namely the urban and rural poor, in whose interest policy elites claimed to have framed programs, and who ultimately, ironically though, have over the decades borne the brunt of misguided policies, could be brought on board in influencing all policies affecting their lives?

- The dissertation emphasized the close relationship between the executive and the legislature. The role of the third stream of government (i.e. the judiciary) and its leverage in the policymaking process has not been examined. Research should investigate the role of the judiciary in the policymaking process, its stature and the constraints this branch of government has so far been experiencing in policymaking.

- Academics are much more predisposed to, and in a better position to form, centers for public policy studies and private policy think-tanks, and to enjoy the relative privilege and the relative freedom to select policy issues to be examined and the framework of analysis. A think-tank or autonomous policy analysis organization, in its substantive current sense, is an arms-length institution that can have a thoughtful cooperative relationship with the government as well as private enterprises and civil endeavors, for it is through maintaining such relationships that it can be guaranteed sustained access to vital information that has a bearing on policy analysis, and the latter receive comprehensive, reasoned and research-based advice on policies and practices (Dror, 1980, 1984, 1986, 1992; Alemayehu, 1998).

- Several policies in Ethiopia have ignited storms of political controversy ever since 1991. Urban land lease, state ownership of land, ADLI, education policy and ethno-federal structure are, *inter alia*, the critical ones. Additionally, nearly a decade since the Constitution has come into effect, finding an appropriate balance between state and society, and central and NRSs governments, remains as unattainable as it was in the early 1990s, when the Constitution was adopted. Concerted research effort should, therefore, be exerted to find common ground among the extremes. It is thus Ethiopian academics' charge to observe and critique trends in policy making to try to ensure that the policymaking process and outcomes are democratic, open, legitimate and, equally important, technically competent and timely.

Despite the fact that Ethiopian academics have over the last three decades been grappling with inadequate facilities, unfavorable academic and administrative milieus it is in the best interests of the common citizenry to address the above proposals in due course of their research endeavors.

List of References:

Abbink, J. 1995. Breaking and Making the State: The Dynamics of Ethnic Democracy in Ethiopia. **Journal of Contemporary African Studies**, 13: 149-163.

Abbink, J. 2000. The Organization and Observation of Elections in Federal Ethiopia: Retrospect and Prospect. In Abbink, Jon and Hesseling, Gerti, (Eds). **Election Observation and Democratization in Africa**. New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc.

Abbink, J. 1997. Ethnicity and Constitutionalism in Contemporary Ethiopia. **Journal of African Law**, 41: 159-174.

Adams, Brian. 2004. Public Meetings and the Democratic Process. **Public Administration Review**: 64: 43-54.

Alemayehu, Lirenso. 1990. Villagization: Policies and Practice. In Pausewang, S; Fantu Cheru, Brune, Stefan; Eshetu Chole, (Eds). **Ethiopia: Rural Development Options**. London: Zed Books Ltd.

Alemayehu, Yihunie, 1998. **Enhancing Public Policymaking through Institutionalization of Policy Analysis in Developing Countries with Special Reference to Ethiopia.** The Hague: Institute of Social Studies.

Alula Pankhurst 1990. Resettlement: Policy and Practice. In Pausewang, S; Fantu Cheru, Brune, Stefan; Eshetu Chole, (Eds). **Ethiopia: Rural Development Options**. London: Zed Books Ltd.

Amhara Civil Service Commission, **Civil Service Statistical Information**. January 2004. Unpublished Amharic Document.

Andargachew Tiruneh. 1993. **The Ethiopian Revolution, 1974-1987: A Transformation from an Aristocratic to a Totalitarian Autocracy**. New York: Cambridge University
Press.

Anderson, James. 1997. **Public Policymaking (third edition).** Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Andreas Eshete. 2001. The Protagonists in the Constitution-Making in Ethiopia. In Hyden, Goran and Venter, Denis, (Eds). **Constitution-Making and Constitutionalism in Africa**. Pretoria: Africa Institute of South Africa.

Asmelash Beyene. 2000. Decentralization as a Tool of for Resolving the Nationality Problem: The Ethiopian Experience. **Regional Development Dialogue** 21:123-147.

Asmerom, H.K. 1993. In Asmerom, H.K. & Jain R. B. 1993, (Eds). **Politics, Administration and Public Policy in Developing Countries:** Examples from Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Assafa Endeshaw. 2002. **Ethiopia: Perspectives for Change and Renewal.** Singapore: Seng Lee Press Pvt. Ltd.

Bahru Zewde. 1991. **A History of Modern Ethiopia: 1855-1974**. Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa University Press.

Bahru Zewde. 1994. The Burden of History: the Constraints and Challenges of the Democratization Process in Ethiopia. **History Workshop on Democracy: Popular Precedents, Practice and Culture.** The University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

Balogun, M.J. 1998. The Role of Governance and Civil Society in Africa's Development: A critical Review. **Regional Development Dialogue**, 19 (2), Autumn.

