



**Representation of Crime and Justice in State media: The Case of the Ethiopian  
Television's Police Program**

**Gizachew Nemomsa**

**A Thesis Submitted to  
the School of Journalism and Communication**

**Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in  
Journalism and Communication**

**Addis Ababa University**

**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

**June, 2013**

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**School of Graduate Studies**

This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Gizachew Nemomsa, entitled *Representation of Crime and Justice in State media: the case of the Ethiopian Television's Police Program* and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in journalism and communication complies with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

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Chair of Department or Graduate Program Coordinator

## ABSTRACT

### **Representation of Crime and Justice in State media: The Case of the Ethiopian Television's Police Program**

Gizachew Nemomsa

Addis Ababa University, June, 2013

The purpose of this study was examining ETV's representation of crime and justice in its Police Program. The study was situated within a broader theoretical paradigm of cultural studies but was specifically informed by theories of representation, semiotic, and Marxist theory of Ideology. In order to address the research questions posed, a qualitative methodological approach was employed. What is more, informed by semiotic and Marxist analytical approaches, textual analytic method was also used. In order to augment the textual data, interviews were conducted with producers of the Police Program. Textual analysis was conducted on twelve (12) weekly programs transmitted via ETV during a seven (7) - month period.

The study revealed that the news narratives of ETV's Police Program constructed the image of criminals, victims, police/policing, and courtroom differently to its viewers. Criminals were portrayed as villains bent on inflicting heinous act against innocent victims in order to achieve their premeditated goals. Often times, they were identified through their pictures where the police were said to be pursuing them in order to arrest them. When arrested, they were often portrayed as powerless subjects paraded in front of judges in the courtroom, demonstrating the power of the institution of policing or the law enforcement bodies as well as representing the court as the ultimate dispenser of justice. In so doing, the news narratives delegitimized crime and criminality whereas it legitimized the institution of policing and the justice system in the eyes of the public.

With respect to the packaging of news narratives about the victims, the police program used graphic images of body injuries, fresh wounds and medical treatments the victims were

undergoing in order to evoke public sympathy for the victims, on one hand, and induce moral outrage against the perpetrators, on the other.

The ubiquitous portrayal of the images of police and policing in the news stories and the routinizing of their activities also served the ideological function of the institution in the sense of helping the public take for granted the institutional role of the police/policing in the society and see it commonsensical; in so doing, it bestowed legitimacy to community policing as an institutional response for the control of crime and criminality.

Owing to its wielding of institutional power, in the news narratives, the police served as news sources, defined the news value, and framed the stories in a way that favored their worldview. As a result, the portrayals became susceptible to stereotyping of the subjects based on gender, age and class of criminals and victims.

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## Table of Contents

<b>Content</b>	<b>page</b>
Acknowledgements.....	v
Table of Contents.....	vi
List of Figures.....	ix
List of Acronyms.....	x
Chapter One: Introduction.....	1
1.1. Background of the study.....	1
1.2. Statement of the problem.....	5
1.3. Objectives of the study.....	6
1.3.1. General Objective.....	6
1.3.2. Specific Objectives.....	6
1.4. Research Questions.....	7
1.5. Significance of the study.....	7
1.6. Scope of the study.....	8
1.7. Limitations of the study.....	9
1.8. Organization of the study.....	9
Chapter Two: Review of Related Literature.....	11
2.1. Overview of Crime and the Media.....	11
2.1.1. Social construction of crime news.....	14
2.1.2. Labeling, Media and moral panics.....	19
2.1.3. Hegemonic role of the media.....	24
2.2. Theoretical Frameworks.....	27
2.2.1. Representation theory.....	27
2.2.2. Semiotic theory.....	33

2.2.2.1. Saussure and Barthes: Language and Myth .....	40
2.2.2.2. Signs and systems .....	42
2.2.2.3. Index, Icon and Symbol .....	44
2.2.2.4. Signs of crime.....	48
2.2.2.5. Criticisms on semiotics .....	49
2.2.3. Marxist notion of Dominant Ideology .....	51
2.2.3.1. Neo-Marxist approaches and concept of Ideology.....	53
2.2.3.2. Hegemony .....	55
Chapter Three: Research Methodology .....	61
3.1. Qualitative Research.....	61
3.2. Textual Analysis .....	62
3.3. Semiotics as an analytical tool for the study of text .....	63
3.3.1. Choosing images for a semiological study .....	66
3.3.2. Stages in Semiotic analysis.....	66
3.4. Marxist Analysis.....	67
3.5. Interview .....	69
3.6. Methodological challenges .....	69
3.7. Sample size and time frame.....	71
3.8. Sampling strategies.....	71
3.9. Unit of analysis.....	72
3.10. Data coding and analytical categories .....	72
3.11. The process and procedures of analysis .....	74
3.12. Trustworthiness of the data.....	75
Chapter Four: Data Analysis and Presentations.....	76
4.1. The Construction of Crime news in police program .....	76
4.2. Sources of crime news, news selection and news values .....	78
4.3. Images of crimes in the news and other narratives.....	82
4.4. Representations and meanings: Semiotic analysis of criminal events .....	85

4.5. The use of different signs for deception .....	111
4.6. Representations of police and policing: the interpretation of crime control .....	114
4.7. Public reaction to evens of crime and the Moral panic .....	121
4.8. Representations of crime and Stereotypes.....	126
4.9. Ideological orientations of representations of Crime: Marxist Analysis.....	131
4.10. The Ideology of Crime news and narrative production.....	131
Chapter Five: Conclusion and Implications.....	140
5.1. Conclusion.....	140
5.2. Implications .....	143
Bibliography .....	146
Appendices.....	153

## **List of Figures**

- Figure 1: The image of criminal captured in South Sudan, returned to Ethiopia.....93
- Figure 2: Clothes of the victim burned with acidic chemical.....99
- Figure 3: Image of emigrants enclosed in the container to travel.....107
- Figure 4: Image of criminal used different signs to deceive people .....113

## **List of Acronyms**

EPRDF	Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front
ETV	Ethiopian Television
ERTA	Ethiopia Radio and Television Agency
FEACC	Federal Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission
Interpol	International Police Organization
ISA	Ideological State Apparatuses
RSA	Repressive State Apparatuses

## **Chapter One: Introduction**

### **1.1. Background of the study**

Crime is a behavior so defined as criminal by the agents and activities of the powerful reflected in what is and what is not defined as criminal and what is and what is not acted upon within the legal code(Walklate, 2005). It is a social problem with which the media in every state is concerned. This is because media plays an important role in the construction of social problems (Jarrell, 2007). Media portrayals of crime and violence have become part of the spectacle of everyday life Kidd-Hewitt (1995). We have become voyeurs of factual programs that ‘entertain and frighten us with reconstructions of violent crimes and amaze us with the sheer audacity of wily confidence tricksters.

Additionally, according to Wykes (2001:1), the major source of information about crime is mass media. Media, state and academy have tended to construct crime narratives interactively around taken-for-granted models of social rules and norms. The construction of stories along such taken-for-granted models, hence, distorts the reality about the actual problem.

Therefore, most of the scholars in media and crime were concerned with the problems that media itself create in the construction of such realities. Criminologists are from those who stress on problems that have been created by the media. Kidd-Hewitt & Osborne (1995:37) describe the problem as state of consciousness characterized by unconscious acceptance of electronically transmitted modes of perceptions and thought in which cynicism, mistrust, and

paranoia predominate and the media, rather than human institutions, provide acquired cultural perceptions

In line with this, Walklate (2005) states that our experiences will tap different aspects of the crime problem because media tend to work with particular stereotypes. Official information only addresses those aspects of the crime problem that have come to the attention of the criminal justice system, and criminological research tends to be focused around specific crimes or specific problems.

Additionally, according to Websdale (1999) cultural criminologists explore the complex institutional and informational interconnections between the criminal justice system and the mass media. Quoting researchers like (Chermak, 1995, Sanders & Lyon 1995), Websdale further claims mass media's heavy reliance on criminal justice sources for imagery and information on crime, but more importantly, the reciprocal relationship that undergirds this reliance. In doing so:

They highlight for the public those issues chosen by criminal justice institutions and framed by criminal justice imperatives and they in turn contribute to the political agendas of the criminal justice system and to the generation of public support for these agendas. Media and criminal justice organization thus, coordinate their day- to-day operations, and cooperate in constructing circumscribed understanding of crime and crime control (Ferrell and Websdale, 1999:9)

The main point is that media images of crimes are those images constructed and shaped by the detectors. As a result, media tend to produce those restricted ideas of detectors for the wider public consumption. In relation to this idea, Mason (2003:4-5) also argues that, as

consumers of popular and news programming, we are surrounded by images of crime, law enforcement and the criminal justice system. He asserts, the growth in new media technologies has led to a marked increase in academic output on media/crime nexus as well as increased concerns about the media's role in new challenges to security.

Whatever ideas raised on the complex issues of the concept crime and media by different scholars, academicians, media practitioners, police officers and judges, the main purpose of conceptualizing crime is to control or prevent it, so as to bring about security and order in the life of the society.

However, in Mason (2003:1), Dyer argues that reality is always more extensive and complicated than any system of representation. We always sense that representation never gets reality which is why human history has produced so many different and changing ways of trying to get it. Because of this reason, this study aimed at examining representation of crime in media.

In our country Ethiopia, the Ethiopian television is the mainstream television which has been producing stories on crimes. As a main stream media, the way the Ethiopian television portrays crime should be examined in line with the problems mentioned by different writers above. To achieve this objective studying of representations appears to be more important.

Ethiopia is a country with low socio-economic or low social class status where criminal behavior has been one of the most challenging problems of the country to assure peace and order to the life of the society. In response to the problems, mass media which are operating in the country are exposing people to the information containing, crime, and criminal justice

system. On the other hand, the criminal Code of Ethiopia, in Article 1 of Proclamation No.414/2004, regarding the purpose of the criminal code, states that it aims at the prevention of crimes to ensure order, peace, and security of the state, its peoples, and inhabitants for the public good.

Additionally, the mass media in Ethiopia, especially the Ethiopian television by its police program, for a long period of time, has been engaging in the portrayal of crime and justice cooperating to educate people. The concern of this study, *Representation of Crime and Justice in State media*, therefore, focuses on the interpretation of how crime and justice is represented in media and how realities are constructed with what implications.

Representation is a complex business, and especially when dealing with differences, it engages feelings, attitudes and emotions and it mobilizes fears and anxieties in the viewer, at deeper levels than we can explain in a simple, common-sense (Hall: 2003:226). Therefore, this study was conducted to analyze the intricate issues of media and crime in Ethiopia based on the study of how crime is portrayed in mainstream media for the fact that representation stands not only for how facts are re-presented, but also for how they are constructed in a given socio-political and cultural context.

Finally, in searching for meaning and ideological values in which crime is portrayed, the study based generally on how crime stories are constructed in television. It also includes what is presented as crime to make an inductive interpretation of the meaning of the stories.

## **1.2. Statement of the problem**

The role of the media in how crime is consumed as popular culture has long been the debate among cultural criminologists (Walklate, 2005). However, studies show that different Scholars, professionals, academicians, as well as disciplines including media practitioners are those concerned with the issues of crime and control in different ways.

Regarding contributions of media and communication to crime control in Ethiopia, now a days, Police officers are working with media organizations to portray events of crime so as to control it. They portray the process of their investigation, with the purpose of using a media strategy in assisting the progress of the ongoing enquiry. Through portrayal of crime and activities aimed at crime control, they produce different crime stories.

Accordingly in Ethiopia, the Ethiopian television with its weekly program is playing active role in creating crime stories in which reactions to crime stories are increasing. However, the agenda by which it is reported and how it is constructed and presented should be occupied and be understood by media and communication students in our country.

The other problem that should be considered is how realities of crime and justice are constructed and presented in the present socio-cultural and political contexts of the Ethiopian society in which they are produced and consumed within the problems of representations and claims of literatures about this issue.

To put it clearly, because of the problems of representations, the researcher concerned about whether the representation of crime in media would solve the problem of crime or not, in present situation for the fact that realities in the world are constructed differently based on

the receiver's cultural, psychological, and political background. It also questioned how media is used to solve problems of crime.

On the other hand, there would be a problem of stereotyping in the process of representation based on age, gender, religion, politics and class of criminals and victims that can be examined in light of Article four (4) of the criminal code of Ethiopia which states criminal law applies to all these differences without discrimination. So, unless the media consider such differences, the representation would be stereotypical and distortion of reality which this study sets out to examine.

### **1.3. Objectives of the study**

#### ***1.3.1. General Objective***

The main objective of this study is to examine the representation of crime and justice in relation to their meanings and ideological values as portrayed in television by the ERTA's police program.

#### ***1.3.2. Specific Objectives***

In addition to the general objective stated above, the specific objectives of this study are:

1. To analyze Crime and criminal justice portrayals in order to know how the stories are constructed
2. To explore the meanings that are inferred from the representations
3. To make analysis of how, individuals or different identities (criminals, victims, police, justice system) are portrayed in light of their age, gender, class, power, etc

4. To explore the ideology and interests of crime news producers used to shape and constrain the behavior of criminals

#### **1.4. Research Questions**

1. How is crime portrayed in Ethiopian television police program? How are the stories constructed? What meanings do texts provide?
2. How are criminals, victims and police represented in the ETV police program
3. Do the portrayals of crime invite the public to react and contribute to the construction of realities?
4. What ideological positions/beliefs do texts, and images of crime stories do communicate?

#### **1.5. Significance of the study**

So far, no serious research has been conducted on Ethiopian television in relation to representation of crime in media. This study is perhaps the first of its kind in relation to crime and media in Ethiopia as well as in school of journalism and communication post graduate division. Of course, there are studies conducted in other countries. However, this study is dedicated to examine the subject in the Ethiopian context. Further, the study is about the search for meaning and ideology than study of coverage and counting of crime. Hence, it would provide a new angle of viewpoint with respect to crime representation in media.

Additionally, the outcome of this study will be of substantial importance to Ethiopia on how to use media for crime control issues. Media practitioners for their programs which focus on crime, police officers through the process of their investigation of crime, court officials in

their work in the courtroom (justice system), and policy makers if they need to revise their policy of media coverage of crime, and other institutions and individuals who are concerned directly or indirectly with crime and crime control issues would be the first beneficiaries of this study.

Additionally, researchers who wish to involve themselves in the study, in the areas of crime and media may use this study for their future research. Students from media studies and law may use it as a reference.

Lastly but not least, it will be an add-up to the domain of knowledge of academics in general, and those concerned with the cause and control of crime using interference of media to shape and define the behavior of criminals in particular.

### **1.6. Scope of the study**

There are a number of private and government owned media institutions weather broadcast or print which are operating in Ethiopia and present issues of crime and justice in different ways. However, this study focused only on Ethiopian television which is completely government owned. Other state owned media are also not included here because the researcher selected Ethiopian television as a result of two important reasons.

The first reason is that crime is widely covered by weekly police program in Ethiopian television. Secondly, it is television that portrays (uses) the images of criminals, victims and detectors so that these images could be used as texts that are analyzed and examined by this study.

### **1.7. Limitations of the study**

There is no research devoid of some limitations. Due to time and resource constraints and lack of enough experience in research, the research area is limited to only Ethiopian television, though there are other media institutions producing crime stories in the country. Particularly, the time limitation might have hindered the finding in relation to the nature of the study. The study required more time to be completed. It was difficult to access the data within the time plan set for the study because of the bureaucratic nature of the organization (ERTA). However, being concerned and critical use of limited time by the researcher minimized the limitation in this respect.

The data accessed for the study was reduced because of the methodological approaches used. Most forms of textual analysis require you to have repeated access to your object of analysis, and that can be time-consuming (Stokes, 2003:54). So, focusing on limited number of programs was the only solution. Semiotic and Marxist approaches have their own limitations. Semiotic analysis, for example demands high level of knowledge about the chosen object of analysis, although it needs relatively few resources which might have hindered the extent to which the programs would have been analyzed. But, reading and re-reading of texts reduced the limitations if not removed at all.

### **1.8. Organization of the study**

The study is organized in to five chapters. The first chapter discusses the background of the study including problem statement, research objectives, method of the study, and the significance of the study. Chapter two focuses on reviewing of crime and media related literature including the theoretical frameworks. In chapter three, methodological aspects of

the study have been discussed. Chapter four is dedicated to discussing the findings of the study through interpretation of texts using different methods in line with the research questions and related literatures discussed. In the final chapter (Chapter five), conclusions and implications of the study are discussed.

## **Chapter Two: Review of Related Literature**

This chapter focuses on review of some literatures and begins with a discussion of studies that deal with representations of crime and justice in media. It is also followed by an examination of theoretical framework.

### **2.1. Overview of Crime and the Media**

During a period of enormous global, political, economic and cultural change, crime is emerging as an issue at the very core of government in societies marked by increasing demographic diversity, mobility and inequalities, and within which the news and entertainment media have become increasingly focused on crime (Stenson and Sullivan, 2001:16). The institutional arrangements that organize the media and rhetorical forms through which crime is represented can play a vital role in shaping and reflecting our deepest personal and cultural fears and sensibilities about crime and insecurities.

Innes, in Mason (2003:51) suggest that the mass-media coverage of crime has been particularly important for its role in articulating and coordinating a social reaction to the individual cases that goes beyond the immediate concerns of the cases themselves. Each of these incidents has been accompanied by widespread popular concern that it signals something is wrong with the society and criminal justice process, which requires some form of corrective response.

Referring to Giddens (1991), Mason (2003:52) proposes that the mediated accounts of crimes have not simply reported the facts of the cases; they have functioned as dramatic articulations of popular fears about the apparent encroachment of the forces of disorder drawing upon

diffuse anxieties about the state of contemporary society. Mason defines events that affecting the immediate participants (victims, witnesses, offenders) as signal crimes. The response to the signal may involve either individual or collective decision to make changes to the environment through situational crime-prevention.

Accordingly, it is argued that the conceptual definition seeks to integrate elements from several theoretical perspectives. From these perspectives, Mason stressed on the semiotic properties of crime; the concept of signal crimes is informed by the evolving field of social semiotics. The important thing that should be considered here is that there is a process of signification in the mediated process of representation of crime which can be generative of a profound social reaction.

The focus upon the importance of signification in constructing public problems coheres with the findings of wider research that has documented the role of mediated communication in the construction of a variety of popular fears and concerns. For example, analysis of crime in the media has repeatedly documented a tendency for both fictional and factual coverage to focus upon serious crime and the role of police investigators responding to such incidents (Ibid.)

The use and manipulation of media interest by police in the furtherance of their objectives reflects the fact that crime investigation is essentially a form of information work. The role of the police investigation is to identify and interpret information about incident in order to construct an evidenced narrative account of what happened, thereby identifying who was responsible for committing the offence.

In addition, concerning the criminal justice and the media, Osborne (1995:41-2) suggest that in all levels, the electronic media is capable of redefining the cultural context in which the criminal justice system operates and in so doing transforming both the concepts of justice, of criminality and of retribution. According to Osborne, media create and distort representations of the social and criminal worlds, and they further diminish the possibility of a rational, reality based analysis of crime and how it could, or should be dealt with. The courts now use video evidence, closed circuit cameras, and many other technologies which clearly impact on the administration of criminal justice.

In a similar way, Altheide (1997) as (cited in Ulmer, 2000:170), states that media coverage of crime and violence has become so pervasive as to constitute a predominant theme in journalism. In addition to their inherently violent nature, the abortion killings possess other characteristics popular by the news media: political protest, moral dilemma, and social controversy (Yale, 1993) quoted in (Ulmer, 2000). These provocative attributes, coupled with dramatic nature of the events and their connection to the contentious issue of abortion, made the abortion killings newsworthy. Ulmer asserts that because murder is so sensational, media coverage of such crimes is usually intense. Murder stories, responding to the public injustice of the act, invoke formats that condemn the crime and the criminal.

Consequently, in this sense, public fascination with crime and justice continues to grow with the emergence of 'risk societies' as it is also emphasized in Mason (2003:5). As he argues, this is because most people have limited direct contact with or experience with this matters and rely on media reports and representations of them for their knowledge.

Most of the studies in 1970s focused, on moral panics, deviancy amplification and construction of crime news. However, as Mason states, scholars such as Cohen, Young, Chibnall, and Hall et.al began to question the media as purveyor of particular constructions of social reality rather than as objective reporters which is also observed by (Kidd-Hewitt, 1995:13). Since then, an increasing number of sociologists and criminologists, and media and cultural studies have concerned themselves with the effects of media representations of crime, surveillance, technologies, and crime and law in popular cultures.

### ***2.1.1. Social construction of crime news***

This part takes a critical look at issues of importance concerning news media representations of crime. But, it is essential to first note why it is important to discuss about crime news. Therefore, it is significant to start from Wykes (2001) proposition that ‘crime news mobilizes the extremes of value judgments for which we need to combine news and crime together. Mason (2003:13) also states that news media parallel the entertainment media industries in their focus on stories of crime and deviance; and the prominence of crime stories in the media has been a focus of anxiety and debate.

For Wykes, news matters because it purports to tell us the truth about the world beyond our immediate experience; and crime matters because it generates the moral boundaries within which state and subject are oriented that it marks the normal from the deviant. The state requires popular cultural authority to legislate and the public learns most real crime in their community from the news. Many of our ideas about the world around us are gleaned, not through direct experience, but through exposure to the mass media. Therefore, it is this

exposure to the media that influence the society to construct certain realities which is known as social construction.

By social construction, it is argued (Hall et.al, 1978:53) that the media do not simply and transparently report events which are 'naturally' newsworthy in themselves. Rather it is the end-product of a complex process which begins with a systematic sorting and selecting of events and topics according to a socially constructed set of categories.

MacDougall's argument in Hall et.al (1978) conforms to this view. As he argues, at any given moment, billions of simultaneous events occur throughout the world. All of these occurrences are potentially news. They do not become so until some purveyor of news gives an account of them. So, the news, in other words, is the account of the event, not something intrinsic in the event itself). Websdale (1999) also proposed in his reading of (Hall et. al' s, 1978) '*policing the crisis*', that the news media played a central role in the initial construction and later intensification of the panic, thereby encouraging a cultural climate more favorable to coercive control strategies.

On the other hand, it is proposed that the news media play an important and primary role in the construction of social problems. According to Sacco (1995) & Fishman (1978) cited in Jarrell (2007), an analysis of the social and media construction of crime waves, "the interplay between national elites and national media organizations may well have given rise to a number of social issues now accepted as fixtures in the recent political scene". The media doesn't just report about crime; they are responsible for constructing a social reality of crime that has an enormous impact on public perceptions of crime and criminality.

The media are frequently not the 'primary definers' of news events at all; but their structured relationship to power has the effect of making them play a crucial role in reproducing the definitions of those who have privileged access, to the media as attributed sources'. So, According to (Jarrell, 2007), it is this structured relationship between the media and its 'powerful' sources which begins to open up the neglected question of the ideological role of the media. It is this which give substance and specificity to Marx's basic proposition that *'the ruling ideas of any age are the ideas of its ruling class'*.

In the major social, political and legal institutions of society, coercion and constraints are never wholly absent (Hall et al, 1978: 60). For instance, reporters and reporting are subject to economic and legal constraints, as well as to more overt forms of censorship. But the transmission of dominant ideas depends more on non-coercive mechanisms for their reproduction. Websdale (1999: 278) additionally quoted (Hall et al, 1978) concerning the ideological linkages between the representational frames of the news media and emergent criminal justice interest in mugging, because it identifies an intricate web of non conspiratorial control initiatives at the heart of modern era government.

