Unravelling the gift of the Nile

Examining the domestic and international determinants of Ethiopian counter-hegemony in the Eastern Nile River basin

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King's College London

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ABSTRACT

This thesis challenges the mainstream analyses of hydro-political relations in the Eastern Nile River Basin by providing a more nuanced understanding of the role of power in the management and allocation of water resources. It is argued, in recent years, that the established hegemonic order on the Nile which is underpinned by asymmetric power relations, has been contested through a variety of counter-hegemonic strategies deployed within the Basin. Through an examination of the domestic and international factors which have influenced Ethiopia's contestation of Egyptian hydro-hegemony, this study provides insights into the processes of counter-hegemony and the options available for non-hegemonic riparians attempting to challenge the consolidated control of water resources in transboundary river basins. Additionally, this approach will help reveal how the positions adopted by the other Eastern Nile riparians – Sudan and Egypt – have changed in response to the contestation of the hydro-hegemonic status quo.

Power and hegemony, as conceptualised by International Political Economy and Neo-Gramscian authors, are the essential ideational backbones of the analytical framework which informs this research. In this regard, the Framework of Hydro-Hegemony (Zeitoun and Warner 2006), which asserts that asymmetric power relations represent the cornerstone of the analysis of hydro-political relations, is of particular importance to this study. Building on the work of Warner (2008) and Zeitoun *et al.* (2011) on critical transboundary hydro-politics, the research expands on the Framework of Counter-Hegemony (Cascão 2009b) by identifying and examining the two-level game (Putnam 1988) being pursued by the EPRDF-led Ethiopian government to contest Egyptian hydro-hegemony on the Nile. The analysis of the domestic and international determinants driving Ethiopian counter-hegemony in the Eastern Nile offers an original contribution to the study of hydro-political relations in the Basin. It also provides new knowledge on the dynamics of domestic water governance in Ethiopia and its relationship to issues of state-building, nationalism and development. Specifically, the study will provide insights on the ongoing construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) in western Ethiopia, a 'game-changing' hydraulic development in the Eastern Nile Basin.

KEYWORDS: Counter-hegemony, Ethiopia, GERD, Hydro-politics, Nile, Transboundary Rivers, Two-Level Game

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LIST OF ACRONYMS, ABBREVIATIONS & TERMS

(ACA)	Interviewees from Academia (in the citations to interviews)
(BIS)	Interviewees from Business (in citations to interviews)
(GOV)	Interviewees from Government (in citations to interviews)
(MED)	Interviewees from the Media (in citations to interviews)
(RO)	Interviewees from Regional Organisations (in citations to interviews)
Abbay	Ethiopian name for the Blue Nile River
AFD	Agence Française de Développement
AfDB	African Development Bank
AIIB	Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
ANDM	Amhara National Democratic Movement
ANDP	Afar National Democratic Party
Art.	Legal or Legislative Article
AU	African Union
AVA	Awash Valley Authority (Est. 1962)
AVDA	Awash Valley Development Authority (Est. 1977)
Baro-Akobo	Ethiopian tributaries of the Sobat River
BCM	Billion cubic metres of water
BGPDUF	Benishangul/Gumuz Peoples Democratic Unity Front
BNVO	Blue Nile Valley Organisation
BPLM	Benishangul Peoples Liberation Movement
CFA	Nile Basin Cooperative Framework Agreement
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement between Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement
CRGE	Climate Resilient Green Economy Strategy
D3	Project which went on to become the Cooperative Framework Agreement
Derg	Military regime which governed Ethiopia from 1974 – 1991
DFID	UK Department for International Development
DOP	Declaration of Principles on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (2015)
EAPP	East African Power Pool
EEP	Ethiopian Electric Power
EEPCO	Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation (officially split in 2013)
EEU	Ethiopian Electric Utility
EFTCA	Egyptian Fund for Technical Cooperation with Africa
ENSAP	Eastern Nile Subsidiary Action Program
ENTRO	Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office
EPA	Environmental Protection Authority

EPLF	Ethiopian Peoples Liberation Front
EPRDF	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front
ESPDP	Ethiopian Somali People's Democratic Party
EVDSA	Ethiopian Valleys Development Study Authority
EWRM	Ethiopian Water Resources Management Policy (1999)
FANSS	Ethiopia's Foreign Affairs and National Security Strategy
FDRE	The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
Fetha Negast	Ancient Ethiopian legal code for administration of justice within church and state
FHH	Framework of Hydro-Hegemony developed by Mark Zeitoun and Jeroen Warner
Finfinne	Alternate name for Addis Ababa
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GERD	Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (formerly known as Millennium Dam)
GHDs	Global Hydro-Hegemonic Discourses
GPDM	Gambella People's Democratic Movement
GTP I/II	Growth and Transformation Plans of Ethiopia
GWh	Gigawatt Hours
GWP	Global Water Partnership
Ha	Hectares
HAD	High Aswan Dam
Halayib Triangle	Contested territory on the Egyptian-Sudanese border
HNL	Harari National League
Hydromet	Hydro-meteorological Survey of the Equatorial Lakes
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICCON	International Consortium for Cooperation on the Nile
ICCON	International Cooperation Consortium on the Nile
ICOLD	International Commission on Large Dams
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority for Development
IPE	International Political Economy
IPoE	International Panel of Experts tasked with assessing impacts of GERD
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
JMP	Joint Multipurpose Program
LWRG	London Water Research Group
MEF	Ministry of Environment and Forestry
METEC	Metals and Engineering Corporation
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MNRDEP	Ministry of Natural Resources Development and Environmental Protection
MoWIE	Ministry of Water Resources, Irrigation and Electricity (formerly Energy) of Ethiopia
MoWR	Ministry of Water Resources of Ethiopia (1996 – 2010)
MW	Megawatts

NBI	Nile Basin Initiative
NBTF	Nile Basin Trust Fund
NDRP	National Democratic Revolution Programme (1976)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NWRC	National Water Resources Commission (Est. 1971)
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OLF	Oromo Liberation Front
ONLF	Ogaden National Liberation Front
OPDO	Oromo People's Democratic Organisation
NELSAP	Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Programme
PASDEP	Plan for Accelerated and Sustainable Development to End Poverty
PDO	People's Democratic Organisations
PDRE	People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
PMAC	Provisional Military Administrative Council
PMO	Office of the Prime Minister
PTJC	Permanent Technical Joint Committee
RBA	River Basin Authority in Ethiopia
RBHC	River Basin High Councils in Ethiopia
SAP	Subsidiary Action Program
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SDBS	Socioeconomic Development and Benefit Sharing
SEPDM	Southern Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement
SPLA/M	Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement
SVP	Shared Vision Programme
Tecconile	Technical Cooperation Committee for the Promotion of the Development and Environmental Protection of the Nile Basin
Tekeze	Ethiopian name for the Atbara River
TGE	Transitional Government of Ethiopia
TNC	Technical National Committee
TPLF	Tigrayan People's Liberation Front
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Program
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USBR	United States Bureau of Reclamation
VADA	Valleys Agricultural Development Authority (Est. 1977)
WPE	Socialist Workers Party of Ethiopia
WRD	Water Resources Department (1956 – 64)
WSDP	Water Sector Development Programme

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

"The current regime cannot be sustained. It's being sustained because of the diplomatic clout of Egypt. There will come a time when the people of East Africa and Ethiopia will become too desperate to care about these diplomatic niceties. Then they are going to act."