Balogun, M.J. 2000. The Scope for Popular Participation in Decentralization, Community Governance, and Development: Towards a New Paradigm of Centre-Periphery Relations. **Regional Development Dialogue,** 21 (1), Spring.

Bauer, Raymond. 1968. The Study of Policy Formation. In Bauer, Raymond and Gergen, Kenneth, (Eds). **The Study of Policy Formation**. New York: The Free Press.

Befekadu Degefe and Berhanu Nega. 1999/2000. **Annual Report on the Ethiopian Economy**, Volume I, 1999/2000. Addis Ababa: The Ethiopian Economic Association.

Befekadu Degefe, Berhanu Nega and Getahun Tafesse. 2000/01. **Second Annual Report on the Ethiopian Economy.** Volume II, 2000/01. Addis Ababa: The Ethiopian Economic Association.

Berhanu Nega and Seid Nuru. 2004. **Was Chinese Development Agriculture-Led? A Preliminary Assessment of Lessons fro Ethiopia**. Paper Presented at the Second International Conference on the Ethiopian Economy. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Blunt, Peter. 1995. Cultural relativism, 'good' governance, and sustainable human development. **Public Administration and Development**. 15: 1-9.

Brinkerhoff, D.W & Crosby. B. L. 2002. **Managing Policy Reform: Concepts and Tools for Decision-Makers and Transitioning Countries**. Bloomfield: Kumarian Press Inc.

Central Statistical Authority. 1987. **People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia: Facts and Figures.** Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Central Statistical Authority. 1990. **People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia: Facts and Figures.** Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Clapham, Christopher. 2004**. Mapping Non-State Actors in Ethiopia: A Research Study Commissioned by the European Union and the Ministry of Capacity Building.** Unpublished report. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**.**

Clapham, Christopher. 1969. **Haile-Selassie's Government**. London: Longmans.

Clapham, Christopher. 1988. **Transformation and Continuity in Revolutionary Ethiopia**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Clapham, Christopher. 2002. Preface. In Pausewang, Siegfried; Tronvoll, Kjetil; Aalen, Lovise, (Eds). **Ethiopia: since the Derg, A Decade of Democratic Pretension and Performance**. London: Zed Books.

Cloete, Fanie. 1991. The State Policy Machine. In Lee, Robin and Schlemmer, (Eds). **Transition to Democracy: Policy perspectives 1991**. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

Cloete, Fanie. 1999. 'Achieving capacity for sustainable governance'. **Africanus**. 29 (2).

Cloete, Fanie. 1999. 'Conceptualizing capacity for sustainable governance'. **Africanus**. 29 (2).

Cloete, Fanie. 2000 (a). **At Full Speed the Tiger Cubs Stumbled: Lessons from South East Asia about Sustainable Public Service Delivery**. Pretoria: Human Sciences Research.

Cloete, Fanie. 2000 (b). Public policy in more or less developed states. In Cloete, Fanie and Wissink, H, (Eds). **Improving Public Policy**. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

Cohen, J; Koehn, P. 1980. **Ethiopian Provincial and Municipal Government**. East Lansing, African Studies Center: Michigan State University.

Commission for Organizing the Workers Party of Ethiopia, Decisions and Documents of the Second Congress of COPWE. 1982. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia,

CRDA. 2003. **Constituency Building: Diagnostic Survey on Ethiopian NGOs**. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

CRDA. 2004. **Information Package on NGO Contributions**. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Dahl, Robert. 1998. **On Democracy**. London: Yale University Press.

Dawit Wolde Giorgis. 1990. The Power of Decision-Making in Post-Revolutionary Ethiopia. In Ottaway, Marina, (Eds). **The Political Economy of Ethiopia**. New York: Praeger.

De Coning, Christo. 2000. The nature and role of public policy. In Cloete, Fanie and Wissink, H, (Eds). **Improving Public Policy**. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

De Villiers, Bertus. 1994. **Birth of a Constitution**. Cape Town: Juta & Co. Ltd.

Dessalegn Rahmeto. 1984. **Agrarian Reform in Ethiopia**. Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies.

Dessalegn Rahmeto and Meheret Ayenew. 2004. **Democratic Assistance to Post-Conflict Ethiopia: Impact and Limitations**. Forum for Social Studies: Addis Ababa.

Dessalegn Rahmeto. 1999. Revisiting the Land Issue: Options for Change. **Economic Focus**. 2 (4).

Dessalegn Rahmeto. 2002. Civil Society Organizations in Ethiopia. In Bahru Zewde and Pausewang, Siegfried, (Eds). **Ethiopia: the Challenge of Democracy from Below**. Addis Ababa: Forum for Social Studies.

Diamond, Larry; Hartlyn, Jonathan; Linz, Juan; and Lipset, Martin. 1999. **Democracy in Developing Countries: Latin America**. London: Lynne Reinner Publishers.

