



RESEARCH ARTICLE

THE IMPACTS OF FAKE NEWS ON PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE WORLD:
THE CASE STUDY OF ETHIOPIA

*Dr. Kiros Abeselom

Department of Rural Development and Agricultural Extension, Wolaita Sodo University, Wolaita Sodo, Ethiopia

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*Corresponding author:

Dr. Kiros Abeselom

Department of Rural Development and
Agricultural Extension, Wolaita Sodo
University, Wolaita Sodo, Ethiopia.
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INTRODUCTION

The author of this Paper has reviewed and analyzed purposively selected reports of mass media ("mainstream media"), i.e. electronic and print media, especially in the Western world, for instance in Germany concerning the unrest¹

¹ There were demonstrations, violations, killings, strikes, etc. in some towns of Oromia and Amhara Regional States of Ethiopia in autumn 2016. However,

ABSTRACT

The author of this Paper has reviewed and analyzed purposively selected reports of mass media ("mainstream media"), i.e. electronic and print media, especially in the Western world, for instance in Germany concerning the unrest in some towns of Oromia and Amhara Regional States of Ethiopia in autumn 2016. However, the question is, what happened really in Ethiopia on the ground during the unrest in Ethiopia in autumn 2016? The news about the unrest in Ethiopia in autumn 2016 was manipulated, i.e. it was fake news. But what is fake news? Fake news means false news, lie, deceive, cheating, illusion, misleading, dummy, simulation, fabrication, manipulation and propaganda. Therefore, according to this definition of fake news, the reports about the unrest in some towns of Oromia and Amhara Regional States of Ethiopia in autumn 2016 were propaganda because the fact was very small but the reports in the news were exaggerated. For example, in terms of the number of people who were involved and/or in terms of the regions which were affected by the unrest in some towns of Oromia and Amhara Regional States of Ethiopia in autumn 2016. However, these manipulated reports were simply copied by mass media ("mainstream media"), especially in the Western world, for instance in Germany without verifying the facts of such reports or news. For instance, Marco Maier wrote an article that the Oromo and Amhara people feel that they are oppressed by the minority Tigray people "(ca. 6 percent of the Ethiopian population)" which holds all key positions in the government. However, Maier's report is not based on facts because the following examples show the opposite: The appointments of the cabinet of the Ethiopian Federal Government in 2015/16, 2016/17 and in 2018 show that the majority of the ministers in the Federal Government of Ethiopia in Addis Ababa were from Oromia region, for example in 2016 eight ministers from Oromia region, four ministers and deputy prime minister from Amhara region, four ministers and prime Minister from Southern Nations (SNNPR) region, three ministers from Tigray Region, etc. Therefore, in order to find out scientific facts about the unrest in Ethiopia in autumn 2016, the author of this Paper has applied the following methodologies: 1. Secondary data were collected from various sources, like for example Internet (websites), watching television news (reports), reading print media, 2. Empirical studies and/or observations in Ethiopia as well as in Germany were reviewed and analyzed. 3. In addition, the author of this Paper has written letters to authors of articles as well as editors of articles concerning the article about the late Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi on 12.07.20 and the reports about the unrest in some towns of Oromia and Amhara Regional States of Ethiopia in autumn 2016. However, the source of their reports is "made up out of thin air". The fact that the purpose of fake news is to defame persons, spread hatred and disturb public peace knowingly, governments like Germany, Malaysia, Singapore, the European Commission, etc. are taking legal actions against social media platforms, like Facebook, etc.

in some towns of Oromia and Amhara Regional States² of Ethiopia in autumn 2016. According to the empirical studies and observations of the author of this Paper, the reports or

some of the reports or news were exaggerated and fake news, i.e. "berewelled".

² There were violations and killings in some towns of Oromia and Amhara Regional States of Ethiopia in autumn 2016 against other ethnicity but not against Oromo and Amhara people. Therefore, the reports or news about the unrest were diverted and manipulated knowingly and purposively.

news of mass media and/or social media like “Facebook” concerning the unrest in some towns of Oromia and Amhara Regional States of Ethiopia in autumn 2016 were fake news. A proverb in Amharic (official working language of the Ethiopian government) describes fake news or fabricated news as “bereweleda”. This means: An Ox delivers a baby calf³ or in German language means: Made up out of thin air.

But what is fake news?

According to the literature, fake news means false news, lie, deceive, cheating, illusion, misleading, dummy, simulation, fabrication, manipulation and propaganda. In other words, fake news includes also “defamation, through spreading of untrue facts of another person knowingly; incitement of hatred or the making of threats in a way that may disturb public peace, and even the dissemination of child pornography and other pornography materials.”⁴ Also “Pope Francis is denouncing ‘fake news’ as evil and is urging journalists to make it their mission to search for the truth.”⁵ Aidan White says: ‘Fake news poisons the atmosphere that we all operate in’⁶. Also Titcomb and Carson say how fake news poisons democracy and free debate. “Fake news was not a term many people used 18 months ago, but it is now seen as one of the greatest threats to democracy, free debate and the Western order.”⁷ The fact that, the author of this Paper is working in Ethiopia since September 2013 and traveling to Germany every year, i.e. he knows (as eyewitness) what has happened in Ethiopia in autumn 2016 and he has gathered information material about the reports or news of the mass media “mainstream media”, i.e. electronic and print media, especially in the Western world for instance in Germany and in the United Kingdom concerning the unrest in some towns of Oromia and Amhara Regional States of Ethiopia in autumn 2016. He has reviewed and analyzed the information materials from German and international mass media and conducted empirical and observation studies in Germany and in Ethiopia concerning the reports about the unrest in some towns of Oromia and Amhara Regional States of Ethiopia in autumn 2016. In addition, there was news in the “mainstream media”, i.e. electronic and print media, especially in the Western world, for instance in Germany and in the United Kingdom which were simply copied from the manipulated and/or fake news of other media and/or persons as well as some Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) without verify the facts of such news. According to the experiences and observations of the author of this Paper, the news about the unrest in some towns of Oromia and Amhara Regional States of Ethiopia in autumn 2016 was manipulated, i. e. it was fake news. This means, the fact was very small but the outcomes in the news were too much to trust them, for example in terms of the number of people and in terms of the regions which were affected by the unrest in some towns of Oromia and Amhara Regional States of Ethiopia in autumn