Meles Zenawi (The Columbus Dispatch, 29 May 2010).

Only a year on from this statement, Meles Zenawi broke ground on the third largest hydropower dam in Africa. Simultaneously challenging the long-established downstream status quo on the Nile while asking these riparian states to be partners and beneficiaries of upstream Nile development in Ethiopia. This coexistence of conflict and cooperation has been a striking characteristic in the years which have followed the launch of the GERD (Mirumachi 2015). This dynamic is captured in the Ethiopian proverb, "when the great lord passes, the wise peasant bows deeply, and silently passes wind" (Lukes 2005 [1974]: 125).

The Nile, as with most transboundary water courses, is characterised by complexity. Firstly, it traverses a number of international boundaries and at a length of 6,650km flows through 11 independent countries including Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, Kenya, Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sudan, Egypt (Strategic Foresight Group 2013). Secondly, with the competing demands for water that are inherent in a river basin shared by so many, it is still bereft of a cooperative management agreement between all its riparians. Unfortunately, this situation is all too common around the world, with 158 of the world's 263 international river basins and aquifers without an inclusive management agreement to speak of (Amdetsion 2012).

Thus, it begs the question. In the absence of these agreements on the Nile, how are water resources allocated and who or what factors determine this? This study, as with a growing body of literature on transboundary waters, will argue that power asymmetry remains the principal determining factor in the competition over water resources in shared river basins. However, this asymmetry is not only limited to the balance of power between riparian states but is accordingly represented in the technical control, utilisation and allocation of water resources. Egypt as the hydro-hegemonic power on the Nile, has historically retained consolidated control over the river's water resources, thus allowing it set the rules of the game within the Basin. These rules have resulted in the side-lining of all upstream riparians, in the downstream deal-making that brought about the 1929 and 1959 Nile agreements between Egypt and Sudan.

However, recent developments on the Nile have pointed towards a shift in the traditional configuration of Nile hydropolitics that have favoured the few at the cost of the many. Nicol (2003: 168) captured these shifts in Nile hydropolitics best when he highlighted the "complex and often rapidly increasing demands for access to water by co-riparians". This study will aim to explain the factors that have enabled

downstream riparians to consolidate their control over Nile water resources while also examining the conditions which have facilitated the contestation of this status quo at multiple spatial scales.

As such, the research will critically examine the current and historical role played by asymmetric power relations in the control and contestation of water resources on the Nile. The study will particularly focus on the existence of competing hegemonies at multiple spatial levels within the Nile Basin, which have acted to facilitate the contestation of asymmetric control by upstream riparians. Consequently, the main research question which guides this study is "**How has Ethiopia, a non-hegemonic riparian, attempted to counter Egypt's hegemonic control of transboundary water resources in the Eastern Nile Basin, and what are its goals in challenging this status quo?**"

The following sections of this introduction will briefly review the key scholarly trends in the study of hydropolitics while highlighting the principal conceptual frameworks that will underpin this study. Subsequently, there will be a discussion of the scope of the study as well as an overview of the research questions and sub-questions that the study will aim to address. Finally, the structure of the rest of this thesis will be described on a chapter by chapter basis.

1.2 EXISTING LITERATURE

Much of the literature on transboundary water relations in the Nile Basin has analysed the hydropolitics as a dichotomy of conflict and cooperation. Following the conclusion of the Cold War, debates surrounding environmental crises and water wars came to the fore amongst the international water policy community with arguments linking scarcity and conflict proving particularly popular (Bulloch and Darwish 1993; Gleick *et al*. 1994; Ashton 2000). Hydropolitical literature pointed to the likelihood of 'water wars' in a future where water scarcity ignited armed conflict between states (Naff and Matson 1984). Over the last decade, however, a number of scholars have challenged the 'water war hypothesis' by arguing that water can and should be a catalyst for peace through regional hydropolitical cooperation (Dolatyar 2002; Sadoff and Grey 2002; Yoffe *et al*. 2003). As discussed further in **Chapter 2** the conflict-cooperation dichotomy has received sustained scholarly attention over the last two decades and has until recent years been the *trend du jour*.

The emergence of transboundary water interactions framework has seen the challenging of the traditional conflict-cooperation dichotomy, instead arguing for the coexistence of conflict and cooperation in river basins (Zeitoun and Mirumachi 2008; Mirumachi 2015). This approach, as opposed to the conflict-cooperation dichotomy paradigm which focuses more on the outcomes of hydropolitical relations, lends itself to recent studies that instead examine the process of hydropolitics. In this regard, the transboundary water interactions approach is more aligned with a growing body of work that contends hydraulic control is achieved through power-related strategies and tactics, not conflict (Frey 1993; Lowi 1993; Homer-Dixon 2001; Zeitoun and Warner 2006; Cascão 2008).

This study, drawing on the frameworks of hydro-hegemony and counter-hegemony, accepts that power asymmetry is the main determining factor in competition over transboundary water resources (Zeitoun and Warner 2006; Cascão 2009b). Similarly, the study adopts Gramscian and neo-Gramscian conceptualisations of hegemony and counter-hegemony which support the revelation of the strategies and tactics employed by non-hegemons in their attempts to contest a hydro-hegemonic order. For the purposes of this study, hydro-hegemony is considered hegemony exercised within a river basin (Zeitoun and Warner 2006). Furthermore, the study accepts that hegemony is never static and can be contested and challenged. **Chapter 3** will go into further detail in explaining the concepts of power, hydro-hegemony and counter-hegemony employed within this study.

Within the empirical context, the Nile basin can be described as a political arena within which hydro-hegemony has historically existed and persists to this day. The literature has described how historical hydropolitical relations within the basin have been primarily conflictual but that since the end of the Cold War relations have improved with cooperative engagements across the basin having increased (Cascão 2008). This has culminated, in recent years, in the attempted development of a basin-wide agreement aimed at addressing the asymmetric allocation of water in the Nile Basin once and for all. Although this process was aimed at fostering inclusivity and integration previously unseen in basin-wide cooperative arrangements, it resulted in the rekindling of historical divisions (Warner and Zawahri 2012: 219).

Currently, a group of 6 upstream countries, including Ethiopia, have chosen to go it alone without the involvement of downstream Egypt and Sudan by signing the Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA).