Dror, Y. 1968. **Public Policymaking Re-examined**. New York: Intext Educational Publisher.

Dror, Y. 1980. 'Think-Tanks: A New Invention in Government'. In C.H. Weiss and A.H. Barton (eds), **Making Bureaucracy Work**. London: Sage.

Dror, Y. 1984a. Required Breakthrough in Think Tanks. **Policy Studies Journal**: September, Vol. 16.

Dror, Y. 1986. **Policymaking Under Adversity**. London: Transition Inc.

Dror, Y. 1992. Advanced Policy Planning for the Third World. In Asmerom H. and R. Hoppe, (Eds). **Bureaucracy and Development Policy in the Third World.** Amsterdam: Free University of Amsterdam.

Dunn, William. 1994. **Public Policy Analysis: An Introduction**. London: Prentice-Hall International.

Dwivedi, O.P. 1985. Ethics and Values of Public Responsibility and Accountability. **International Review of Administrative Sciences**. Vol. 1.

Dye, Thomas 1995. **Understanding Public Policy**. London: Prentice-Hall International Limited.

EPRDF (undated). **The Essence of Revolutionary Democracy**. Unpublished and unofficial Document of the Ethiopian Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

EPRDF, January 2003 (a) (1995 E.C). **The Principles and Policies Guiding the Implementation of Our Program for Peace, Development and Democracy**. Unpublished and unofficial Amharic document of the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

EPRDF. 1994. **The Draft Program of EPRDF**. 1994. Unpublished and unofficial Amharic document of the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

EPRDF. 1995. **The EPRDF's First Five-Year Development, Peace and Democracy Program**: Amharic Document, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

EPRDF. 1998. **The Propaganda Plan of the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front for 1999/2000 (1991 E.C).** Unpublished and unofficial Amharic document of the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

EPRDF. August 2003 (b) (1995 E.C)**. The Internal Procedure and Regulation of the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF).** Unpublished and unofficial Amharic document of the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

EPRDF. March 2000. (Megabit 1992 E.C). **EPRDF's Policy on the Rural Land**. Unpublished Amharic document of the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Esman, M. J. 1991. **Management Dimensions of Development: Perspectives and Strategies**. Connecticut: Kumarian Press.

Ethiopian Herald. February 25, 1986. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Ethiopian Management Institute. 1983. **Central Government's Structure and Procedure Manual.** Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Ethiopian Management Institute. November 1981. **Socialist Ethiopian Provisional Military Government's Structural and Operational Manual** (Amharic Text). Addis Ababa Ethiopia.

Etzioni, Amitai. 1967. Mixed-Scanning: A « Third » Approach To Decision-Making. **Public Administration Review**.

Fasil Nahum. 1997. **Constitution for a Nation of Nations: the Ethiopian Prospect**. Asmara: The Red Sea Press, Inc.

FDRE and World Bank. 1998. **Program Implementation Manual.** December. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

FDRE. 2002. ESDP, **Program Action Plan**, June. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

FDRE. 2004. **Civil Society's Capacity Building Program**, May. Addis Ababa: The Ministry of Capacity Building.

FDRE (Joint Review Mission). 2003. **Education Sector Development Program**. March. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

FDRE (Mid Term Review Mission). 2001. **Education Sector Development Program, 1997/98-2001/02, Volume 1**. March. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

FDRE. 1995. Definition of Powers and Duties of the Executive Organs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Proclamation. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

FDRE. 1995. Proclamation of the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

FDRE. 2001. Consolidation of the House of Federation and the Definition of its Power and Responsibilities. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

FDRE. 2001. Council of Constitutional Inquiry Proclamation. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

FDRE. 2001. Reorganization of the Executive Organs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Proclamation. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

FDRE. 2001. **Rural Development Policies, Strategies and Instruments**. Addis Ababa: Ministry of Information.

FDRE. 2002. **Ethiopia: Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Program**. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

FDRE. 2002. House of Peoples' Representatives Legislative Procedure, Committees Structure and Working Proclamation. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

FDRE. 2004. **Civil Society Organizations' Capacity Building Program**. Ministry of Capacity Building: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

FDRE. 1995. House of Peoples' Representatives Legislative Procedure Proclamation. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

FDRE. November 1996. **Education Sector Development Program (1997-2001).** Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

FDRE. September 2004 (1996 E.C.). **Council of Ministers' Internal Regulation**. Unpublished Amharic Document.

Frieden, A; Lake, David. 1991. **International Political Economy: Perspectives on Global Power and Wealth.** New York: St. Martin Press.

Friedman, Steven. 2003**.** The state, civil society and social policy: setting a research agenda, **Politikon,** 30: 3-25.

Garnet, H, Koenen-Grant, J & Riellly, C. 1997. Managing Policy Formulation in Zambia's Democratic Transition. **Public Administration and Development**, 17: 77-91.

Gerston, Larry. **Public Policymaking: Process and Principles**. New York: M.E. Sharpe.

