

Narratives of Developmentalism and Development in Ethiopia: Some preliminary explorations

Asnake Kefale¹

Abstract

Development has remained one of the key aspirations of the developing world. There is, however, little consensus what it actually means and how it could be brought about. This is also true in the Ethiopia. Since the beginning of 2000s, the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) began to portray poverty as an existential threat to the country. Consequently, it began to present itself as a 'developmental state'. Concomitantly, it was said that neoliberalism faced its dead-end in bringing development in Africa. Hence, what is required is a 'democratic developmental state'. The ideology of developmentalism was also given a big boost after the controversial 2005 elections. Following the 2010 parliamentary elections, the EPRDF as a winning party endorsed a five year ambitious 'Growth and Transformation Plan'.

However, there are deep contradictions in the narratives of development and Developmentalism in the country. First, for the EPRDF and its supporters, the economic successes that the country witnessed in the last several years should be credited to the democratic developmental strategies and practices of the ruling party. Second, almost all of the opposition political parties accuse the regime of using development as an instrument of consolidating its grip on power by undermining electoral democracy. By taking what has been stated above as a background, this paper examines the contradictory narratives on such issues as 'developmental state'; 'economic growth'; 'development strategies'; 'equity and social justice'; 'urban development and renewal' and others. The study hopes to provide insights how issues of development are contested and negotiated in a country which has a long history of dictatorship and economic stagnation. In terms of methodology, the paper uses information that will be gathered from official documents, newspapers and magazines and others.

¹ Assistant Professor of Political Science and International Relations, Addis Ababa University, POB 1176, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. E-mail. asnakekefale@gmail.com

I. Introduction

Contemporary views on development go beyond the simplistic view that posits development as growth. Today, many scholars conceptualize development in terms of the reduction or elimination of poverty, inequality and unemployment (Seers 1969:3). Such scholars like Amarty Sen (1999) even consider development from the view point of freedom, social and political equality. Development has been, however, traditionally considered in terms of the alteration of the structure of production and employment in which agriculture's share of the economy declines and the shares of manufacturing and service industries increase (Todaro 1996:49). That is why development strategies usually focus on rapid industrialization, often at the expense of rural development.

Debates about the nature of development are still important for Africa where myriads of developmental models failed. Presently, one of the development models which are being promoted as a panacea for Africa is the 'developmental state'. Ethiopia in recent years has become one of the champions of the developmental state model. The ruling party – the EPRDF – at least since 2007 follows what it calls a 'democratic developmental state' model.

The EPRDF and the country's long serving Prime Minister, Mr. Meles Zenawi now advocate the use of this model not only in Ethiopia but also across Africa.² The double digit GDP growth rate which the country achieved for the last several years since 2003/04 has somehow boosted the confidence of the government in its developmental path. There is, however, little public debate on the nature of Ethiopia's democratic developmental state model. This paper tries to examine the politics of developmentalism and development by looking at some contending narratives – the narratives of the government and the counter narratives of critics and the political opposition.

The paper is divided into four parts. The first part is the introduction. The second part deals with the theory of the developmental state and considers its viability as an alternative model of development for the African continent. The third part tries to outline some of the most contentions surrounding Ethiopian model of development. The final provides a brief conclusion.

II. The Developmental State: An Alternative to African Development?

The term 'developmental state' is used by scholars to refer to the phenomenon of state-led macroeconomic planning in East Asia in the late twentieth century. In this model the state has independent political power as well as control over the economy. It was in 1982 that Chalmers

² The Prime Minister in a paper entitled 'African Development: Dead Ends and New Beginnings (Preliminary Draft' presented at the Initiative Policy Dialogue in London in 2006 and disseminated by the internet declared the failure of neo-liberalism to address African problems and advocated the use of the developmental state model of East Asia. See [http://www.africanidea.org/m_zenawi_aug_9_2006.pdf].

Johnson conceptualized the term developmental state to refer and analyze the process industrialization in Japan

The core idea of the theory of developmental state is that the state should make development its top priority and intervene in the economy to facilitate growth and industrial transformation. A developmental state, according to Bolesta (2007: 105) could be conceptualized as between liberal open economic model and a centrally planned economy. It is thus neither capitalist nor socialist. It rather tries to capture the advantages of private enterprise and the capacity of the state to muster economic development. In this context, the state itself leads the industrialization drive.