The divisive nature of existing hydropolitical relations within the basin coupled with the looming spectre of climate change has begun to rekindle the 'water wars hypothesis' of days' past (Warner 2012: 177). Additionally, the pressures of increasing population coupled with historic under-investment in the water sector in sub-Saharan Africa has led McCornick *et al.* (2008: 24) to project that "the water sector is likely to face major conflicts between its energy and environmental goals on the one hand and food and livelihood goals on the other". With rising energy costs and global drive to promote renewable energy, the time has never been as ripe for non-hegemonic riparian states to exploit opportunities for hydraulic development, particularly hydropower development.

For Egypt, which has been described as 'the archetypal hydraulic state', heavy dependence on the waters of a single river - in an area known as much for the Sahara as the Nile - necessitated action (Warner 2012: 177). The country's history of mega-projects on the Nile dating back to the pharaohs is reflective of the existence of an early understanding of the symbiotic relationship between hydraulic control and development in Egypt (Twigger 2013). Within this historical context, Egyptian hydro-hegemony in the Nile basin can be better understood as the combination of political leadership, powerful bargaining capacity and the ability to construct and sanction discourses favourable to its position (Cascão 2008).

However, for many upper riparian countries, including Ethiopia, until fairly recently, they neither had the technical capacity, economic means or leverage by which to pursue the development of their water resources. According to Cascão (2008), mainstream water resources literature has a tendency to focus on the status quo by examining how powerful actors consolidate hydraulic control while neglecting the influence of non-hegemonic actors on hydropolitical relations. Consequently, there has been little attention given to the role of non-hegemonic riparians and limited analysis of the contestation of hydro-hegemony within transboundary river basins.

This study, in heeding Sneddon and Fox's (2006) call for a critical hydropolitics and Selby's (2007) appeal to go 'beyond hydro-hegemony', attempts to unpack the hydraulic state, rejecting the idea of the state as a monolith, by focusing on and analysing the multi-actor character of domestic hydropolitics. It will be argued that the majority of scholarship on transboundary water interactions overlooks the conceptual importance of the relationality between domestic politics and international relations. By largely focusing on governmental sources, the research contributes to a more nuanced understanding of the domestic government institutions and elites driving hegemonic processes within transboundary river basins. Particularly, through the empirical case of Ethiopia, a non-hegemonic riparian, whose government is contesting hydro-hegemony within the Eastern Nile Basin at the domestic, regional and international levels, the study will shine a light on the agency of non-hegemonic riparians along transboundary rivers.

By doing so, the study underlines that though weaker riparians may be without power, they are not powerless in their interactions over transboundary waters (Cascão 2009b).

The explicit focus on governmental actors within Ethiopia offers distinct advantages to the research. Firstly, as Ethiopia is currently governed as a developmental state where policy-making and infrastructure planning are directed from the centre of government, an analysis of influential government actors within this system reveals the domestic determinants of the country's hydraulic mission on the Nile. Additionally, a focus on government sources helps uncover not only the domestic, but also the international factors currently influencing the contestation of Egyptian hegemonic control over Nile water resources. Although this approach is largely state-centric, the focus on the state is maintained because of the significant role it plays in imposing dominant ideas and shaping plans for water resources management. Disadvantages of this approach include the inability to uncover insights from below the state, within civil society, where counter-hegemonic actions and movements find their roots. Therefore, in order to account for these limitations, there is some analysis conducted on how governmental action and discourses have been received by non-state actors within the Basin.

1.3 THE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of the research will be limited to the study of the Eastern Nile Basin, the relations between its three principal riparians: Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt and the evolving role of Ethiopia in these relations. Eritrea, though located within the Eastern Nile, plays an insignificant role both in hydrological and hydropolitical terms and will therefore not be considered in as much depth within the study. The choice in geographically limiting the study to the Eastern Nile is justified by the importance of three riparians which inhabit it. Ethiopia supplies the majority of Nile water while Sudan and Egypt are the riparians who most utilise it.

Although the Eastern Nile is considered within this study as the most important sub-basin of the Nile in both hydrological and geopolitical terms, the researcher acknowledges that the majority of the Nile's eleven riparians are found in the Equatorial Nile sub-basin. The research also accepts the varying degrees to which these riparians have impacted the overall hydropolitical state of the Nile Basin.

Although geographically limited, this study, however, takes a thematically multifaceted approach to Nile hydropolitics through the international political economy framework which comingles history, politics, economics and international relations. Such an approach particularly lends itself to the analysis of existing riparian relations on the Nile as these are borne out of the synergistic interplay of the political with the hydrological and the wider impacts of this mingling on the socio-economic and security conditions within the basin. The interplay of these factors, among others, will be more thoroughly unpacked and historicized in chapter 2.

The temporal focus of this study will be limited to the period 1991 – 2016. The timeframe has been chosen in an attempt to properly account for key trends within the Eastern Nile Basin, and more specifically in Ethiopia, which have affected the hydropolitical configuration of the Nile to date. Such developments, to mention but a few, include the coming to power of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), the reconfiguration of the Ethiopian state and launch of its hydraulic mission and the construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). However, this does not mean that there will be no attention paid to events that preceded this timeframe as the researcher recognizes that an examination of the period before 1991 can help put current trends and developments in the Basin into proper historical context.

1.4 THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main research question of this study is – How has Ethiopia, a non-hegemonic riparian, attempted to counter Egypt's hegemonic control of transboundary water resources in the Eastern Nile Basin, and what are its goals in challenging this status quo?

Having established that power relations are the principal determining factor in the competition over transboundary water resources, the study will attempt to uncover the impact of shifting power relations in the Eastern Nile Basin on Ethiopia's access to and utilisation of water resources. The three Eastern Nile riparians all exhibit varying levels of the different dimensions of power, namely material, bargaining and ideational power (as will be explained in Chapters 2) it will be argued that asymmetric power relations motivate the existence of both hydro-hegemony and counter-hegemony within the Basin.

In crafting the subsidiary questions that accompany the main research question, there will be an attempt to account for the domestic and international factors currently determining the strategies and tactics being pursued by the Ethiopian government in its attempts to counter Egyptian hydro-hegemony in the Eastern Nile. This falls in line with the study's explicit focus on governmental actors and their influence on hydraulic decision-making within the Basin discussed earlier. By accounting for the impacts of these two-level factors on hydropolitical relations, these research questions will seek to investigate the dynamics of water interactions between riparian states in transboundary river basins characterised by asymmetric control.

Sub-question A – What domestic hegemonic strategies is the Ethiopian government pursuing in its attempts to access and utilise a greater share of Eastern Nile water resources?

> Sub-question A1 – To what extent do domestic hegemonic strategies and tactics contribute to the control of transboundary water resources?

The Eastern Nile is characterized by an asymmetry in the degree of control that each riparian country exercises over Nile water resources. While Egypt has for a long time enjoyed consolidated control over these resources, Sudan and Ethiopia have considerably less control. In evaluating these research questions, the study will illustrate how domestic factors in Ethiopia and international factors beyond the Basin have hastened the contestation of asymmetric control in the Basin.