Gerth, H.H; Mills, Wright. 1947. **From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology**. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd.

Grindle, M.S & Thomas, J. 1991. **Public Choices and Policy Change: The Political Economy of Reform in Developing Countries.** Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Grindle, M.S. 1980. Policy Content and Context in Implementation. In Grindle, M.S. (Eds). **Politics and Policy Implementation in the Third World**. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Grindle, M.S. 1997. In Grindle, M, (Eds). **Getting Good Government: Capacity Building in the Public Sectors of Developing Countries.** Harvard Institute for International Development: Harvard University Press.

Grindle, M.S. 1997. Divergent Cultures? When Public Organizations Perform Well in Developing Countries. **World Development**, 24: 481-495.

Hailu Wolde Amanuel. 2003. **The Institute of Ethiopian Nationalities: Establishments and Accomplishments**. The XVth International Conference for Ethiopian Studies. Hamburg, Germany.

Halliday, Fred; Molyneux, Maxine. 1981. **The Ethiopian Revolution**. London: Verso.

Ham, Christopher & Hill, Michael. 1993. **The Policy Process in the Modern Capitalist State.** Singapore: Harvester Wheatshafer.

Hanekom, S.X. 1987. **Public Policy: Framework and Instrument for Action**. Johannesburg: Macmillan South Africa Ltd.

Haque, Shamsul. 1997. Local Governance in Developing Nations: Reexamining the Question of Accountability. **Regional Development Dialogue**, 18 (2), Autumn.

Harbeson, J.W. 1988. **The Ethiopian Transformation: the Quest for the Post-Imperial State**. London: Westview Press.

Harbeson, J.W. 1998. A Bureaucratic-Authoritarian Regime. **Journal of Democracy**, 9:62-69.

Haysom, Pink. 2001. Special Features and Mechanisms in Negotiating the South African Constitution. In Hyden, Goran and Venter, Denis, (Eds). **Constitution-Making and Constitutionalism in Africa**. Pretoria: Africa Institute of South Africa.

Hope, Ronald K. 1985. Politics, Bureaucratic Corruption, and Maladministration in the Third World. **International Review of Administrative Sciences**. No. 1.

Hope, Ronald K. 1998. Beyond Structural Adjustment and Economic Recovery: Development Prospects and Policy for Africa. **Regional Development Dialogue**, 19 (2), Autumn.

Horowitz, D. L. 1989. Is there a third-world policy process? **Policy Science**, 22: 197-212.

Howlett, M & Ramesh, M. 1995. **Studying Public Policy: Policy Cycles and Policy Subsystems.** Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Huntington, S. 1976. **No Easy Choice: Political Participation in Developing Countries**. Boston: Harvard University Press.

Hyden, Goran; Court, Julius. 2002. Comparing Governance Across Countries and Over Time: Conceptual Challenge. In Olowu, Dele and Sako, Soumana, (Eds). **Better Governance and Public Policy: Capacity Building and Democratic Renewal in Africa**. Bloomfield: Kumarian Press.

Hyden, Goran. 1999. Governance and the Reconstitution of Political Order. In Joseph, Richard, (Eds). **State, Conflict, and Democracy in Africa**. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Hyden, Goran. 2001. Constitution-Making and Democratization in Africa. In Hyden, Goran and Venter, Denis, (Eds). **Constitution-Making and Constitutionalism in Africa**. Pretoria: Africa Institute of South Africa.

Jhala, Eva. 2001. Synthesis: The Principal Actors in Constitution-Making. In Hyden, Goran and Venter, Denis, (Eds). **Constitution-Making and Constitutionalism in Africa**. Pretoria: Africa Institute of South Africa.

Joseph, R. 1998. Oldspeak Vs. Newspeak. **Journal of Democracy**, 9: 55-61.

Kaplan, Allan; Davidoff, Sue. 2004. **Towards Future NGO Strategy: A Discussion Paper**. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Kassahun Berhanu. 1995. Ethiopia Elects a Constituent Assembly. **Review of African Political Economy**. 22 (63): 129-135.

Keller, Edmond. 1985. Testimony before SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Kernaghan, K, Marson, B. & Borins, S. 2000. **The New Public Organization.** Toronto: Publie Par.

Kifle Wodajo. 2001. The Making of Ethiopian Constitution. In Hyden, Goran and Venter, Denis, (Eds). **Constitution-Making and Constitutionalism in Africa**. Pretoria: Africa Institute of South Africa.

Kinfe Abraham. 1994. **Ethiopia: From Bullets to the Ballot Box**. Lawrenceville: The Red Sea Press Inc.

Kinfe Abraham. 2001**. Ethiopia: From Empire to Federation.** Ethiopian International Institute for Peace and Development**.** Addis Ababa: EIIPD Press**.**

Lealem Berhanu: 1991. **State Ideology and Public Policy: The Case of Ethiopia**. ISS: The Hague.

Lindblom. 1959. The science of 'Muddling Through'. **Public Administration Review**.