In addition to bolstering the role of the state in the economy, the developmental state requires an ideological basis. According to Mkandawire (2001:290),

In terms of ideology, such a state is essentially one whose ideological underpinning is ‘developmentalist’ in that it conceives its ‘mission’ as that of ensuring economic development, usually interpreted to mean high rates of accumulation and industrialization.

In this respect, the ERPDF since 2000’s coined the motto that the worst enemy of the country and its peoples is poverty and hence all sections of the society by the leadership of the state – which is both developmentalist and democratic should strive to end poverty. A related slogan in this regard says ‘we will make poverty history’.

According to Castells (1992: 55) a developmental state “establishes as its principle of legitimacy its ability to promote sustained development and [...] structural change in the productive system.’ This has also been somehow reflected in the Ethiopian context. After the debacle of the May 2005 elections in which EPRDF victory was controversial and the crackdown on the opposition parties, civil society and the media, the Ethiopian government seeks to strengthen its legitimacy on the sustained high rate of growth and infrastructural development that were witnessed in the country in the last several years.

Although the notion of the ‘developmental State’ is often associated with the first and second generation of newly industrialized countries in East Asia, the idea of the ‘developmental State’ in practice was born long before it was so labeled. In fact, governments played pivotal roles in the industrialization of such European countries as England, the Netherlands, and Germany. Nonetheless, the concept of developmental state in its present context emerged due to the unprecedented levels of growth experienced by such East Asian countries as Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia and others. All these countries had the common factor of an interventionist state that directed economic development.

According to Rapley (2002:119) the successes that followed interventionist policies of the states of East Asia helped the development of a *new* theory in development studies which is called the developmental state. While the developmental state entails a drift towards state interventionism, it does not handicap socio-economic development as it was often the case in the former centrally-planned socialist economies (Bolesta 2007:106).

Even if the state played a central role in the development of East Asian economies, a combination of multitude of factors contributed to their fast growth. These, according to

Leenders (2007: 3-15) broadly include: the efforts to catch-up western development with technology transfer, state protectionism and subsidies for developing selected domestic industries, , close relationship between state bureaucracy and industry guaranteeing autonomy from societal forces, unique East Asian characteristics-Asian culture (the Confusian values that are most commonly associated with developmental state in East Asia) along with the contexts of post WWII and cold war period. Leenders after outlining the various factors that contributed to the transformation of East Asian economies concluded the difficulty of applying the developmental state model of East Asia to other developing countries. He found out that these contexts were then combined to suggest that the developmental state in its East Asian form cannot be applied successfully to other developing regions.

The impact of the developmental state model on democracy has been one of the controversial issues. East Asian economies like Korea and Taiwan registered unprecedented levels of growth while they were under authoritarian regimes. Even in Japan where electoral democracy was instituted in the wake of the Second World War, elements of authoritarianism persisted for a long time. The bureaucracy in Japan, for instance, appeared to have the upper hand (even as compared to elected officials) in the management of the country (Bolesta 2007:107).

Hence, the earlier conception of the developmental state paid little attention, if any to democratic participation. In fact, some scholars regarded the repressive nature of the state as one of the factors that enhanced its developmental capacity (Edigheji, 2005: 12). That is why many scholars argue that the developmental state model of East Asia is inconsistent with the vision of a pluralistic form of democracy in which a multitude of interest groups enjoy unrestricted access to the state (Onis quoted in Leenders, 2007: 12). As a result, there is a strong skepticism about the tendency of using this model in other developing regions like Africa.

With the recent revival of the idea of the developmental state, there has been an attempt to give it a democratic credential. On the one hand, there is a strong contention that instituting a democratic system of government requires robust economic development. Lipset much earlier showed how economic development (building of a large middle class) helps the consolidation of democracy (1960). On the other hand, there are those who underscore the possibility of reconciling state autonomy which is a requisite of developmental state and democratic participation. In this respect, Edigheji (2005:22), defines a democratic developmental state as a one which ‘not only has the institutional attributes of the classical developmental state, that is, being autonomous and coherent, but also takes on board the attributes of procedural democracy’

In recent years, there has been a renewed interest on the applicability of the developmental state model to Africa. Unfortunately, Africa since independence has been a testing ground of many models of development in vain. The first generation of African leaders ‘adopted State-led development strategies whereby governments played a pivotal role not only as facilitators and

regulators but also as producers, traders and bankers' (ECA 2011:1). In spite of some initial successes, this development strategy led to unsustainable macroeconomic instability which induced the structural adjustment policies of the 1990s.