Sub-question B – What basin-wide counter-hegemonic strategies and tactics are Ethiopian officials employing in their attempts to challenge Egyptian hegemonic control within the Eastern Nile Basin?

> Sub-question B1 – How has Ethiopia been historically impacted by Egyptian hydro-hegemony in the Nile Basin?
>
> Sub-question B2 – To what extent do basin-wide counter-hegemonic strategies and tactics contest Egyptian asymmetric control of Nile water resources within the Basin?

Sub-question C – How has the Ethiopian government deployed discursive power regionally in support of its construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam along the Blue Nile?

> Sub-question C1 – How have Ethiopian officials amplified and promoted alternative discourses, within the Basin, in support of upstream hydraulic development?
>
> Sub-question C2 - To what extent does the discursive power legitimise the unilateral construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam by the Ethiopian Government?

This research has been conducted at a time in the Eastern Nile Basin when hydropolitical relations between its riparians have been tested over the construction of the GERD. With many surprised by the launching of the GERD project in 2011, this research is timely in its investigation of the factors which are currently motivating the contestation of the hydro-hegemony within the Basin. The two-level analysis of Ethiopian counter-hegemony deployed as part of this research, in the testing of these research questions, has contributed to the growing body of literature on the agency of non-hegemonic riparians in transboundary river basins characterised by power asymmetry. The study has analysed this competition within the context of the interaction of hegemonic processes contributing to the coexistence of conflict and cooperation within the Eastern Nile Basin.

1.5 STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

The thesis is divided into three main parts comprising seven chapters, excluding the present introduction. The chapters and their purposes within the scope of the research are briefly described below.

PART 1 - BACKGROUND

Chapter 2 reviews the relevant literature on the hydropolitics of the Eastern Nile basin as well as the wider scholarly debates surrounding transboundary water relations in general. The chapter provides an overview of the hydrology of the basin as well as the asymmetry that characterises how the river has been controlled, utilised and allocated. Finally, by deploying a thematic approach to the review of the literature on the basin's hydropolitical developments over time, the chapter highlights how contending schools of thought have attempted to explain the history of changing riparian relations on the Nile.

PART 2 - FRAMEWORKS

Chapter 3 introduces the theoretical frameworks and principal concepts that help address the report's research questions also presented herein. The conceptual building blocks of this study include power, hegemony and counter-hegemony, which are concepts central to the existing frameworks of hydro-hegemony and counter-hegemony. Following a discussion of these frameworks, the chapter presents a more critical approach to hydropolitical analysis which accounts for the domestic and international factors motivating Ethiopia's contestation of Egyptian hydro-hegemonic control in the Eastern Nile Basin. The research will not attempt at theory-building but instead will apply the framework of counter-hegemony with the logic of the two-level game to the empirical case of Ethiopia.

Chapter 4 discusses the study's methodological framework and explores the research approaches employed in the study. It discusses the main research method – elite interviews – as well as highlighting the importance of triangulation and reflexivity and identifying the limitations of the methods chosen to test the research questions. It concludes by detailing the timeframes and outcomes of the activities conducted during the various research phases between September 2013 and September 2017.

PART 3 – ANALYTICAL CHAPTERS

Chapter 5 analyses the domestic politics of hydraulic development on the Ethiopian Nile. The chapter begins by examining domestic state-building in Ethiopia, in relation to the centralisation and modernisation agendas pursued by successive governments in the country's modern history. The second part of the chapter examines the hydraulic mission on the Ethiopian Nile – identifying the domestic actors currently advancing it - and its role in the formation and development of the state. Finally, the chapter analyses the domestic hegemony of the GERD project, linking the Government's current pursuit of hydraulic state-building in Ethiopia to its wider contestation of hydro-hegemony in the Eastern Nile Basin.

Chapter 6 investigates Ethiopia's changing position in the hydropolitics of the Eastern Nile Basin. The chapter begins by reviewing the history of downstream hydro-hegemony on the Nile, including the

strategies and tactics the hegemonic order has deployed in its efforts to maintain its position and thwart Ethiopian attempts at utilising Nile water resources. The chapter then goes on to extensively review Ethiopia's contestation of this hydro-hegemony on the Nile, thereby identifying the relationship between its contestation at the Basin-level and its domestic and international political economy.

Chapter 7 provides a critical analysis of the debate surrounding the GERD project on the Blue Nile, exploring how the exercise of 'soft' power by the Ethiopian government is reshaping the physical allocation and utilisation of transboundary water resources in the Eastern Nile. The chapter analyses how Ethiopian officials have leveraged global hydro-hegemonic discourses to justify the construction of the GERD transnationally in the face of regional and international controversy. The chapter concludes by highlighting how the interaction of these discourses at various levels has contributed to Ethiopia's pursuit of counter-hegemony.

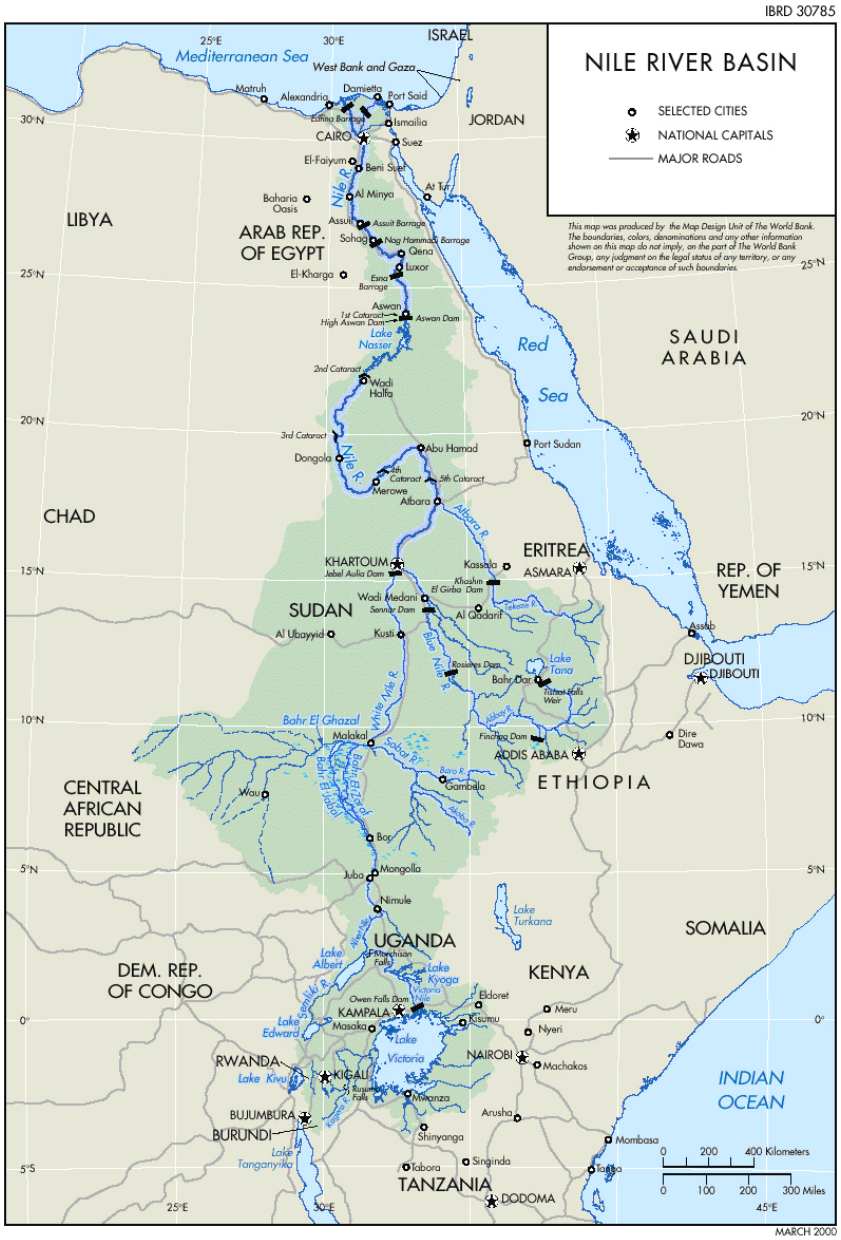
Chapter 8 concludes the thesis, providing the conceptual contributions that the research makes, examining the key findings in relation to the research questions. The chapter also highlights the main limitations of the study, thereby identifying potential opportunities for future research in the area.