2016. The following example shows the difference between the fact and fake news: For example Mr. Marco Maier had written an article about the unrest in Ethiopia in German language in his magazin “Contra Magazin” under the title “Äthiopien auf dem Weg zum Bürgerkrieg”/“Ethiopia on the way to civil war” on 02.09.2016 that Oromo and Amhara people live in two unrest provinces and make together 60 percent of the Ethiopian population. Maier said that the Oromo and Amhara people feel that they are oppressed by the minority Tigray people “(ca. 6 percent of the Ethiopian population)” which holds all key positions in the government. However, Maier’s report is not true, as anybody who wants to know the truth can verify it. Consequently, the author of this Paper has written a letter to Mr. Marco Maier via e-mail in April 2018 and requested him to mention the sources of the data for the data of his article. But unfortunately, he didn’t respond. Similarly Mr. Tillmann Elliesen had written an article about the unrest in Ethiopia in German language in his magazin “Weltsichten” under the title „Unruhen in Äthiopien: Das Bollwerk wankt”/“Unrest in Ethiopia: Bulwark or rampart falter” on 24.10.2016. Elliesen said: “Although the important Ethiopian ethnics are represented in the block party [EPRDF], but de facto the ethnic Tigray dominates or is in charge or it is the boss or it has final authority. The political elite of Tigray follows the principle of divide and rule and tries to keep or hold the other Ethiopian ethnics or peoples at bay in order to control the centrifugal forces which threaten Ethiopia constantly to tear.” Moreover, Elliesen said that the Ethiopian government could manage the two biggest ethnic groups to play off against each other. By the way, Elliesen had used a photo of Oromia Regional “special” police with uniform for his article as if the Oromia Regional “special” police were the Addis Ababa police. This shows that Elliesen doesn’t know the differences between the Regional States polices and the Federal police as well as the Regional States Governments and Federal Government. Consequently, the author of this Paper has written a letter also to Elliesen via e-mail on 22.09.2017 and on 03.10.2017 and requested him to mention the sources of his data including the photo of the Oromia Regional “special” police, i.e. if Elliesen has investigated and verified the information of his article, i.e. whether it is true or not true.

However, fact is, the structure of the federalism and of the government of Ethiopia were and are the same in 2016 as well as today 2018. This means the Regional States like Oromia, Amhara, Tigray, Southern Nations, Nationalities & Peoples’ Region (SNNPR), etc. have their own parliaments and regional governments from their own ethnicity with their own ethnic languages and cultures. All these Regional States are autonomous. Therefore, in order to find out scientific facts about the unrest in some towns of Oromia and Amhara Regional States of Ethiopia in autumn 2016, the author of this Paper has applied the following methodologies:

1. Secondary data were collected from various sources, like for example Internet (websites), watching television news (reports), reading print media,
2. Empirical studies and/or observations in Ethiopia as well as in Germany were reviewed and analyzed.
3. In addition, the author of this Paper has written letters to authors of articles as well as editors of articles concerning the article about the late Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi on 12.07.20 and the reports about the unrest in Ethiopia in autumn 2016.

³A free translation by the author of this Paper.

⁴Explained: What is Fake news? | Social Media and Filter Bubbles: Source Internet

<https://www.webwise.ie/teachers/what-is-fake-news/> and Fake news: What exactly is it – and how can you spot it? - The Telegraph, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/0/fake-news-exactly-has-really-had-influence/>

⁵ Winfield, N. (24.01.2018): The Associated Press

⁶“Fake news: sound bites on a burning topic - Unesco”: Aidan White, Director, Ethical Journalism Network was quoted by Verashni Pillay, Editor-in-Chief, Huffington Post, South Africa: <https://en.unesco.org/courier/2017-july.../fake-news-sound-bites-burning-topic>

⁷Titcomb, J. and Carson, J. (19.03.2018)

As a result, the objective of this Paper is to assess and analyze the impacts of the reports or fake news about the unrest in Ethiopia in autumn 2016 on Peace and Development in Ethiopia. Moreover, the author of this Paper wants to bring another fake news to light with examples of mass media ("mainstream media") for example Deutsche Welle/DW; for instance Mr. Ludger Schadomsky⁸, the head of DW [Deutsche Welle] -RADIO's Amharic Service in Bonn/Germany) had written an article in the Deutsche Well website about the late Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi on 12.07.2012. Schadomsky posted a photo of Meles Zenawi on his article and had written "Meles War Criminal Supported by West" as a title of his article. The fact that, nobody has the right to defame and abuse anybody let alone personalities like the late Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, the author of this Paper had written a letter on 18.07.2012 via e-mail to Deutsche Welle (Mr. Ludger Schadomsky and Mrs. Stefanie Duckstein/Editor of the article) and requested them to provide an evidence from the International Court of Justice in the Hague (Netherlands) judgment that the late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi was "War Criminal", which they had published the article on 12.07.2012.

Because the International Court of Justice in the Hague (Netherlands) is the only Institution which can give judge a verdict on someone as "war criminal" in a law court.

But unfortunately, Deutsche Welle (Mr. Ludger Schadomsky and Mrs. Stefanie Duckstein/Editor) didn't respond although the author of this Paper has written them twice.

Fact is, Mr. Ludger Schadomsky had created and spread fake news because of political and ethnical hate.

Consequently the author of this Paper has written a letter to the intendant (director) of Deutsche Welle, Mr. Bettermann on 24.01.2013 concerning the article of Mr. Ludger Schadomsky and Mrs. Stefanie Duckstein/Editor that they had defamed and abused the late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi as "War Criminal". Mr. Bettermann (the intendant (director) of Deutsche Welle) had responded on 06.02.2013 but he had denied the existence of such formulation "Meles War Criminal Supported by West" in an article of Deutsche Welle. After the intendant (director) of Deutsche Welle, Mr. Bettermann had denied the existence of this formulation, the author of this Paper had sent a copy of the article with the photo of the late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi to the Intendant (director) of Deutsche Welle, Mr. Bettermann on 13. 02.2013. But unfortunately, the intendant (director) of Deutsche Welle, Mr. Bettermann didn't respond again. Therefore, this is a big problem when "journalists", reporters, editors and moderators are claimants and judge as the same time although it is out of law to be both claimant and judge as the same time. According to the German Federal Law, the mass media have the duty to inform the public comprehensive, objective and understandable information as much as possible.