Immediately after independence, many of the African countries with the exception of few (like Kenya) adopted a model of development that vested in the responsibility of leading the economy to the state. The majority of the countries of Africa adopted various forms of socialism – which advocated the control of the vital sectors of the economy and undermined private initiative. While this approach could be credited for its emphasis on social justice, it failed to bring economic transformation.

With the end of the cold war and the collapse of the socialist system, African countries were forced to undertake the now infamous structural adjustment programs (SAPS) and to liberalize their economies. In spite of the rather constant search of success stories by the donors, these programs also failed to bring development.

Due to the failure of SAPS and policies of economic liberalization, policymakers and scholars across Africa are currently engaged in exploring alternatives paths of development. In this process, the central role the state played in the economic development of the Asian tigers and some Latin American countries made the developmental state model attractive. The two African countries which officially pronounced their pursuit of a 'democratic developmental' state model are South Africa and Ethiopia which are led by left leaning dominant political parties the African National Congress (ANC) and the EPRDF respectively. The Ethiopian Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi has for the last several years been ardent advocate of the developmental state model in the continent. He in several occasions reiterated the impossibility of breaking the development impasse in the continent by the use of a neo-liberal approach.³ His position has recently been adopted by the UN Economic Commission for Africa and other international agencies (ECA 2011).

According to the ECA, the failure of earlier approaches, both State-led and market-driven, points in the direction of a developmental State that uses the market as an instrument rather than a "mechanism" for fostering long-term investment, rapid and sustained economic growth, equity and social development, and does this in the context of a democratic, inclusive and comprehensive national development framework (2011: 2). Critics, however, caution by emphasizing the difficulty of replicating the success stories of East Asia in Africa because of differing local, international and historical contexts. The pursuit of a developmental state model which presupposes a 'strong' state is also looked at with suspicion due to its negative impact on democratic accountability and pluralist politics.

3

III. Development and Developmentalism in Ethiopia: Contending voices

With an estimated population of above eighty million, Ethiopia stands as the second populous country in Sub-Saharan Africa. The main stay of the economy is subsistent peasant agriculture which accounts for about 42.9 percent of the GDP. Agriculture provides the largest proportion of foreign earnings and employs more than 85 percent of the population (African Economic Outlook, 2011). The country is confronted with complex poverty, which is broad, deep and structural. The country has one of the lowest per capita incomes – about 1000 USD and is categorized as one of the poorest countries in the world (Ibid).

The economic policy of the country has been radically changing over the last many decades. The military regime which ruled the country in the period between 1974 and 1991 followed a socialist model. The EPRDF which assumed state power in May 1991, on the main follows a free market economic system but since the mid of 2000s is becoming more interventionist and assertive.

Since 2003/2004, the Ethiopian economy achieved a double-digit growth (see table 2.1 below). However, the country has been struggling with the twin macroeconomic challenges of high inflation and very low international reserves since 2007/2008 (Ibid.). This high growth rate has been driven mainly by a boom in services and healthy growth in agriculture, supported by strong service exports and increasing official development assistance (Ibid).

3.1 Developmentalism vs. democracy

The EPRDF government which has been ruling the country for twenty years now has framed its guiding slogans in terms of peace, democracy and development. Since the controversial elections of 2005,⁴ the EPRDF put greater emphasis on its developmental credentials. This has been boosted by the double digit growth rate the country sustained since 2003/04 fiscal year. The recently adopted Growth and transformation Plan (GTP) of the Ethiopian government states the vision of the country is:

to become a country where democratic rule, good-governance and social justice reign, upon the involvement and free will of its peoples, and once extricating itself from poverty to reach the level of a middle-income economy as of 2020-2023 (GTP, 2010: 21).