2 ASYMMETRY IN THE EASTERN NILE BASIN

2.1 THE HYDROLOGY AND WATER RESOURCES OF THE EASTERN NILE

The Nile River basin is arguably one of the most complex hydrological systems in the world. Meandering through eleven riparian countries – Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, Kenya, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, Eritrea, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Sudan and Egypt – before emptying into the Mediterranean Sea. It is widely referred to as one of the world's longest river (UNEP 2010)[1].

Figure 1 - The Nile River Basin (World Bank 2000)

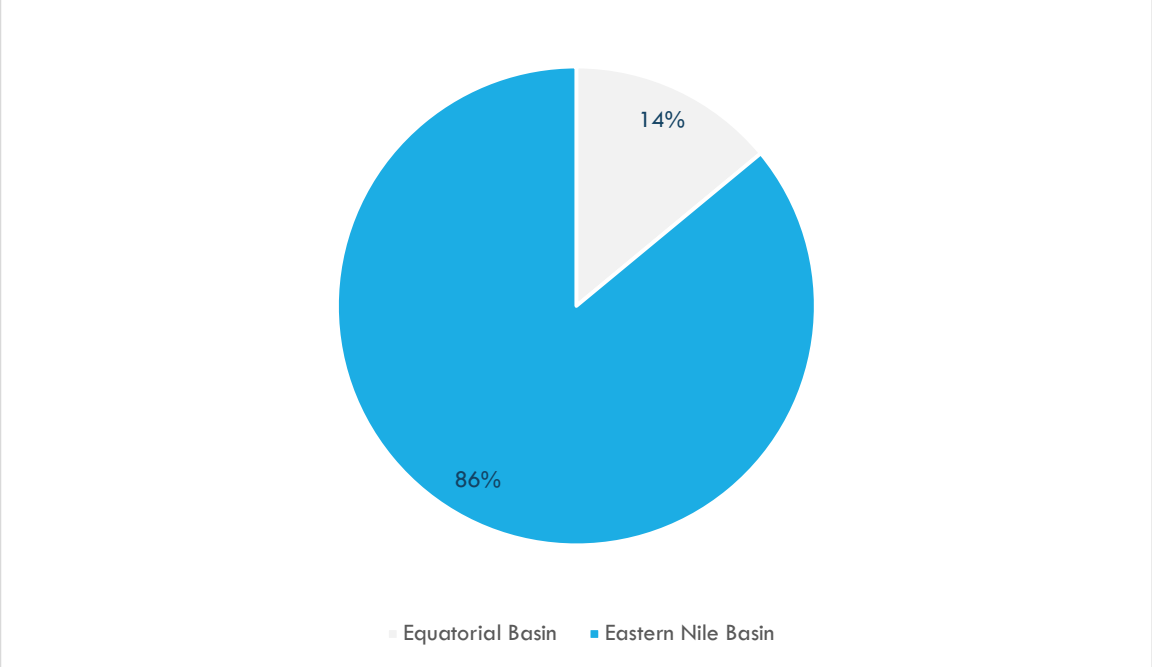


[1] In 2007, a group of Brazilian scientists claimed to have traced a new source of the Amazon to Southern Peru. They argued that this discovery would render the Amazon the world's longest river by extending its length by a further 284 kilometres. However, no consensus has yet been reached on whether this claim is indeed correct. (http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2007/06/070619-amazon-river.htmlv)

As with the river's two principal tributaries, the Nile's drainage basin has commonly been approached by distinguishing between the Eastern Nile Basin, home to the Blue Nile, and the Equatorial Nile Basin, host to the White Nile. The White Nile originates in Burundi and flows through the Equatorial Lakes before discharging much of itself in the Sudd wetlands of South Sudan (Swain 2011: 688). On the other hand, the Blue Nile traces its origins to the highlands of Ethiopia where it begins its plunge down to the clay plains of Sudan. The two Niles eventually confluence in Khartoum, the capital city of Sudan, and flow onto Egypt and into the Mediterranean.

Although the Nile can boast unsurpassed length, its average annual flow of 84 BCM could be described as modest compared to its African counterparts and moderate at best when examined alongside the world's other major river systems. For example, the average annual runoff of the Congo, Volta, Zambezi and Niger rivers has been measured as 1250, 390, 230 and 180 BCM respectively, while the Amazon, the world's largest river, has an estimated annual discharge of 5518 BCM (Rangeley *et al.* 1994). The Nile's discharge, as measured at Aswan, is largely provided by its Eastern Nile Basin headwaters – Blue Nile (59%), Baro-Akobo/Sobat (14%) and Tekeze/Atbara (13%) - with its Equatorial basin tributary only contributing the remaining 14% of its annual flow (Waterbury 2002). This asymmetric distribution of water is further compounded by seasonality in the Basin, where during the flood period, Eastern Nile tributaries make up a staggering 95% of total flows, while Equatorial Basin rivers only contribute 5% (NBI 2012). Coupled with its low discharge the Nile has been aptly described as a river system that is "unevenly distributed across space and time" (Cascão 2009b: 33).