But the question is, who implements such laws?

⁸LudgerSchadomsky (36) has been appointed by Director-General Erik Bettermann as the head of DW-RADIO's Amharic Service. ... After completing his studies (African studies and political science), Schadomsky worked as a trainee at Deutsche Welle in 1998. ... He reported for DW and other ... - Press Releases Dec 19, 2006 - www.dw.com/en/deutsche-welle-ludger-schadomsky-new-head-of.../a-2283464

Where are the executive organs like for example the public prosecutors⁹ ?

Unfortunately, Ludger Schadomsky and Stefanie Duckstein/Editor (Deutsche Welle) are not the only people who defame and abuse the late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi. Also Awol Kassim

Allo¹⁰ and Keffyalew Gebremedhin¹¹ create and spread fake news about the late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi and the unrest in some towns of Oromia and Amhara Regional States of Ethiopia in autumn 2016. However, contrary to the negative opinions of some people like Ludger Schadomsky, Awol Kassim Allo and Keffyalew Gebremedhin about the late Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, Meles Zenawi is still beloved by many people not only in Ethiopia but also in Africa. This means that Ethiopians and other Africans are commemorating him every year.¹² Whatever some people defame and abuse the late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, everybody can remember and be witness when the late Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawidied in August 2012 how people in Ethiopia and in many African countries as well as world leaders¹³ had emotional reacted to his death. The author of this Paper was in Ethiopia from 11.12.2012-29.12.2012 and he had talked to many people and observed them how they felt sad and mourned deeply because of the death of the late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi. Many people in Ethiopia were shocked by the death of the late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi and they had expressed their grief sorrow emotion through photos, placards (poster), quotations of Meles Zenawi in Cafés, private houses, at buildings, cars (vehicles), at street fences, public places such as parks, squares and everywhere but especially in Addis Ababa and around Addis Ababa. "All Ethiopians and Africans¹⁴ and the world mourn deeply on our Great Hero Meles Zenawi's death. It is very difficult to accept his death. But antidote for such sad time is Meles's legacies that are in-printed in gold into each hearts of Ethiopian People and also tastes the outcomes and so as and Africans it was said" 'Hero never die Because His vision and struggle will pass over next generation'.¹⁵ Also Duop Chak Wuol had commented on the fifth-year memorial tribute to the late Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi under the title:

"Prime Minister Meles Zenawi: An African icon gone too soon" as follows: "Waging an armed struggle against your own country is probably one of the toughest decisions a man could make. However, there are political, cultural, and social issues that might lead one to declare a war against a state, and this is exactly what the late Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi decided to do in 1975. His decision changed Ethiopia forever,

⁹ According to the law, a public prosecutor shall investigate immediately when he is aware of law-offending cases through complaint, reporting, surrender of the suspect and other sources. The prosecutor has the responsibility of directing the enforcement of criminal decision made by the court for the enforcement of state penalty, efficiency and justice of law.

¹⁰Awol K [Kassim] Allo. AwolKassimAllo is Fellow in Human Rights at the London School of Economics and Political Science.]

¹¹KeffyalewGebremedhin: "The Ethiopia Observatory (TEO)"

¹²DuopChakWuol (20.08.2017) and Xinhua (2017-08-12 04:35:51) Editor: Mu Xuequanand Admin, (24.08. 2013) Source: AllAfrica.com

¹³For detail see "Problem Statement" in this section.

¹⁴ Admin, (24.08.2013), "Sudan Commemorates First Anniversary of Death of MelesZenawi"

¹⁵kelela-communication | Who Is Who - Wix.com: andualemtafesse1.wixsite.com/kelela-communication/who-is-who:Source: Internet

both socially and economically.[...] My conscience compels me to write this piece about late Ethiopian leader Meles during the fifth anniversary of his death. However, Meles' efforts helped eliminate such a perception. He eliminated poverty by expanding Ethiopia's agricultural sector and investing in small farming. Ethiopia's economy is now booming because of his ideas. Meles also correctly identified that dependence on foreign aid does not progress the nation's economy. He was a strategic decision-maker who pushed for Ethiopia to effectively utilize its own natural resources. As someone who once studied in Ethiopia, I witnessed Ethiopians who were living under extreme tyranny."¹⁶ In the same way, Mu Xuequan had commented on the fifth anniversary of Meles Zenawi's death under the title: "Ethiopia commences fifth-year memorial tribute to long-serving late PM" as follows: "Ethiopia will start nationwide commemoration events on Saturday to pay tribute to the country's long-serving late prime minister, Meles Zenawi. Zenawi, who passed away in August 2012 at the age of 57, is considered a central figure in masterminding Ethiopia's current development agenda, bringing double-digit economic growth to a country once seen as one of the poorest on the African continent. Ethiopia's former Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, speaking during Zenawi's first-year memorial service, praised the late premier as "a strong leader who builds the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) and Ethiopia on strong democratic and developmental foundations."¹⁷ Moreover, Governments of African countries "Commemorated First Anniversary of Death of MelesZenawi".¹⁸

The fact that the purpose of fake news is to defame persons, spread hatred or the making of threats in a way that may disturb public peace knowingly, governments like Germany, Malaysia, Singapore, Russia, Kenya, United Kingdom, France, the European Commission, etc. are taking legal actions against social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube which do not promptly remove illegal contents. "However, some groups like the New York-based "Human Rights Watch" are against the new German law ("Anti-Fake News Bill") that compels social media companies to remove hate speech and other illegal content. "Human Rights Watch" argues that the new German law can lead to unaccountable, overbroad censorship and should be promptly reversed. "Human Rights Watch" says further: "The law sets a dangerous precedent for other governments looking to restrict speech online by forcing companies to censor on the government's behalf." "Human Rights Watch" and "Amnesty International" are against the "Anti-Fake News Bills" because, according to their argument, the "Anti-Fake News Bill" is "a dangerous crackdown on freedom of expression".¹⁹