⁴ The May 2005 national and regional elections were the third which were held after the enactment of the federal constitution in 1995. The elections were better contested as compared to the previous elections but they ended in a violent dispute. The opposition accuse of the EPRDF of stealing their victory, the EPRDF accused the opposition parties of instigating violent overthrow of the contrition. Following street protests across the country, the EPRDF adopted laws and policies which significantly reduced the political space.

According to the EPRDF, the main development agenda in the country has been the eradication of poverty (ibid: vii). The political program of the EPRDF in this respect reads:

The EPRDF's revolutionary democratic objectives will be fulfilled only if they trigger a successful economic development. Thus, economic development, the major objective of our organization is the foundation and pillar of all our goals. Our endeavor for development must quickly overcome the structural problems and defects in agriculture. In the course of development, agriculture and industry must grow rapidly exploiting inter-dependence; and, over time, industry should take the leading role. (EPRDF 2005: 4).

Accordingly, several medium term policies and strategies of the government including the Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Program (SDPRP) for the year 2002/03-2004/05; the Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty (PASDEP), Ethiopia's guiding strategic framework for the five-year period 2005/06-2009/10; and the current Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) for the coming five years –2010/11-2014/15 aimed at poverty reduction, social and economic development (MoFED, 2006: 1).

The government contends that through the successful implementation of the above programs, the country achieved high and sustained economic growth and significant social and human development results. Moreover, the government aims at achieving many elements of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) by 2015 (GTP, 2010: 1).

Table 2.1 Macroeconomic Indicators

Sector/Indicator	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	Average (2004/05-09/10)
GDP Growth in %	11.7	12.6	11.5	11.8	11.2	9.9	10.1	11.0
Agriculture and allied activities	16.9	13.5	10.9	9.4	7.5	6.4	6	10.1
Industry	11.6	9.4	10.2	9.5	10	9.9	10.2	10.1
Service	6.3	12.8	13.3	15.3	16	14	14.5	13.2
Per capita growth	10.7	9.0	7.9	7.8	7.1	6.0	8.3	8.1

Source: MDG Report, 2010, p.5.

According to the government MDG report, following the implementation of the comprehensive poverty reduction strategy, poverty levels have declined steadily reaching 38.7 percent in 2004/05, and are estimated to further decline to 29.2 percent in 2009/10. The five year Growth and Transformation Plan 2010/11-14/15 indicates that Ethiopia would achieve halving poverty by 2015 and projects that both income and food poverty reach 22.2% and 21.22% in 2014/15 from 29.2% and 28.2% in 2009/10, respectively (2010: 5).

The rosy pictures which are provided by the EPRDF about the successes of its developmentalist ideology and the country's actual development is contested by many. For instance, the strong interventionist approach which the ERPDF follows in the economy for some is not due to the weakness of the private sector, rather because of the desire of the government to ensure the survival and consolidation of its rule (Eshetu Chole, 2004: 216).

Critics and opponents of the EPRDF regime not only dispute the rate of economic growth that has been reported by the government and international financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) but also consider EPRDF ideology of developmentalism as an instrument to consolidate its 'authoritarian rule' under what has been dubbed a dominant party system. For the political opposition the main reason behind the promotion of developmentalism appears to be the need to provide a new legitimacy for a regime that failed to translate its promises of democracy particularly after the deeply controversial 2005 elections.

Critics underscore the set of policies which the ERPDF endorsed after its popularization of the developmental state approach are indicative of the fact that this model of development is opposed to pluralist democracy. For instance, Leulsaged Girma comments on the recently adopted law that limits the activities of civil society organizations. He said:

The proclamation affects the democratic order. In the process of building a democratic order in the country, civil organizations cover areas or carry out activities where the government fails to do so. The government might not be able to cover all the areas by itself... The role of the civil societies is crucial in cementing a firm base for the building of a democratic order in Ethiopia... Civic organizations have been making a meaningful contribution in sensitizing citizens about their rights. The proclamation has created hurdles for them to carry out their objectives (The Reporter, Vol. XII, No.615, 2008).

Similarly, Sisay G/Egziabher contends that many people, especially human rights activists are pessimistic about the future fate of the country under the existing ruling political party, EPRDF for the reason that it has monopolized the state mass media particularly the broadcast media and has made things difficult for the private press (2002: 17). After all a very important question that several individuals are asking is whether Ethiopia can be a developmental state with or without democracy. In this respect, Asrat Seyoum comments that under the current political environment democratic governance which is believed to be an integral part of a (democratic) developmental state is being seriously hampered (The Reporter, Vo. XIV, No. 710, 2010).