The other side of the problem rests on the source of information that media use. According to (Jarrell, 2007), the media utilize the police and criminal justice officials as their primary source of information for a number of reasons. One is in order to provide the public with as much credible information as possible; the media need to gather information from reliable sources. In addition, due to time constraints, the media need easy and quick access to crime information. The police provide the media with seemingly credible and easy-to-access data (Lynch et al, 2000) cited in Jarell (2007).

It is also emphasized by Websdale (1999: 291) that the writers of true crime often base their accounts upon police investigative narratives. As a result, the ironic name of this genre as 'true crime' reminds us that there are multiple way of narrating crime tales, and police versions are one among them. Furthermore, Websdale suggests that police investigative narratives are inscribed within broader dominant or preferred cultural understandings of crime, individual guilt, punishment and justice.

Relying on police information, certain crimes, moreover street crimes, are given more coverage than other types of crime and the police are able to promote their own interests and their own version of crime (Sherizen, 1978; Fishman, 1980; Hall et al, 1978; Ericson et al, 1987, Grabosky and Wilson, 1989) cited in (Jarrell, 2007). In addition, the police role as the dominant gatekeeper means that crime news is often police news and that the advancement of a police perspective on crime and its solutions is facilitated.

Concerning the news values, Jewkes (2004) have more specifically mapped out the news values that not only shape the reporting of crime, but also help to locate those values within the larger practices of journalism. She included to the usual news values (immediacy, dramatization, personalization, simplification, conventionalism, structured access, and novelty) thresholds such as predictability, individualism, risk, sex, celebrity, proximity, violence, spectacle and graphic imagery, and children.

On the other hand, Smith (2010:9-10) claims that clarity, plausibility and intelligibility are of crucial importance when constructing the story of a crime and crime narratives organize the events, characteristics and characters to form a believable story with a logical chronology so that we may begin to understand what happened and why. The way in which crime story is

constructed will reveal what we as a culture or society find to be plausible motivations and acceptable or excusable behaviors.

Some writers argued that media are redefining and making obsolete traditional notions of crime and deviance altogether. It is clear from these divergent viewpoints that the media's role in representing reality is highly contested and subject to interpretation (Jewkes, 2004:36-7). Although fictional accounts of crime are arguably of greatest salience in discussions of media influence, the reporting of crime news is also of importance and is no less shaped by the mission to entertain. Wykes gives her views about construction of crime news and its consequences for society within which it is constructed as follows:

The construction of news simultaneously constructs for audiences a framework of interpretation as it presents the 'facts'. Crime news is about moments of immediate crisis, extreme conflict and resolution. The match between news values, the new political discourses and cultural values was good enough for meanings appropriate to the conservative agenda to be represented within a range of news topics reported as crime and deviance (Wykes, 2001: 187).

This implies that the multi-faceted reality of crime news depends on the individual's way of interpretation. Wykes also holds the view that, because the issue is of public interest, it paves the way for the reaction of the public to the issue. Additionally, she suggests that it becomes possible to argue that the interests and values of conservatism were readily and systematically supported by the language of crime and conflict news. That has implications for theorizing the media, crime, politics and culture Wykes (2001: 201-2). Crime news may serve as a focus for the articulation of shared morality and public sentiments. A chance not simply to speak to the community but to speak for the community, against all that the

criminal outsider represents, to define the shape of the threat, to advocate a response, to praise on conformity to established norms and values, and to warn of the consequences of deviance.

### ***2.1.2. Labeling, Media and moral panics***

The subject that attracted most of media-crime writers in literatures of previous studies is the issue of labeling and moral panic. Labeling theorists focused on the interactions between individuals or groups and those who label or define them as deviant. Out of these interactional encounters between 'police' and 'delinquents' the participants will construct meanings: namely, images and understandings of both themselves and the others involved. As Tierney (2006) points out, individuals are involved in a process whereby they subjectively construct a symbolic world.

Under certain circumstances, these interactions lead to the application of a 'deviant' label. This in turn, has psychological implications in that those so labeled may come to see themselves in terms of the label. It also has social implications in that such labeling is likely to have an impact on the way in which individuals labeled as deviant are treated by others in the future (Ibid: 141).

From the perspective of labeling theory, the quality of 'deviance' does not reside in the behavior itself, rather the outcome of responses to that behavior by various social audiences. Behavior that is potentially deviant is said to occur all the time, among all sections of society. In short, they construct social reality. The process of becoming deviant reaches a key stage when the recipient of the label begins to accept the label and sees him or herself as deviant.

Howard S. Becker attempted to bring to light the continuities, rather than discontinuities, between deviant and non-deviant worlds. Significantly, instead of the concept of crime, with its connotations of moral absolutism, he used the concept of deviance, and he shifted attention away from the supposed intrinsic qualities of the rule breaker, towards the reactions of the social audience, and the interactional processes leading to the application of the deviant label (Tierney, 2006:143). Two important elements of labeling theory are present in Becker's account: first, an anti-deterministic stance, allowing people to make choices and exercise their wills, and second, following successful labeling by control agents, the notion of a deviant 'career'.

Accordingly, for labeling theorists, the original causes of the behavior, as traditionally understood, are not on the agenda. Modern societies, they say, are composed of different groups with different norms and values, and deviant behavior or more accurately, behavior that could be labeled as deviant is widespread. However, only some of it becomes officially designated as deviant. Another eminent writer in the labeling tradition, Edwin Lemert cited in Tierney (2006), argued that trying to establish the original causes is pointless. In his view, all that deviants have in common is that they have been labeled deviant.

Laughy (2007) quotes the idea of Becker and explains that social groups create deviance by making the rules whose infraction constitutes deviance. From this point of view, deviance is not a quality of the act the person commits, rather a consequence of the application by others of rules and sanctions to an 'offender'. The deviant is one to whom that label has successfully been applied; deviant behavior is the behavior that people so label (Laughy, 2007). At this point, it is important to make clear that it is not only people that do the label.

But, media institutions can also label some behavior as deviant, and so generate fear about that behavior.

***Moral Panic:*** According to Laughey, Becker applied his ideas about deviance to various groups such as marijuana users and jazz musicians. He argues deviance becomes a vicious circle once labels are attached to a deviant group. The deviance is accentuated by group reactions that in turn label the 'labelers', which provokes further social condemnation of the group.

Theoretically, the moral panic model falls under the domain of the dominant ideology approach Wu (2012: 49). According to him, the term "moral panic" has been so often employed not only by academics, but by the media in everyday life. It commonly refers to the public reactions to social problems such as crime, deviance, natural disasters, and accidents. According to (Wu, 2012), the term first appeared in Stanley Cohen's work (1972/2002): *Folk Devils and Moral Panics: The Creation of the Mods and Rockers*. In that sense, the definition of "moral panic" is somewhat narrower than its usage today.

Societies appear to be subject, every now and then, to periods of moral panic. A condition, episode, person or group of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests; its nature is presented in a stylized and stereotypical fashion by the mass media; the moral barricades are manned by editors, bishops, politicians and other right-thinking people; socially accredited experts pronounce their diagnoses and solutions (Cohen, 2002:1).

For Cohen, the object of the panic is quite novel and at other times it is something which has been in existence long enough, but suddenly appears in the public interest (eye). Sometimes the panic passes over and is forgotten, except in folklore and collective memory; at other times it has more serious and long-lasting consequences and might produce such changes as

those in legal and social policy or even in the way society conceives itself. Therefore, because of the complexity in its nature, such moral terror should be considered when issues that draw public reactions such as crime and deviance are produced and disseminated through the media.

Cohen applies his theory to the mods and rockers, two opposing groups of working class youth who came into conflict with each other at English seaside resorts; and argues that media did not merely report, in an objective way, the crowd disturbances that occurred between the two groups, but actually helped to construct social reaction to the deviance by sensationalizing the level of violence and disruption that occurred. It is also emphasized in Goode & Ben-Yehuda (1994: 25) citing Cohen (1972), the media handled the seaside events could be characterized by exaggerated attention, distortion, and stereotyping. Not only was the focus of attention exaggerated, the stories describing the events also exaggerated their seriousness.

Additionally Okoronkwo (2008:4-5), referring to Stuart Hall's *'Policing the Crisis'* (1978) states the concept of the moral panic as reused in relation to the disturbance surrounding muggings in the 1970's, on how the media, working with images defined the incidence of street robberies in Britain's inner cities as an outbreak of a new dangerous kind of violent crime (Muncie, 2004) cited in (Okoronkwo, 2008). The media portrayal of young black men as muggers generated fear of black men and also resulted in an over policing of this particular group.

Such panics are often characterized by a inconsistency, as Hall puts it, between the threat represented and the reaction to the threat, between "what is perceived and what

that is a perception of" (Hall et al, 1978:29). In particular he tries to examine how and why certain themes, particularly crime or any other deviant act, are more likely to be given a great deal of attention by the state and more likely to be considered threatening for the normal fabric of society and the safeguard of the dominant ideas.

The state reacts to the 'moral threat' both through the mobilization of its forces such as the Police and the courts of law, and through sensitization of the public through the media. Hall explains how both these very powerful 'tools', available to the state, play a crucial role in the 'fight against the threat'. Particularly, he refers to the media as an important mediating agency between the political interests of the state and the formation of public opinion.

Labeling theorists propose that they focus their attention not on the behavior of offenders, but on the behavior of those who label, react to and otherwise seek to control offenders (Okoronkwo, 2008). Hence, labeling theory argues that it is these efforts of social control that ultimately trigger the processes that trap individuals in a criminal career.

In (Hall, et al, 1978) *policing the crisis*, when the panic surrounding mugging intensified, mugging became almost solely a problem with black youths. Therefore, the problem with the moral panic in turn raises the problem of stereotyping resulted from labeling and labelers since the media is one of the influential instruments to label working with other labelers in the society.

Consequently, it is for this same reason that Okoronkwo (2008) quoted (Agnew, 2004: 295) for his argument which proposes that the label of criminal placed upon black youths in

society leads to society defining their acts as criminal and extending this judgment to them as people. Having been labeled, there is an expectation that this criminality must be expressed.

With this attached stereotype, the general population will perceive them to be criminal and treat them accordingly. This produces unanticipated effects: the label of criminal is intended to prevent individuals from participating in criminal activities but it actually creates the very thing it intended to stop. According to Burke (2005) cited in Okoronkwo 2008), it produces a self-fulfilling prophecy which is defined as a false definition of a situation, evoking a new behavior that makes the original false assumption come true

Shortly, to put the concept in short, by labeling, we mean that the behavior crime is a social construct rather than the behavior that inherent within the individuals who are labeled as criminals. Moral panic refers to the fear that is created as a result of labeling. Media is one among the labelers which increases the anxiety of who are in responsibility which is examined by this study.

### ***2.1.3. Hegemonic role of the media***

As part of the wider debate about crime and media, Robert Reiner has argued in (Mason, 2003: 217-18) that analyses of media representations of law and order and policing have tended to be either “hegemonic” or “subversive”. Proponents of the hegemonic perspective point to the police as being in a position to provide access to information, to select and to filter information. Consequently, this places them in a position of dominance in relation to media agencies, which become propagators of dominant ideology.

In contrast, proponents of the latter perspective perceive the media as a treat to morality and authority, and fear that media representations undermine respect for the police service. For

Mason, Reiner's analyses despite his over simplistic view for such complex relationship, gives clear understanding that media images of policing are important, and worthy of study for a number of reasons, prosaic and symbolic.

To put the reasons clearly, first people know the police through television which is a rich source of policing images. Secondly, policing is a popular television subject and policing programs attract sizeable viewing figures. Third, policing programs can tell debates about the nature and future of policing, and can influence policy and procedure. Finally, policing is a key of the 'state of the nation' and media images of policing have symbolic value for commenting on contemporary society.

According to Mason (2003), media images of policing are important for reasons of transparency, for demonstrating and challenging the accountability of a public sector institution. They are a source of information on policing and vital for the attainment of that minimum of consent which is essential for the preservation of police authority.

In short, media representations may support or (more rarely) challenge the dominant definitions of a situation, and they can extend, legitimize, celebrate or criticize the prevailing discourses at any given time. The media thus play a crucial role in the winning of consent for a social system, its values and its dominant interests, or in the rejection of them (Ibid: 16-17).

Moreover, Jewkes (2003:23) argues that the media continue to provide homogenized versions of reality that avoid controversy and preserve the status quo. Consequently, ignorance among audiences is perpetuated, and the labeling, stereotyping and criminalization of certain groups (often along lines of class, race and gender) persists. The structured relationship between the media and its 'powerful' sources has important consequences for the

representation of crime, criminals and criminal justice, particularly with respect to those whose lifestyle or behavior deviates from the norm.

However, it was pointed out by Kidd- Hewitt and Osborne (1995) that while acknowledging the undoubtedly important power and class differentials, failed either to tackle or recognize the practical dynamics surrounding white-collar crime in the media in any systematic fashion. As their primary aims and objectives were rooted in mostly street crime, information pertained to white-collar crime remained cursory.

Likewise, a great many more of the studies dealing with crime and the media failed to include any information on white-collar crime. Additionally, Jewkes (2004: 20) argued that critical criminologists, whose intellectual roots lie in Marxism, have noted that the media rarely covers ‘white collar’ or ‘corporate’ crime unless it has a ‘big bang’ element and contains several features considered conventionally newsworthy. This reluctance to portray corporate wrongs contrasts with the manufacturing of ‘street’ crime waves and reflects a pervasive bias in the labeling of criminals.

Finally, Box (1983:17) has clearly put in (Walklate 2004:123) that ‘the majority of those suffering from corporate crime remain unaware of their victimization, either not knowing it has happened to them, or viewing their “misfortune” as an accident or “no one’s fault”’. Therefore, this study of the nature of crime and media in Ethiopia included an analysis and interpretation of the problem.

## **2.2. Theoretical Frameworks**

This study used representation theory, semiotic theory, and Marxist theory of dominant ideology as theoretical frameworks. Within that, it also pointed out some of the issues of stereotypes that result from representations.

### ***2.2.1. Representation theory***

Before turning into theorizing representation, it is important to first define and conceptualize what a representation is. Scholars attempted to define representation in almost similar ways, even though there are different systems of representation as well as different approaches to it.

According to Hall (1997) cited in Abdissa (2010:18), “Representation is using language to say something meaningful about or represent, the world meaningfully to other people”. In other expression, “it is the production of meaning through language”.

Representation is an essential part of the process by which meaning is produced and exchanged between members of a culture (Hall, 2003). The meaning production process involves the use of language, of signs and images which stand for or represent things (Abdissa, 2010). Accordingly, Abdissa goes on to discussing the process of systems of representations. He identifies two processes. The first one is a system which establishes a correlation between all sorts of objects, people and events, and a set of concepts or mental representation which we carry in our heads. Without such concepts, we could not interpret the world meaningfully at all. Thus he says, meaning depends on the system of concepts and images found in our thoughts which can stand for or represent the world. On the other hand, concepts are not a random collection of things or phenomena rather they are organized,

arranged and classified into complex relations with one another. As a result, he suggests that meanings and concepts must be represented or exchanged which is possible when we have access to shared language.

Moreover, Dyer's definition also appears to fit with the theoretical and methodological approach of this study. He defines "*representations as the concrete form (signifiers) taken by abstract concepts*" (Dyer, 2002:1). Since representations inevitably involve a process of selection in which certain signs are privileged over others, it matters how such concepts are represented in news media, movies, or even in ordinary conversation. More simply, how we are seen determines in part how we are treated; how we treat others is based on how we see them; such seeing come from representation.

Therefore, the way representations are regulated through various media, genres and within various discourses have been given considerable attention. Clearly, representations articulate with cultural power.

When we delve into the theory of representation, we would get the approaches that are provided by Hall (2003). He forwards three approaches in explaining how representation of meaning through language works; and these are the reflective, the intentional and constructionist approach.

In the reflective approach, meaning is thought to lie in the object, person, idea, or event in the world and language functions like a mirror. The intentional approach argues in the opposite case. It holds that it is the speaker, the author who imposes his or her unique meaning on subject through language.

The constructionist approach on the other hand, admits that neither things in themselves nor the individual users of language can fix the meaning in language. Hall further elaborates that it is social actors who use the conceptual systems of their culture, and the linguistic and other representational systems to construct meanings to make the world meaningful or to communicate about the world meaningfully to others. Therefore, according to constructionist view, representation is a practice, a kind of work, which uses material objects and effects. But, the meaning depends, not on the material quality of the sign, but on its symbolic function.

Debates about representation in part centre on alternative notions of reflection or construction. Although Burton (2005: 61) forwards that there is a temptation to follow the 'mirror' of reality approach because of iconographic nature of images in visual media (photograph, film and television), the constructionist view is more meaningful for the purpose and nature of this study because the realities tend more to be constructed based on the cultural background of the society.

Regarding the intentional and reflective approaches to representation, Hall himself was critical that he argued as a general theory of representation through language, the intentional approach is flawed. We cannot be the sole source of meaning in languages. The essence of language is communication, and that in turn depends on shared linguistic conventions and shared codes. Our private thoughts have to negotiate with all the other meanings for words or images which have been stored in language which our use of the language system will inevitably trigger into action (Hall, 2003:25).

For Hall, the reflective approach has also its own deficit Croteau and Hoynes (2003:168) that media images do not simply reflect the world, they *re-present* it; instead of reproducing the reality of the world “out there” the media engage in practices that define reality. Here, we can conceptualize that representation is a very different notion from that of reflection. It implies the active work of selecting and presenting, of structuring and shaping; not merely the transmitting of an already existing meaning, but the more active labour of *making things mean*. It is also pointed out by Croteau and Hoynes that:

We generally agree with the social constructionist perspective which suggests that no representation of reality be totally “true” or “real” since it must inevitably frame an issue and choose to include and exclude certain components of a multi- faceted reality (p. 197).

Hall (2003) clearly put that, we must not confuse the material world, where things and people exist, and the symbolic practices and processes through which representation, meaning and language operate. According to him, constructionists do not deny the existence of the material world. Hence, social constructionism holds that people do not discover knowledge about the world so much as they construct it, and this construction takes place within collective conceptual frameworks through which the world is described and explained.

Similarly, Hartley (2002:202) shares almost the same view with Hall’s argument. He states that representations rely on existing and culturally understood signs and images, on the learnt reciprocity of language and various signifying or textual systems. It is through this ‘stand in’ function of the sign that we know and learn reality. When considering media representations, than looking for accuracy, it is perhaps more useful to understand the discourses that support

the image in question. Furthermore, one cannot assume that all people read all representations in the same way.

Clearly to put, the complexity of the world in which we live does not let us see the true representation of reality, rather we choose to construct the reality that is most related with our own interests from versatile realities available to us. Therefore, it is the social constructionist view that seems to open a way to choose from the realities which represent us. Furthermore, Dyer argues that:

The complexity of representation lies in its imbeddedness in cultural forms, its unequal but not monolithic relations of production and reception, its tense and unfinished, unfinishable relation to the reality to which it refers and which it affects. It also lies, finally in its comprehensiveness (Dyer, 2002: 4).

According to Dyer, representation is always with us, with our culture, and it is not the same or equal because of our difference in culture, it is uneasy and incomplete and full, full in a sense, 'full of' or 'rich' in realities so that it is complex. As a result of the complexity of representations, there are so many problems that come with it, and stereotype, which is one of the focuses of this study, is one from the problems.

### ***Representation and Stereotypes***

Stereotypes came to be seen as an avoidable part of media representations. Fourie has tried to clearly put the definition of stereotypes citing scholars such as O'Sullivan, Hartley, Saunders, Montgomery and Fiske (1994: 299).

Stereotypes are the social classification of particular groups and people as often highly simplified and generalized signs, which implicitly represent at set

of values, judgments and assumptions concerning their behavior, characteristics or history(Fourie, 2001: 471).

The media have been criticized for the generalized, partial and selective way in which they have represented different groups, emphasizing easily identifiable, unchanging and often negative characteristics (O'Sullivan & Jewkes, 1997) cited in Williams (2003). Therefore, representations of realities in media possibly will provide stereotypically constructed events; and even though stereotypes may be positive or negative, both have their own problems that require careful considerations in most serious cases of public issues.

Any analysis should be careful not to accuse an image of being patronizing or demeaning, because such a judgment speaks on behalf of a group who may not feel the same way (Hartley, 2002: 202-3). Stories are always constructed in a certain ways and depend on interpretations.

According to Hartley (2002), stereotype has entered public life via social psychology as a term that is used to describe how fixed qualities or traits may be attributed to groups in the way they are represented in various media. It is usually applied to negative impressions or pernicious representational techniques. For example, negative portrayals of people of color may be taken as stereotyping them. But, conversely, the word stereotyping is not used to describe equally fixed and equally fantastic positive portrayals as McKee argues:

It is constructive to understand stereotypes as reflecting a dominant mode of representation rather than seeking to judge them on their accuracy. This is useful as it opens up the field of analysis; stereotypes are not so much failed representations of an external reality as textual devices that play a role in the economy of narration. Stereotypes can be understood as a concise means of explaining character (McKee 2001, cited in Hartley, 2002: 216).

The problem of stereotype in the case of this study is one of the main research questions with the purpose of searching for realities, whether the image of crime is stereotypically represented in television. Stereotypes are essentially social constructions just as media representations, which entail a process through which certain traits are chosen over others in terms of what is shown in the media (Monamodi, 2009). Because of the complexity of representation and the presence of multiple realities in the media according to the social constructionist view, semiotics is used to explore the meanings of images and stereotypes especially by applying systems of difference or binary oppositions to images of crimes portrayed.

### ***2.2.2. Semiotic theory***

According to Berger (2000), interest in signs and the way they communicate has a long history in medieval philosophers like John Locke and others who have shown interest. However, modern semiotic can be said to have begun with two men: Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1857–1913) and American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce (1839–1914).

Semiology was first defined by the Swiss Linguist Ferdinand De Saussure as the scientific study of signs, and for him a sign is something which stands for something else. At almost the same time, an American Philosopher, Peirce, referred to his similar investigations into the process of meaning as semiotics (Comboy, 2007:96). Additionally, one of the key theorists of semiotics, Roland Barthes, developed the ideas of Saussure and tried to apply the study of signs more broadly (Stokes, 2003:71). Barthes central concern was ‘how does meaning get

into the *image*', and that is the key to semiotics: it is about how the producer of an image makes it mean something and how we, as readers, get meaning out.

Umberto Eco was another semiotician whose argument is a merit in this study. He was concerned with, and gives an impression on how signs communicate. The special point of his work which is used in this study is his argument about 'signs and truth'. Thus, while theorizing semiotics, it is more important not to forget the arguments and ideas of these four scholars.

Therefore, this study based on these four semioticians for the merits their arguments contribute to the subject of the study. However, before discussing the ideas of the scholars in depth, it is essential to make sure the areas of studies in semiotics. According to Fiske (1990: 40), semiotics has three main areas of study: The first area is the sign, which consists of the study of different varieties of signs and different ways they have of conveying meaning for signs are human constructs, second, the codes or systems into which signs are organized, and the third one is the culture within which these codes and signs operate. Having this in mind, now it is important to discuss the ideas of different semioticians. Semiotics argues that language and communication in general is structured according to certain rules, which are commonly understood in a culture. In order to communicate, these rules have to be learned.

For De Saussure, language is a system of 'signs'. The sign, which conveys meaning, is divided into two components: The signifier and the signified. The signifier is manifest in the form of printed word, a picture of a sound, which is perceived by our physical senses. The signified is the meaning that cultural convention determines we attach to the signifier (Fiske, 1982, cited in Williams, 2003: 155-56).