Figure 2 - Contributions to total annual flow of the Nile



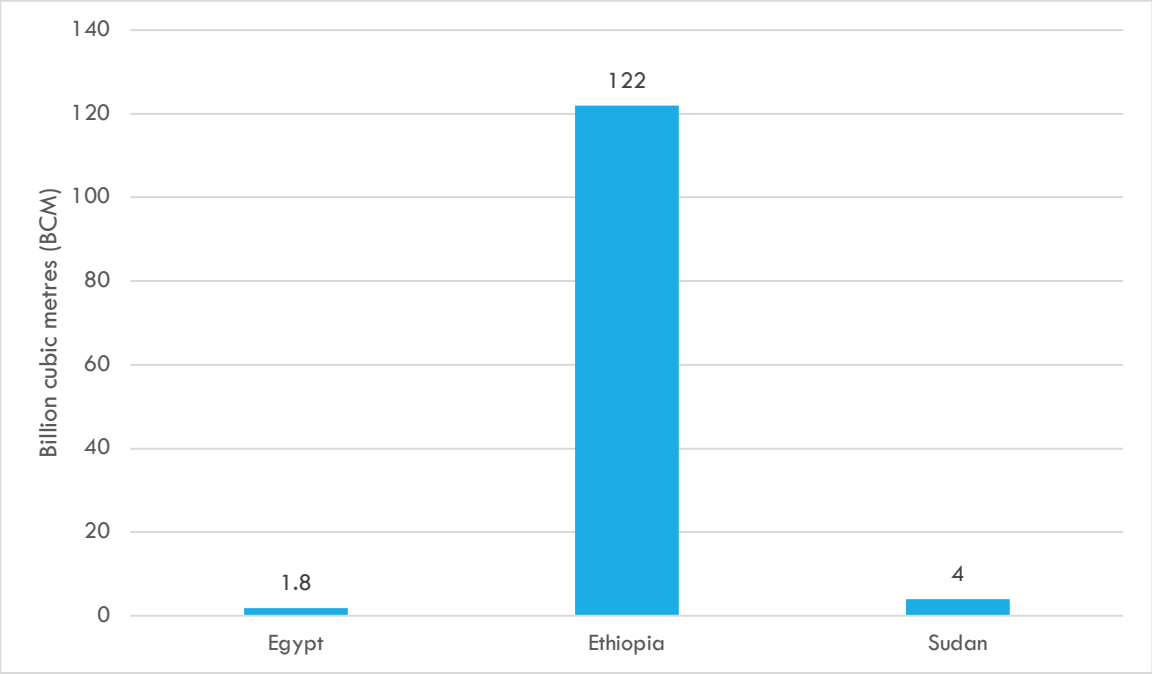
As a result, Ethiopia, home to all Eastern Nile tributaries, is in real terms the basin state with the most water availability, making it arguably the most important player in the entire basin from a quantitative allocation perspective. As Swain (2011: 688) puts it "while there are [eleven] riparian countries, three of them are most critical for the meaningful cooperative sharing of the Nile water: Ethiopia as the primary supplier and Egypt and Sudan as the dominant consumers". It is with this in mind that this study will aim to narrow its scope to: (a) an examination of the Eastern Nile Basin, (b) the relations between its three principal riparians: Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt and (c) the evolving role of Ethiopia in these relations[2].

[2] Although Eritrea is indeed an Eastern Nile riparian its contributions to the Tekeze/Atbara headwaters are minimal rendering it a very small player in Nile hydropolitics. This is exemplified by the fact that it was only granted observer status at the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI).

2.2 THE ASYMMETRIC DISTRIBUTION OF WATER IN THE EASTERN NILE

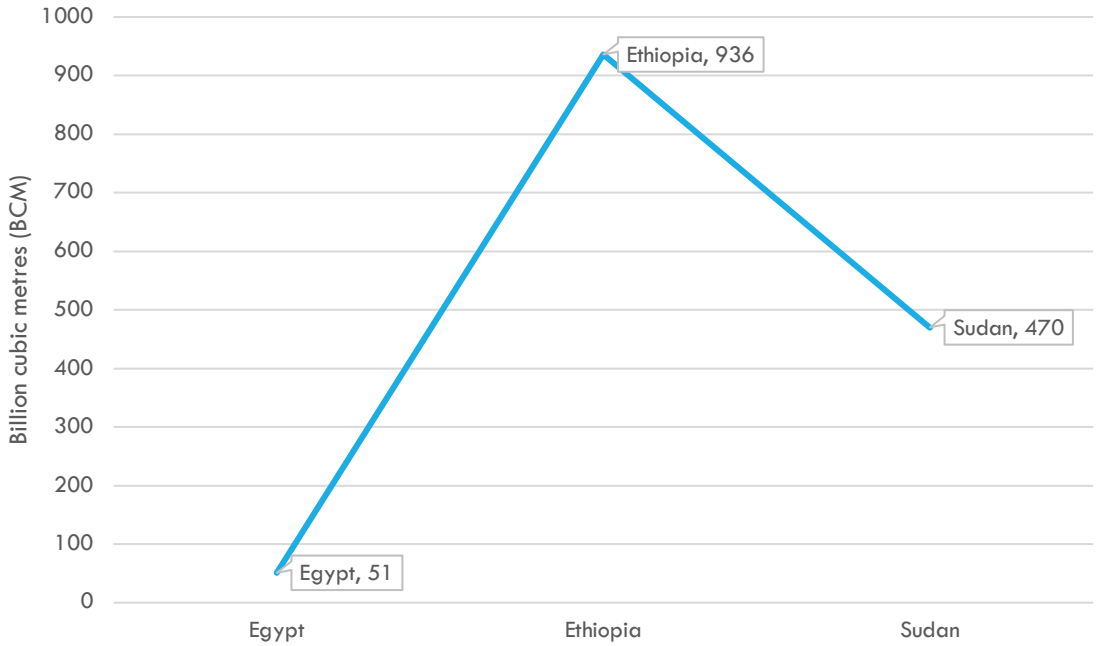
One of the dominant features of the Eastern Nile Basin is the juxtaposition of water scarcity, in the cases of Egypt and Sudan, with the relative abundance of water in Ethiopia. The water scarcity present in the two downstream riparians is representative of their (1) lack of internal water resources and (2) dependence on external waters, or "the country's annual renewable water resources that are not generated in the country", largely provided by the Eastern Nile (FAO 2014)[3]. This dynamic is clearly illustrated in the water resources data available for the three riparians from the UN FAO Aquastat project displayed and discussed below.