Problem Statement

The question is, what happened really in Ethiopia on the ground during the unrest in some towns of Oromia and

Amhara Regional States²⁰ of Ethiopia in autumn 2016?. In this section the author of this Paper would like to review purposively selected reports of mass media concerning the unrest in some towns of Oromia and Amhara Regional States of Ethiopia in autumn 2016. The aim or objective of this Paper is to assess and analyze the impacts of these reports of mass media on Peace and Development in Ethiopia. As already stated in the Introduction section of this Paper, the reports of mass media concerning the unrest in some towns of Oromia and Amhara Regional States of Ethiopia in autumn 2016 were fake news. Therefore, this Paper would like to present a clear description of the issue: "The Impacts of Fake News on Peace and Development in the World: The Case Study of Ethiopia" with vision and methods to solve the problems. However, in order to deliver a clear description of this issue, and to have vision and methods to solve the problems, the author of this Paper would like to start with the "5 Ws", i. e.:

1. Who does the problem affect?
2. What are the boundaries of the problem?
3. When does the issue occur?
4. Where is the issue occurring?
5. Why is this issue important?

It is obvious that this issue affects the whole world but especially the Third World Countries for example Ethiopia. As already discussed above, fake news is lies and propaganda to mislead the public in order to defame, harm an agency, entity, or persons deliberately. Fake news poisons democracy and free debate. As the result: Fake news is denounced as evil. Therefore, the reasons why it is important to write this Paper are to show problems which are not yet discussed so far for example in Ethiopia, i.e. Fake news about the unrest in some towns of Oromia and Amhara Regional States of Ethiopia in autumn 2016 had impacts on peace and development as follows:

1. Fake news had negative impacts on peace and security in Ethiopia during and also after the unrest in autumn 2016,
2. Fake news had negative impacts on the Ethiopian economy during and after the unrest in 2016,
3. Fake news had negative impact on the neighborhood or community of different ethnicity,
4. Fake news has impact on awareness among the Ethiopian society regarding the negative effects of social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube which spread Fake news or lies and "berewellede" propaganda to mislead the public in order to defame, harm an agency, entity, or persons deliberately.
5. To draw attention to the "mainstream media" like for example BBC, Tagesschau (the German Broadcaster News/ARD), Deutsche Welle, "Voice of America" (VOA), "Al Jazeera, "n-tv.de, epd", "Weltsichten Magazin", etc. which spread fake news knowingly or unknowingly. But this act of such "mainstream media" is very serious violation of laws against the society because the public (media "consumers") trust these

¹⁶South Sudan News Agency (SSNA), August 20, 2017, By DuopChakWuol: Duop Chak Wuol is the Editor-in-Chief of the South Sudan News Agency. He can be reached at duop282@gmail.com. The views expressed in this article are his and should not be attributed to the South Sudan News Agency."

¹⁷ Mu Xuequan (Editor): ADDIS ABABA, Aug. 11 (Xinhua): Source: Xinhua 2017-08-12

¹⁸ Admin, (24.08. 2013) Source: AllAfrica.com

¹⁹ Germany: Flawed Social Media Law | Human Rights Watch <https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/02/14/germany-flawed-social-media-law>

²⁰There were demonstrations, violations, killings, strikes, etc. in some towns of Oromia and Amhara Regional States of Ethiopia in autumn 2016. However, the violations and killings were aimed against other ethnicity but not against Oromo and Amhara people. Therefore, the reports or news about the unrest were diverted and manipulated knowingly and purposely. Consequently, some of the reports or news were exaggerated and fake news, i.e. "berewellede".

“mainstream media”. This means that many people think that the reports or news of these media are authentic and objective until these reports or news are uncovered their negative side.

Consequently the author of this Paper would like to evaluate purposively selected reports of mass media (“mainstream media”) like for example BBC, Tagesschau (the German Broadcaster News/ARD), Deutsche Welle, VOA, “Al Jazeera”, “n-tv.de, epd”, “Contra Magazin”, “Weltsichten Magazin”, etc. about their media coverage regarding the unrest in some towns of Oromia and Amhara Regional States of Ethiopia in autumn 2016. The question is, what happened really in Ethiopia on the ground in some Oromia and Amhara Regional States of Ethiopia in autumn 2016?

As already explained above, the author of this Paper is working in Ethiopia since September 2013 and traveling to Germany every year so that he is eyewitness and observing what has happened in Ethiopia on the ground in 2016 and what the above mentioned “mainstream media” had reported about the unrest in some towns of Oromia and Amhara Regional States of Ethiopia in autumn 2016. Individuals or Bloggers like Mr. Awol [Kassim] Allo, Jawar Mohammed²¹, Ludovica Iaccino²², Eskinder Nega as well as the “human right-groups” like the New York-based “Human Rights Watch” and the media like Deutsche Welle (Mr. Ludger Schadomsky) had created and spread fake news because of ethnic-political hate campaign against one ethnic group in Ethiopia, i.e. the Tigray people. This is another example for fake news or berewellede, i.e. the intention to mislead the public in order to harm an agency, entity, or persons as follows:

For example Mr. Marco Maier had written an article about the unrest in Ethiopia in German language²³ in his magazine “Contra Magazin” under the title “Äthiopien auf dem Weg zum Bürgerkrieg”/“Ethiopia on the way to civil war” on 02.09.2016 that Oromo and Amhara people live in two unrest provinces and make together 60 percent of the Ethiopian population. Maier said that the Oromo and Amhara people feel that they are oppressed by the minority Tigray people (“ca. 6 percent of the Ethiopian population”) which holds all key positions in the government.