Lipsky, George. 1962. **Ethiopia: its people, its society, its culture**. New Haven: HRAF Press.

Lister, Stephen: Jan. 1998. **Implementing Sector Development Programs in Ethiopia**. Mokoro Ltd.: England.

Luke. D.F. 1986. Trends in Development Administration: The Continuing Challenges to the Efficacy of the Post-Colonial State in the Third World. **Public Administration and Development**, 6: 73-85.

Markakis, John. 1974. **Ethiopia: Anatomy of a Traditional Polity**. Addis Ababa: Oxford University Press.

Markakis, John. 2001. **Ethnicity in Conflict Resolution, Political Mobilization, and State Structuring in Ethiopia**. Unpublished Report. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Martin, John; Oksanen, Riitta; Takala, Toumas. 2000. **Preparation of the Education Sector Development Program in Ethiopia.** Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Mbete-Kgositsile. 2001. The Principal Actors in the South African Constitution-Making Process**.** In Hyden, Goran and Venter, Denis, (Eds). **Constitution-Making and Constitutionalism in Africa**. Pretoria: Africa Institute of South Africa.

Meheret Ayenew. 1997. **Public Administration in Ethiopia 1974-1991: Administrative and Policy Responses to Turbulence**. (PhD Dissertation. New York.

Meheret Ayenew. 1998. **Some Preliminary Observations on Institutional and Administrative Gaps in Ethiopia's Decentralization Processes**. Regional and Local Development Studies, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Meheret Ayenew. 2002. Decentralization in Ethiopia: Two Case Studies on Devolution of Power and Responsibilities to Local Authorities. In Bahru Zewde and Pausewang, Siegfried, (Eds). **Ethiopia: the Challenge of Democracy from Below**. Addis Ababa: Forum for Social Studies.

Mengistu Hailemariam. 1983. **Reports to the Founding Congress of COPWE**, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Mengistu Hailemariam. 1984. **Central Report to the Founding Congress of the Workers' Party of Ethiopia**, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Merera Gudina. 2003. **Ethiopia: Competing ethnic nationalism and the quest for democracy, 1960-2000**. Addis Ababa: Chamber Printing House.

Mesfin Woldemariam. 2004. **Ethiopian Peasants and Development**. Paper Presented at the Second International Conference on the Ethiopian Economy. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Mills, Wright. 1995. The Power Elite. In Theodoulou, Stella and Chan, Matthew. **Public Policy: The Essential Readings**. London: Prentice-Hall International.

Milne, R.S. 1972. Decision-Making in Developing Countries. **Journal of Comparative administration.** 3 (4).

MOE. September 2002. **Education Annual Abstract**. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Mule, H. 2001. Challenges to African Governance and Civil Society. Public **Administration and Development**, 21: 71-76.

Mulugeta Abebe. 2002. The Problems of Policy Implementation in the Education Sector: Cases from Selected Regions. In Amare Asgedeom, Derebssa Dufera, Nuru Mohammed, Taye Regassa, (Eds). **Quality of Primary Education in Ethiopia**. Addis Ababa University: Institute of Educational Research.

Olowu, Dele. 2002. Introduction. In Olowu, Dele and Sako, Soumana, (Eds). **Better Governance and Public Policy: Capacity Building and Democratic Renewal in Africa**. Bloomfield: Kumarian Press.

Omiya, Pascaliah. 2000. Citizen Participation for Good Governance and Development at the Local Level in Kenya. **Regional Development Dialogue**, 21 (1), Spring.

Ottaway, Marina; Ottaway, David. 1978. **Ethiopia: Empire in Revolution**. New York: Africana Publishing Company.

Oyugi, Walter. 2000. Decentralization for Good Governance and Development: The Unending Debate. **Regional Development Dialogue**, 21 (1), Spring.

Parsons, Wyne 1995. **Public Policy: An Introduction to Policy Analysis.** Lyme (USA): Edward Elgar Publishing Limited.

Paul, James. 2000. Ethnicity and the New Constitutional Orders of Ethiopia and Eritrea. In Ghai, Yash, (Eds). **Autonomy and Ethnicity: Negotiating Competing Claims in Multi-ethnic States**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Pausewang *et al*. 2002. A Process of Democratization or Control? The Historical and Political Context. In Pausewang, Siegfried; Tronvoll, Kjetil; Aalen, Lovise, (Eds). **Ethiopia: since the Derg, A Decade of Democratic Pretension and Performance**. London: Zed Books.

Pausewang *et al*. 2002. Conclusion: Democracy Unfulfilled? In Pausewang, Siegfried; Tronvoll, Kjetil; Aalen, Lovise, (Eds). **Ethiopia: since the Derg, A Decade of Democratic Pretension and Performance**. London: Zed Books.

Pausewang *et al*. 2002. Democratization in Ethiopia: Some Notes on Theory and Methodology. In Pausewang, Siegfried; Tronvoll, Kjetil; Aalen, Lovise, (Eds). **Ethiopia: since the Derg, A Decade of Democratic Pretension and Performance**. London: Zed Books.