Figure 3 - Internal renewable water resources of countries in the Eastern Nile Basin



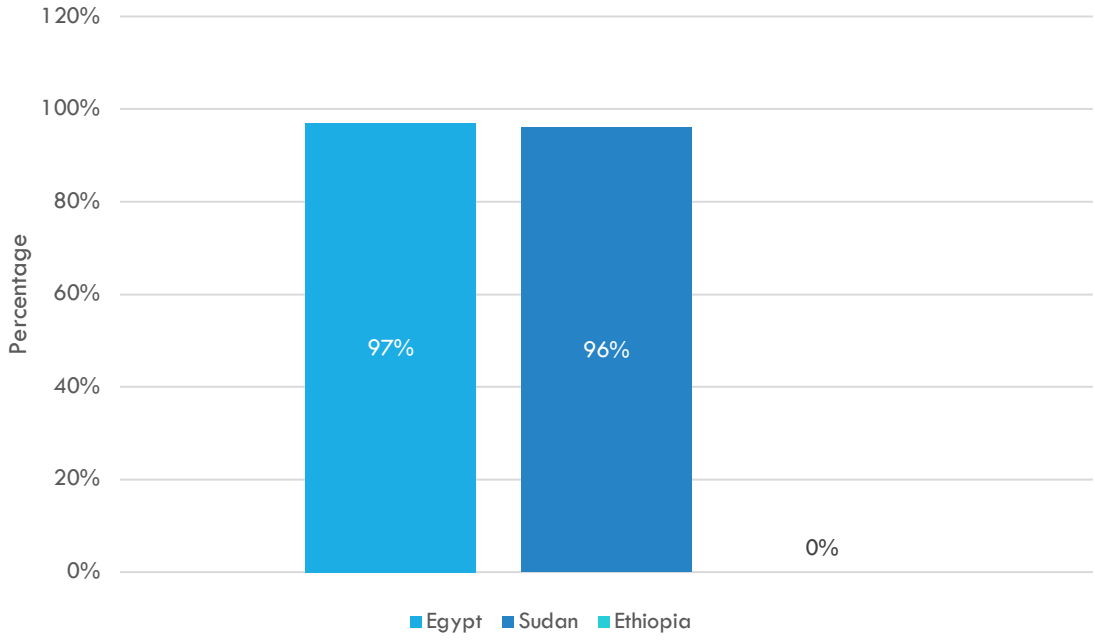
[3] According to the UN FAO Aquastat project external waters are defined as "that part of the country's annual renewable water resources that are not generated in the country. It includes inflows from upstream countries (groundwater and surface water), and part of the water of border lakes and/or rivers." (FAO 2014)

Figure 4 - Long-term average annual precipitation in countries of Eastern Nile Basin



Egypt, the most water-scarce of the three riparians, has virtually no internal renewable water resources (1.8 BCM) making it extremely dependent on external water resources that total 58.3 BCM, which it receives from Eastern Nile waters. Sudan, as the intermediary between upstream Ethiopia and downstream Egypt, has been thrust into a precarious hydrological position since the secession and independence of South Sudan in 2011. The departure of South Sudan saw the new Republic of Sudan lose virtually all its internal renewable water resources overnight making it dependent on external water resources totalling 33.8 BCM.

Figure 5 - Dependency on external water resources in countries of Eastern Nile Basin



This has meant that Sudan is now just as dependent on external water resources as Egypt, with a dependency of 96% compared to Egypt's 97% (FAO 2014). Consequently, Sudan and Egypt can be described as heavily dependent on water resources originating from outside their borders (Swain 2011).

Conversely, Ethiopia is home to 12 river basins and boasts internal renewable surface water resources totalling 120 BCM and further groundwater potential of 2.6 BCM (MoWR 2001). It is not dependent on any external water resources and consequently would be described as the only country in the Eastern Nile Basin with an abundance of internal renewable water resources. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that although Ethiopia's water resources are plentiful relative to its downstream neighbours, the country is subject to high levels of hydrological and climate variability (World Bank 2006).

It is within this context that hydrology in the Eastern Nile has comingled with the 'high politics' of foreign policy and national security considerations, resulting in the coexistence of conflict and cooperation in transboundary water interactions between its riparian states. It will be shown in subsequent sections how the asymmetric distribution of water in the Eastern Nile has motivated water-scarce Egypt to pursue an assemblage of tactics aimed at securing, utilising and allocating greater volumes of Nile water resources for itself, at the expense of Sudan and Ethiopia. The section will also go on to highlight the responses of these states to these actions, noting, in particular, the role of Ethiopia in contesting these strategies since the early 1990s.

2.3 MASTERING, WITHDRAWING AND ALLOCATING THE NILE

The asymmetric distribution of Eastern Nile Basin water resources described above is not the only imbalanced element of the dynamics at play on the Nile. The problem of asymmetry equally rears its head when examining the varying degrees to which the three riparian states have been able to control, utilise and allocate the waters they share.

2.3.1 MASTERING THE NILE

As Cascão (2009b: 36) explained, "technical control represents the control of the resources through the securing of a water supply after the establishment of hydraulic infrastructure and storage which represents the development of a 'hydraulic mission'".

The three Eastern Nile riparians: Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt, which will be the focus of this study, display varying technical capacities in their attempts to control water resources. This variance in capacity can be described as asymmetric due to the historical disparity that has existed with regard to both the development and execution of infrastructure that "affect[s] the flow or quality of water resources" in the Basin (Waterbury 1977: 279). These physical projects, which represent 'facts on the ground', allow their riparian owners to capture and, more importantly, exploit what effectively becomes water resources that they retain control over.