Consequently, the author of this Paper has written a letter to Mr. Marco Maier via e-mail in April 2018 and requested him to mention the sources of the data for his article. But unfortunately, he didn’t respond. Similarly Mr. Tillmann Elliesen had written an article about the unrest in Ethiopia in German language²⁴ in his magazin “Weltsichten” under the title „Unruhen in Äthiopien: Das Bollwerk wankt”/“Unrest in Ethiopia: Bulwark or rampart falter” on 24.10.2016. Elliesen said: “Although the important Ethiopian ethnics are represented in the block party [EPRDF], but de facto the ethnic Tigray dominates or is in charge or it is the boss or it has final authority. The political elite of Tigray follows the principle of divide and rule and tries to keep or hold the other Ethiopian

ethnics or peoples at bay in order to control the centrifugal forces which threaten Ethiopia constantly to tear.” Moreover, he said that the government could manage the two biggest ethnic groups to play off against each other.

By the way, Elliesen had used a photo of Oromia Regional “special” police with uniform for his article as if the Oromia Regional “special” police were the Addis Ababa police. This shows that Elliesen doesn’t know the differences between the Regional States polices and the Federal police as well as the Regional States and Federal Governments.

Consequently, the author of this Paper has written a letter also to Elliesen via e-mail on 22.09.2017 and on 03.10.2017 and requested him to mention the sources of his data including the photo of the Oromia Regional “special” police, i.e. if Elliesen has investigated and verified the information of his article, i.e. whether it is true or not true. He has responded via e-mail on 04.10.2017 and he said that investigation or research means for him talk to people who know about the situation in Ethiopia and read reports of other media which have investigated or researched in Ethiopia. But he himself didn’t investigate or conducted research in Ethiopia because it would be too expensive for him to investigate the information in Ethiopia.²⁵ This shows that Elliesen had simply copied from other media without any verification. As he said he had interviewed Dr. Berhanu Nega²⁶. But Dr. Berhanu Nega was sentenced to death by an Ethiopian court in absentia in late 2009. Because: “The Ethiopian government claimed in April it had uncovered a plot to kill government officials and sabotage infrastructure by a group called “Ginbot 7” [May 15].²⁷ However, this type of gathering of information is not investigative journalism. Consequently, the author of this Paper had responded to Elliesen via e-mail that the reports and/or information of a journalist should be balanced and the journalist should be impartial. Moreover, a journalist shouldn’t take or simply copy reports or information from other media or people without investigation or prove whether the information is true or not true. In other words, journalists shouldn’t simply disseminate the information without verification of its content or fact-checking. Moreover, a journalist should have secured or trusted sources for his or her information or data, otherwise the journalist is a “parrot-journalist”.

Therefore, the question is, where is an investigative journalism?

Does Maier and co. know really about the constellations of the government of Ethiopia or he is a “parrot-journalist”?

Maier and Elliesen may not know really about the Ethiopian Federal Government System but they want to fill the gap of their newspaper or magazine without knowing or thinking about the purposes and consequences of the fake news.

²⁵ The author of this Paper has translated the German language to English.

²⁶ “Berhanu Nega (Ph.D.) was a founding chairman of the Rainbow Ethiopia: Movement for Democracy and Social Justice and a Deputy Chairman of Coalition for Unity and Democracy (CUD) [...] He is also the co-founder and Leader of Ginbot 7, an anti-government rebel group. He has been labeled a terrorist by the Ethiopian government. [...] In July 2015, Berhanu went to Eritrea, to permanently join the “freedom fighters” that have been receiving help from the government of Isayas Afewerki [...]. In January 2016, he returned to the United States to “update” his supporters and raise funds for his organization.” Source: Internet

²⁷ Source: VOA News, [https://www.voanews.com/a/ethiopians-sentenced-death-assassination,last updated: December 22, 2009 8:03 AM](https://www.voanews.com/a/ethiopians-sentenced-death-assassination,last%20updated%3A%20December%2022%2C%202009%208%3A%2003%20AM%3A%20Source%3A%20Internet): Source: Internet

²¹ Jawar Mohammed, executive director of Oromia Media Network (OMN), banned under the state of emergency, explained Oromo people are calling for a radical regime change, not a government reshuffle.”: Source: Ludovicalaccino

²² Ludovicalaccino is an Italian journalist who currently lives in London: What Is Happening in Ethiopia? State of Emergency, Protests and Political Crisis Explained, By Ludovicalaccino On 02/19/18 at 16:13 PM”: Source: Internet

²³ The author of this Paper has translated the German language to English.

²⁴ The author of this Paper has translated the German language to English.

However, fact is, the structure of the federalism and of the government of Ethiopia are the same in 2016 as well as today 2018. This means the Regional States like Oromia, Amhara, Tigray, Southern Nations, Nationalities & Peoples' Region (SNNPR), etc. have their own parliaments and regional governments from their own ethnicity with their own ethnic languages. All these Regional States are autonomous. Amharic language is the working language of the Federal Government only in the Federal Institutions. Moreover, the Federal Government in Addis Ababa is constituted from the four political parties of Oromo, Amhara, Tigray and Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region (SNNPR). These four parties have built the coalition of the governing party the "Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF)" and the members of these four parties have seats in the Federal Parliament in Addis Ababa. In addition, the majority of the ministers in the Federal Government of Ethiopia in Addis Ababa are from Oromia region, from Amhara region, from Southern Nations (SNNPR) region, from Tigray region, etc. respectively. This is contrary to what Maier had created and spread fake news (lies) that "the Oromo and Amhara people feel that they are oppressed by the minority Tigray people "(ca. 6 percent of the Ethiopian population)" which holds all key positions in the government" (see above).

The question is, what are the key positions in a government?

"Key positions" in a government could be different from government to government, for example:

Ministry of Defense could be a key position for one government and Finance could be for another government and Foreign Affairs for another government. This depends on the situation of the governments.

Therefore, how was and is the distribution of "key positions" in the Ethiopian Federal Government in 2015, 2016/17 and 2017/18?

The appointments of the cabinet of the Ethiopian Federal Government in 2015/16 show as follows:

- Prime Minister was from Southern Nations (SNNPR) region,
- Deputy Prime Minister from Amhara region,
- Minister of Defense from Southern Nations (SNNPR) region,
- Minister of Finance and Economic Cooperation from Oromia region,
- Minister of Foreign Affairs from Tigray region, etc.²⁸

According to this list of cabinet, there is no "key position" for specific ethnicity or ethnic group in the Ethiopian Federal Government.