While the signifier is what we perceive, such as ‘the marks on the paper or the sounds on the air’, the signified is the mental concept to which it refers’ and ‘is broadly common to all members of the same culture who share the same language. Saussure connected three different structures in the process of signification. The first one is a sign. The second is language (sound) that used to refer to the sign. The third one is that we attach cultural meaning to the sign and language. The combination of these different elements is important in the process.

Similarly for Thwaites, Davis and Mules (1994:31), the two aspects of the sign have standard names. The mental impression of the sound is called the signifier; and the general concept invoked is the signified. In other words, one aspect of the sign does the signifying, the other aspect is what is signified. The relation between the two is called signification.

According to Saussure (Berger, 2000:38), the relation between signifier and signified is based on convention and is arbitrary. For instance, the word tree and the large stemmed plant for which the word tree stands is not natural but historical, tied to conventions and choices that people made. To make clear the idea, Thwaites et.al, (1994: 32-6) propose about four different on how it works: first, signifier and signified are inseparable and simultaneous: the diagram tends to suggest that signifier and signified are separable parts of the sign; in reality, they are simply terms which are valuable for emphasizing the two different ways in which a sign must operate in order to be a sign.

Second, signifier and signified are abstract mental entities: The sign itself is a mental construct, which happens in our heads. What distinguishes a mere combination of sounds or

graphic marks from a sign is a mental, cognitive activity; hence the two components of the sign, the signifier and the signified, must also be mental entities.

Third, the signified is not referent: The referent is something other than the sign, which the sign points to or stands for: an object in the world; the signified on the other hand, is an aspect of the sign, a pure abstraction, and a concept. Fourthly, the link between the signifier and signified is arbitrary: there is no inherent and necessary reason that the sound-image or graphic-image for example 'cat' should automatically invoke the general concept of 'catness' or vice versa. The signified 'catness' can have other signifier.

Therefore, the connection between the signifier and signified is arbitrary means that it is purely a matter of historical accident; there is nothing in the language system itself which would prohibit the possibility that, if history had been a little bit different, we would now associate different signifiers with the concept of *catness*, or different signifieds with the sound-image *cat* (Ibid: 36).

Concerning the arbitrariness of the relations between the signifier and the signified, Saussure distinguished symbols from signs. For him, symbols are subcategory of signs, and are not completely arbitrary. As he wrote,

One characteristics of the symbol is that it is never wholly arbitrary; it is not empty, for there is the rudiment of a natural bond between the signifier and signified. The symbol of justice, a pair of scales, could not be replaced by just any other symbol such as a chariot (Saussure, 1966 cited in Berger, 2000: 38).

Therefore, what is important to keep in mind is that, symbols have enormous significance in our lives and play an important role in our thinking and behavior. Taking symbols to analyze

what they represent in society and their meaning is a merit for studies using semiotic analysis because they are connected to the social as well as the legal cultures.

**Peirce:** While Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure was describing a sign as the combination of the signifier and signified, American philosopher, Charles Sanders Peirce was coined the term semiotics (Rayner et.al, 2004) and independently developed his triadic model of the sign (Griffin, 2012). Peirce suggested that a sign has three components: the object, the representamen, and the interpretant. Object is something beyond the sign to which the sign refers. This referent is often a physical object, but may be an action or an idea.

Representamen is the form that the sign takes, similar to what Saussure called the signifier. Interpretant is the sense of the sign made in the mind of the interpreter, related to what Saussure called the signified (Griffin, 2012:340). The representamen and the interpretant are similar to the signifier and the signified. What stands out is Peirce's addition of the object. The Saussure's model, with its emphasis on internal structures within a sign system, can be seen as supporting the notion that language does not "reflect" reality but rather constructs it. Earlier, we have pointed out some of the significances of the constructionist approach to representation and his model can support the study of reality in this aspect.

Peirce's semiotic triangle has become the counter-model to Saussure's dichotomy signified/signifier (Neumuller, 2001: 21). While Saussure's system needs an active sender of signals to make the semiotic process work, Peirce's semiosis (process of signification) can be applied to phenomena that have no sender, such as natural symptoms of an illness that can be detected and interpreted by a medic.

In contrast to Saussure's self-contained two-termed model of sign (sign as an arbitrary relation of signifier and signified), Peirce offered a triadic relation between the representamen, the interpretant and the object. Peirce identified a triangular relationship between the sign, the user, and the external reality as necessary model for studying meaning. Peirce explained his model simply:

A sign is something which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity. It addresses somebody, creates in the mind of that person an equivalent sign, or perhaps a more developed sign. The sign which it creates I call the *interpretant* of the first sign. The sign stands for something, *its object* quoted in (Fiske, 1990: 42, citing Zeman, 1977).

The similarity between Saussure and Peirce is that, they both seek meaning in structural relationship, but Saussure considers a new relationship between sign and other signs in the same system. Thus the meaning of the sign man is determined by how it is differentiated from other signs (Fiske, 1990: 45). This system of difference connects semiotics to structuralism which believes many meanings produced by their difference from other elements in the system.

**Barthes:** One of the key theorists of semiotics, Roland Barthes, developed the ideas of Saussure and tried to apply the study of signs more broadly. Barthes included fashion, photography, literature, magazines and music among his many interests Stokes (2003:72) citing Barthes (1973: 184). Therefore, Barthes semiotics is significant to this study because of two important reasons. One is, he engaged in applying his semiotic analysis to the images, and the second one is for his concept of myth. One of his central preoccupations is "how does meaning get into the image". That is the key to semiotics. It is about how the producer of an image makes it mean something and how we, as readers, get meaning out.

Thus, it is not always the case that the reader gets the same meaning out of something that the producer put in. Barthes claim, semiotics as “an adventure with the goal of interpreting both verbal and nonverbal signs. However, Barthes was mainly interested in the nonverbal side, multifaceted visual signs just waiting to be read (Griffin, 2012: 332). He was interested in signs that are seemingly straightforward but those subtly communicate ideological or connotative meaning and perpetuate the dominant values of society. Because they are deceptive, they can be applied to the interpretation of ideological values used in representation of crime in media in this study.

According to Barthes, ideological signs enlist support for the status quo by transforming history into nature pretending that current conditions are the natural order of things. Because one of the objectives of this study is to explore the ideological stance of the producers of crime stories therefore, the notion of Barthes ideological signs has a significance to apply to the interpretations of the images or signs of crime.

Barthes, approach provides great insight into the use of signs, particularly those channeled through the mass media. He later substituted the term connotation to label the ideological baggage that signs carry. Thus, myth is the connotative meaning that signs carry wherever they go (Griffin, 2012: 333).

Barthes argues that the main way myths work is to naturalize history. He used the term “myth” to describe the situation where latent or hidden meaning accepted as ‘natural’ and ‘normal’ in helping us to make sense of the world. However, myths appear as universal truths and embedded in common-sense are cultural constructions serving particular interests. For Barthes, myth makes particular world views natural and unchallengeable. In modern society, he argues, myths primarily serve the interests of capitalism and bourgeois ideology,

promoting as obvious, taken for granted and inevitable. Something that is ideological is made into common sense through the process of mythic representation.

As mythic representation is seen as self-evident, it is seldom questioned (Williams, 2003:154). He identified how signs were organized into particular systems or codes, which provided them with meaning. These codes are central to any culture, and learning them is essential for communication in society. However, at the same time they are not neutral or value free. It is significant to show the relation between Saussure's language and Barthes's myth in how they approach meaning.

#### ***2.2.2.1. Saussure and Barthes: Language and Myth***

Saussure dismissed the notion that language operates within its own. Meanings do not evolve in any natural or unique way. For him, the choice of a given slice of sound to name a given idea is arbitrary. Language is a system of independent terms in which the value of each term results solely from the simultaneous presence of the other (Laughy, 20007:55). Barthes develops Saussure's notion that meanings do not simply refer to real things; and accordingly, meanings can develop beyond their linguistic properties and take on the status of myths.

Saussure's signifier and signified is replaced in other terms in Barthes myth. For example, most of the mythical meanings that we attach to '*rat*' are negative, because most of us dislike or fear the 'real creature which the word signifies. The distinction between language and myth is sometimes equated to the distinction between denotation and connotation. Denotation is similar to the dictionary definition of a sign, connotation by contrast refers to the wider social and cultural meanings attached to a sign. Thus, rat denotes rodent; it connotes much more (dirt, disease), and so on.

The point of departure in media semiotics is that media content is not reality itself, but a representation and an imitation of reality. In these representations, signs and codes are combined in a structured way to convey specific meanings the media wish to distribute about reality. The media are thus a symbolic form of expression similar to other forms of symbolic expressions (Fourie, 2001). The aim of media semiotics is to sharpen our critical awareness of the ways in which the media reflect, represent and imitate reality or aspects of reality with the purpose of conveying specific meaning usually in support of an underlying ideology. Therefore, the concept of myths helps to understand the themes of mass mediated texts in representations of images in media.

The other semiotician was Umberto Eco (1976), an Italian man whom Berger (2005: 13) cites for his concern with signs and truth and has suggested that if signs can be used to tell the truth, they can also be used to tell lies. For Umberto Eco, semiotics concerned with everything that can be taken as a sign. A sign is everything which can be taken significantly substituted for something else. This something else does not necessarily exist or actually be somewhere at the moment in which a sign stands for it.

Thus, semiotics is in principle, the discipline studying everything which can be used in order to tell lies. If something cannot be used to tell a lies, conversely it cannot be used to tell the truth; it cannot be used “to tell” at all. Berger(2005) further develops Eco’s theory and put forward that we live in a world full of signs that mislead, and many of us spend a good deal of effort trying to determine whether or not we conned. Much of this lies with signs is relatively harmless, but in some cases, it can be very dangerous. As a result, if signs communicate and used to generate meaning in the society, it is important to make clear how these signs work within a systems.

#### ***2.2.2.2. Signs and systems***

Signs are organized into different structures to give certain meanings based on the codes or systems in which they are used. Conventions in the society regulate the way this signs are used to mean. With regard to codes, Fourie (2001) argued that we including the media communicate with signs. Signs are combined according to the rules of codes. With the use of signs and codes we convey meaning. Semiotics is thus the science of signs and codes, and the meaning they convey.

Meaning is generated not only from the raw material of signs and the relationships between the signifier and the referent, but also from the relationship between various signs. The relationship between signs is determined and directed by codes. A code is therefore, a group of signs and the rules for their use (Fourie, 2001: 339) and (Thwaites *et.al*, 1994: 39). Accordingly in practice, a sign is capable of taking on many different meanings. This depends on the code or sub-system within which it is used and interpreted. Codes also provide positions from which it is possible to speak or to mean. Fiske (1990:64) view codes as the systems in which signs are organized. These systems are governed by rules for all members of the community using that code.

Thus, codes emphasize the social dimension of communication. Codes are highly complex patterns of associations that all members of a given society and culture learn. They are the secret structures in people's minds; affect the ways that individuals interpret the signs and symbols they find in the media and the ways they live. From this perspective, to be socialized and to be a member of a culture means, to be taught a number of codes, most of which are quit specific to a person's social class, geographic location ethnic group, and so on (Berger,

2005: 30). It is more important within this issue, not to forget that for misunderstandings to arise between those who create television programs and those who watch them.

Umberto Eco (1972) cited in Berger (2005) has suggested that ‘aberrant decoding’ is the rule in the mass media. This is because different people bring different codes to given messages, and thus interprets the messages in different ways. Accordingly Eco, in (Berger, 2005) puts it:

Codes and sub codes are applied to the messages in the light of a general framework of cultural references, which constitutes the receiver’s patrimony of knowledge: his ideological, ethical, religious stand points, his psychological attitudes, his tastes, his value systems (p. 31).

According to this view, transmitters of messages, being in certain social class, educational level, political ideologies, world views and ethos, may differ from the codes of their audiences. This difference may lead to decode the message in different way from the encoders intended meaning, and interpret the messages they receive from their own perspectives.

In line with signs and systems, especially with the notion of system of difference, it is important to consider issue of “*binary opposition*” which is introduced by the social anthropologist Claude Levi Strauss. By binary opposition, the meaning of something depends on its opposite. Accordingly, ‘good’ and the meaning of the concept good depend on ‘bad’ and the meaning of bad (Fourie, 2001: 172). For him, applying the method of binary oppositions in television genres, such as soap operas, situation comedies, and police dramas has shown how the genres constantly handle binary oppositions such as good/bad, right/wrong, hero/villain and the values which society attach to these oppositions.

This can be related to Wykes (2001) argument which states “crime news mobilizes the extremes of value judgment” since it is about good and bad, innocent and guilty, heroes and villains, victims and abusers’. It is the site of our national conscience and moral codes.

As we discussed so far, a linguistic sign is defined as a union of signifier and signified and for semiotics too, sign is a sum total of signifier and signified (Tyson, 2006: 218). However, semiotics expands the signifier to include objects, gestures, activities, sounds and images; in short, anything that can be perceived by the senses. Clearly, semiotics gives the signifier a wide range of possibilities and so there are three recognized classes of signs which are introduced by Peirce and these are: index, icon, and symbol.

#### ***2.2.2.3. Index, Icon and Symbol***

An **index** is a sign in which the signifier has a concrete, causal relationship to the signified. For example, smoke signifies fire; a knock on the door signifies that someone is there. An icon is a sign in which the signifier physically resembles the signified. For example, a painting is an icon to the extent that the picture resembles the subject it represents. Fourie (2001) suggested that, because of the directly identifiable resemblance between an iconic sign and its referent, it is possible that the recipient will treat the iconic sign as a real thing, especially in film and television. The photograph for example re-presents its subject more or less faithfully and thus it is the least arbitrary or conventional type of sign.

Fourie (2001:349) further claims that, because of their iconic nature or recognizable representation of reality, television images create an illusory reality which most viewers experience as a correct version or the truth. On the other hand, according to Fourie (2001), the meanings of symbols are culturally determined and that people belonging to a particular

culture learn these meanings. Thus, we can say symbol is more meaningful when we add our cultural values to the symbol that we read from a given material.

Accordingly, language is an example of a symbolic sign system. Here, we must not forget Saussure's idea that for example, the sound image "chair" refers to the idea of 'chair' only because speakers have agreed to use it that way. While smoke is an index of fire and a realistic painting of fire is an icon of fire, the word fire is a symbol of fire. There is no quality of fire inherent in the word fire. Of the three kinds of signs, only the symbol is a matter of interpretation.

Peirce offers an exhaustive and exhausting classification of all aspects of semiosis, but as (Childs & Fowler, 2006 ) suggest, most of his terms are now neglected except those describing the relation between the sign and its object. Peirce differs from Saussure in allowing a greater role for motivated linkage. Besides the arbitrary 'symbol', he describes the 'icon' (linked through resemblance) and the 'index' with causal linkage (Ibid: 213). These terms are now often applied to the signifier/signified pair. Although Peirce may offer more scope as a critical tool, Saussure has exercised the greater influence.

While Peirce's logic was neglected, Saussure's linguistics flourished, and drew his semiotics along with it. A crucial factor for this was the rise of Structuralism. Structuralism is concerned with the linguistic structures that underpin, enable and govern meaning (Procter, 2004). Structuralism and semiotics, as they imposed on literary studies, were often indistinguishable. Semiotics concentrated on production of meaning rather than its communication.

According to Hill and Fenner (2010:54), structuralism explores how human culture is understood as a system of signs reflecting deep structures. It shapes the common sense ways in which we interpret texts; and it is closely related to semiotics in that it views society as a system or code. Hartley (2002) states that early structuralism was distinguished by the use of Saussurian linguistics and its terminology: especially the notions of signifier and signified; *langue (language)* and *parole (speaking)*; synchronic and diachronic; paradigmatic and syntagmatic. Structuralism was dedicated to showing how such structures were to be found in all kinds of cultural activity.

Therefore, it is important to make clear about paradigmatic and syntagmatic analysis of which (Berger, 2000:46) discussed in relation to language structures. The paradigmatic analysis of texts concerns itself with how oppositions hidden in the text generate meaning, whereas syntagmatic analysis focuses on the sequence of events in a text and how the orders of events generate meaning.

Roland Barthes's element of semiotics extends the Saussurian base, and gives a greater role to inspiration and expresses doubts about binarism. On the other hand, Umberto Eco's theory of semiotics (Childs and Fowler, 2006) actualizes the potential dynamism of Peirce and the social hints of Saussure. It emphasizes process through what Eco calls "the mobility of semantic space". Codes are subject to change in use: through under coding, the simplification of unfamiliar systems, and through over coding, the addition of extra signifying rules that are crucial in stylistic or ideological elaboration.

Moreover, Tyson (2006) articulates that as structuralized enterprise, semiotics will analyze a sign system by focusing on a group of similar objects, for example, billboards or pictorial

magazine ads or restaurant menus synchronically at a given moment in time. To analyze the semiotics of food as it is expressed in restaurant menus, for example, one would not examine menus from a single restaurant as they have changed over time diachronically. Instead, it is possible to examine a large number of menus produced by different restaurants at the same point in time synchronically in order to discover their semiotic codes.

For Saussure, synchronic means analytic and diachronic means historical. So, the synchronic study of a text looks at the relationships that exist among its elements, and a diachronic study looks at the way the narrative evolves. Concerning the difference between the two, Laughy (2007) states that synchronic analysis as it explores language as a system at a given moment in time, and diachronic analysis as it explores a language system as it evolves over a period of time. In contrast to this, Sturrock, (1979), cited in (Laughy, 2007) argues that structuralism is necessary synchronic. He puts that structuralism is concerned to study particular systems or structures under artificial and historical conditions, neglecting the systems or structures out of which they have emerged. For Sturrock therefore, structuralism focuses on the study of structures to explain their present function.

***Hyperreality and Intertextuality:*** it is important to include these two main concepts the concepts of hyperreality and intertextuality because it is believed that they are significant to the constructionist approach claim of multi-faceted realities. Berger (2005:14) cites Jean Baudrillard for his argument that reality has been replaced by what he calls hyperreality, which suggests that the sign is now more important than what it stands for. Hyperreality is associated especially with cultural tendencies and a prevailing sensibility.

On the other hand, intertextuality refers to the use in texts (consciously or unconsciously) of material from other, previously created texts. For example, a kind of conscious intertextuality takes place when screen writers or film directors create scenes that are recognizable as “quotations” from other films.

Unconscious intertextuality involves textual materials of many kinds (plots, themes, kinds of characters) that become common currency, pervading cultures and finding their way into new texts without the creators being aware of it. Berger (2000) also discusses the concept of intertextuality as it deals with the relation between texts and is used to show how texts borrow from one another, and for him, many texts borrow stylistic elements from other texts or even use characters from other texts.

To have an understanding of the concept of semiotic theory, and illustrate how it can be applied to analyze representations of crime in media, now it is significant to articulate a bit about signs of crime which are very essential particularly in the process of the construction of the events of crime in the media.

#### ***2.2.2.4. Signs of crime***

The investigative technologies as practices to generate information and knowledge is the sense that detectives are essentially engaged in trying to determine what particular objects and acts tell them about how and why the crime is subject to investigation. These objects and acts can be thought of as signs (Innes, 20003: 178-80). If properly decoded, these signs become signifiers, providing enhanced information about some aspect of the crime and its participants (the signifieds).

According to Innes, five types of investigative signifier can be identified: First, 'signifiers of crime connotatively and denotatively encode meanings related to understanding some aspect of the circumstances of the crime event. The second one are 'signifiers of intent'. These are objects and behaviors that can be construed as indicators of the motivational state of the suspect at the time of committing the offense.

Thirdly, 'signifiers of criminality, those items or behavior that can from the police's point of view be used to suggest that a particular individual is involved in crime generally. The fourth are 'signifiers of guilty', and are stronger versions of the signifiers of criminality which, if decoded, can be used by detectives to objectively or subjectively implicate a suspect in the commission of the crime under investigation.

The fifth are 'exculpatory signifiers', items or behaviors that suggest an individual either cannot or may not have been involved in the offense under investigation. According to Innes, the interpretation of various signifiers can be construed as a situated and stylized form of applied semiotic analysis. For example, the analysis and processing of a corpse is a form of semiotic work. The violence inscribed onto the body in the form of wounds is interpreted as symptoms of the fatal interaction, which if decoded correctly, will become signifier allowing the investigators to know much about the interactional dynamics of the fatal assault and possibly the identity of the person responsible.

#### ***2.2.2.5. Criticisms on semiotics***

One of the criticisms of semiotic analysis is in its concern for the relationship of elements and production of meaning in a text that it ignores the quality of the work itself (Berger, 2005: 34-5). Semiotics is not really concerned with art, rather with meaning and modes of

cognition. Another problem with semiotic analysis, especially of television or televised texts, is that strong theoretical foundation is lacking that would facilitate work in this area. Most of the work done in semiotics in recent years has been concerned with film, not television.

On the other hand, there are some critics who claim semiology as only capable of offering impressionistic insights into the construction of meaning, and hence there is no guarantee that different analysts will produce similar accounts (Bauer and Gaskell, 2000: 239). In addition, some readings, both denotations and connotations, will be much universal, while others will be more idiosyncratic. Here, what will be most important to the analyst are not the idiosyncratic, but the culturally shared associations and myths that readers employ.

According to Geraghty cited in (Curran and Gurevitch, 2000), semiotics criticized for promoting too narrow a focus on texts and for being too hermetically sealed in its own systems to allow for analysis of the process of historical change. It is also noticed that, since the quality of the analysis is highly dependent on the skill of the analyst, there is a tendency to be subjective.

For some critics, (Griffin, 2012: 352-3) connotative systems are not always ideological, and inevitably support the values of the dominant class. There are significant semiotic systems that suggest divergent perspectives or support alternative voices. To some students of signification, Barthes' monolithic Marxist approach to mythmaking borders on conspiracy theory. These interpreters are unwilling to accept the idea that all representation is a capitalistic plot. Whether or not we accept Barthes claim that all connotative signs reinforce dominant values, his semiotic approach to images remains a core theoretical perspective for a wide variety of communication scholars, particularly those who emphasize media and

culture. For example, cultural studies expert, Stuart Hall builds directly on Barthes' analysis of myth to establish his critique of the "hegemonic" effects of mass communication.

### ***2.2.3. Marxist notion of Dominant Ideology***

Ideology is a system of social beliefs: a closely organized system of beliefs, values, and ideas forming the basis of a social, economic, or political philosophy or program; or meaningful belief systems that shapes the way a person or a group such as social class thinks acts and understands the world (Encarta English Dictionary). Ideology can be understood as sets of ideas which give some account of the social world, usually a partial and selective one (Briggs and Cobley, 2002:308). The relationships of these ideas or values are the way power is distributed socially.

According to Burton (2005:63), representations give substance to ideology. Textual analysis reveals ideology in action. Representations tend to reflect the ideological positions of the times in which they are created. Sometimes those reflections are of contradictions between one ideological position and another, or of kinds of challenge to the ideological status quo.

Similarly, Croteau & Hoynes (2003) advocate that media representations are intertwined with questions of power and ideology; because the process of giving meaning to events suggests that there are multiple definitions of reality. Media are places where certain ideas are circulated as the truth, effectively marginalizing or dismissing competing truth claims.

On the other hand, Croteau & Hoynes (2003: 162) propose that ideological analysis often goes hand in hand with political advocacy as critics use their detection of distorted messages to make their own ideological points, exploring the ideologies of media can be tricky. However, ideological analysis provides a window onto the broader ideological debates going

on in society. It allows us to see what kinds of ideas circulate through media texts, how they are constructed, how they change over time, and then they are being challenged.