In a similar fashion, Scholars like Sisay Asefa caution that the developmental state model as pursued in Ethiopia with weak democratic content might not bring the desired results. He said:

In the long run, it is best to have a developmental society as well as a democratic state. Certain cultures can simply be developmental in a sense that the economy grows without necessarily being democratic. Examples are China, South Korea, and Singapore. However, these countries are ethnically homogenous, so they can't really be a model for Ethiopia. This is because they have a certain culture based on the teachings of Confucius. Probably for Ethiopia, the best model can be a country like India. India is a developmental state but it is also democratic. It is the largest democratic state. Meaningful lessons can be learned from India on how to organize federalism in a sustainable way (The Reporter, Vol. XIV, No. 710, 2010).

3.2. Development vs. inflation and rising food prices

The EPRDF and its supporters on several occasions underscore that Ethiopia's growth is making a strong impact on the reduction of poverty and the country achieved great results in social and human development. And hence the growth is directed to social equity. Accordingly, headcount poverty, which stood at 48% in 1990 and 44.2% in 2000/01, fell to 38.7% 2004/05, with a trend estimate of 34.6% for 2006/07. Primary school enrolments have almost tripled, *i.e.* from 32% in 1990 to 91.6% in 2006/07 (African Economic Outlook, 2011). The same report states that the under-five child mortality rate declined from 190 per 1 000 children in 1990 to 123 in 2004/05 while infant mortality fell from 123 per 1 000 infants in 1992/93 to 77 in 2004/05. (Ibid).

Critics and the political opposition, however, contend that the emphasis that is given about GDP growth is misleading. They for instance argue that measure of GDP tells us nothing about the increasing income gap that prevails within the country. The opposition and critics in particular emphasize on the prolonged high inflation which the economy sustained since 2007. According to the African Economic Outlook, inflation in Ethiopia has hit double-digits with a rising trend since 2005/06. Overall average annual inflation spiked to 36.4% in 2008/09, up from 25.3% in 2007/08, 15.8% in 2006/2007 and 12.3% in 2005/06. The leap in food prices was the major factor behind the unprecedented inflation in Ethiopia, in both 2007/08 and 2008/09. But in the second half of 2008/09, food price inflation registered only 2.3% (2011). Temesgen Zewide an official of one of the opposition parties, for instance, said with the high inflation rate of above 26 percent, people have reached a level where they can't afford their basic needs (The Reporter, Vol. XIV, No.711, 2010).

There are also discrepancies regarding the causes of the sustained high inflation which the economy encountered. The government argues that the structural changes that brought to the economy – the expansion of the service sector, the remarkable growth in communication and transportation network and others explain the increasing rate of inflation. The opposition and critics and international financial institutions mainly attribute high rates of inflation on massive expansion of government expenditure particularly big infrastructure projects

Inflation which was significantly reduced in the 2009/10 fiscal year due to tight fiscal and monetary policies remerged with an alarming rate after mid 2011. The devaluation of the Ethiopian Birr, massive expenditure plan and the surge in global oil prices explain the new high levels of inflation – over 26 percent.

The government which was alarmed by these developments and also the recent political turmoil in the Middle East and North Africa and food riots in many African countries introduced since the mid of 2011 price controls on basic commodities like sugar, bread, cooking oil, meat and others. But many of these commodities particularly cooking oil and sugar disappeared from the market altogether. The government now has assumed the task of importing and distributing these items and barred private business people from importing and distributing cooking oil and sugar. The

3.3 Urban Renewal vs. demolition of houses

During its first decade in power, the EPRDF neglected urban development. It for the first time adopted a comprehensive urban development policy in 2003. Economic growth, development in commerce, political stability and infrastructural development resulted in rapid urbanization. In this process, the price of urban land throughout the country and particularly in Addis Ababa spiked. Consequently, land became the pray for officials and one of the chief sources of corruption. As there is a severe short of land in Addis Ababa, the government introduced since 2000s what is called the policy of ‘urban renewal’. Under this policy, houses in poor neighborhoods of city are demolished and the land is by and large leased to ‘investors’ and low cost condominium apartments are constructed. The low-cost condominium houses are sold to residents of the city who do not have their own houses on a lot basis.