Pausewang, Sigfried 1990. **Meret Le Arrashu** (Land to the Tiller). In Pausewang, S; Fantu Cheru, Brune, Stefan; Esetu Chole, (Eds). **Ethiopia: Rural Development Options**. London: Zed Books Ltd.

PDRE. 1987. A Proclamation to Define the Rights and Duties of the People's Deputies. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

PDRE. 1987. A Proclamation to Establish the Council of States of the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

PDRE. 1987. Proclamation of the Constitution of the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

PDRE. 1987. Proclamation to Define the Powers and Duties of the Government of the People's Democratic of Ethiopia. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

Perham, Margery. 1969. **The Government of Ethiopia**. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.

Peters, B.G. 1995. **The Politics of Bureaucracy**. Longman Publishers: USA.

Pliny the Middle Aged. 1978. The PMAC: Origins and Structure. **Northeast African Studies**. 1:1-20.

PMAC. 1974a. Provisional Military Government Establishment Proclamation. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

PMAC. 1974b. A Proclamation to Provide for a Measure Ensuring Public Order, Safety and Welfare. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

PMAC. 1974c. Definition of Powers of the Provisional Administration Council and its Chairman Proclamation. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

PMAC. Proclamation. 1975a. Public Ownership of Rural Lands Proclamation. **Negarit**

Gazeta. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

PMAC. 1975b. Government Ownership and Control of the Means of Production Proclamation. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

PMAC. 1975c. Government Ownership of Urban Lands and Extra Houses Proclamation. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

PMAC. 1975d. Proclamation to Provide for the Organization and Consolidation of Peasant Associations. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

PMAC. 1976a. Definition of Powers and Responsibilities of the Provisional Military Administration Council and the Council of Ministers Proclamation. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

PMAC. 1976b. **National Revolution Democratic Program**. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

PMAC. 1976c. People's Organizing Provisional Office Establishment Proclamation. **Negarit Gazeta.** Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

PMAC. 1977. Redefinition of Powers and Responsibilities of the Provisional Administration Council and the Council of Ministries Proclamation. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

PMAC. 1978. National Revolutionary Development Campaign and Central Planning Supreme Council Establishment Proclamation. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

PMAC. 1979a. Commission for Organizing the Party of the Working People of Ethiopia Establishment Proclamation. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

PMAC. 1979b. Commission for Organizing the Party of the Working People of Ethiopia Establishment Proclamation. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

PMAC. 1980a. Revolutionary Ethiopia Women's Association Establishment Proclamation.

Negarit Gazeta. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

PMAC. 1980b. Revolutionary Ethiopia Youth Association Establishment Proclamation. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

PMAC. 1981. Urban Dwellers' Associations and Urban Administration Proclamation. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

PMAC. 1982a. Peasant Association Consolidation Proclamation. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

PMAC. 1982b. Trade Unions Organization Proclamation. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

PMAC. 1984a. Recognition of the Leading Role of the Workers' Party of Ethiopia (WPE) Proclamation. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

PMAC. 1984b. Recognition of the Leading Role of the Workers' Party of Ethiopia (WPE) Proclamation. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

PMAC. 1986a. Commission for Referendum on the Constitution Establishment Proclamation. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

PMAC. 1986b. Commission for Referendum on the Constitution Establishment Proclamation. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

PMAC. 1986c. Constitution Drafting Commission. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

PMAC. 1986d. Constitution Drafting Commission. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

PMO. 1997. **The Standing Committees of the Prime Minister Office and the Member Ministries**. Unpublished Amharic Document.

PMO. 1996 (Megabit 1986 E.C). **The Organizational Structure of the Prime Minister's**

Office. March, Unpublished Amharic Document.

PMO. October 2003. **FDRE's Revised Internal Regulation of the Council of Ministers**. Unpublished Amharic Document.

PMO. 2003 (Meskerem 1996 E.C). **A Revised Organizational Structure of the Prime Minister's Office**. September. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Polhemus, J.H. 2003. **A study report on the duties, responsibilities, and capacity of regional parliaments in Ethiopia**. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Polidano, Charles; Hulme, David. 1997. No Magic Wands: Accountability and Governance in Developing Countries. **Regional Development Dialogue**, 18 (2), Autumn.

Proclamation for Defining the Legislative Procedure, Committee Organization of the Amhara National Regional Council. 2002. **Zikre-Hig**..

Proclamation for Enforcement of the Revised Constitution of 2001 of the Oromia Region State. 2001. **Megelta Oromia**.

Proclamation for reorganization and definition of powers and duties of the executive organs of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Regional State. 2001a. **Debub Negarit Gazeta**.

Proclamation for re-organization of the Amhara National Regional State Organs and Determination of their powers and duties. 2001b. **Zikre-Hig**..