Marx's core idea was the dichotomy between the 'base' which represents the economic system or mode of production (for example, media), which is found in a given society, whereas the 'superstructure' represents institutions and values of a given society (Berger, 2005: 46). The main idea is that the economic structure of society always furnishes the real basis the ultimate explanation of the superstructure.

Critical media research was born out of a tradition which believed that the ideological role of the media was important. Original Marxist theories proposed that the existence of a dominant ideology favored ruling-class interests. Therefore, perpetuated the class system believed to be crucial in an understanding of how the powerful retain power.

In the classical Marxist view, social change was explained by the struggle between competing and antagonistic forces in the society, the 'haves' and the 'have not's'. A division based on economic power. The haves were the bourgeois, and the have-nots were the proletariat or the working classes. However, Marx never completed a comprehensive study of the role of the communication and media industries, his work locates the role of mass media in the context of the operation of capitalist economy, and emphasizes the relationship between economy and communication and culture (Williams, 2003:36-7). For that reason, on behalf of Marx and his followers:

The ideas of the ruling class are, in every age, the ruling ideas: i.e. the class, which is the dominant material force in society, is at the same time its dominant intellectual force. The class which has the means of material

production at its disposal has control at the same time over the means of mental production (Williams, 2003: 37, citing Marx and Engels, 1974: 64-5).

Accordingly, the dominant material force could be the media itself. The dominant intellectual force is the ideology that spread from through the media to the society. Hence, the class which owns the media, controls over means of production of ideas necessarily dominates the means of meaning making.

The classical framework for theorizing and conceptualizing ideology arises from critical Marxist theories of culture and society. Within Marxist theory, however, there are wide ranges of varying perspectives on culture and ideology.

#### ***2.2.3.1. Neo-Marxist approaches and concept of Ideology***

Contemporary neo- Marxist theory is best illustrated by the works of Althusser and Gramsci (Fourie, 2001). They argue that the superstructure of society has some degree of autonomy from its economic base. But, the relationship between ideas, economic and class interests is not straightforward.

Althusser developed the concept of Ideological State apparatuses (ISA) and Repressive State Apparatuses (RSA). Media was one of the Apparatuses. He drew his attention to how the media and other Ideological State Apparatuses such as family, language, education, church, politics and (RSA) which include defense force, the judiciary, and the police force function to propagate social conformity, influencing people's behavior and thoughts and reproduce the dominant ideology(Williams, 2003:148 & Fourie, 2001: 371 citing Gurevitch *et al*,1982). All such institutions reproduce everyday representations, meanings and activities the idea which Gramsci ascribed to the media

Althusser was a Marxist theorist with a structuralist leaning (Lechte, 1994). However, as Hall notes in Laughey (2007), Althusser's approach was more sophisticated than the classical Marxist notion of top-down 'false consciousness' which suggests that ideology is imposed 'from above' by elite powers upon the unknowing masses.

Althusser generates wide ranges of views about where ideology is launched and how it is used as a social control. According to Althusser (1971) as cited in Fourie (2003), the first central tenet is that all social and cultural forms of expression propagate social norms and values intended as mechanisms of social control. While presenting themselves as socially neutral and objective, these norms and values are ideologically determined to serve the interests of those who possess social power.

The second central concept in Althusser theory is that ideology always has a material existence and is inscribed within the ISA and its practices. Ideology is the medium through which people experience the world. It provides the framework for understanding through which human beings interpret and make sense of their reality. Ideology is thus, an essential element of every social formation; and is defined as lived relations between human beings and the world.

Althusser shared the view of (Fiske, 1987) to further elaborate his idea that, individuals are all constituted as subjects in and subject to ideology by the ISA which not only constitute the sense of the world for us, but also comprise our sense of ourselves, our sense of identity and our sense of our relations to other people, to society in general (Fourie 2003: 371). For Althusser, all ideology functions to constitute individuals as subjects, which is a social

construction, not a natural one. All forms of social and cultural expression play an important role in construction of the subject, i.e. in the reproduction of ideology in people.

A third central tenet of Althusser theory was his contention that ideology is not simply a set of illusions, but a system of representations about the circumstances in which people live. Thus, within Althusserian framework, all social and cultural forms of expression play an important role in the functioning of the social formation, and essentially operate through ideology (p. 372).

Consequently, the effectiveness of social and cultural forms of expression does not lie in an imposed false consciousness or in changing attitudes, but in the unconscious categories through which conditions are represented and experienced. The power of the social and cultural forms of expression is then not simply rooted in their economic bases, but in ideology.

According to Foucault (2003: 373), Althusser theory provided an important theoretical foundation for the study of communication by focusing attention on individuals as social subjects who both construct and are constructed by systems of representation. Larrain states in (Morley & Chen, 1996: 47) that together with other theorists who share the concept of Althusser, Laclau and Hall criticize the notion of false consciousness and start from the premise that it is not the subject that produces ideology as ideas but it is ideology, conceived as a material instance of practices and rituals, that constitutes the subject.

#### ***2.2.3.2. Hegemony***

Antonio Gramsci focused on Marxist concept of ideology in relation to the role and power of the mass media in influencing meaning production. Theoretical concept that animates the

study of the media is ideology (Croteau & Hoynes, 2003). Gramsci argued that ruling groups can maintain their power through force, consent, or a combination of the two, and referred to the hegemonic role of the media.

Hegemony refers to the process by which the ruling classes win approval for their actions by consent rather than by coercion. This is largely achieved through social and cultural institutions such as the law, the family, the education system and the mass media (Laughy: 2007: 16).

According to the hegemonic perspective, all such institutions reproduce everyday representations, meanings and activities to render the class interests of those in power apparently natural, inevitable and hence unarguable general interest with a claim on everybody.

According to Williams (2003), media do not simply reproduce the views of the ruling class, but are crucial sites for struggle between the competing ideas and beliefs. Hegemonic groups are effectively able to set the over-arching intellectual agenda in a given society and manipulate dominant discourses. Hegemony theorists propose that ruling groups have an advantage of closing meanings because they have the necessary power and influence to steer meaning production towards their preferred understandings of the world.

Gramsci's theory of hegemony provides a more dynamic view of the institutional role and practices of the media than Althusser's Ideological state Apparatuses. Unlike Althusser, Gramsci emphasizes the notion of struggle (Williams, 2003). Furthermore, Gramsci's hegemony stress on the idea of individuals are always intensifying and responding to the society and culture they live in, offers more pluralistic and complex model of ideology.

Additionally, Hall underlines his point by defining ideology as *'those images, concepts and premises which provide the frameworks through which we represent, interpret, understand and "make sense" of some aspect of social existence'* (Hall, 1981) cited in (Morley & Chen, 1996:48). Accordingly, he highlights three aspects of this conception.

First, ideologies do not consist of isolated and separate concepts. But, they articulate different elements into a distinctive set or chain of meanings'. 'Second, ideological statements are made by individuals; but ideologies are not the product of individual consciousness or intention. We formulate our intentions within ideology. 'Third, ideologies "work" by constructing for their subjects positions of identification and knowledge.

Both Laclau and Hall take Althusser idea that ideology interpellates individuals as subjects, as the basic explanation of how ideology works which:

Ideologies are not really produced by individual consciousness but rather individuals formulate their beliefs within positions already fixed by ideology as if they were their true producers. However, individuals are not necessarily recruited and constituted as subjects obedient to the ruling class; the same mechanism of interpellation operates when individuals are recruited by revolutionary ideologies (Morley and Chen: 1996: 48).

Althusser does not believe that the individual is a self-conscious autonomous one. Rather, he views individuals as subjects constituted as a result of pre-given structures. His concept of 'interpellation' describes the process by which individuals are constituted as subjects. Ideology operates to do this. Individuals are interpellated through Ideological State Apparatuses from which people gain their sense of identity as well as their understanding of reality. He sees human beings as determined by pre-given structures such as language, family relations, cultural conventions and other social forces (Williams, 2003: 149).

Furthermore, Laclau's key insight is that ideologies are made of elements and concepts which have no necessary class belongingness and that these constituent units of ideologies. In Larrain's understanding of the Laclau's view in Morley and Chen (1996: 48), there are no 'pure' ideologies which necessarily correspond to certain class interests. Every ideological discourse articulates several interpellations, not all of which are class interpellations.

As Larrain argues, Hall is explicitly aware of Marx's contribution and seeks to assess it. Hence, the first problem he confronts is the nature of the 'distortion' it apparently entails. According to Hall, there is no fully developed theory of ideology in Marx and there are severe fluctuations in Marx's use of the term.

Consequently, Hall critically examines the theoretical bases of the classical version. In spite of showing the insufficiency and problematic nature of it, he proposes to be constructive, especially in relation to the issue of distortion. Besides, he aims to show that the 'economic relations themselves cannot prescribe a single, fixed and unalterable way of conceptualizing reality' which can be expressed within different ideological discourses' (Ibid: 49). For Hall 'hegemony' is tied to the incorporation of the great majority of people into broadly based relations of cultural consumption.

In Morley and Chen (1996: 162) Hall suggests that hegemony is not a universally present struggle; it is a conjuncture of politics opened up by the conditions of advanced capitalism, mass communication and culture. Nor is it limited to the ideological struggle of the ruling class bloc to win the consent of the masses to its definitions of reality. But, it encompasses the processes by which such a consensus might be achieved. It also depends

upon the ability of the ruling bloc to secure its economic domination and establish its political power. Hegemony is a matter of control rather than coercion or incorporation.

Accordingly to Hall, hegemony defines the limits within which we can struggle. It is the field of 'common sense' or 'popular consciousness'. It is the struggle to articulate the position of 'leadership' within the social formation (Ibid)

To relate the theoretical concepts of ideology and semiotics, Hall along with other theorists investigated the relationship between media and ideology through semiotic analysis of systems of signification in texts (Laughy, 2007). He views meaning as a discursive process that operates within a language system, loaded with ideological signification. Thus, media institutions and the texts they generate are important ideological dimensions through which we make sense of the world.

Hall set out semiotics to understand the sense-making process by which media transmits messages to their audiences. He extends this semiotic theory of meaning construction to a model of production and reception which is known as the Encoding/Decoding model. Encoding operates within a set of professional codes such as technical competence and high budget production values. These professional codes generate preferred meanings that institutional/political/ideological order imprinted in them and become institutionalized (Hall, 1980 cited in Laughy, 2007).

Accordingly, Hall identifies three categories of decoding through which audiences make meaning of media messages. Firstly, an audience member may adopt a dominant code which accepts the preferred meanings intended by the encoders. A second possibility is that an audience member may adopt a negotiated code which accepts some of the preferred

meanings but opposes others. Third, an audience member may completely disagree with the preferred meanings of media producers, in which case they adopt an oppositional code and 'decode' the message in a globally contrary way.

As it was discussed in Rose (2001: 92) referring to Hall (1980), these preferred meanings or ideologies become preferred readings when they are interpreted by audiences in ways that retain the institutional/political/ideological order imprinted in them.

Finally I want to add Bauer and Gaskell's (2000) idea in relation to readers which states that, the reader's interpersonal freedom is dependent upon the number and identity of his/her lexicons. The act of reading a text or an image is thus a constructive process. Meaning is generated in the interaction of the reader with the material. The reader's meaning will vary with the knowledge available to him/her through experience and contextual salience.

## **Chapter Three: Research Methodology**

In this chapter, the research approach the researcher used including data collection methods, analytical tools applied to them, sampling strategies and process and procedures of analysis are discussed to give an insight to the methodological development used in the study.

### **3.1. Qualitative Research**

This study employed a qualitative research. Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world in to a series of representations (Creswell, 2007). Qualitative researchers study meaning. The quality of research into meanings and interpretive processes cannot be assured simply through following correct procedures. Interpretations and meanings are situated. A method applicable to one research situation will be inappropriate in another (Ezzy, 2002: 81).

The main objective of this research was studying meaning constructed in representations of crime in the media. Hence, qualitative research approach is preferred to achieve the goal of this study. Yin (2011:8-9) forwards about five features of qualitative research which are summarized as follows: the first one is that qualitative research involves studying the meaning of people's lives, under real world conditions. Second, qualitative research differs because of its ability to represent the views and perspectives of the participants in a study. Therefore, the events and ideas emerging from qualitative research can represent the meanings given to real-life events by the people who live them, not the values, preconceptions, or meanings held by researchers. Third, qualitative research covers

contextual conditions, the social, institutional, and environmental conditions within which people's lives take place. These contextual conditions may strongly influence all human events. Fourth, qualitative research is not just a diary or chronicle of everyday life. On the contrary, it is driven by a desire to explain these events, through existing or emerging concepts. Fifth, it strives to collect, integrate, and present data from a variety of sources of evidence as part of any given study.

Additionally, Bauer and Gaskell (2000:14) argue that qualitative research is intrinsically a more critical and potentially emancipatory form of research'. It aims to see through the eyes of those being studied. It is seen as necessary to understand the interpretations that social actors (people themselves) have of the world, because it is these interpretations that motivate the behavior that creates the social world itself. Therefore, the above mentioned qualities of this approach influenced the researcher to employ qualitative approach to the subject of the study.

### **3.2. Textual Analysis**

Rayner et.al (2004: 9) describe textual analysis as one of the cornerstones of media studies; and defines as a process by which we can both reveal the inner workings of a text and identify its significance in terms of the wider social and cultural issues to which it relates. Textual analysis is sometimes called careful reading, and it is as important to a journalist as good listening. Textual analysis is a method that communication researchers use to describe, interpret, and evaluate the characteristics of a recorded message (Frey, Botan, Friedman, & Kreps, 1991 Cited in Iorio, 2004: 163-5). Iorio suggests that Mass media textual analysis can be applied to any communications medium because photos, illustrations, graphics, and

video images can be reduced to textual summaries before analysis. Textual analysis is an invaluable qualitative method for understanding and evaluating police and court records, legislation, court opinions, and legal briefs.

Stokes (2003:56) suggests that analyzing texts can allow you to investigate a wide range of assumptions about the nature of media and cultural artifacts. Studying media texts will enable to discuss an infinite number of themes and issues. Stokes (2003) raises several reasons for studying media texts as advantageous: The texts themselves are readily accessible. Today, many media artifacts are available for purchase in different forms, making it much easier to gain access to a wide range of texts than ever before. The multiple forms also make texts easy to see and analyze. Media texts are part of our world: they are social phenomena and are often part of the debates about society going on in the world, and this makes them more topical and socially relevant, in turn giving a greater sense of relevance to our work. Studying texts can improve our understanding of cultural life of how things mean and meaning is one of the most important aspects of media use. Hence, the researcher used textual analysis to the study of television.

### **3.3. Semiotics as an analytical tool for the study of text**

According to Given (2008:807-9), semiotic research is motivated by a set of fundamental assumptions about research and the world. He argues that it is more important to focus on how the world can come together as a coherent and meaningful whole and in the implicit and explicit codes that allow this to happen. Accordingly, the assumptions that were stated by Given (2008) are summarized as follows.

*“The world is always talking to us and it is always rich in meaning”*. Since we are always searching for meaning in order to avoid genuine doubt, we are always drawing guidance and affirmation from the world. According to (Given, 2008) semioticians go beyond the notion that they make all the meaning they find, either singly or collectively.

Additionally it is also stated that *“the presence or absence of specific things often serve as clues to the nature of reality”*. One good way to think of semiotic researchers is to compare them to detectives. Signs are often clues and symptoms and omens of things. The job is to find them in intelligent and creative ways.

The last assumption is that *“although semioticians assume the world can be understood, we do not necessarily assume that it can always be understood easily in human terms”*. Semioticians try not to impose order on things, unless they are things supposed to impose order upon. Therefore, according to Given (2008:810), semiotics is important to qualitative research mainly as a related discipline. For him, if qualitative researchers choose to employ some of the perspectives listed above, the links between semiotics and qualitative research might become more explicit overtime.

According to Stokes (2003), one of the key advantages of semiotic analysis is that it demands relatively few resources. It is possible to conduct a semiotic analysis of only one text or image (although this is not necessarily recommended). Additionally, Stokes (2003) proposes that semiotics breaks down the content of texts into their component parts and relates them to broader discourses. Berger (2005: 5) also argues that everything can be analyzed semiotically; and semioticians see semiotics as the queen of the interpretive sciences, and the key that unlocks the meanings of all things great and small.

Semiotics has the advantage of generating what Clifford Geertz (1973) cited in Stokes (2003: 72), refers to as 'thick descriptions', meaning textured and complex analyses. Furthermore, the prominence of semiotics as a method is due in part to the fact that it confronts the question of how images make meanings head on. It is not simply descriptive, as compositional interpretation appears to be; nor does it rely on quantitative estimations of significance, as content analysis (Rose, 2001:69). Instead, it offers a very full box of analytical tools for taking an image apart and tracing how it works in relation to broader systems of meaning. Therefore, it is more important to say that semiotics has an advantage of relating texts to the contexts in which both the producers and consumers of texts produce and read the products of the media.

It is essential to add some points about semiotics as a method in relation to ideology. Ideology is knowledge that is constructed in such away as to legitimate unequal social power relations; science, instead, is knowledge that reveals those inequalities. Ideology is those representations that reflect the interests of power. In particular, ideology works at the level of our subjectivity which according to Williamson, the meaning made necessary by the conditions of society while helping to perpetuate those conditions.

We feel a need to belong, to have a social 'place'; it can be hard to find. Instead we may be given an imaginary one (Williamson, 1978) cited in Rose (2001: 70). Rose states Williamson's use of the term imaginary as contrasting the imaginary with the real. She is contrasting the imaginary social positions produced by ideology with the actual social relations produced by capitalism as revealed by scientific knowledge and semiotics which is concerned with the social effects of meaning.

### ***3.3.1. Choosing images for a semiological study***

Semiological studies require extensive knowledge of the type of images which the case studies will examine. There is no concern among semiologists to find images that are statistically representative of a wider set of images, as there is in content analysis. Images are interpreted in close relation to semiological theory, and discussion of particular images is often directed at exemplifying analytical points.

Consequently very often, semiotics takes the form of detailed case studies of relatively few images, and the case study stands or falls on its analytical integrity and interest rather than on its applicability to a wide range of material (Rose, 2001:73). In a similar way, it is stated that in Bauer and Gaskell (2000), the choice of material or an image will depend upon the purpose of the study and the availability of the material. Therefore, in this study based on the research questions posed, the researcher has selected images of criminals, victims and police, as well as materials which are semiotically significant in the portrayals.

### ***3.3.2. Stages in Semiotic analysis***

Stokes (2003: 73-5) provides us seven stages of analyzing an image or text using semiotic analysis which the researcher adopted to this study.

- I. **Defining your object/unit of analysis:** In this case the selection of the units of analysis was based on the research questions with respect to the study thinking that object of analysis should answer the research questions.
- II. **Gathering the texts:** based on the decision made on the selection of the unit of analysis, audio and video texts are gathered.

- III. **Describing the texts:** the content of the texts or images are carefully described to identify all of the elements of the image and describe each as precisely as possible.
- IV. **Interpreting the texts:** After describing the contents, the meanings and implications of each separate sign are interpreted individually or collectively in relation to each other to generate possible additional meanings and implications.
- V. **Drawing out the cultural codes:** for our purpose here, codes and conventions that regulate all the images of crime stories to give meanings.
- VI. **Making generalizations:** general statements are made about the images or texts based on what they mean and how meaning got into the images.
- VII. **Making conclusions:** in this respect, the analysis carried out used arguments from theories to check whether the interpretations made could answer the research questions.

### **3.4. Marxist Analysis**

Marxist method seeks to explain the manifest and latent or coded reflections of modes of material production, ideological values, class relations and structures of social power (Berger, 2005:49). Marxist method, in varying degrees of combination with structuralism and semiotics, recently has provided an insightful analytic tool for studying the political signification in every facet of contemporary culture, including popular entertainment in TV and films, music, religion and etc. The most frequent theme in Marxist is the way the prevalent mode of production and ideology dominate, and this domination is perpetuated both through overt propaganda in political rhetoric, news reporting, advertising and public

relations. The mass media are centrally important in the spread of false consciousness, in leading people to believe that “whatever is” is right.

The media as unwitting instruments of hegemonic domination have a much broader and deeper influence (Berger, 2005: 61-62). Therefore, when we interpret hegemonic content, we must look very deeply into the work we are analyzing and elicit from it not only its ideological content but also its even more fundamental ethnological worldview generating content.

To simplify, semiotic analysis can be applied to this study because of the only fact that semiotics is the science of signs. Saukko (2003: 101) states in broader theoretical terms, the semiotic theory and method help researchers, especially in its reformulation of the Marxist notion of dominant ideology, which was often interpreted in terms of dominant ideas, which ‘becloud’ people’s understanding of social reality and inequality. While semiotics studies signs and their meaning, the media are a prime site of struggle for the sign. The ideological struggle is also struggle for meaning (Tomaselli, 1996).

Therefore, this study used Marxist analysis as a method for the significance they have together with semiotics. That is, semiotic analysis could be used to interpret the meanings of the texts whereas Marxist analysis could be applied to analyze the ideological values, views and interests used in the representations. The purpose of using the combination of the two is to enhance credibility of the study.

### **3.5. Interview**

It is already stated in Stokes (2003:96) that one of the criticisms of methods which focus on texts is that they ignore the contexts of production and consumption. As Stokes forwards, sometimes the relationship between the text and its producers is of interest. In such cases, it is important to combine textual analysis with other approaches. In this study therefore, the main purpose of using interview is to challenge the questions that remained unanswered by the two methods of analysis (semiotic and Marxist analysis).

#### *Semi-structured interviews*

Semi-structured interviews involve the interviewer deciding in advance what broad topics are to be covered and what main questions are to be asked (Miller & Brewer, 2003: 167-9). Flexibility plays a key part in structuring the interaction. The interviewer may ask certain major questions the same way each time, but may alter their sequence and probe for more information. Dornyei (2007:123) also suggests that, although there is a set of pre-prepared guiding questions and prompts, the format is open-ended and the interviewee is encouraged to elaborate on the issue raised in an exploratory manner.

### **3.6. Methodological challenges**

Despite its importance to the study of media and mass communication, textual analysis has its own limitations. For instance, if we have media texts as our only object of analysis, the conclusions we can make will be relevant only to those texts and not applicable to broader society Stokes (2003). From textual analysis alone, it is not possible to make inferences about the state of mind of the author. Textual analysis does not give up the secrets of the

creator's intention: to find out what the producer/editor of a program intended, it is usually necessary to ask them rather than assuming the intended meaning and giving only your own interpretations. Hence, the researcher conducted an interview with the producers of the text.

Stokes (2003) suggests that most forms of textual analysis require you to have repeated access to your object of analysis, and that can be time-consuming. In this case, the researcher has carefully planned and gave particular attention to the time management of your project. Some of the methods of textual analysis are also quite subjective. Semiotic analysis is very interpretive, and different readers do not always share the same interpretation. It does not have to be reliable in the sense of being applied to a large number of texts. As a result, the expressions used in the analysis and interpretations tend to reflect the probability of more possible realities by the use of hedging words. In addition, Stokes (2003: 54-5) suggests that a good textual analysis depends on the persuasiveness of the argument, and this in turn often depends on good writing skills.

Concerning the Marxist analysis, Berger (2005:69-70) claims that applying Marxism for analyzing media is a question that continues to be debated. It is only in most departments that Marxist philosophies, especially as the bases for analyzing media have many adherents. But, Lyotard (1984) cited in Berger (2005) suggest that if an analyst finds the concepts of Marxism useful and believes that they explain things better than other perspectives, that analyst should use them. Unless, he/she should approach media analysis from other view points. Thus, Marxist media analysis is believed to be appropriate for this study, and used to analyze the hegemonic roles of media in representation of crime in media.