Due the construction of hundreds of high rises and condominium apartments since the onset of the 2000s, the landscape of the Addis Ababa city is being dramatically changed. With the newly paved roads, flyovers and street lights and high rises, Addis Ababa is looking like a modern city. The EPRDF and its supporters portray these as symbols of Ethiopian development, the opposition and critics, however, raise a number of important points.

Critics for instance underline that practice of demolishing houses in poor neighborhoods and relocating their residents to the periphery of the city denies them their livelihood. Many of the poor people who used to live in the city center in slums and poorly constructed houses were engaged in provision of services and petty commerce. They cannot do these in their new locations. Due to the severe difficulties in transportation, they cannot also commute to the city centre to work. Moreover, the erection of high rises by demolition the old quarters of the city could irreparably change the social structure of the city in which people of different ethnic, religious and economic background live side by side.

Even if the government uses the policy of state ownership of land in order to remove private houses and others for commercial developers, these practices undermine ownership rights of citizens. While the government provides compensation for private houses demolished for redevelopment, there is a serious complain about the inadequacy of the compensation scheme.

3.4. Agricultural investment vs. land grabs

Since the last three years, Ethiopia has caught the attention of the international media due to the leasing of large tracts of land to foreign investors. The rapid and alarming rise in international food prices prompted many countries – particularly those who have huge surplus of foreign exchange like Saudi Arabia, India and others to lease agricultural land in Africa and produce food for their consumption. The great rush for African land in the name of agricultural

investment has been dubbed by the international media as ‘land grabs’. Ethiopia has been one of the countries in Africa made vast tracks of land available to these investors. Accordingly, it leased land to Djiboutian, Indian and Saudi companies. Much of the land which is transferred to the international investors is located in the lowlands of the country where there is spare population settlement, high rainfall and vegetation cover.

The two regional states which are affected by this process are the Gambella and Benishangul-Gumuz regions which are located in the western parts of the country. In both regions hundreds of thousands of hectares of land were transferred to foreign investors. In the Gambella region, the agricultural company –Saudi Star – established by the Saudi Ethiopian business tycoon Sheik Mohammed Alamoudi aims to produce rice for the Saudi market. In the same regime and in the Benishangul-Gumuz region, the Indian agricultural company Karuturi leased hundreds of thousands of hectares of land for commercial development.

The government argues that these agricultural investments are crucial for the development of the country – they bring foreign exchange, expertise in commercial agriculture and help the country achieve its food security. Moreover, government officials underscore that these investments take place in areas which are not or under utilized by local people. Local and international critics and however air contrasting views. First, the transfer of hundreds of thousands of agricultural land to investors undermines the livelihoods of the local people – who depend on their land resources. Second, the introduction of commercial agriculture harms the ecology and vegetation of the concerned areas. Third, as the foreign companies lease land to export their produce to their home countries, these farms contribute little to ensuring the food security of the country.

IV. Conclusion

The role the state plays in socio-economic development cannot be doubted. In the African and Ethiopian unique situation, it is still very difficult to assume that the so called market forces bring development and lift millions of people out of grinding poverty. As a result, the developmental state model has reemerged as an alternative model of development. The problem is, however, the difficulty of replicating what has been achieved in East Asia and even in China. The developmental state in East Asia emerged and triumphed under unique local, regional and international contexts. Almost all of the East Asian economies which prospered through the use of the developmental state model were under authoritarian rule. Is it possible today to bring development by suppressing political freedoms and liberties? It is highly unlikely due to a number of interrelated factors. Authoritarian rule is expensive not only in terms of defense and security costs but also depends on massively corrupt patrimonial systems. That is certainly why regimes which advocate developmentalism in Africa today promote what they call the democratic developmental state. This hybrid, however, appears to be untenable. Democracy among many other things is about peaceful and regulated contestation of power, while developmentalism is the autonomy of the state from societal voices (even the voices of voters).