Proclamation for the Constitution of Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Regional State. 1995 **Debub Negarit Gazeta**..

Proclamation for the Definition of Powers and Duties of the Executive Organs of SNNP Regional State. 1995. **Debub Negarit Gazeta**.

Proclamation for the Establishing the Secretariat of the Amhara National Regional Council

and for Defining its Powers and Duties. 64/2002. **Zikre-Hig**.

Proclamation for the Establishing the Secretariat of the Tigray National Regional Council and for Defining its Powers and Duties. 2002. **Negarit Gazeta Tigray**.

Proclamation for the Reorganization and Redefinition of powers and duties of the executive organs of the Oromia Regional State. 2001. **Megelta Oromia**.

Proclamation of the Constitution of the Amhara Region. 1995. **Zikre-Hig**..

Proclamation to establish the executive organs of the Oromia Regional State. 1995. **Megelta Oromia**.

Proclamation to provide for the establishment of Woredas of the Amhara Regional State. 1995. **Zikre-Hig**.

Proclamation to provide for the Revised Constitution of the Amhara National Regional State. 2001. **Zikre-Hig**.

Proclamation to Ratify the Revised Constitution, 2001, of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State. 2001. **Debub Negarit Gazeta**.

Redden, Kenneth. 1966. **The Law Making Process in Ethiopia**. Faculty of Law: Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Reporter. May 2001. The Amharic Monthly Magazine: 4: 10-11.

Rondinelli D.A.; Cheema., G.S. 1983. Implementing Decentralization Policies: An Introduction. In Cheema. G.S.; D.A. Rondinelli, (Eds). **Decentralization and Development: Policy Implantation in Developing Countries.** Beverly Hills: Sage.

Saasa, Oliver 1985. Public Policymaking in Developing Countries: The Utility of Cotemporary Decision-making Models. **Public Administration and Development.** 5:309-321.

Sabatier, Paul. 1991. Toward Better Theories of the Policy process. **Political Science and Politics**. June.

Schacter, M. December 2000. **Public Sector Reform in Developing Countries: Issues, Lessons and Future Directions**. Online at http://www.iog.ca/cida/1/1/1.html. Accessed 23 July 2002.

Schwab, Peter. 1985. **Ethiopia: Politics, Economics and Society**. London: Frances Printer.

Serra-Horguelin, Arnault. 1999. **The Federal Experiment in Ethiopia: A Socio-Political Analysis.** Travaux Et Documents.

Seyoum Tefera. 1996. Attempts at Educational Reform in Ethiopia: A Top-down or a Bottom-up Reform? **The Ethiopian Journal of Education**. 16: 1-36.

Shiferaw W. Michael: 1989. **The Law Making Process in Ethiopia**. Faculty of Law, Addis Ababa University: Addis Ababa

Sisay Gebre-Egziabher. 2002. **The Role of Society Organizations in Democratization Process in Ethiopia**. Paper Presented at the Fifth International Conference of the International Society for the Third Sector Research (ISTR). University of Cape Town, South Africa.

Smith, Brian 1985. **Decentralization: The Territorial Dimension of the State.** London: Allen and Urwin.

Smith, Brian. 1988. **Bureaucracy and Political Power**. Sussex: Wheatsheaf.

Smith, Brian. 1996. Sustainable Local Democracy. **Public Administration and Development**, 16: 163-178.

Smith, T.B. 1973. The Policy Implementation Process. **Policy Sciences**. 4: 197-209.

Smith, T.B. 1985. Evaluating Development Policies and Programs in the Third World. **Public Administration and Development**, 5: 129-144.

Stahl, Michael. 1989. Capturing Peasants though Cooperatives - The Case of Ethiopia. **Review of African Political Economy**. 44: 37-72

Tandon**,** Rajesh. 1991. **Civil Society, the State and the Role of NGOs**. Vol. 8. No. 3. IDR Report.

Teferra H. Selassie: 1997. **The Ethiopian Revolution: 1974-1991**. London: Kegan Paul International.

Tekeste Negash. 1993. **A Report of a Workshop on the Ethiopian Education Policy**. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Terefe Degefe. 2001. **Death of the Mother Tree: Land Tenure and Environmental Degradation in the Oromian Highlands, Ethiopia, 1900-1997**. The Hague: Institute of Social Studies.

TGE. 1991. A Proclamation to Define the Powers and Duties of the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

TGE. 1991. A Proclamation to Define the Powers and Functions of the President of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

TGE. 1991. A Proclamation to Define the Rights and Duties of the Members of the Council of Representatives. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

TGE. 1991. Transitional Period Charter of Ethiopia. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

TGE. 1992. A Proclamation to Provide for the Establishment of National/Regional Self-Governments. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

TGE. 1992. A Proclamation to Provide for the Establishment of the Constitutional

Commission. **Negarit Gazeta**. Addis Ababa: Ethiopia.