### **3.7. Sample size and time frame**

A sample is a subset of the population elements that results from a sampling strategy (Dattalo, 2008:3-5). Ideally, a sample is selected as a representative of a population (i.e., elements accurately portray characteristics of the population). The police program in ETV is a weekly program which has news stories and other programs that are transmitted for an hour. With concern to the time frame, the researcher selected a time from September, 2011 to March, 2012 simply because he thought recent data would be accessed.

### **3.8. Sampling strategies**

Convenience sampling and purposive sampling are used as strategy to select the samples. In the case of convenience sampling, the researcher had to use data available before March by employing convenience sampling. It was because he was unable to access data from the library after March 4<sup>th</sup> of 2012. Convenience sampling involves selecting data for the research that are available (or convenient) for the study.

The disadvantage, as with all non random sampling techniques, including convenience sampling is the lack of representativeness of the general population (Vanderstoep & Johnston, 2009:27). In this case, because semiotic analysis can be applied to a single text, representativeness of the sample, the researcher was not concerned about it. Additionally, the researcher had to employ **Purposive sampling** based on research questions and the content of the texts. Purposive sampling involves the use of the researcher's knowledge of the population in terms of research goals (Dattalo, 2005: 6). In this study, elements are selected based on the researcher's judgment that they will provide access to the desired information.

Therefore, according to the sampling strategies employed, one program from September, 2011, three programs from October, 2011, two programs from November, 2011, two programs from December, 2011, one program from January, 2012, two programs from February, 2012 and one program from March, 2012 were selected to be analyzed.

From these programs, the researcher used texts that were theoretically and methodologically believed to reveal different meanings and dimensions of interpretations. Stories containing cases of crimes, criminals and victims images as well as police, and stories furnished with images of police and policing, crime control and prevention strategies were purposively selected. Accordingly, twenty eight (28) stories are selected and used in the analysis based on the dimensions of interpretations they could generate by the use of semiotic and Marxist methods of analysis.

### **3.9. Unit of analysis**

The subjects and data sources for this study were audio and video texts available at Ethiopia Radio and Television Agency (ERTA) library. The producers of these audio and video texts are also one of the data sources with whom interview was conducted. Therefore, the subject of the study from which data collected is simply audio-visual texts of police program and the producers of the program.

### **3.10. Data coding and analytical categories**

Coding is the process of defining what the data are all about (Charmaz, 1995) cited in Ezzy, 2002: 86). Coding in thematic analysis is the process of identifying themes or concepts that are in the data. Accordingly, the researcher attempted to build an account of

what has been observed and recorded. Thematic analysis aims to identify themes within the data. Data were analyzed through thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is more inductive because the categories into which themes will be sorted are not decided prior to coding the data.

Codes are tags or labels that are attached to the raw data (Denscombe, 2007). The idea was to develop themes and to work out how they were related to each other within the data. Thematic analysis is a search for themes that emerge as being important to the description of the phenomenon (Daly, Kellehear & Gliksman, 1997) cited in (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, 2006:4). They also state that the process involves the identification of themes through “careful reading and re-reading of the data”. Accordingly, data coded generally for meaning and themes were identified based on coding.

Accordingly, the researcher has coded to categorize the data gathered through textual reading and interview to form or develop themes for the study. The codes used for categorization of data are based on research objectives and research questions. Therefore, data collected through reading texts portrayed and conducting an interview are categorized into certain categories to develop themes.

1. Types of stories:-it was a category used to identify news from other programs and coded as (news stories and narrative stories).
2. Focus of the story: - it refers to topic on which the story constructed and this was coded as (story about crime, police, policing, and crime control and prevention issue).
3. Types and nature of crime events portrayed: - It is used to combine and analyze crimes of the same nature together in order to develop their common themes and

- these were coded as (e.g. crime of rape, burglary, murder, deception, and illegal human trafficking or immigration).
4. Presentation of stories: - it is concerned with how crimes committed were portrayed in television and the coding used was (images of offenders, victims, properties, and police, and justice)
  5. The subject matter of the stories: - this was coded as the (objective of a story transmitted, how it was structured, the meaning of the stories, images or signs used to generate meaning).
  6. The ideological values of the stories: - it was coded as, what and whose ideological interest does television tend to portray events of crime.
  7. Implications of the portrayals: - it is about what is caused by the stories and coded as (moral panic and stereotypes).

### **3.11. The process and procedures of analysis**

Based on the research objectives, data collected through textual readings and interview. Then, stories were translated and semiotic analysis has been applied to analyze the expressions and images using them as signs of signification or meaning. The structure of the stories, including the leads, expressions used, the images portrayed are separately and collectively seen to generate different possible meanings using different sign systems or structures that are used to produce different meanings of texts. Therefore, data containing narrative stories and video-images were analyzed in relation to each other. Marxist approach was also used to analyze the ideological dimensions of the stories.

### **3.12. Trustworthiness of the data**

Lincoln and Guba (1985) propose that the conventional measures of research rigor, namely validity, reliability and objectivity, appear to be inappropriate in qualitative research. Instead, they suggest that more appropriate criteria should include the measures of credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability. These four measures were adopted for ensuring trustworthiness of the study.

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), the most crucial technique for establishing credibility of the evidence is by checking data analytic categories, interpretations and conclusions. Within the construct of transferability, the researcher must argue that his findings will be useful to others in similar situations, with similar research questions or questions of practice.

The dependability of a study centers on the validity of processes used to arrive at the conclusions made (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The technique used to enhance the dependability of this study has been to stick to the research questions, objectives and methods of the study.

Conformability captures the traditional concept of objectivity and the researcher needs to ask whether the findings of the study could be confirmed by another. To ensure conformability of the study, the researcher has discussed the methodological aspects of the study in depth.

## **Chapter Four: Data Analysis and Presentations**

Ethiopian television's police program composes news and other narrative stories of crime. In these stories, criminals, victims, police officers, as well as courts or criminal justice systems were the focus of the analysis. Regarding stories related to crime control, community policing strategy was emphasized in the analysis. The process of news construction, especially, sources of news, news selection and news values, including their ideological significance were also analyzed.

Additionally, images of crimes in the news stories and other narratives were used together to be analyzed using semiotic and Marxist methods of analysis. Therefore, images of crimes that accompany the news and other narratives were analyzed and interpreted using semiotic approach to meaning and Marxist approach to ideological beliefs of the stories.

### **4.1. The Construction of Crime news in police program**

In this part, I'm going to analyze the process of crime news production of police program in Ethiopian television. In police programs of Ethiopian television, some of the stories of crime and criminal justice, of criminals and crime control in news presentations are events happened long time in the past. This is because of the complicated nature of crimes happened. Therefore, stories pass through the process of collection, selection, sifting and evaluation which takes long time. It is this process which makes stories crime realities of constructions and re-constructions.

Thus, with regard to the notion that the media do not simply and transparently report events which are 'naturally' newsworthy in themselves (Hall et al, 1978), considering news

presentation and the social construction of news making requires an examination of the conscious and unconscious processes involved in production of such news stories from the collection of information to the selection, edition and shaping which is time taking.

The news source that the producers use to get information and how they tend to shape their news stories can be seen in terms of the claim that crime and criminal justice stories produced reveal much about views of themselves (police and court) on criminal events. The reason is that crime news construction process (news gathering and production) in ERTA is likely to be completed by police who practice journalistic news reporting. They are police officers acting as reporters and as the sources of crime events. Through sorting and selection of events, determination of the news values takes place by the police officers and sometimes by the courts. According to the response of producers to the question of the basis of news evaluation, the selection and the sifting is determined based on social and cultural contexts in which the society lives as well as the nature of the crimes.

So, selection and evaluation based on these different issues, especially the experience of responding to crimes by society thereby subjecting events of crime to selection and evaluation, and rejection of stories on the bases of the mentioned features makes it a social construct. This idea is explained and interpreted hereunder with inevitable consequences.

#### **4.2. Sources of crime news, news selection and news values**

The sources of almost all crime news of ETV's police program in all regional, and at federal levels are police officers. They report events happened and investigated by the police and criminal justice system. Therefore, the news stories come from different places to the newsroom by these reporters. There are individuals in police stations of each and every region who act as reporters. The newsworthiness of events is going to be determined by producers at the center. They collect stories of crime for selection and evaluation, and then sift them for production and dissemination.

Additionally, the producers state that they have two different options regarding the source of their stories: The first option is that they do have reporters who gather events of crime and bring to their office from different regions. There is also another option if there are serious crime events that are assumed that the public needs more critical coverage. In this case, the reporters in branches may call the producers to uncover the serious and complicated events.

Hence, there is a case in which they contact sources of information by themselves; especially, this is much more practical to events that happened in and around Addis Ababa city. Though there are still branch reporters in different sub-cities of Addis Ababa, most of the events are accessed by senior producers and reporters.

In a nutshell, there is an opportunity of gathering facts about the crime events happened in different regions. They select stories and evaluate them to be worth reporting. In most cases, the selection depends on the seriousness of crime. Crimes that are considered as serious and grab the communities' attentions are murders, robberies and intricate crimes which distress the community frequently and need an investigation.

Whatever alternative they use to gather information about criminal events, the source of their information is either police or courtroom. This can be seen in terms of what Jarell (2007) argued that the media utilize the police and criminal justice officials as their primary source. It is also important to view in terms of what scholars claim (Jarell, 2007) that relying on police information paves the way to portray certain crimes, especially street crimes and police promote their own interests and their own account of crime. The people may involve in the construction of the events while providing information during the investigation. But, it is the police and justice system who determines how to frame the news stories in the process of investigation and proceedings.

Moreover, the police as a source of crime news create another problem especially regarding selection of the news. For example, if there is a case of crime on the process of an investigation which is not yet proved, but for which the community expected to be reported, may not be reported until the investigation become successfully completed and proved whether the action is crime or not. In some cases, this kind of crime may remain uninvestigated or unreported because of shortage of reliable source. At this time, the interest of the public and police officers may clash over the newsworthiness of such events.

According to the producers of the crime stories of the police program in ETV, there is a time or a situation in which unsolved problems of crime on investigation process could be portrayed. When the situation demands (e.g. when the public interest overrides), there is a possibility of portraying it. There are cases of crime that demand short period of time to be portrayed before complete investigation has been conducted on it (e.g. a crime of producing and processing contaminated foods that may damage many people). However, this has its own drawback. As stated by the informants, problem has happened earlier because of

portraying unsolved crimes and identification of the criminals in television. There was a time at which individuals labeled criminals appeared completely free from the case of crime or eased the magnitude of the crime they committed.

On the other hand, while the criminal is under the control of the police force, they may transmit the case keeping the identity of the criminals confidential until sufficient information and witnesses are contacted. They believe that realities about criminal events are likely to be constructed by the society. This is because it is individuals in a public who are used as witnesses or information source to construct realities in the process of investigation.

They also suggested that the contemporary police investigative force is strong and systematic. Unless different information is collected to support the case on investigation, as a journalist and member of police, they do not uncover the cases for granted. It is similar to what (Smith, 2010) suggested that crime narratives sort out the events, characteristics and characters to form an authentic story with a logical order. When the event is supported by different information available within a society there is a possibility to produce and disseminate. It is a reality constructed not only by the police, but also by the society so that it is a social construct.

Concerning the selection of the news events, the producers of the program claim that as most media newsrooms, they have the evaluation criteria; they use all possible criteria to select news from none news. It can be related to social constructionist claim (Hall et al, 1978) that 'news' is the result of a complex process which begins with a systematic sorting and selecting of events according to a socially constructed set of categories. They do have their own

gatekeepers and evaluation system. They do not transmit all the information collected from different sources.

Accordingly, representation implies the active work of selecting and presenting, of structuring and shaping (Croteau and Hoynes, 2003). Realities about crime constructed depending on what should or should not be portrayed. Selection and rejection in turn depends on the circumstances in which such crime is committed. It might also depend on cultural, political and social background of the society in which it is committed which makes it a social construct.

There are stories rejected based on their evaluation system. This might depend on the kinds of criminal events; they decide it based on thinking what others might learn from such cases (be the criminals or victims), especially based on the magnitude of the crime committed. Consequently, they don't simply expose cases of simple criminal events, because they believe that it is simple to rehabilitate such criminals and to change their behavior. The determination of what to be reported may need professional means of evaluation. However, except basic trainings on how to cover events of crime, these reporters, particularly those who are working in regions have no professional means to distinguish even newsworthy events.

In fact, they would decide to report violent crimes. Violence in the crime news is one of the thresholds which are considered as news values (Jewkes, 2004). This takes place mostly when the public interest overrides. For example, the criminal acts in which the community as whole might be victimized are likely to be reported than the individual cases.

On the contrary, the informants pointed out that crimes that are serious and against the social and cultural norms and values of the country, for instance, crimes of homosexuals could deliberately be ignored because of the negative effects that they generate to the society. It is related to the cultural conventions that regulate representations. According to Hall (cited in Fourie, 2001), representation is an essential part of the process by which meaning is produced and exchanged between members of a culture. Because of the meaning it generates to the community and the effect it draws, homosexual has no acceptance in Ethiopian culture and portraying such behavior might amplify than controlling it. Generally, the inclusion and exclusion of certain components of multi-faceted realities of criminal events is one characteristics of social constructionist perspective.

#### **4.3. Images of crimes in the news and other narratives**

This subsection of the chapter focuses on giving some meanings to the images used in construction of crime stories. The visual representations of crime stories to analyze what they communicate and how they mean what the producers of the images intended to mean. In this study therefore, the presence of such visual images help the researcher to analyze, interpret and give meaning to the images portrayed in line with theoretical and methodological approaches of the study.

However, in most of the Ethiopian television's police news, there is either image of criminals, or victims in some cases and neither of the two in other cases. For instance, in the case of sexual assault happened in Bench-Maji Zone of southern nations, nationalities and peoples of Ethiopia which included in the news stories transmitted on October, 23/2011, it was reported as the criminal committed a crime of rape on his uncle's daughter of thirteen

(13) years old. The criminal was sentenced to ten (10) years imprisonment. There was no extra information in the news more than what is mentioned here. Similar criminal case on November, 20/2011 in which seventy (70) years old woman was raped by juvenile (young boy) in Amahara region. The perpetrator committed the crime while the victim was going alone, and he was sentenced to eight years imprisonment. In both cases, the crime was crime narrated on television without supporting it with images of the victim and the criminal. Even though some stories appear without image, most of the time, there are other criminal cases which are supported by images.

The producers questioned about this, and answered that it can directly be related to the case of crimes. As there are criteria for news selection, the same is true for the presence and absence of images to support criminal events portrayed. This is based on how much the audiences could learn from events as well as what implication does it have on the criminals and victims (personal interview, April 10, 2013). For example, the criminals' images of whom they believe their behavior could be simply changed or rehabilitated may not be portrayed because of the psychological effect on them. In addition, the images of victims of the crime of rape on children may not be portrayed. It is because of negative effect that it draws to the victim's psychological makeup as well as to what the people construct. In fact, there was no image of adult women presented as victims of sexual assault. This can also be related to the norms and values of Ethiopian society.

In some cases, there are some events of crime in which the stories were supported with images. Concerning the criminal justice, for example, while criminal is on trial in the courtroom, the images viewed through television screen do communicate that someone has committed crime for which he appeared before judges. Here, the contextual meaning in the

courtroom, for example, judges sitting in front of the audience wearing a robe and turning pages of documents in which the profile of the criminal registered, and criminal(s) as well as witnesses standing in front of the court to hear the verdict can be read from the images.

In addition, from criminals' facial expression, everyone can read a sign of disappointment, lack of confidence and hopelessness or despair for the crime they have committed. These are signs that signify criminals' regret to their action. They show consciousness of their guilty. They can also communicate that criminals are asking for forgiveness or for lessening the severity of their punishment at a connotation level. Lack of confidence and failure to defend the case can also be a signifier of the hidden meaning of power relation between the court and the criminal. It shows power which judges hold to charge the criminal. Therefore, the signs can show the power imbalance between the criminal and judges in the courtroom.

On the other hand, most of the courtroom portrayals in the news media (ETV) lack description of the dialogue made among the judges, plaintiff, defendant and witnesses themselves which is important to construct meaningful and real event. But, reporters of the event describe what is going on in the courtroom. The only example of crime in which images of the above mentioned courtroom participants and their dialogue portrayed on the television is the story of crime of mugging in Amahara region, Debark area (story transmitted on November, 20/2011). In this case, signifiers of the concept of what is going on in the courtroom are a combination of the images of those participants of court proceedings and the language through which the process is described.

Therefore, we can see it in terms of Thwaites, Davis and Mules (1994) argument which states signifier and signified are inseparable and simultaneous. Supporting crime stories with

images gives simultaneity of signifiers and signified (images as signifiers and the concept of the story as signified) to generate meaning. It can also attach a sense of reality to the event and credibility to the news stories.

Accordingly, when we talk about lack of supporting stories with images (signs) in news stories produced by police, we are necessarily commenting on lack of reality or truth, and credibility of the stories. Images appear to generate more meanings if semiotic analysis is applied to the images. Thus, stories used different signs (images) were subjected to semiotic method of analysis.

#### **4.4. Representations and meanings: Semiotic analysis of criminal events**

In order to explore the visual signs that are used in police program, the images of crimes, criminals, victims, police officers and criminal justice as well as the signs used in the process of production and representation in the media were analyzed. Additionally, how they are constructed to represent a reality and how meaning can be generated by the use of these visual signs is interpreted.

The images were viewed in relation to the stories which the producers used to support. The linguistic expressions were analyzed in relation to their corresponding images except for those events which were not supported with images. To organize the analysis and the interpretation of images in a manageable and meaningful way, similar crime cases were taken together and the same technique of interpretation applied to them.

**Burglary:** this is an act of crime in which the criminals break into a building and steal money or objects, often while no one is in it. This kind of crime happened in Nifas Silk Lafto

sub-city of Addis Ababa. The criminals committed the crime on the organization in which they were working. It was investigated that they were supported by the guards of the organization (the story presented on October, 23/2011). The story narrates that the criminals were captured stealing machines which are worth 60,000 Ethiopian birr. The attempt that is used to explain the criminals as members of the employees working in the organization tells us the identity of the criminals and their behavior. Besides, their description connotes that the criminals failed to show loyalty to their organization which signifies and justifies their punishment to be proportional. The expression also can tell us two things: stealing is a crime, and at the same time, committing a crime on organization in which they have been working can communicate ruthlessness of the criminals.

The stolen machines which are worth 60,000 Ethiopian birr denote the value of the machines and may connote the gravity of victimization to the organization. The first criminal was sentenced to three years imprisonment while the supporters were sentenced to one year imprisonment and 600 Ethiopian birr fine. Image of the sub-city's police office which represents the routines of police officers and their concern to crime committed was portrayed.

Story of similar criminal case which happened at different areas was presented on October, 23/2011. It expresses the fact that *'organized criminals who started with minor property offenses turned to committing serious crimes of murdering with knife and guns were investigated*. This has different meaning: intended or unintended. The intended meaning is that they were captured committing different crimes. The unintended meaning is that property crime has been given less attention by the police and this caused serious offenses to

happen. The attention of the police was on the high-risk offenses and high levels of violence. The criminals turning to serious crime of murder can also connote that there was mild detective force that cannot prevent from committing further crimes. Hence, the story communicates that there should be a response to lower-level offenses and acknowledgement of the need to respond to these "minor" offenses by the police to control further engagement in serious crimes.

The image of criminals portrayed, while the police officers make an investigation upon them, sitting terribly in front of police and answering questions posed by them. The image of police portrayed as a source of solution to the problem. Additionally, images of different properties (bag, clothes, guns, lap top computers, etc) were also displayed. They are signs photographed to show that the criminals were accused of snatching these properties. Thus, they have an indexical value that the criminals were captured because of stealing those properties (cause, and effect relationship). On the other hand, these images can also be used in terms of Pierce's trichotomy (Berger, 2000). Properties were portrayed by their photographs. Photographs are icons that signify the real properties by resemblance. Thus, bags, clothes, guns and lap top computers displayed were icons that represent their respective concepts. Finally, the criminals were sentenced to 21-24 years imprisonment based on the seriousness of their respective actions.

The use of the criminals and properties together and portraying them can be a symbol of power which acquires its meaning at a connotative level (myth). Barthes used the term myth (Fiske, 1999) to describe the situation where the hidden meaning accepted as 'natural' or

'normal' in making sense of the world. Accordingly, it is a power of setting the criminals and properties under control which is unchallengeable for that crime was committed.

***Mugging (robbery) on the roadway:*** the most example of mugging which is semiotically significant was a crime happened in Amhara region (story transmitted on February, 19/2012). The story described the event as it was the most serious problem in which the public have been suffering from criminals for six years. They (criminals) have been attacking people who travel on vehicles around Limalimo Mountain. The setting of the mountain assisted the gangs to hide themselves and live on the mountain for a long period of time (see Appendix, A: 1).

According to the story, they were gangs of seven members organized with weapons. They have been committing similar crime for long period of time. The public have been suffering and many were killed by them. From the members, one was strong and rumored by the community to be a magician that cannot be shot him by gun. This expanded fear within the community. However, the police force immediately organized after one day robbery happened on vehicle, and followed their way to the forest. Amongst the robbed properties, the police found one lap top (Toshiba) in the forest. They used it as a sign to follow the direction of the robbers.

Semiotically, the computer found in the forest signifies different meanings: The criminals might be unable to handle it in the forest while they were followed by the police. On the other hand, it might be because of the robber's level of understanding of the value of computer. We can relate the idea to the concept of hyperreality (Berger, 2005) which claims

sign is more than what it stands for. The reality about the computer found is multi-faceted based on how the criminals missed the computer from other properties. We can also make a difference between the owner of computer and the criminals if the reason was related to understanding of the value of computer. Accordingly, the concept of binary opposition can be applied to the literacy level of both the criminals and owner of the computer.

Denotatively, the computer can represent a concept of computer that the victims lost. It is an icon, on the other hand, that is represented as computer (photograph) by resemblance. It has also an indexical meaning in which it is used by police investigative forces, because it was 'there in the forest', signified the concept that someone was there.

After awhile, they opened a war with the robberies and killed three persons including the one who has been labeled to work with magic. Except the image of police, properties under control, and some other signs portrayed, the images of criminals were not presented in the story. Some victims were presented while their properties returned to them and some were interviewed and reacted to the event; especially, driver's image signifies happiness and freedom from such anxiety.

The materials returned to the victims were one lap top, forty-one thousand (41, 000.00) Ethiopian birr, 17 mobile phones, four (4) rings of gold, a police uniform which the criminals used to wear during their action, one photo camera and four (4) Weapons. The weapons were big guns (see Appendix, A: 7).The public is represented as supporter of the investigation mainly through giving information about the criminals, and as victims of these criminals.

In addition, the image of much Ethiopian birr in hundreds displayed on the screen has different meanings. Forty-one thousand (41,000) Ethiopian birr which was returned to the victims denotes the amount of money the criminals collected and the victims lost. Returning the money to the victims denotes that it belongs to the victims. The robbers were not used because the law does not allow them to use. On the other hand, they lost the opportunity of using the money because of the power of the police which kept them under control, killing some of them.

At a connotative level, it may communicate the loyalty of police to the community, the power they hold to do that, the successfully accomplished investigation and the strength of police force. A droplet of red color on the notes of money signifies blood dropped on the money during the shot with guns (see Appendix, A: 6). It indicates that there was a war in between the criminals and the police force. It connotes the power of the police force over the criminals which can be viewed in terms of Barthes myth. From seven criminals, three of them dead while three captured, and one concealed. The death of the three can be seen in terms of what (James and Collines, 2011) commented that crime control approaches have a more punitive focus that gives weight to the identification and punishment of perpetrators.