In the Ethiopian context, while the EPRDF argues that it is following a democratic developmental path, the opposition and critics underscore that political space in the country has been narrowing down. Surprisingly, the popularization of developmentalism somehow coincided with the passing of a set of laws which put limitations on civil society organizations, and the media. In the absence of a democratic space which among other things allows debates and exchanges on the making and implementation of public policies sustaining high level of development would be undoubtedly difficult. For instance, the different narratives of developmentalism and development that were outlined in this paper do not get adequate attention in public discourses. Moreover, an open and competitive electoral system in which political parties of various stripes compete for the votes of citizens is important to ensure long term stability. Hence, widening the political space is enormously important to bring sustainable development.

Bibliography

African Development Outlook (2011). Ethiopia Social Context and Human Resource Development. OECD

Asrat Seyoum (2010) 'Behind the theory of the developmental state' in *The Reporter*, Vol. XIV, No.710, Saturday, 17 April 2010

Bolesta, A. (2007) 'China as a Developmental State' in *Montenegrin Journal of Economics*, No.5.

Castells, M. (1992) 'Four Asian Tigers with a Dragon Head: A Comparative Analysis of the State, Economy and Society in the Asian Pacific Rim', in R. Henderson and J. Applebaum (eds.) *State and Development in the Asian Pacific Rim*. London: Sage Publications.

Economic Commission for Africa (2011) *Governing development in Africa: The role of the State in economic transformation*, Issues paper on Meeting of the Committee of Experts of the 4th Joint Annual Meetings of the AU Conference of Ministers of Economy and Finance and ECA Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 24 – 27 March 2011.

Edigheji, O. (2005) 'A Democratic Developmental State in Africa: A Conceptual Paper.' Johannesburg: Centre for Policy Studies.

Eshetu Chole (2004) *Underdevelopment in Ethiopia*, Organization for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa (OSSREA), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Democratic Front Programme (2005), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (2010) *Ethiopia: 2010 MDGs Report, Trends and Prospects for Meeting MDGs by 2015*. September, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

- Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (2010) *Growth and Transformation Plan, 2010/11-2014/15, Volume I: Main Text*. Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, November 2010, Addis Ababa.
- Ingham, B. (1993) 'The Meaning of Development: Interactions between "New" and "Old" Ideas' in *World Development*, Vol. 21, No. 11, University of Sanford.
- Johnson, Chalmers. (1982) *MITI and the Japanese Miracle: The Growth of Industrial Policy, 1925-1975*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Leenders, R. (2007) 'The East Asian Miracle and the Developmental State, Is it possible to replicate the developmental model, and is it desirable to replicate the developmental state model? Politics of Development.' Brendan Da Costa.
- Lipset, Seymour (1960). *Political man; the social bases of politics*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday
- Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED)(2007) *Ethiopia: Building on Progress: A Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty (PASDEP) Annual Progress Report 2005/06* June, 2007 Addis Ababa
- Mkandawire, Th. (2001) 'Thinking about Developmental State in Africa', in *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, Vol. 25.
- MoFED (2006) *Ethiopia: Building on Progress A Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty (PASDEP) (2005/06-2009/10)* Volume I: Main Text, September, Addis Ababa.
- Rapley, J. (2002) *Understanding Development: Theory and Practice in the Third World*. 2nd edition, London: Lynne Reinner Publishers.
- Sisay Asefa interviewed in *The Reporter*, Vol. XIV, No. 710, Saturday 17 April, 2010: p. 12
- Sisay G/Egziabher (2002) 'The Role of Civil Society Organizations in Democratization Process in Ethiopia', Paper presented at the Fifth International Conference of the International Society for the Third-Sector Research, "Transforming Civil Society, Citizenship and Governance: The Third Sector in an era of Global (dis)order", July 7-10, University of Cape Town, Cape Town, South Africa.
- Temesgen Zewdie (2010) 'The ruling party does not understand the concept of growth properly' in *The Reporter* Vol. XIV, No. 711, Saturday, 24 April 2010.

Seers, D. (1969) 'The meaning of development', presented at the 11th World Conference of the Society for International Development, New Delhi.

Sen, Amarty (1999). *Development as Freedom*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Todaro, M. (1996) *Economic Development*. 6th edition, Longman: Addison Wesley Longman.

World Bank (1991) *World Development Report*. New York: Oxford University Press.