Now let us see the appointments of the cabinet of the Ethiopian Federal Government in 2016/17:

The appointments of the cabinet of the Ethiopian Federal Government in 2016/17 show as follows:

- Prime Minister from Southern Nations (SNNPR) region,
- Deputy Prime Minister from Amhara region,

- Minister of Foreign Affairs from Oromia region,
- Minister of Finance and Economic Cooperation from Tigray region,
- Minister of Defense from Southern Nations (SNNPR) region, etc.

Also in this list of cabinet, there is no "key position" for specific ethnicity or ethnic group in the Ethiopian Federal Government. But whatever the "key positions" are, the majority of the ministers of the Federal Government of Ethiopia are from Oromia region, this means for example in 2016 there were:

- Eight ministers from Oromia region,
- Deputy prime minister and four ministers from Amhara region,
- Prime Minister and four ministers from Southern Nations (SNNPR) region,
- Three ministers from Tigray region, etc.²⁹

Now let us see the appointments of the new cabinet of the Ethiopian Federal Government in 2018:

The appointments of the new cabinet of the Ethiopian Federal Government in 2018 show as follows: Prime Minister is from Oromia region, Deputy Prime Minister from Amhara region, Minister of Defense from Oromia region, Minister of Finance and Economic Cooperation from Tigray region, Minister of Foreign Affairs from Oromia region, etc.³⁰

Therefore, the above stated examples make clear that the "key positions" are exchangeable, i.e. there is no specific "key position" reserved for specific ethnicity or ethnic group in the Ethiopian Federal Government. But this is contrary to the above mentioned statements of "bloggers" and/or "parrot-Journalists" who create and spread fake news (lies) and "berewellede". This can be verified by anybody who wants to know the truth and loves peace, development and unity of Ethiopia. Therefore, the question is, how can the ethnic of Tigray oppressed and discriminate the languages and cultures of the ethnics of Oromo and Amhara?

By the way Oromia Regional State and Tigray Regional State are not neighbours. Therefore, the question is, what is the purpose of Maier and co. spread fake news ("berewellede") about the Tigray people that this ethnic group was perpetrator and oppressor or suppressor of other ethnicity or ethnic groups, i.e. the majority. But as already stated above, this is a big lie. In fact many innocent people from Tigray are victims of the unrest in Ethiopia in 2015/16. Consequently, this Paper would like to remind genuine people in Ethiopia and outside Ethiopia that the people from Tigray have paid too high price with the lives of their very young children (more than 60,000 death and more than 100,000 disable very young people) to overthrow the military government in Ethiopia 27 years ago.

Therefore, the question is, why do the "bloggers" and "journalists" forget these facts?

Moreover, the above mentioned examples show that even the "mainstream media" like for example BBC, Tagesschau (the

²⁹ admin (01.11.2016)

³⁰ List of Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed New Cabinet - ethpress www.ethpress.gov.et/.../news/...news/.../11600-list-of-prime-minister-dr-abiy-ahmed-n...

²⁸ Elobeid, F. (21.10.2015), : Ethiopia: new cabinet, new plan, new direction"

German Broadcaster News/ARD), Deutsche Welle, VOA, "Al Jazeera", "n-tv.de, epd", "Weltsichten Magazin", etc. which spread fake news knowingly or unknowingly, they follow the "principle" of sensation news, i.e. "man bites dog". This means that this news has more newsworthy than dog bites man because dog bites man is not unusual for such media. In other words, there is attention on the sensation news. Unfortunately this is the trend of the "mainstream media" throughout the world. Therefore, the question is, why such "mainstream media" like for example BBC, Tagesschau (the German Broadcaster News/ARD), Deutsche Welle, "Weltsichten magazine", etc. spread fake news?

Couldn't they verify the objectivity or authentic of the reports or news?

However, according to the literature, the purpose of most fake news is to make money from ad revenue, says. In Veres, Macedonia, where scores of fake news stories about the 2016 US election originated, the teenagers writing them claimed to make thousands of euros a day. "Fake news was spread more virulently."³¹ 21st century fake news is often intended to increase the financial profits of the news outlet. In an interview with NPR, Jestin Coler, former CEO of the fake media conglomerate Disinfomedia, said who writes fake news articles, who funds these articles, and why fake news creators create and distribute false information [?] Coler, who has since left his role as a fake news creator, said that his company employed 20 to 25 writers at a time and made \$10,000 to \$30,000 monthly from advertisements. Coler began his career in journalism as a magazine salesman before working as a freelance writer. He said that he entered the fake news industry to prove to himself and others just how rapidly fake news can spread.³²

But the author of this Paper believes that there are many reasons why many people as well as "mainstream media" create and spread fake news.

These are for example:

1. Political hate propaganda
2. Social (ethnic and religion) hate propaganda
3. Economic/money as income motivations
4. Naive or immature followers - as a fashion or mode and/or moving together in one direction
5. Serving as a gap-filler, for instance newspaper space-filler or gap filler. But to spread fake
6. news for not professional journalism, i.e. "Parrot-Journalists"³³ is without knowing or thinking
7. about the purposes and consequences of the fake news.
8. The "mainstream media" adopted the fake news and fake news becomes serious and trusted news. Therefore, people consume this fake news as serious news and they spread it forward.

However, this adaptation of fake news by the "mainstream media" is more harmful than the social media platforms, such as Facebook because the public (media consumers) trust the "mainstream media" that the reports or news are objective until these reports or news are uncovered.

³¹ Adams (30.10.2017): "Fake news was spread more virulently."

³² Source: Internet

³³ Parrot is a bird which is able to mimic the human voice. Synonyms: Repeat mindlessly, repeat mechanically, echo, say again.

This kind of situation has already happened in Ethiopia during the unrest in autumn 2016. This means that some groups and individuals in Ethiopia and outside Ethiopia have created and exaggerated fake news about the unrest in some towns of Oromia and Amhara Regional States of Ethiopia. However, the "mainstream media" like BBC, Tagesschau (ARD), Deutsche Welle, etc. which they simply copy fake news, i.e. "berewellede" and spread or broadcast this fake news without verifying its authentic or reality. Therefore, BBC, Tagesschau (ARD), Deutsche Welleshould be responsible for spreading fake news, i.e. "berewellede" about the unrest in some towns of Oromia and Amhara Regional States of Ethiopia in autumn 2016?