***Murder:*** Other criminal cases semiotically analyzed were violent crimes. Crime of murders or deliberate killings was presented in the texts. The style of portrayal of these cases was almost similar, especially in narrating how the investigation of such crime was progressed from speculations to the proof of the cases, how the investigation was supported by the community, the role of police and how criminals and victims are represented, and how signs

or images are used to construct meaning. The similarity emanates not from the circumstances in which such crime events happened, but it is from strict and constant use of same fashion which might influenced them (producers) to construct realities of different events.

Having this in mind, now I try to present the meanings that could be generated using semiotics. There were so many cases of murder portrayed. To begin with, there was a murder in which the females were victimized (program aired on October, 23/2011). The story of one woman narrated as the victim has her own hotel and she had a friendly relationship with the criminal for more than fifteen (15) years.

The criminal used to supply raw materials for the victimized woman which were thought to have consolidated their relationship. In a long run, he decided to kill her in order to take over the properties that belong to her. First, he deceived her that there were individuals who wanted to kill her so that she had to protect herself. He advised her to be out of contact with her relatives and other people. Then, he told her to transfer 1,081,700:00 Ethiopian birr that she saved in her deposit book to his savings account. After keeping her out of contact with people, he told her that she had the opportunity of being alive only if she left out her home, Addis Ababa, to rural areas. He took her to Debre Sina town, 145 km towards North of Addis Ababa and killed her.

The corpse of victim was seen by 13 years old, shepherd girl. The community of the town reported to the police. The corpse was taken to a hospital for a medical checkup and she was killed by being hit on her back. After so many speculations and investigation process, the criminal was suspected by the community because of changes that were observed from his

overall life and material properties. He immediately bought residence and car after the death of the victim.

The neighbors of the deceased woman informed the police that she had a close relationship with the criminal for a long period of time. The police searched his home and found the victim's bag and some of her clothes. These signs assisted the police to know that the victim was murdered by him. He also admitted that he killed her. As a result of this he was sentenced to life imprisonment.

The victim was represented with her photograph, while the criminal portrayed in person in the courtroom (see Appendix, A: 24). The photograph is the icon that communicates the identity of the victim by resemblance. The police represented as successful investigator with the support of the community. The victim's bag and her clothes found in the offender's home are signs that signify the attachment of the criminal with crime being investigated.

Another crime of murder was the case of a victim murdered by her husband. The story does not cover the event from causes of the murder. However, it describes that the spouse hid himself hitting his wife seriously. She was dead in the hospital (program transmitted on November, 13/2011). After committing such serious crime, the criminal moved to south Sudan and lived there for long time.

However, after police investigative force proved the whereabouts of the criminal in collaboration with South Sudanese police forces, especially the Interpol, he was brought to

Ethiopia and made to appear before court. Here, the involvement of the Interpol and south Sudanese government communicates that different countries are committed to controlling and preventing crime together.



Figure 1: the criminal captured in South Sudan, returned to Ethiopia

*(Source: from ERTA's audio-visual library)*

This means, it is because of the assistance of the South Sudanese government and the Interpol that the Ethiopian police detective force managed to catch the criminal. The police force and the criminal portrayed on television while they arrived at airport. Within the story, there was a photograph of the couples which showed the intimate relation they had before the crime was committed. Therefore as a sign, the photograph can signify a sense of being happiness, togetherness and love before the crime was committed (see Appendix, A: 15). Here, it is important to discuss the notion of intertextuality.

According to Berger (2005), intertextuality is the use in texts of material from other. So, the producers of the program used the photograph of the couples to show how much they have been together in order to better construct the story from the beginning. The purpose of the

story was not about the life the couples passed through, but it was about the crime committed. The purpose of the photograph before the happening of crime has been to reflect love, friendship, marriage and intimacy. Therefore, the photograph that had been used to show love and friendship by the couples was reused to construct a story of violence between the couples, which can be seen in terms of intertextuality.

In the portrayal of most of the crime of murder, the victims were portrayed by their photographs. This can tell us about their identity or to know who the victims are. But it cannot tell us how realities of the event constructed, which resulted from narrow framing of the story. Regarding this case, victim was not portrayed in person though she was dead after entering a hospital for treatment. Her sister, including some other relatives and communities reacted to her death gravely.

The criminal appeared in person and asked a bit about his action. He responded desperately by regretting what he has done. He said that he couldn't erase from his mind. He was completely open-eyed which shows his frustration (see Appendix, A: 13). Besides, it can also be used by police as 'Signifier of criminality' (Innes, 2003). An item or behavior that can, from the police's point of view, be used to know that he was involved in crime. The police forces portrayed encircling the criminal which as a sign signifies their commitment to the solution. The fact that the criminal was encircled with his hands shackled indicates his physical strength and that he able to escape out of the control of the police otherwise. His response to his own action may possibly mean his disappointment and connotatively mean to others 'do not do that'.

In addition to the above cases, there was also other case in Jima town in which one woman was murdered while she was going to her home leaving her shop (story presented on March, 4/2012). She was a mother of three children. She was gunshot by her neighboring young male with whom they had been in conflict. The criminal was investigated by police and the community. The families of the victim portrayed and reacted to the case giving appreciation to the community that cooperated with the police force in the process of investigation. The criminal presented in the courtroom for trial and was finally sentenced to life imprisonment.

Other murders were all cases of male victimization by male criminals. For example, most serious case of this kind was evident in which organized criminals murdered one person in Arsi Negele, Oromia region, fraudulently, taking him from Addis Ababa (program transmitted on December 25/2011). These criminals were young males who know the victim very well. The victim was a leader of a household who has his own residence and automobile. The offenders betrayed him that they were students and want to leave Addis Ababa for field trip to lake Langano(one of the recreational areas of Ethiopia) taking his automobile for rent for three days and himself(the victim) as a driver .

They decided to kill him outside Addis Ababa to take his Automobile. Killing him, they threw his body to the river around Arsi Negele. They sold the automobile going to Moyale, Borana Zone, on the way to Kenya. It was alleged to be a serious crime. According to the opinion given by individuals from the neighbor in the story, the criminals themselves disclosed with irritation that they violently killed the victim refusing his polite request to save

his life. It was expressed as such '*you can take my Automobile, please save my life*'. From this expression it is simple to understand the extent of the criminals' aggressiveness.

Accordingly, the criminals' frustration might be connected to fear of punishment, and the expression of their aggressiveness can be related to the moral codes of the notion that evildoers deserve to be punished. The corpse of the victim was found by the police. Funeral ceremony was processed by the community of Arsi Negele (see Appendix A: 20). Police found photograph of the victim from his clothes and used it to attach to his tomb believing that his family would search out based on revealed identity of the victim through his photograph (see Appendix, A: 21).

The criminals were also portrayed by their photographs (see Appendix, A: 22 &23). This is the way that is always used by the police on investigation to identify criminals and victims. In this crime of murder, the photograph is used to know whereabouts of the victim and his family. The other sign used in the production of this event was the coffin (a long box in which a dead person is buried) and the community expressing their grief encircling the coffin during the funeral ceremony (see Appendix, A: 18). They collected money to construct a tomb on a dead body of the victim.

A collection of people encircling the coffin, expressing their grief, signifies irritation or the belongingness of human beings to each other. Cooperation or unity of the community to collect money raises the whole image of the event to a second order level of (Allen, 2003) Barthes Mythology. Therefore, turning that sign into a signifier for a new signified, the unity

of people can communicate their care for human beings, togetherness that results from either humanistic way of thinking or from cultural codes and conventions. According to the expression used by the producers, it was a kind of crime that proved the egocentric behavior of the criminals in which money is favored over humanity that police reacted to it and described the action as heartbreaking.

The criminals were five young males. Three of them were sentenced to life imprisonment whereas the two sentenced to 14 and 18 years imprisonment. Regarding the difference in imprisonment imposed on them, there was no expression of reason as portrayed on television. The producers of the program did also not want to suggest on the decisions made by the courts.

However, it is stated in Article, 168(2) that the Court shall determine the period of detention to be undergone according to the gravity of the act committed and having regard to the age of the criminal at the time of the crime (the Ethiopian Criminal Code) which might be the reason for such difference. The automobile sold in Kenya returned to the victim's family by police.

The other murder happened in East Showa around Mojo town and transmitted on September 25/2011. The criminals were three in number, appeared in the court standing in front of many spectators for trial. They shot the victim with gun and took 5000:00 Ethiopian birr, one Pistol and one Mobile phone. They committed crime of murder while the victim was going with his wife. One criminal was sentenced to life imprisonment and while the two left were sentenced to 16 years prison.

Generally, there are other murder cases presented on television though the way of construction of the event and their intended meaning is roughly similar. The story which narrates about killing never revealed the victims' dead body. The language is only used to construct the meaning about the image of victims of murder.

***The use of chemical weapon:*** Other event of crime in which female seriously hurt was an offense committed by the use of Sulphuric acid (story presented on November, 13/2011). It is important to discuss its semiotic significance. The victim was the girlfriend of the criminal. They had been together before she graduated from University. But after her graduation, she rejected her decision of being with him. The criminal was discouraged by her action and aggressively used chemical weapon to attack her. The victim has been illustrated while she was being treated in the hospital. The story expresses that the police captured the criminal but yet waiting for decisions of judges.

The story constructed victim's background as follows. She was a single offspring for her mother and her father was died. This signifies that the mother have no any option of being supported by other person than her daughter. She (the victim) graduated from University with BA degree. Her mother had a dream of leading comfortable life after graduation of her daughter. However, the mother's dream became gloomy. As a result, she was portrayed on television as hopeless, crying, expressing grief and needing urgent attention. Even though the victim is alive, the parts of her body were seriously damaged. The violence inscribed onto the body in the form of wounds can be understood as symptoms of the fatal contact (Innes, 2003). Accordingly, it is simple to interpret the interactional dynamics of the serious assault

and probably the magnitude of the crime committed on the victim. Therefore, her wounded face was covered with bandage which signifies she has seriously been injured. In the hospital, medical doctors and nurses were also portrayed while giving care for the victim. It signifies their commitment to their profession. Her photograph portrayed helps the audience to compare the victim's image before and after she had been hurt and this extended the level of her victimization (See Appendix, A: 16 & 17).

The image you see below is a victim's clothes which are burned with acid. There is a jug placed at the center of the burned clothes. One can interpret from that it is a material by which the chemical was poured onto the victim's body. The size of the jug can communicate what amount of acidic chemical it can contain and how much it can destroy human bodies. The clothes are also signifiers of what has been happened, and denote the bitterness and potential of the chemical to burn. At a connotation level, it can signify to what extent the victim was hurt.



Figure 2: Clothes of the victim burned with chemical/acid

*(Source: from ERTA audio-visual library)*

In addition, there was other physical injury caused by pouring of acid in which males appeared to be the victim. In most of the cases, there is no event of crime in which males are victimized by females. But there was single case in which a female used a chemical weapon to injure her boyfriend (news story transmitted on October, 23/2011). The reality presented about the victim was only that he has been on treatment. As a result, I used to compare with the above case of a female assaulted by her boyfriend with chemical as an example of stereotypical representation analyzed under '*Representations and Stereotypes*' subtitle.

**Rape:** in a crime of sexual assault, there is no image of victims which support the news stories narrated. The sexual offenders were portrayed in most of the cases while they appear in the courtroom. The narratives of rape tend to compare the ages of offenders and victims. Hence, the severity of sexual assault tends to be determined by the age of the victims. For instance, in Benishangul Gumuz region (news report on November, 3/3/2004), one person raped his uncle's daughter and his name has been identified in the news. This offender was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment. Sexual assault on relatives might have aggravated the level of victimization and so that his name has been called on television for identification. This is related to the cultural values and codes that are attached to the society.

The seriousness of crime of rape can be weighed by different things. For instance, a person alleged to commit a serial rape may not be punished equally with one that has committed a single crime of rape. For example, on February 19/2012), there was a news story which expresses that six females of 13-14 years old were sexually assaulted by a single person. He committed these much crime by deception, separating them from their families, and telling

them that he would send them to the foreign country. No image of the criminal and victims was appeared on television. But the story ends saying the perpetrator was convicted to Eighteen years imprisonment.

Therefore, signifiers of the seriousness of the offense are the number of victims (six), their age (13-14), the way the offender deceived them to commit the crime, the rigorous imprisonment of 18 years. The victims deceived that they would be sent to the foreign country connote the attitude of Ethiopians towards life in the foreign country. As a citizen of underdeveloped country (Ethiopia), they were interested to lead their life abroad. But, the life choice with which they have been encountered resulted in victimization of these young girls.

In relation to the difference in image of offenders and victims of sexual assault, example can be given from the texts in the sample. In the case of a rape against one female who is 13 years old by 26 years old male, the offender appeared in the courtroom in front of the public. In another sexual assault in which a 70 years woman was raped by young male, neither the criminal nor the victim's image was used to construct the event. The offender was sentenced to eight years imprisonment. Even if the same kind of crime was committed on the Seventy years old woman and the thirteen years female, they were differently treated for which their age might be the factor.

On the other hand, the absence of image of the offender on the second case might mean the gravity of the crime is of no significance comparing to the first. Moral considerations might be the reasons for the absence of image in the crime of rape in general, and for this case in

particular because of the fact that the woman the perpetrator raped was much older than him. A cultural code in which the society lives seriously views this kind of crime because of the ethical issues within the media organization or the effects on the audience which the producers claim.

***Semiotics of the Desert Journey:*** A crime of illegal human trafficking (illegal emigration) is one of the kinds of crime in which police officers were more concerned with their construction of crime stories. It is described as a desert journey by police journalists who narrate stories of the event. It has been narrated and portrayed extensively, and the stories framed insist on the way to control, and awareness creation to stop illegal outgoing of young Ethiopians. Illegal human trafficking is labeled as a crime based on the process through which emigrants leave out their home country. The portrayals of this case tend to generalize the risk of crime not only to the victims and their family, but also to the country Ethiopia. Some responsible institutions and individual opinions in the stories perceived such events as more serious problem in distorting the image of Ethiopia than other criminal acts. Additionally, they clearly perceived it as a sign of ‘modern slavery’ (stories presented on September, 25/2011 and January, 15/2012). The producers, for example, in the program aired on January, 15/2012, framed the introduction of the story starting from the historical background of Ethiopia in standing against slavery and colonization. They also pointed out the fact that Ethiopia was the country remained free from European colonization. While this is the reality, the perpetrators are spoiling the image of Ethiopia in the eyes of others, being involved in such inhuman acts.

Those who deemed to be criminals in the crime of illegal human trafficking are different from other criminals. As it was articulated, it is a kind of crime in which the supporters of such crime appear to be the victims also. Even though the brokers and drivers at different stages of the journey portrayed as main actors of these illegal proceedings, the emigrants were also presented as supporters of the action who are labeled both as criminals and victims.

Police and criminal justice response to illegal human trafficking is the issue which remained unclear or out of consideration in the representations. Their stories focused on awareness creation than giving appropriate police and criminal justice response. In doing so, they tend to figure out the home country (Ethiopia) as a place where each and every young Ethiopian can do whatever business they like. But, the reality about the economic, social and political context in which those emigrants have been living and urged to live remained untouched. Moreover, the situations in which these emigrants could work, for example, the capital by which such business could be started, the problems with implementations of policies with regard to migration were practically intangible in the portrayals.

Despite the absence of the above mentioned business life opportunities, they try to portray images of some development activities, workers in the home countries, projects on process to make awareness to those who want to leave out their country in order to shape their behaviors. Therefore, the attempts towards the works of public awareness and community mobilization to change societal attitudes and behaviors, and the works of government institutions regarding social and economic development projects that would increase the life choices of victims and offenders represented in the media seem to remain elusive, or manipulation than solution.

Police journalists were questioned and reacted towards the nature of the problem. They believe that human beings have the right to migrate from country to country. However, there is a legal procedure that regulates the way in which it should officially be used. Article, 32 of the Ethiopian constitution states about the freedom of movement and it reads as: *any Ethiopian or foreign national lawfully in Ethiopia has, within the national territory, the right to liberty of movement and freedom to choose his residence, as well as the freedom to leave the country at any time he wishes to.* However, those who want to leave their country in illegal way are mostly youths who have no capital potential. It is because of this that most young people prefer the illegal way of leaving their home country. But, some concerned officials who give their opinion on television claim that the cost that emigrants pay illegally would enable them to leave out legally.

According to police (journalists), the media in this case aimed at producing awareness about suffer and victimization of those emigrants. The ways they are being treated tend to be portrayed in the media. Moreover, they believe that the hardships in the desert areas may help others to understand the magnitude of victimization and so help them to make decision of working in their country.

Criminals in illegal human trafficking, mainly those who participated as brokers and drivers were portrayed as ridiculous, aggressive individuals who have no any sense of belongingness for human beings and humanity(e.g. story transmitted on December, 25/2011). The action presented as a planned criminal act in which brokers have been organized as selectors from the local areas of different regions and as locomotors to different directions. Moreover, it was illustrated as it is more complicated crime which is committed by actors within and outside the country.

The emigrants were portrayed both as criminals and victims. They were criminals because illegally tried to leave or left their country, initiating the action by giving money to brokers and drivers. They were also represented as victims because they are the first who take the risk of the travel, suffering from the desert journey, from brokers' maltreatment who are seeking for extra money. Especially, female emigrants were represented as those who suffer from double victimization. They suffer from harsh environment during the journey in the desert, and sexual assault by those brokers as well as drivers. So, these emigrants were portrayed in the television as criminals, victims and witnesses to the crime committed.

Having this much about general background of representations of illegal human trafficking in mind, it is important to analyze and interpret the languages, signs and images used to construct the stories. I love to start from expression used as 'Desert Journey'. 'Desert' is an area often covered with sand or rocks where there is very little rain and not many plants (Cambridge Advanced Learners dictionary). In the case of illegal emigration, it was used to explain the reality that the journey is always in the desert areas and unpleasant nature of the journey (see Appendix, A: 8-11). As a result, they sometimes prefer to call it the 'Dark Journey'. One of the hardships during the journey was expressed as the problem they encountered to cross the rivers. There is a time at which those emigrants would die because of failure to swim or being thrown forcefully into the sea by those brokers who sought extra money from them.

The journey has been described as a 'Dark Journey' which happens during the night. However, the expression used as 'Dark journey' signifies more. It can communicate how much the journey is concealed and difficult for the police to follow up in order to stop this

criminal act. On the other hand, it may signify the inability to travel during the daytime because of the temperature of desert areas.

At a denotation level, dark may mean that little or no light, black in color; but when used before noun, it communicates sadness and without hope, evil or threatening. Naturally, human beings would not prefer to travel in the dark because of their fear. But, what can be signified from the 'Dark Journey' is more than this. The word 'dark' has also another meaning at a connotative level or second level signification of Barthes (Laughy, 2007, Given, 2000). This is not simply understandable to most of the people because it needs an interpretive way of looking at it. They are describing not only the conditions of the journey, but also the life that the immigrants going to live outside their country. For instance, there was an expression by producers of story which states *'those who thought and decided their destination to be Saudi-Arabia, died and buried in the dusts of desert areas'* (program transmitted on January, 6/2004). This expression helps to think how much the journey was gloomy.

Moreover, it can be used to compare the difference between what the travelers have thought and what happened on them using binary opposition of Claude Levi-Strauss (Fourie, 2001). Consequently, the meaning of hope to live in Saudi gets its meaning better while compared with death and being buried in dust. An opinion from one commander inserted in the story expressing how much it was disappointing says *'paying money for illegal emigration is simply buying death for oneself'*. It means that they are the victims who drive death to themselves.

An example of dark journey could be the case of travelers captured in Afar region, Ethiopia while travelling through Djibouti, and then planning to Yemen (program transmitted on February, 19 and March, 4/2012). It was a crime in which so many individuals died and seriously injured. The emigrants were seventy seven (77) people who started traveling in the midnight at about seven O'clock (7:00) local time, being enclosed in the container, large metal box used for transporting goods, (see the figure below and Appendix, A: 10). The media portrayed the action as a serious criminal act in which human beings were treated as commodities.



Figure 3: Image of emigrants in the container

(Source: ERTA audio- visual library)

The expression 'like commodity' or 'treatment as commodity' was used to explain how much the crime was serious. For instance, an opinion of police members within the story says: *'I don't believe them; I don't believe those drivers who used container for transporting human beings in the harsher conditions of the desert to be human beings'*. From this expression, therefore, it is simple to understand the extent of criminality as well as the extent to which these drivers could think as human beings.

Because of deficiency of air to breath in the container, some of them died and thrown out from the container. The police force followed the criminals, speculating that something was going on when they found the dead bodies of those who were thrown on the street. As a result, these emigrants were arrested being enclosed in the container. Police found eleven (11) people died and fifteen (15) seriously injured. Dead bodies and those who were seriously harmed seen on television while they were arriving at the hospital.

The family of the victims and the community reacted to the event and expressed their grief. They were portrayed both as victims and sources of solutions for such kind of crime. Including the community from the surrounding, families gave opinion, pledging not to drive their descendants and relatives to such serious offense.

From this perspective, it is simple to understand the media's role as to expose people to the risks of such crime, but the result depends on the audience's behavior. It means that if other crimes drive the community's attention as what is presented in the case of illegal emigration and people reacted in such away to control, the media's role can simply be understood as awareness creator. But, how the public react and the response depends on the pre-conceived behavior.

However, the re-construction of this case distorted the reality that is expressed by narration of the story. In the above figure, the container which is used to produce the event is not located on the high way in the desert; it is in city or in town. We can look at the electric pole standing near the container and the poster posted on it, as well as vehicles around the container to think where the area would be. So the expressions that says *using container for transporting human beings in the desert* is not similar with what the figure communicates which is a distortion of reality.

*Paradigmatic and Syntagmatic analysis:* Stories of crime can be interpreted in terms of paradigmatic and syntagmatic analysis. Paradigmatic analysis can be applied to the case of illegal immigration discussed above. There was an opposition between the ‘commodity’ and ‘human beings’ which can be analyzed with the notion of paradigmatic analysis (Berger, 2000, Rose, 2001, Given, 2000). Producers used the ‘commodity and human beings’ to make an opposition between what is a commodity and a human being. According to paradigmatic analysis of text, the meaning of something depends on what it is associated with. Accordingly, the value given for human beings in this journey associated with the value given for commodity. It is an expression used to describe how much the crime was serious.

In addition, in the case of murder in which the criminal appeared while coming from south Sudan (story aired on November, 13/2011), the portrayal of police force besieging the criminal communicates the relation between ‘hero and villain’. The police are ‘heroes’ and the criminal controlled is ‘villain’. Paradigmatic analysis concerns itself with oppositions hidden in the text and their meaning which stems from Claude Levi- Strauss’s analysis of myths (Berger, 2000). The hidden ideas between police and criminals in crime stories analyzed in this study are therefore, subjected to paradigmatic analysis in this context.

On the other hand, syntagmatic analysis can be applied to the stories portrayed narrating criminal events. According to Berger (2000), semioticians use syntagmatic analysis for interpretation of texts in terms of the sequence of events that give them meaning. In the same way, the sequences of words we use in a sentence generate meaning. The term syntagm means chain. Therefore, the process of investigation of criminal events and their chains and

the sequence by which stories are narrated gives meaning when syntagmatic analysis is applied.

The leads below are different stories written to show how to analyze texts by using a paradigmatic and syntagmatic analysis.