TGE. 1994. **Education and Training Policy.** April Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

TGE. 1994. **Education Sector Strategy**. September Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

TGE. 1995. The abridged clarification of the draft constitution adopted by the council of Representatives**.** October Unpublished Amharic Document. (Tikemt 18, 1987 E.C)

The 1931 His Imperial (Ethiopian) Constitution, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The 1955 Revised Constitution, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The Constitution of Tigray National Regional Sate/Amharic version/. **Negarit Gazeta Tigray**. June 1995.

The Draft Constitution Adopted by the Council of Representatives. Unpublished Amharic Document. May 1994/ Miazia 24, 1986 (E.C).

The Draft Constitution of Ethiopia presented by the Constitution Drafting Commission to the Transitional Government Ethiopia's Council of Representatives**.** Unpublished Amharic Document. April 1994/Megabit 29, 1986 (E.C).

The Minutes of the Constitutional Assembly in six Volumes (1994). Unpublished Amharic documents.

The Minutes of the Plenary Sessions of Council of Representatives (1st -109th Regular Sessions). Unpublished Amharic documents. July 1991-August 1995 (Hamle 1983 to Nehase 1987 E.C).

The Minutes of the Plenary Sessions of the House of Federation. August 1995-June 2000/ October 2000-June 2002 (Nehase 1988 to Sene 1992 E.C/Tikimt to Sene 1994 E.C). Unpublished Amharic Documents.

The Minutes of the Plenary Sessions of the House of peoples' Representatives: August 1995-June 2000/ September 2000-April 2003 (Nehase 1988 to Sene 1992 E.C/Meskerem 1993 to Miazia 1995 E.C). Unpublished Amharic documents.

The Revised Constitution of the Tigray National Regional State. **Negarit Gazeta Tigray.** 45/2001.

Theodoulou, Stella; Chan, Matthew. 1995. **Public Policy: The Essential Readings**. London: Prentice-Hall International.

Tigray National Regional State Executive Reorganization and Powers and Duties Proclamation. **Negarit Gazeta Tigray**. 46/2002.

Tigray National Regional State's Woreda (District) Establishment Proclamation. **Negarit Gazeta Tigray**. 47/2002.

Tigray National Regional State's Zonal Reorganization proclamation. **Negarit Gazeta Tigray**. 48/2002.

Todaro, Michael. 1992. **Economics for a Developing World**. London: Longman.

Toddi, Steelman; Ascher, William. 1997. Public involvement methods in natural resource Policymaking: Advantages, disadvantages and trade-offs. **Policy Sciences**: 30: 71-90.

TPLF. May 1883. **People's Democratic Programme of the Tigray People's Liberation Front.**

Tuner, M; Hulme, D. 1997. **Governance, Administration & Development: Making the State Work.** Hong Kong: Macmillan Press Ltd.

Vaughan, Sarah; Tronvoll, Kjetil. 2003. **The Culture of Political Power in Contemporary Ethiopian Political Life**. SidaStudies.

Vestal, Theodore. 1996. An Analysis of the New Constitution of Ethiopia and the Process of Its Adoption. **Northeast African Studies**, 3:21-38.

Vestal, Theodore. 1997. Promises Unkept: Freedom of Association in the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. In Fukui, K; Kurimoto, K; Shegeta, M, (Eds). **Ethiopia in Broader Perspective: Papers of 13th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies**. Kyoto (Japan): Nakanishi Printing Co., Ltd.

Weaver, James; Rock, Michael; Kusterer, Kenneth. 1997. **Achieving Broad-Based Sustainable Development: Governance, Environment, and Growth with Equity**. Connecticut: Kumarian Press.

Weber, Max. 1969. **Selection in Translation**, edited by W.G. Runciman, Translated by E. Matthews. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wessels, Leon. 2001. Foreword**.** In Hyden, Goran and Venter, Denis, (Eds). **Constitution-Making and Constitutionalism in Africa**. Pretoria: Africa Institute of South Africa.

White, Gordon. Constructing a Democratric Developmental State. In Robinson, Mark and White, Gordon **The Democratic Developmental State: Politics and Instituional Design** (Eds). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

World Bank 2002. **World Development Report 2002.** Oxford University Press.

World Bank Group. **Administrative and Civil Service Reform**. Online at http://www1.worldbank.org/publicsector/civilservice/debate1.htm. Accessed 23 July 2002.

World Bank. 2001. ***Worda* Studies**. Addis Ababa. World Bank.

World Bank. 2001. **World Development Indicators**. New York: Oxford University Press.

World Bank. 2003. **World Development Report**. New York: Oxford University Press.

World Bank: 1992a. **World Development Report 1992. Development and the Environment**. New York: Oxford University Press.

World Bank: **Decentralization and Governance: Does Decentralization Improve Public Service Delivery?** June 2001.

WPE. September 1984. **The Program of the Workers' Party of Ethiopia** (Amharic Text). Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Young, John. 1997. **Peasant Revolution in Ethiopia: The Tigray People's Liberation Front, 1975-1991.** Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.