As already discussed above, the purpose of fake news is to defame persons, spread hatred or the making of threats in a way that may disturb public peace knowingly, governments like Germany³⁴, Malaysia³⁵, Singapore, Russia, Kenya, United Kingdom, France, the European Commission are taking legal actions against social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube which do not promptly remove illegal contents. "Under rules adopted in 2017, social media and portals are required to remove content found to be offensive or illegal within 24 hours, on the basis of a decision by the competent public administrative body, supervised by the federal government." Once posts are flagged by users, a social-media firm has 24 hours extended to a week in complex cases—to check and remove those that contravene the rules, or face a €50m (\$60m) fine. [The German] Parliament approved the Network Enforcement Act, commonly known as NetzDG, on June 30, 2017, and it took full effect on January 1, 2018."³⁶

As already stated above, fake news means evil, false news, lie, deceive, cheating, illusion, misleading, dummy, simulation, fabrication, manipulation, and propaganda, defamation, through spreading of untrue facts of another person knowingly; incitement of hatred or the making of threats in a way that may disturb public peace, and even the dissemination of child pornography and other pornography materials. However, the question is, why some groups like the New York-based "Human Rights Watch" and "Amnesty International" defend fake news which poisons democracy and free debate?

"Human Rights Watch" argues that the new German law can lead to unaccountable, overbroad censorship and should be promptly reversed. "Human Rights Watch" says further: "The law sets a dangerous precedent for other governments looking to restrict speech online by forcing companies to censor on the government's behalf."³⁷ "Human Rights Watch" and "Amnesty International" are against the "Anti-Fake News

³⁴ A law counteracting hate speech and fake news on the Internet, *Netzwerkdurchsetzungsgesetz* [NetzDG], has been in force in Germany since 1 January 2018. Source: https://netzpolitik.org/wp.../1703014_NetzwerkDurchsetzungsgG.pdf.

³⁵ James Gomez, director of Amnesty International's Southeast Asia and Pacific division, said, "This bill is an assault on freedom of expression. The vague and broad definition of 'fake news,' combined with severe punishments and arbitrary arrest powers for police, shows that this is nothing but a blatant attempt to shield the government from peaceful criticism. This bill must be scrapped immediately." Source: Via: Wall Street Journal: Malaysia proposes law that would make spreading fake news illegal <https://www.engadget.com/2018/.../malaysia-proposes-law-spreading-fake-news-illega...Asia Internet Coalition, Amnesty International>

³⁶ Germany passes controversial law to fine Facebook over hate speech ... <https://www.theverge.com/2017/6/30/.../germany-facebook-hate-speech-law-passed>

³⁷ Germany: Flawed Social Media Law | Human Rights Watch: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/02/14/germany-flawed-social-media-law>

Bills” because, according to their argument, the “Anti-Fake News Bill” is “a dangerous crackdown on freedom of expression”. Also James Gomez, director of Amnesty International's Southeast Asia and Pacific division, said, “This bill is an assault on freedom of expression. [...] This bill must be scrapped immediately.”³⁸ However, “Human Rights Watch”, “Amnesty International” as well as other groups or individuals know that there is a limitation of freedom of expression. Otherwise the right of others would be violated. Moreover, if there are no Law & Order and limitation of freedom of expression by the law, news and/or data can be manipulated and misused in social media like “Facebook” as the “Facebook”–Cambridge Analytica data scandal” shows. “Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook’s founder and chief executive gave testimony to [US] Senate committees in light of revelations that Cambridge Analytica used Facebook data to influence US voters.”³⁹

Hypothesis

Why did the unrest in some towns of Oromia and Amhara Regional States of Ethiopia in autumn 2016 occur?

Because there are some Ethiopian academicians and/or intellectuals in and outside⁴⁰ Ethiopia as well as some foreign Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) which are against other ethnicity as well as the Ethiopian government⁴¹ at that time. These individuals and/or groups of people and the NGOs create and spread fake news, i.e. “berewellede” against other ethnic groups and the Ethiopian federal government. Consequently, such fake news, i.e. “berewellede” of these individuals and/or groups of people and the NGOs has negative impacts on Peace and Development in Ethiopia, i.e. fake news caused hatred, chaos, bloodshed, destabilize and destruction in Ethiopia.

Methodology of Data Collection

In order to find out scientific facts about the unrest in some towns of Oromia and Amhara Regional States of Ethiopia in autumn 2016, the author of this Paper has applied the following methodologies:

1. Secondary data were collected from various sources, like for example Internet (websites), watching television news (reports), reading print media,
2. Empirical studies and/or observations in Ethiopia as well as in Germany were reviewed and analyzed. The fact that, the author of this Paper is working in Ethiopia since September 2013 and traveling to Germany every year, he has gathered information materials from German and international mass media (“mainstream media”), i.e. electronic and print media, and conducted

empirical and observation studies concerning the reports about the unrest in some towns of Oromia and Amhara Regional States of Ethiopia in autumn 2016.

3. In addition, the author of this Paper has written letters to authors and editors of the articles concerning the reports about the late Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawion 12.07.20 and the reports about the unrest in some towns of Oromia and Amhara Regional States of Ethiopia in autumn 2016. The authors and editors of the articles were requested by the author of this Paper to mention the sources of data or news of their articles.

However, the sources of their reports or news are “made up out of thin air”, as already stated in the Introduction and Problem Statement sections of this Paper.