<b><i>Paradigmatic Analysis</i></b>	A pharmacist was killed while closing illegally opened pharmacies in Eastern Harerge A person who raped a 70 years old woman has been sentenced to Eight years imprisonment Criminals were captured stealing telecommunication cables from Welkite A person committed suicide because of failing to pay back the money he has borrowed
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***Syntagmatic analysis***

The above written statements are leads of crime stories. These stories have different meanings. When we read the statements vertically from the first to the end, the stories could be interpreted in terms of their similarities and difference. For instance, the first statement was framed from a victim's angle, while the second and the third are from the criminal angle. When we see the fourth statement, it is different from others because it was a suicide. Therefore, paradigmatic analysis works when different realities are analyzed as a whole in relation to each other. Vertically, we can find also different kinds of crimes such as murder, rape, theft and suicide which invites for further interpretations of these stories.

Syntagmatic analysis focuses on how chains of events constructed by the use of words and statements in narrative stories. It can also be seen in terms of the sequence in which the criminals are captured. It helps to understand different realities constructed to narrate stories. On the above example, a horizontal line shows how the statements are constructed to give

meaning to the events. The sequence of words and sentences that are used to construct a story, therefore, can be analyzed in terms of syntagmatic analysis. For instance, from the above statements, there is a fact that '*A pharmacist was killed*'. However, the statement gets better its meaning if we know how, why and where he was killed which is possible only when we follow up the chains of words used to construct the statement up to the end.

#### **4.5. The use of different signs for deception**

One important element in discussing semiotics of criminal event which I was interested to explain is showing how signs used to communicate lies in relation to Umberto Eco's argument of '*if signs cannot be used to tell lies, they cannot be used to tell at all*' (Berger, 2000) and (Griffin, 2012) in his discussion of signs and truth. This leads us to describe the clothes the robbers used while they have committed the crime of mugging around Limalimo Mountain. They used a police uniform to mislead the victims as they were police investigative force searching for criminals (see Appendix A, 4). This assisted them to easily stop the drivers and enter in to the vehicles. So, police uniform as a sign, communicated a good works of police at the initial, and what it communicated after the event was opposite and used by the criminals to mislead the people.

The criminals perhaps choose to wear police uniform because of two different things. The first one is that people assume that only police wear the uniform. The legal codes do not allow others to wear police uniform other than police themselves. Fiske (1990) views codes as the systems in which signs are organized. He also believes that these systems are governed by rules for all members of the society using that code.

From this perspective therefore, we can conclude that criminals wore the uniform to obtain the identity of police. But, they were captured because of the rules that regulate the use of police uniform that allows only for police. These codes also regulate police wearing uniform not to misuse the uniform. Berger's (2005) notion of intertextuality of text realized in this case because the uniform as a text used to refer to what both the police use to wear in the work area or office and criminals used it to commit crime.

The criminals used the uniform to be free from guilty of the crime they have committed because in reality, they were not policemen. The second point is that people can attach to the person wearing police uniform the meaning of one who protect people and property, solve criminal problems, and keep peace and security. So, no one can suspect individuals wearing police uniform to be criminal because of the legal system that has been experienced by the society.

There were other related criminal acts in which the criminals used different signs to deceive the community. For example, in the story presented on November, 13/2011, a criminal was investigated in Shashamane town, Western Arsi zone, because of producing false documents, (degree and diploma) certificates for individuals in order to collect money. In this case, the signs of certificates were to represent an official document which states that the information on it is true. The signs of certificates (false documents) misleadingly communicate their function. On the other hand, the criminal has supporters from the community, who sought the false documents. It was a kind of crime that could dim the value given to education. It signifies what is being happening to the quality of employee or job vis-à-vis educational quality, especially if there are related cases in different areas of the country which needs further investigation.

In the same area (Arsi zone), similar deception with signs happened. The criminal introduced himself that he came from South Gonder, Amhara region. Entering the Muslim's Mosque in Shashamane town, he deceived the Muslim's that he has been hit by his families because of changing his religion to Muslim. He used to wear clothes that reflect Muslim culture including hat and scarf (see Appendix, A: 12). His choice of religious subject for deception is a signifier of people's proximity to religious matters that he thought to be simply supported by those people who follow the religion of Islam.



Figure 4: Image of criminal used different signs to deceive people

*(Source: from ERTA's Audio-Visual library)*

He covered around his stomach and back with bandage (a piece of white cloth made from cotton). He also used a wooden bandage (material made from Bamboo) on his hands and legs to mean that they are broken. He told them that he had not eaten any food for ten days and this information was checked and proofed by medical doctors, and it was true. But, he had not hit by his families and no injuries on his parts of bodies. He used the signs to deceive them in order to collect money. These all attempts were unsuccessful after the police

examination on the person. He had brought to the court and sentenced to one year and eight months imprisonment and 5000:00 Ethiopian birr fine.

Additionally, in Southern Nations and Nationalities in Hadiya zone, criminals were found planting cannabis on farmer's land deceiving the owner of the land by agreeing to plant tea. In one criminal house 154kg cannabis was found during the process of investigation which the police used it as information for further investigation 'signs of criminality' (Innes, 2003). He has two supporters (criminals). He was sentenced to five years imprisonment and 10,000:00 Ethiopian birr fine. His supporters sentenced to six month to two (2) years imprisonment and 200:00 Ethiopian birr fine. Therefore, the leaf of cannabis as a sign wrongly used to represent tea to deceive the farmer.

In Addis Ababa, Nifas silk Lafto sub-city, there was another case in which one person has been noticed deceiving individuals to sell glittering stone misleadingly as 1kg gold to 400,000 Ethiopian birr. But he was arrested for two years and 5000:00 Ethiopian birr fine. Hence, in entire examples illustrated above, different signs and symbols are used to tell lies.

#### **4.6. Representations of police and policing: the interpretation of crime control**

In the process of crime and criminal justice representations, overarching portrayals of images of police and policing in the news and other narrative stories were evident. These stories aim at controlling crime in different ways: The ways in which news is used to control crime is by constructing all the activities, policies and strategies of police officers for production and consumption. At this point, there is a belief that the public understands what police officers

are doing to control crime so that they can either cooperate with police or cease from acts of crime. Thus, the informants state that:

In our country, there are different kinds of crimes committed in different areas". The main objective of the police program is to control such criminal acts against the society. To control crimes therefore, the police program aimed at educating, making awareness and understanding of these crimes and their negative outcomes socially, politically and economically to the society (Personal interview: April, 10, 2013).

Hence, the main objective is to contribute to the control and prevention of crime peacefully by creating awareness about crime and the policies designed for control and prevention. There is a belief to make the country free from serious criminal acts by striving to make conducive work environment for those individuals who commit different crimes in which they work to develop themselves and their country. The role of the media in this sense can be defined as a tool to educate the society to control crime.

Of course Mason (2003) suggests the significance of media images of policing for reasons of transparency, or an indication of it, and challenging the responsibility of public sector institutions. However, the way they tend to do this should be considered. For instance, the other way they use to construct police and policing images is through producing and spreading the routine activities of police officers and criminal justice system as news agendas. This has an ideological significance.

While constructing the criminal acts, the process of investigation and criminal justice system, the community influenced by the messages in the news might cease from the acts of crime. Still in this way, intentionally or unintentionally, there is a sense of planting the strength of police officers and their policies and strategies to control crime in the eyes and ears of

audiences. The best example for this can be a production of the trainings of police on (military, government policies, strategies) and all the activities take place in the process of capacity building as news events.

As a result, it facilitates the opportunity of instigating fear of crime and concern within the community. Community policing is a strategy implemented through the coordination of people and local associations with police forces. Through training sessions, it works to enhance capacities of people in order to ensure participation in the implementation of crime prevention activities. For this reason, community centered crime prevention which is now working in Ethiopia appears to be inclusive. The involvement of local associations is believed to be essential for the continuation of the initiatives.

It is also emphasized as the important strategy to work in cooperation with the public to control crime. The knowledge about this strategy comes through offering trainings to the members of police officers and community throughout different regions in the country. Thus, most of news reports focused almost on the training and trained graduates (polices), narrates that most of the participants who acquired more awareness about community policing worked well on controlling particularly crimes that victimize females in the community such as sexual assault and these individuals were also certified for it. Certifying individuals encourages others to perform in the same way because it can be a way to the promotion of police employees. So, it is a systematic way of making people concerned about crime and crime control.

Therefore, the community policing strategy appears to be more important strategy in the police program of the Ethiopian television. In the case of community policing which takes

place through training, the public attitude in the news gives the impression that there is an appeal towards creating awareness to control crime and seems fruitful since it aims at educating and creating awareness to the number of people so that they save themselves and others from being a victim of certain crimes.

For example, in the news presented on November, 20/2011, training has been given to some communities of Bench-Maji Zone. The public opinion included in the news reflect that community policing strategy has been successfully applied in the area and resulted in minimizing crime rates. Some of them claim that there is a decrease mostly in criminal acts from which females become victims. Police officers' attitudes towards the community in relation to crime control in general, and community policing strategies in particular has been mostly positive. There is a temptation towards giving a positive image to the community.

As the producers understanding, community policing is a strategy of controlling crime using members from the community so as to cooperate with the police force. By their understanding, community policing is a strategy of crime control which focuses on the community to make them participate in different cases of crime not to be happened, and in exposing crimes which were already happened. It is a strategy experienced in most developed countries such as England and Germany from which Ethiopia adopted and used especially in rural areas of Amhara, Oromia and Tigray regions.

According to informants, it has its own significance in controlling crime. Everyone can understand that only the police force cannot control crimes that occur in different areas within the community. So, through the strategy of community policing, at least one person should represent the family and cooperate with police to control crime. As a result, the

middle-aged individuals and youths became participants and effectively controlled crime in different areas.

According to their belief, most communities in Ethiopia want to live in peace; and so that they attach the name of '*peace-loving community*', a community that always likes to live in peace. There are two important things that should be considered here: Their connection and attaching such image to the community helps the police officers to make their bond to the public more strong and sustainable. The second one is that it paves the way for the institutions to gain recognition and collaboration from the community in their effort to assure peace and order. This helps them to make believe the public that they are as a public institution, working with the community, and as a result became successful in controlling crime and keeping peace and security.

Sometimes, the implementation of this strategy is more systematic. For instance, they have been organizing youths in to different sport clubs. The name they give to these clubs has a direct relation to systematic way of making this clubs part of police members. There are names of clubs such as 'Renaissance dam' (related to the Ethiopian Grand Renaissance dam) which has the message of initiating people to build the dam than committing crimes, Anti-terrorist club, and Anti-contraband club and etc. These names have their own role to play in crime prevention and control.

As a result, to build the image of both the community and themselves, they overemphasized the whole society as peaceful and their success in controlling crime which one can consider it as a system of manipulation. Furthermore, it has a political implication because it naturalizes the ideology of crime control and peace keeping to the sustainability of political stability.

Despite their addition of community policing strategy of crime control, police force as a solution to events of crime and security of society has been an ideal representation which dominates narrative stories of police and policing issues. However, Hartley (2004) suggests that, any analysis should be careful not to blame an image of being patronizing or demeaning. Because of successful accomplishment of short term trainings and educations of police forces were portrayed in news stories, there could be a judgment of the representations as other possible solutions from the community patronized or demeaned which contradict the expression used as 'peace loving community' by police journalists. Within such stories, there are expressions supported by images of trained and educated police forces that were ready to serve the government and the community. The routine activity of Ethiopian Police University College (EPUC) concerning trainings and police educations with the purpose of working for human resource development and utilization has been emphasized in the stories.

In the stories, the purposes of trainings explained by the leaders of training institutions, commanders and other responsible individuals. Accordingly, the trained police forces were represented as those who are organized with knowledge of investigation of the ever changing complex crimes as a result of technological development, knowledge of democracy, human and civil rights and etc. Furthermore, the image of so many queues of trained police standing in front of trainers, leaders and commanders showing different military exercise communicates their physical strength (makeup) and legitimate power they hold to give service in what they have been trained.

In addition, the success of police in the investigation of violent and complicated criminal cases and the portrayal of the process might assist the community to perceive police as a powerful. In cases of planned violent crimes such as murder portrayed, the public opinion in

the stories has been fear of whether the offenders would be investigated and/or punished. While the criminals in complicated violent crimes are captured and brought to court, the public tend to perceive that any illegal action, however it is serious and intricate would be investigated, and couldn't be beyond police's investigative potential, emphasizing the success of police. This perception comes from how police and policing are represented or how stories related to this are framed.

Generally, the way the police officers represented in the media revealing their routine works in their institution and their structural relationship to the political institutions assisted them to prevail in spreading their power, success, their loyalty to the community and the government, in supporting the development of the country through crime control and keeping peace and security. For instance, in the story transmitted on October, 23/2011), there was an idea about current situation of the police. It expresses that *'Ethiopian Federal Police has a strong relationship with about 198 countries in the world concerning control of any criminal acts and problems of security to work in cooperation with the outside world'*. This elucidates their concentration to the social control and the ideology of possibility of strengthening the strategy by including other countries to take part.

Moreover, the news stories were furnished with the issues that connect Ethiopia to other countries. The image of Ethiopia concerning crime control, and keeping peace and security as one of the African states has been stated. For example, because Ethiopia is the seat of African Union, most of the meetings and conferences take place in the city of Addis Ababa. There has been no experience of security problem during those meetings and conferences. As a result, they tend to regard this quality to the success of police officers works and activities.

But, other factors such as people's quality of preference for peaceful life would have been considered in the framing of such stories.

The police ideology towards politics seems to be neutral in some cases. For instance, in the news story that narrates about the recruitment of new police forces from the public to train (story transmitted on October, 2/2011), one of the criteria in which those individuals were selected was neutrality to politics and free from being a member of any political party. This figured out the police officers and their institution as politically neutral. However, in framing their stories as they work in supporting government's development policies by controlling crimes not to be obstacles to such development activities, they distort the practical reality of being neutral to political issues.

#### **4.7. Public reaction to evens of crime and the Moral panic**

It has been argued in review of literatures that moral panic is the way in which the police, Courts, politicians, and others especially the media respond to a problem of crime in such a way that the nature of a problem is so exaggerated that it has the effect of generating concern and anxiety out of proportion with the actual nature of the problem itself (Jewkes, 2004 and Cohen, 2002). This reality is evident in crime stories portrayed in Ethiopian television and can be seen in different news and entertainment stories portrayed. Even though the study of audiences was not included in this research, it is believed that the audio/video texts analyzed construct public reaction to the media through collection and insertion of public opinion to crime stories. As a result, the way the community has been called to be part of the solution itself was exaggerated. The way in which issue of crime become a concern of the community is when the police officers need to cooperate with the public to control crime.

My concern at this point is not the study of effects behavior, which is the question of whether the exposure to these stories cause people to engage in similar behavior, but the focus of the study for this idea is the reaction of the public which is evident within the stories as well as the concern of police and courts with the issue of crime and control which results in labeling and moral panic.

In line with this view, their stories cover past crime events and risk of crime, comparing to the contemporary works and successes of police officers and the public in controlling crime. At this point, there are two important things that take place. The success of current police and policing is emphasized and the contemporary criminal events are perceived as complex and serious. In the contrary, the past generation is labeled as criminal than the current generation. So, there is a tendency towards attaching a quality of goodness to the contemporary generation and evilness to the past generation.

First of all, it is important to analyze how the communities react to events of crime and crime control, and overall actions while working with police officers and how this reaction to it creates such panic in the society. Then the role the media played in generating such panics could be analyzed from different points of view. In stories that cover serious crimes such as murder, the public has been called to react to such problems to search for solutions. Hence, the way public has been called to assist the police investigative process, and the other responsible institutions to control crime and the way the events of such crimes are constructed including public reactions to such events are sometimes overstated.

The public reacted to the problem have different perception towards crime events. As a result, perceptions of public regarding appropriateness of the criminal justice system, victims of crimes the police role in investigation of crimes are issues of concern in the news and other stories that are included in this part of analysis. For example, there has been a reaction to crime happened and transmitted on November, 13/2011 in which the offender of the crime dropped acidic chemical to his girl friend in Western Wollega. People from the neighboring reacted to the offence expressed their grief towards the action. For instance, one legal expert reacted to the case and stated her fear of similar crime cases in the future. As she put it:

Females should always be responsible and cease from such relationship. It is becoming a serious problem. Therefore, this and similar cases should be controlled by cooperation of police officers, legal experts, and the community in general. A complete behavioral change should come to solve such problems in the society (Opinion inserted in the story).

The seriousness of such crimes and female victimization was emphasized in her reaction to this case. Her emotion and ways of expression tells us that females were more likely to be victimized in such relationship. She is not blaming the offenders. But she is giving general advice for females. Her idea also tells us that this kind of crime could be controlled if the public as a whole cooperate with those who are concerned with the issue.

Additionally, the representative of a hospital in which the victim was treated also described the seriousness of the crime, and then she labeled the offender(s) of such crime as ‘selfish young males’. She explained the criminal act which takes place between the couples as it results from selfishness of males. Compared to the above reaction of the legal expert, this one

tends to blaming young criminals. She did not put female victimization and male criminality in broader social relationship. She simply generalized the behavior to all males.

Therefore, commenting on events of crime and these depictions of comments and ideas conform to Cohen's longstanding moral panic model (James & Collines, 2011). This is because Cohen (2002) argues that these situations are often due to a divide between a group of male youths and the society which does not provide enough opportunities for improvement. In this case, all young males are labeled as self-centered and females as always victims in which both are completely stereotypes. Due to the moral panic, youths have been labeled as deviant and a threat to society (Okoronkwo, 2008). Similar to what Okoronkwo claimed, the fear has been extended to the public through television. Hence, labeling and moral panics reach their highest level when such different ideas spread within the public and especially when the media reveal such opinions.

On the program transmitted on the same date (November, 13/2011), there was another case in which one female murdered by her husband with similar criminal act. Her family and the surrounding people reacted to the case more disgustedly. The victim died in hospital while the offender moved to South Sudan. The divide between criminality of males and female victimization emphasized and extended anxiety while individuals responded to the violence in the media.

Another crime which derived public reaction was a crime of robbery by gangs on roadway in Amhara region of North Gonder around Limalimo Mountain (see Appendix, A: 3). The fear

of victimization in the case of this event can be thought in terms of moral panic model created by (Cohen, 2002). Similarly, a moral panic is a response to categories of people who are perceived as threatening the integrity and welfare of a community or society (Jewkes, 2004).

Over reaction of the community to this event resulted from the seriousness of the crime. They have been suffering from criminals who have been committing this crime for a long period of time. No one could believe the offenders be controlled and brought to court. Police investigative force was also supported by the community. The other way of reacting to the events is related to the impacts of crime on the victim. This results from the fear of risk of a single case which is generalized to the whole community. When the media covers criminal cases and all the impacts on both the offender and the victim, the story often framed as a sense of making awareness and informing the public to secure themselves from similar cases. As a result, the public become emotional and project a sense of insecurity, and this sense of uncertainty spread in the community. On the other way, the proportionality of the punishment raises another question within the community. This is mostly evident on reactions to serious crimes in which victims died because the public expects punishment to be proportional, and the criminal to be sentenced to death.

Using the model of a moral panic to understand the issue is not to suggest that criminal violence does not occur and fear of victimization is determined solely by media publicity, rather the media provide the public with a particular, exaggerated framework for understanding Criminal violence (Jewkes, 2004). This is also true to the case of crime portrayed in Ethiopian state television.

#### **4.8. Representations of crime and Stereotypes**

In the portrayals of crime in media, the problem of stereotype is reflected in different ways. The differences in gender, age and class of criminals and victims can be major causes for such stereotypes to arise. Representation is a battlefield on which none of us can be neutral (Briggs and Cogley, 2002:314). In terms of this view, it is possible to observe different ideas of how criminals and victims were portrayed on the bases of gender, age and class differences. Representations inevitably involve a process of selection in which certain signs are privileged over others (Dyer, 2002). According to this argument, the portrayal of crime examined to know which issue of crime, criminals and victims given opportunity.

To start from gender related stereotypes, significantly, one can sense from the way in which females were portrayed as more likely to be victimized by males than the vice versa. Smith (2003:116) suggests that crime of gendered or sexual violence often overlooked with much focus being on the practical police response and effectiveness in achieving criminal justice outcome. This is evident not only in presentations of criminal events related to rape, but in other police programs that aim at control of crime against women.

In the news story transmitted on October 23/2011, November 13/2011, and March, 4/2012, stories of crime and control, and public reaction to crimes tend to label females as they were victims of most criminal behaviors. Additionally, the way female and male victims were portrayed in television has been compared. For instance, the stories transmitted on October, 23/2011 focusing on male offended with chemical by his girlfriend, and on November, 13/2011, focusing on female offended by chemical by her boyfriend were critically seen in relation how their case portrayed.

The same kind of crime has been committed on both male and female victims. But, the way the story constructed for events differs. The story on male victim was a news story. However, extensive narration was used in the case of female victim. Additionally, female victim portrayed while she has been on treatment in the hospital (see Appendix, A: 16). This might assist viewers to understand the extent of injury to her parts of body. In the contrary, no any image was used in the case of male victim. Moreover, since enough airtime with different attention has been given to the story of female victim, public opinions were inserted which extended the level of victimization. Further, there was an event of police training portrayed with the purpose of reducing only female victimization from sexual assault. As a result, the attention that is given for females in the portrayals and by the government can be seen in terms of (Gunter, Harrison and Wykes, 2003) which states that traditionally, most attention has been devoted to the way women depicted as victims on television.

On the other hand, crime of rape seems to be determined by age to punish the criminals. Crime of rape was different in that the level of victimization determined based on the ages of victims. In this case, it mean that if the victims are middle aged females, the offender is likely to be sentenced with few years imprisonment compared to rapes on younger females which results in rigorous imprisonment. This shows the legal aspects applied to sexual crime to be different from other crimes. Minimization of criminal charges for other crimes may depend on other factors/ situations mainly related to criminal.

The other way of representation in which stereotypes appear to be reflected takes us to the issues of crime which are portrayed on television. Even though the purpose of this research is not counting different kinds of crime portrayed, my concern to problems of stereotypes leads

me to consider which crimes given more focus by the police, justice system and then by the media. Accordingly, more attention has been given to street crimes and violent acts against individuals than property crimes and corporate crimes in ETV's police programs, even though some violent criminal cases were caused by offenders seeking for materials (money) to survive. It is also argued that the news media might distort official knowledge of crime by overemphasizing violent crime and underemphasizing property crime. Most of crimes which extensively covered were crime of murder.

The extensive coverage of such crime drives public reaction as well as what (Hall et. al, 1978) commented, the discrepancy between crime and what has been perceived as crime. The way the producers construct story of murder appears to be the same, but comparing to other crimes covered, serious attention has been on the crime of murder.

However, the producers of these programs argue that, they tend to focus on all types of crimes. They say: *"of course, there is a tendency towards violent crimes against human beings, peace and security. But, it is not a deliberate action"*. They claim that they do not intentionally choose street crimes committed by lower classes. However, they admit that to the audiences, it may seem to be street crimes because they cover most of the time mugging, deceptions, murders and rapes based on the concern and risk they draw to the society and the social situation. But, there are deceptions committed to get money even in the corporations and institutions (for example, bank) that were portrayed. What can be admitted according to the producers is that because of the time limit within the newsroom, they have no an opportunity to cover complicated crimes of corruption. But, focusing on street crimes because of this reason can create an experience of defining crime limiting to street crimes which is a stereotype.