General Objective

The fact that the purpose of fake news is to defame persons, spread hatred or the making of threats in a way that may disturb public peace knowingly, governments are taking legal actions against social media platforms, such as Facebook which do not promptly remove illegal contents, because fake news poisons democracy and free debate. Therefore, the General Objective of this Paper is to contribute to serious discussions and debates especially on the naïve or innocent users of social media platforms, such as Facebook to be aware and conscious of the news, i.e. the motives behind of the news. Moreover, this Paper wants to draw attention to the role of the “mainstream media” that they simply copy fake news and this fake news, i.e. “berewellede” becomes “serious and trusted news”. As a result, the objective of this Paper is to assess and analyze the impacts of fake news on Peace and Development in the world as an example the reports or fake news about the unrest in some towns of Oromia and Amhara Regional States of Ethiopia in autumn 2016.

Specific Objectives

The Specific Objectives of this Paper are:

1. The fact that some individuals and groups in Ethiopia and outside Ethiopia as well as some NGOs create and spread fake news, i.e. “berewellede” in order to clash different ethnics and religions against each other in Ethiopia, this Paper would like to appeal for tolerance and respect of different political views, religions, as well as ethnics in Ethiopia.
2. This Paper would like to appeal to those individuals and/or groups in and outside Ethiopia as well as some NGOs who want to see chaos, bloodshed, destabilize and destruction in Ethiopia not to be hopeless. Therefore, such hopeless⁴² mentality of people can be described better with a proverb in Amharic.

Conclusion

As already discussed above, fake news means false news, lies, deceive, cheating, illusion, misleading, dummy, simulation, fabrication, manipulation and propaganda. In other words, fake news includes also “defamation, through spreading of untrue facts of another person knowingly; incitement of hatred or the

³⁸ Source: Via: Wall Street Journal: Malaysia proposes law that would make spreading fake news illegal <https://www.engadget.com/2018/.../malaysia-proposes-law-spreading-fake-news-illega...> Asia Internet Coalition, Amnesty International

³⁹ The “guardian” (11.04.2018)

⁴⁰ The mentality of such people can be described better with a proverb as follows: A proverb in Amharic describes a sadist or hopeless donkey. This means, as the donkey says: “After my death the grass shouldn’t grow”. This is a free translation by the author of this Paper.

⁴¹ “Oromo Liberation Front, which the Ethiopian government labelled as a terrorist organisation that carried out violent acts in Ethiopia, Somalia and Kenya.” Source: Ludovicalaccino: “Ethiopia” Oromo People Don’t Care about Cabinet Reshuffle: Jawar: TesfaNews TesfaNews November 3, 2016”

⁴² The proverb in Amharic says: As a sadist or hopeless donkey says: “After my death the grass shouldn’t grow”.

making of threats in a way that may disturb public peace. In general fake news poisons democracy and free debate. Accordingly the news or reports about the late Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi and the unrest in some towns of Oromia and Amhara Regional States of Ethiopia in autumn 2016 were lies or "berewellede" and propaganda to mislead the public in order to defame, harm an agency, entity, or persons deliberately. The fact that, the foreign mass media don't have accurate information about Ethiopia, reporters and/or editors simply copy information from "bloggers" and other media without verifying its objectivity or reality. Because they follow the "Motto": "Danachkrahtkein Hahn"⁴³. This means "Nobody cares two hoots about it"⁴⁴. Therefore, everybody should be aware and conscious about news or reports in the social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube whether the news or reports are Fake news or facts (authentic). Moreover, all governments and other institutions should take actions not only against social media platforms, such as Facebook which do not promptly remove illegal contents but also against the "mainstream media" like BBC, Tagesschau (ARD), Deutsche Welle, etc. which they simply copy fake news or lies and spread or broadcast this fake news without verifying its authentic or reality. This means that also the "mainstream media" should obey the law because no one is above the law. In other words, the law must be applied the same regardless of status or any other consideration. As already discussed in this Paper, fake news, i.e. "berewellede" had negative impacts on peace and development in Ethiopia during and also after the unrest in some towns of Oromia and Amhara Regional States of Ethiopia in autumn 2016.

These impacts were and are as follows:

- On peace and security,
- On the Ethiopian economy,
- On the neighbourhoods or relationship between the communities of different ethnic groups,
- On awareness among the Ethiopian society regarding the negative effects of social media on society and individuals. These social media platforms are for example Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube which spread fake news or lies, "berewellede" and propaganda to mislead the public in order to defame, harm an agency, entity, or persons deliberately.

As a conclusion, the media coverage about the unrest in some towns of Oromia and Amhara Regional States of Ethiopia in autumn 2016 was fake news, i.e. "berewellede" due to two reasons:

- Hidden hatred against one ethnic group because of power struggle,
- The "mainstream media" have simply copied and spread or broadcasted fake news, i.e. "berewellede" knowingly or unknowingly because they follow the "principle" of sensation news, i.e. "man bites dog". This means that this news has more newsworthy than dog bites man because dog bites man is not unusual for such media. In other words, there is attention on the sensation news. Unfortunately this is the trend of the "mainstream media" throughout the world.

⁴³A German Saying.

⁴⁴In other words, "from one day to the next, nobody cares two hoots about the project anymore."

Consequently, those who create and spread fake news (lies), i.e. "berewellede" about Ethiopia want to see hatred, chaos, bloodshed, destabilized and destruction in Ethiopia.

Recommendations

It is already discussed on the fake news, i.e. "berewellede" about the unrest in some towns of Oromia and Amhara Regional States of Ethiopia in autumn 2016. Therefore, if peace and development would be restored in Ethiopia, those who have committed a crime and/or contributed to violation in Ethiopia in 2015/16 should apologize to all victims and compensate them at least the properties what the victims have lost during the unrest. Because this is the right way for reconciliation in order to make peace within the Ethiopian society. Also the mass media especially the "mainstream media" like BBC, Tagesschau (ARD), Deutsche Welle, "Contra Magazin", "Weltsichten" Magazin, etc. should be responsible for simply copying fake news, i.e. "berewellede" and spreading or broadcasting this fake news without verifying its authentic or reality about the unrest in some towns of Oromia and Amhara Regional States of Ethiopia in autumn 2016. This means that such mass media has contributed direct or indirect to mislead the reality in Ethiopia and encouraged the criminals. Therefore, the above mentioned mass media ("mainstream media") should apologize also to the public in their respective countries for misleading the public about the unrest in some towns of Oromia and Amhara Regional States of Ethiopia in autumn 2016.

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