On the other hand, they have weak connection to Federal Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (FEACC). A corruption investigated by Anti-Corruption Commission is complicated and has a long chain; it is hard to follow up to produce and disseminate for the audience within their time frame. But, they say that there is a situation in which they produce the case investigated by the Commission when they think that the event has something for the audience. Additionally, they state that they may make contact of them to cover such corporate corruptions in the future. The main point is that the producers admit that they do not cover much complicated corporate crimes but it is not a purposeful action to make the difference between the types of crimes (street crimes and corporate crimes). Rather, it is a failure of their systems. They also admit that it has a political implication, which demands the attention by the police program.

Marx identifies social classes according to the predominant structural characteristics of their modes of production or economic systems. Therefore, individuals represented as criminals in violent crimes can be categorized under lower class society. This is because most of the causes of violent crimes committed were by individuals who seek to gain money or any other kinds of benefits. Moreover, street crimes are crimes that are committed by low income society. We can relate this to the idea of (Briggs and Cogley, 2002) which argues that stereotyping is a process of selection, magnification and reduction. Hence, as a result of selection of street crime to portray, property crime and white-collar crimes are reduced and street crimes are magnified.

Consequently, portrayals of crimes based on such differences, and absence of corporate crimes coverage, and the labeling of this lower class as criminals results in stereotyping and criminalization of certain groups along lines of gender, age and class. The concept of binary

opposition can be applied to analyze stereotypical representations. By binary opposition, the meaning of something depends on its opposite (Fourie, 2001). The argument of Wykes (2001) which states that 'crime news mobilizes the extremes of value judgment' is also crucial since stereotypes result from such judgments.

For instance, those lower classes who commit the street crimes obtain their meaning as a result of the presence of crimes committed by upper and middle classes which can be white-collar crimes committed in different institutions and organizations. The focus on the street crimes and ignorance of corporate crimes tend to generate the meaning of evilness to the lower classes and goodness to the middle and upper classes.

Therefore, in terms of what Fourie (2001) commented as stereotypes came to be seen as an avoidable part of media representations, it can be proved that realities in the representation of crime, criminals and victims are distorted realities that the value judgments of criminality based primarily on the nature of crime and social differences rather than the legal basis. It can also be seen in terms of what McKee (2001) argues in Hartley (2002) that 'it is constructive to understand stereotypes as reflecting a dominant mode of representation rather than seeking to judge them on their accuracy'.

Over generalization of the problems of street crimes as the most troubles to the society, and in contrast paying little or no attention to cover corporate crimes can reflect the dominant mode of representation that those who are working in the public institutions are generally good. This kind of representation works to favor not only for the criminals in such institutions, but for the general political situation of the country. It is similar to what

(Monamodi, 2009) suggests that 'stereotypes are essentially social constructions just as media representations'.

As a result, the public understands those middle classes who work in public institutions as 'good' and those lower classes as 'evils'. Therefore, to avoid stereotypical representations in this case, equal opportunity should be given to uncover crimes committed at different levels by different social classes.

#### **4.9. Ideological orientations of representations of Crime: Marxist Analysis**

In this part, the ideological significance of representations of crime in news and other narrative stories were analyzed using Marxist analysis. These ideological values of the portrayals are going to be examined with respect to Marxist theories discussed in this study. Therefore, points that semiotically not better construct Marxist view of ideology in the representations are subjected to Marxist analysis.

#### **4.10. The Ideology of Crime news and narrative production**

Before discussing the ideological interest that exists in crime news of ETV's police program, it is important to first notice the circumstances at which such ideological contents come into being in crime news stories. It is already mentioned that the sources attributed to crime news at different levels were police officers and courtroom reports. This helps to produce stories with ideological interest of these detectors.

From the Althusserian theory of the notion of ISA by which the ruling class influences people's behaviors and thoughts, media is mainly used to influence the meaning of criminal events and to spread ideologies of the ruling class to the community. According to Althusser,

police is one of the RSA who work to influence people's behavior to propagate social conformity (Fourie, 2001) and (Williams, 2003). This is a reality that is evident in the ETV's crime stories in using police force and courts to change criminal's behavior through punishments, thorough investigation of crime and through control policies. Members of police officers, acting as journalists and providing a room for some events and ignoring some other issues mean that the news is constructed with ideological position that exist within police (who is acting as journalist) mind.

The issue of illegal emigration is an example on which police construct stories as to prevent it paying no attention to the broader legal framework through which solution should have been provided. The point is that the emigrants should have been given a life choice in their country. Hence, if the police as one governmental institution because of the political structure that relates police to the ruling class determines how the issue would be constructed, we can simply proof Marx's argument in (Williams, 2003) that the ideas of the ruling class are, in every age, the ruling ideas. This is because the media by which the police determines what should be worth reporting and why, is owned by government in which police reproduce its dominant intellectual force by determining newsworthy issues of crime in collaboration with court officials.

Police officer is an individual who acts in a certain way in public institution. The state owns means of production (media) by which police as journalists' are engaged in meaning making, defining newsworthy events of crime for the society. This can be seen from Gramsci's hegemonic point of view. The hegemonic power of the police seem to be reflected when the police acts as source, determining what is worth reporting and shaping the meaning it constructs for consumers thereby winning the consents of the public in general, and

criminals/victims in particular. Ruling groups have an advantage of closing meanings because they have the necessary power (Williams, 2003). As a result, they become circulators of dominant ideology which is already argued by the proposers of hegemony theory.

There would be an ideological interest in the selection of events to be covered. For instance, because some of the sources of news for these reporters are cases passed through criminal justice process, the news angles and values of the event is going to be determined and framed by the court that verdict upon the criminal. For instance, the news value of the event might depend on the punishment of the criminal which depends on the seriousness of the violence. Therefore, police officers and the courts in determining what should be crime news facilitates for them to construct their own ideology and attitude towards crime and control of crime.

On the other hand, the court is a representative of an institution which operates under some political condition in a country. Therefore, if the criminal is punished for crime related to political cases, the punishment may depend on the ideological interest of the court towards politics, and so for determining the newsworthiness of the event because of these ideological problems within individuals. At this time, no one is able to determine the public interest itself regarding the story which may result in instigating serious common political pressures in the community.

In addition to acting as the source of the news, the issues that are covered in the news stories do not only represent the work of police officers and their ideology towards crime and control. Rather the story is furnished with the ideology of 'nationwide political, social and

economical issues' which frames the issues about the work of police officers in controlling crime relating to its significance for national socio-economical and political development.

The working ideology that is transmitted to the public as crime control strategy is connecting criminal acts to the consequence and the risk of crime. Making the community aware of the risks and as a result everyone can participate to control crime, and then keeping peace and security for sustainable development. Therefore, there is an ideology of initiating huge number of Ethiopians through mass media to make them participate on national issues. Thus, it is the strategy they use to win public consent to stand on behalf of them or the 'government' in the process of crime control.

The Gramscian conception of ideology as a struggle between ideas (Williams, 2003) or the idea which stress individual's intensification and response to the society and culture they live in become meaningful when, as they put it, "*it is not a time for everyone to join criminals, or behave according to them, rather it is a time to work for a country's development and once own benefit*". This is a way of either persuading the public, thereby gaining public will. The ideology produced through the response of the society to the statement made by police forces is therefore, the ideology produced from the struggle in ideas between the police and the society.

If the community accepts and do all what the police officers say, there is no room for acts of violence or crime. This can also make the socio-political environment more conducive for sustainability of the working political structure in the country. Hence, one can understand that the ideology which is being articulated in this case is not only the ideology of crime and control which is police officers as one public institution, is always responsible for, but it is an

ideology that loaded from the above, from the government's political interest using police station as one of its political structures, and the mass media to spread the ideology to the society.

As a result, the hegemonic role of media as an expression of elite interests is reflected. The events are report of reality that determined and dependent on police officers and court officials. For this reason, 'reality' is shaped by the production processes of news organizations and the structural determinants of news-making (that is police officers or courts in ERTA's case) who may shape the image of crime, criminals in the minds of the public. This is also evident in reporting crimes that have been solved and resulted in a conviction.

Additionally, their generalization of crime, criminal cases and risks of crime to general political situation of the country, especially to the working socio-economic policies of the government than simply focusing on reports of criminal cases, assisted the government to preserve its political philosophy emphasizing on the view-points favorable to the status quo. Police represented as a powerful way out to crime problems in the media. The media is used to construct the routines of police officers regarding crime control, even though there were other strategies of crime control.

By crime control policies, it is emphasized that in the portrayals, the success of the police in controlling crime as it resulted from the policies and strategies of the current government, and the implementation of the policies as it resulted from cooperation with the public. While the government sets out policies, the community represented as one of the bodies that participate in the implementation of the policies cooperating with police officers and courts. Hence, it can be regarded a system of winning approval of the public to control crime and

claiming to acknowledge the policies. Changing the behavior of criminals would be related to what Althusser argued that all ideology functions to constitute individuals as subjects, which is a social construction, not a natural one (Fourie, 2003). This is mainly because the process by which individuals labeled as criminals and subjected to change their behavior is a social construct, that it is a social and cultural expression of the behavior. Additionally, codes and conventions in the society are important factors for the behavior to be marked as a criminal behavior.

However, these representations of events of crime may not appear to be a conscious attempt to present the political ideology of the ruling class. The situations and the angles in which the stories framed intentionally or unintentionally presented from the general political points of view as well as from the national capability to control crime. For example, the police forces contribution and success in keeping peace and security at the time of international meetings in Addis Ababa by different African leaders was emphasized(e.g. program transmitted on February, 4/2012). There was an expression that states *“today’s addition of the work on peace and security on important duties accomplished by Ethiopians regarding the African Union in the past has brought a spirit of peace and security in the country”*. The other sentence reads as *“though we are working day and night, and the work of police seems difficult, we are satisfied because we prevent crime and so no feeling of exhaustion”*.

Therefore, we can sense the intentional construction of police image or success and/unintentional representations of ideologies towards political situation in the country (Ethiopia). It can be related to what Hall argues in (Morley and Chen, 1996) which states that Ideology is a struggle to articulate the position of ‘leadership’ within the social formation.

Hence, it is a struggle for winning approval of political stability by making people understand the situation of peace and security.

In addition, what can be an important example of emphasizing the current political situations in relation to crime portrayal is how criminals in prison were represented in the media. In their program (January, 15/2012), there was a sense of comparing the situations and treatments for people in prison that has been experienced during the military regime with the EPRDF government. The opportunity of getting formal education, trainings in different skills represented as important experience of EPRDF government. But in their whole expressions, they tend to refer to the past and condemn the military regime's policies. They claim that in the past political situations people in prison have been suffering from different hardships because of weak legal policies to protect human rights.

In the contrary, prison houses in EPRDF represented as an important place where individuals in prison learn a lot and change their behavior from being there. So, they believe that criminals arrested for a number of years in prison might use their experience and skills they acquired in prison to change their future life. It is the idea or a rule of rehabilitations of criminals which is encouraged by the law. Doing so, they tend to give the opportunity for criminals to speak on behalf of themselves to give opinions about acts of crime as well as how they live in prison.

Therefore, it seems to serve the police and courts ideology when criminals by themselves speak that no one criminal can be above the law or get out of control committing whatever criminal act on individuals. At this point, we can share what Hall argued in (Morley and Chen, 1996) that ideological statements are made by individuals in prison, however it might

not be resulted from their consciousness or intention, but it is formulated within ideology of the body that regulates the prison houses and used individuals in prison to make meaning to the outside public.

Similar to this, Berger (2000) explains Marxist critic of the media which states that ‘many people in the media do not recognize the extent to which their messages contain ideological content’. The reality is that while giving their opinion about the prison houses, people in the prison might be conscious of their ideology about the conditions in the prison but unconscious of the ideology they are reproducing about the wide political arena.

Generally, the portrayals of their routines, and their codes and conventions, and how they construct crime stories, from the process of speculations to the investigation and criminal justice system merely fashion the news and narratives clear and meaningful ideological position of the government. The police investigative success on cases of crime, the community participation in supporting the investigation and the results of all the processes regarded as signifiers of situated political conditions that assisted the process to be flourishing. This can be a systematic favoring for the government to extend its political ideology.

Finally, to know about how far such messages with ideological interests of some groups can influence the receivers (audience) of the message, we need to think about the audiences literacy level, maturity and experience in relation to what Hall(Laughy,2007) argues with three categories of decoding messages containing ideologies. Adoption of the dominant ideologies, negotiated ideologies and disagreement with the ideologies depends on the nature of the audiences which needs further study.

Therefore, in relation to Hall's preferred reading (Rose, 2001) which states ideologies become preferred reading when they are interpreted by audiences cannot be proved using textual analysis. But as a matter of simplification, it is important to see with the idea of Bauer and Gaskell (2000) which states an act of reading a text or an image is constructive process. Reading or viewing images of crimes can also be a constructive process because it depends on the audience's interpersonal interaction with such images.

## **Chapter Five: Conclusion and Implications**

This chapter presents conclusion of the study with key findings. After that, it forwards implications for future studies.

### **5.1. Conclusion**

The study was conducted on representation of crime and justice in media (television) focusing on the Ethiopian television's police program. It examined how criminals, victims, police as well as issues related to policing presented with objective of exploring what meanings and ideological leanings could be presumed from such representations.

Qualitative research was employed on the bases of textual analysis, using semiotic analysis and Marxist analysis as analytical tools of collected texts. Semi-structured interview was used to support the interpretations of information gathered from the texts.

Accordingly, using convenience and purposive sampling strategies, twelve (12) hour weekly stories of ETV's police program which were transmitted within the first seven months (from October 2011 to March 2012) were collected. Two informants from producers of the story were also interviewed.

Depending on the methodological approaches used, the researcher examined different texts collected based on the analytical categories that include types of stories, focus of the story, types and nature of crime events portrayed, presentation of the stories, the subject matter of the stories, the ideological values of the stories and implications of the portrayals.

Stories were critically examined in relation to their images or using images as a sign and their meaning based on how they are used to construct realities of crime and justice. Such analysis of different images has showed the semiotic significance of crime stories and the meaning that they construct in the community. The ideological orientations of representations were also analyzed with particular reference to how detectors tend to control crime and how they used to treat criminals and victims.

Consequently, the findings revealed that the ETV's police program focused on the presentation of different crime events such as crime of burglary, mugging or robbery, murder, deceptions, pouring of acid on human bodies, crime of rapes and fraud (deception). These different crimes are occupied in news and narrative stories. Sources of the stories are police and courtrooms. There are selection criteria for news stories and these criteria are connected mostly to the nature of crime and criminals. The society's cultures and norms are also considered in the presentation of some crimes. Moreover, news stories of crimes on the process of investigation and trials in the courtroom seem to be constructed by different people, because crimes are committed in the community and realities are constructed within that community which makes crime stories a social construct.

Semiotically, these different kinds of crimes are analyzed using different sign systems and appeared to generate different possible meanings. The stories are constructed and presented using various signs and images. Images of criminals and victims, as well as police (policing) and justice systems presented revealed comprehensive meanings. From images analyzed for meaning, the researcher has attached different denotations and connotations to the signs used in the construction of the stories. Moreover, the researcher applied different systems of analysis and these sign systems generated different way of looking at images of crimes.

Some criminals appear on television while they are on trial in the courtroom and sometimes the producers use their photograph. Victims are also portrayed by their photograph. Especially, photograph of the dead victims are used in the narration of murders which helps to identify who the victims are. Image of some properties snatched or stolen portrayed on television are analyzed. These images and signs are interpreted as signifiers of different concepts in crime stories. Their iconic, indexical and symbolic values are examined in relation to how they are used in the stories as well as some unique meanings more than what was intended. Some images and signs are used to deceive people and analyzed in terms of Umberto Eco's notion of 'signs and truth' which gives insights on how signs are used to lie.

Therefore, by using Saussure's "signifier and signified" and Peirce's "triadic model" (icon, index, symbol), the images used in the production of crime stories are interpreted in terms of their values and reality that could be constructed from such images. In the portrayals of police as detectors of crime in stories and issues of policing, some images and signs are interpreted as symbols of power and to have ideological significance.

The interpretations also examined the public reaction to crime within the stories in terms of the moral panic they generate to the public. Hence, comments on different crime events were examined and interpreted in relation to what literatures claim about the issue of the moral panic. Especially, crime stories of murder and robbery attracted the community attention in which fear of crime is reflected more. Stereotypical representations in line with ages, gender and criminal class are also revealed.

In line with the language (expressions) used, the researcher interpreted the way police program is constructed to represent the ideological value of the police and the government. In

this case, presentations of police routines, their policies and strategies of crime control which includes the community appeared to have ideological significance.

Moreover, Marxist analysis which is especially applied to detectors or police and policing, and justice system, mainly the way media is used to control and prevent crime revealed different ideological interests with especial focus on hegemonic role of the media. Thus, the interpretations show that there are situations at which the media is used to shape and control meaning thereby presenting the detectors ideological interest which is important for the working political structure to sustain.

## **5.2. Implications**

Representations of crime and justice in Ethiopian television have some implications. First, since the sources of news or all narrative stories are police officers and courtroom officials, the stories are subjected to selection, evaluation and sometimes rejection of these detectors than journalists or police practicing journalism. This causes the ideological position of the detectors to prevail.

Second, the variations in the portrayals of criminal images, the absence and presence of images in the construction of crime as well as the re-constructions of some stories distort the meaning of crime and the reality of the actual event. The use of images in the production of different stories when it is only possible to access, and presenting others without images gives emphasis to some issues of crime while patronizing some of the issues.

Third, the use of different images of criminals, victims, and police and courtroom officials and properties facilitates the opportunity of generating different possible meanings using the images as signs. Police response to crime, criminals' behavior, victims' level of victimization

and the power relations in the process are issues that could be interpreted by the use of such signs.

Lastly, crime representations are more likely to drive public reaction which generates moral panic. Hence, producers should consider the problem while they construct and present crime stories. The problems of stereotypes in representations also need particular attentions since they cause social difference.

Such implications need particular attention to give to issues of crime and media especially by those who are engaged with production and portrayals of crime stories. Therefore, this study is not an end by itself. Crime is the concern of every state since it has political, social and economic impact. The technological developments in the future may cause different complicated crimes to happen. Issues of crime and media will always subsist and appear to require investigators who want to study on how the media should be used to prevent and control crime in general, and to detect the criminals in particular.

Moreover, with the development of technology, the complexity of crime will increase, and this demands technologically equipped police investigation force. In relation to the way media should react to control and prevent crime, it is difficult to say this or that. However, within the complicated nature of crime it is more likely complicated nature of media representations of crimes to appear. As a result, the police members who are acting as a journalist should take care of their decisions particularly on how to construct the realities about issues of crime.

Further, different concepts about crime and media, criminals and victims, police and policing and justice systems are revealed. Different impressions and knowledge are produced from

interpretations of such representations. However, these concepts and knowledge produced invite researchers for other studies. Issues of representations in relation to crime need further research because researchers, using the same or another methodological approach may find new possible realities.

To the end, further research should also follow in relation to the investigation of the role of media in crime control and prevention. In our country Ethiopia, study of audience's behavior particularly, how they use crime stories in the media, how they react to crimes, and particularly, how much they can negotiate messages of the media which carries detector's ideological interest should be included in the future studies.

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## Appendices

### Appendix, A

#### Images of different crime stories Analyzed



(1)



(2)



(3)



(4)



(5)



(6)



(7)



(8)



(9)



(10)



(11)



(12)



(13)



(14)



(15)



(16)



(17)



(18)



(19)



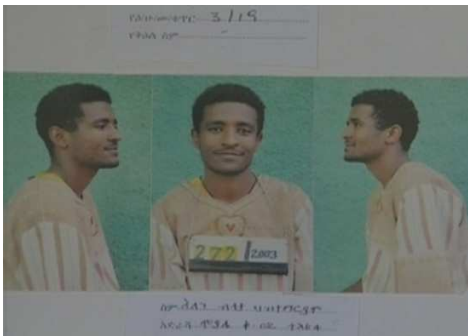
(20)



(21)



(22)



(23)



(24)

## Appendix B

### Interview Guide for the ERTA's Police Program Producers

1. Why you are concerned about criminal events or what is the objective of the portrayals of criminal events? What role do the media play regarding the control of crime?
2. What are the sources of crime news for police programs?
3. What are the criteria you use in the selection of news events? What are your newsworthy elements to decide what is to be covered?
4. Does the police program portray events of crime on investigation; or only cases that has been solved? If so, how realities about problems on the process of investigations are constructed?
5. What kinds of crime do you focus on to report? There are deficiencies in covering property crimes and corporate crimes; and my inquiry on texts shows that there is a temptation to cover street crimes and violent crimes against human beings, why is that?
6. In most of the news events, there are stories about the significance of community policing as crime control strategy in Ethiopia; what is community policing? Why is it important?
7. Some stories do not have images of both criminals and victims or either of the two; don't you think that the absences of images to support the stories affect the truthfulness of the event or how realities are constructed?
8. Some stories narrate events of crime that happened long time in the past; how do you construct such stories? Don't you believe that the reconstruction of events distort the actual realities?

9. In representations of images of criminals and victims in television, how much do you think that criminals and victims with respect to the cases of crimes, their age, and gender and class difference, are equally treated?
10. What do you think about the reaction of the people to events of crime? Don't you think that the images project a sense of insecurity, anxiety to them?
11. In the stories, there are some similar events of crime for which criminals were treated (punished) differently in the criminal justice system; what do you think about the proportionality of punishment to their criminal action?
12. In some events (e.g. illegal human trafficking) portrayed, there is no significant response to the crimes by police and justice system? Why? And what is the media's policy to react to such problems?

Appendix, C

List of informants

No .	Name of informant	Sex	Position	Nationality	Date of interview
I	Mokonen Gartew (Deputy commander)	M	Police program producer, editor and coordinator	Ethiopian	April, 10/2013
II	Daniel Damtew (Deputy commander)	M	Police program producer and presenter	Ethiopian	April, 10/2013

## Appendix, D

### Dates of transmission and codes of programs analyzed and the issues focused in the programs

1. September, 25/2011(ESR, 317: B).
  - Stories about illegal human trafficking, crime of murder, crime of deceptions, and crime of rape were focused.
2. October, 2/2011(ESR, 317: C)
  - Stories of meetings of police officials, about selection of new police members for training, news about federal police sport club
3. October, 23/2011(ESR, 317:F)
  - Stories related to police trainings, crime of theft, crime of using chemical to attack, crime of murder, about the Ethiopian federal police and public discussion with police
4. October, 30/2011(ESR, 317: G)
  - Stories on police training, crime of theft, police discussion with the community, crime of acidic chemical spray and crime of murder were focused.
5. November, 13/2011(ESR, 317: I)
  - Stories on issues related to police and policing including trainings on community policing, crime stories related to murder, fraud (deception), burglary, different activities of Ethiopian police University College, graduation of trained police and their images, crime of spraying acidic chemical.
6. November, 20/2011(ESR, 317:J)

- Stories on police training on controlling female victimization and gender equality, crime of rape, crime of theft, training on community policing,
7. December, 11/2011(ESR, 317: N)
- Stories related to police and their activities
8. December, 25/2011(ESR, 317: P)
- Stories about people in prison, Ethiopian Police University College, crime of theft, illegal human trafficking, crime of murder, crime of theft.
9. January, 15/2012(ESR, 317: S)
- Stories on police training, crime of fraud, Chemical attack, on prison house, illegal human trafficking.
10. February, 4/2012(ESR, 317: U)
- Stories related to keeping security during internal meetings by African Union were extensively narrated.
11. February, 19/2012(ESR,317 :W)
- Crime of theft, illegal immigration and crime of robbery were extensively narrated.
12. March, 4/2012(ESR, 317: Y)
- Stories on police training, training of people on community policing, crime of murder, fraudulent.

**\*ESR, 317 is code given to police program in ERTA Audio-visual library**