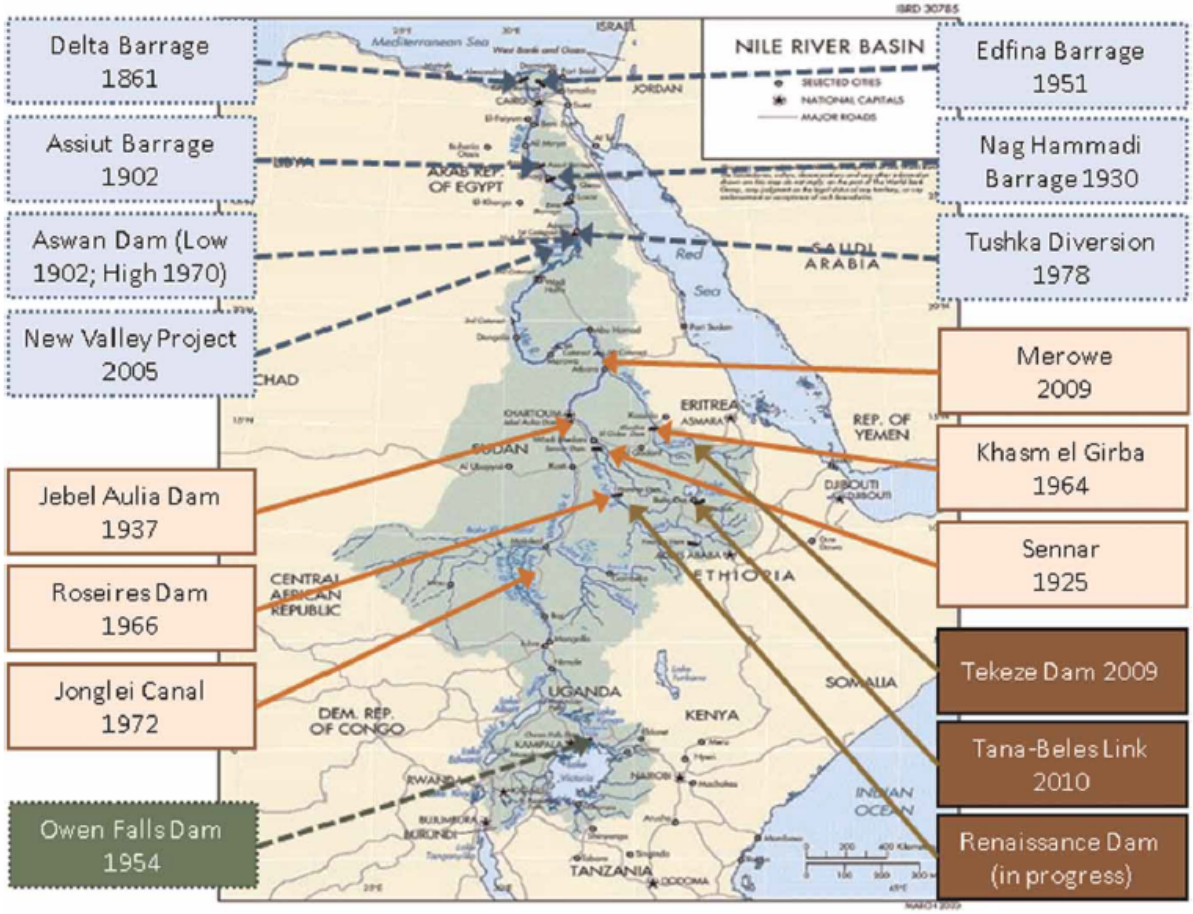
British-administered Egypt, with the support of colonial engineers, was the first to initiate what Swyngedouw (1999) describes as the 'hydraulic mission' on the Nile. The hydraulic mission has been defined by Ricardo Macias Picavaea as a necessary strategy for national development that channels and fuses all national forces towards and around a hydraulic program, planned and developed by means of designated grand works (Swyngedouw 1999: 454). Although these efforts began as early as the last two decades of the 19th century (Willcocks and Craig 1913, Allan 1983), the pinnacle of the Egyptian mission to master the Nile was achieved in the 1960s with the commissioning of the Aswan High Dam (Allan 1999). Boasting a total storage capacity of 169 BCM[4] from Lake Nasser behind the dam walls, the Aswan High Dam was a game-changer in determining Egypt's technical control over Nile resources (Cascão 2009a). This is because, crucially, the high dam gave Egypt the capacity to store up to three years of its annual legal allocation of Nile waters, according to the *1959 United Arab Republic and Sudan Agreement for the Full Utilisation of the Nile Waters*, or the equivalent of almost double the Nile's average annual flow of 84 BCM.

Similarly, Sudanese development of large water resources infrastructure was commenced during British colonial rule before gathering pace after Sudan's independence in 1956 and revolution in 1958 (Swain 2011). The establishment of military rule following the revolution facilitated the acceleration of the hydraulic mission in Sudan as it represented a time of close hydraulic collaboration with its downstream neighbour to the north, Egypt. Consequently, during the period 1956 – 1965, Sudan with the close

[4] According to Smith (1986) Lake Nasser created by the High Aswan Dam is one of the largest manmade lakes in the world with the carrying capacity of 164 BCM of water.

support of Egypt was successful in constructing the *Sennar, Jebel Aulia, Khashim El-Ghirba* and *Roseires* Dams which originally offered a total storage capacity of approximately 8.7 BCM, but currently, offers only 6.9 BCM as a result of heavy sedimentation (Cascão 2009a)[5]. It was to be another four decades before Sudan built any additional storage capacity, a trend interrupted by the 2008 construction of the *Merowe* Dam and the heightening of the *Roseires* Dam in 2013. These two projects, though contributing to a rise in the country's total storage capacity to 21.23 BCM (FAO 2014), still leave Sudan with extremely limited storage capacity compared to that enjoyed by Egypt.

Figure 6 - Existing hydraulic infrastructure projects in the Nile Basin (Whittington, Waterbury and Jeuland 2014: 597)



The disparity between these countries is only further compounded by the fact that Ethiopia, until fairly recently, had only 3.5 BCM of total storage capacity, much of which was located outside the Nile Basin in the Awash Valley (McCornick *et al.* 2008). Arsano and Tamrat (2005: 18) described how Ethiopia before 2009 "had not yet been able to embark on an actual water resources development program" and had only developed a meagre amount of storage capacity within its territory. However, in the last decade, Ethiopia has begun to make some important strides in developing hydraulic infrastructure on the

[5] "Sudan has lost part of its live storage capacity (around 65%, 20% and 55% respectively at the three main reservoirs) in the year subsequent to construction" (Cascao 2009b)

Nile. With the inauguration of the *Tekeze* Dam in 2009, ongoing construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) and a number of other dams in the pipeline, Ethiopia's storage capacity on the Nile is expected to soar in the coming years. In the case of the GERD, when complete, it is expected to be only the second dam in the entire Nile Basin, after *Aswan*, capable of providing over-year storage (Whittington, Waterbury and Jeuland 2014: 600). Nonetheless, the general landscape of the Basin continues to be one characterized by a massive disparity between Egypt and the rest in terms of the technical capacity to store and marshal Nile water resources.

2.3.2 IMBALANCED WITHDRAWALS

In what is the overarching dynamic at play within the Eastern Nile Basin, it should come as no surprise that asymmetry in the physical water storage capacity of riparians has resulted in further asymmetry in the utilisation and exploitation of water resources on the river. In this regard, Egypt as the main user of Nile waters leaves both Sudan and Ethiopia trailing in its wake in terms of its total water withdrawals from the Nile. In Egypt, the river's historical use has been closely tied to a wide range of purposes including large-scale irrigation, hydropower, industry and domestic use. On the other hand, usage in Sudan and Ethiopia has been largely limited to agriculture (Block and Strzepek 2010: 157).

According to the official FAO data, Egypt is estimated to withdraw a total of 78 BCM of water per year. Of this total, 65.55 BCM is taken from the Nile while the remainder of the withdrawals are a mixture of groundwater, recycled wastewater and desalinated water (FAO 2014). It is interesting to note here that official Egyptian statistics put the figure withdrawn from the Nile at 55.5 BCM (MWRI 2005), a figure which also happens to be the exact amount legally allocated for Egyptian utilisation in the *1959 Agreement for the full Utilisation of the Nile Waters* signed with Sudan. Here according to some observers, Egypt may be using more than it officially discloses due to (1) the availability of more water than the 84 BCM cited in the 1959 agreement and (2) its use of the under-utilised quota of Sudanese water stored in Lake Nasser (Waterbury 2002; El-Zain 2007).

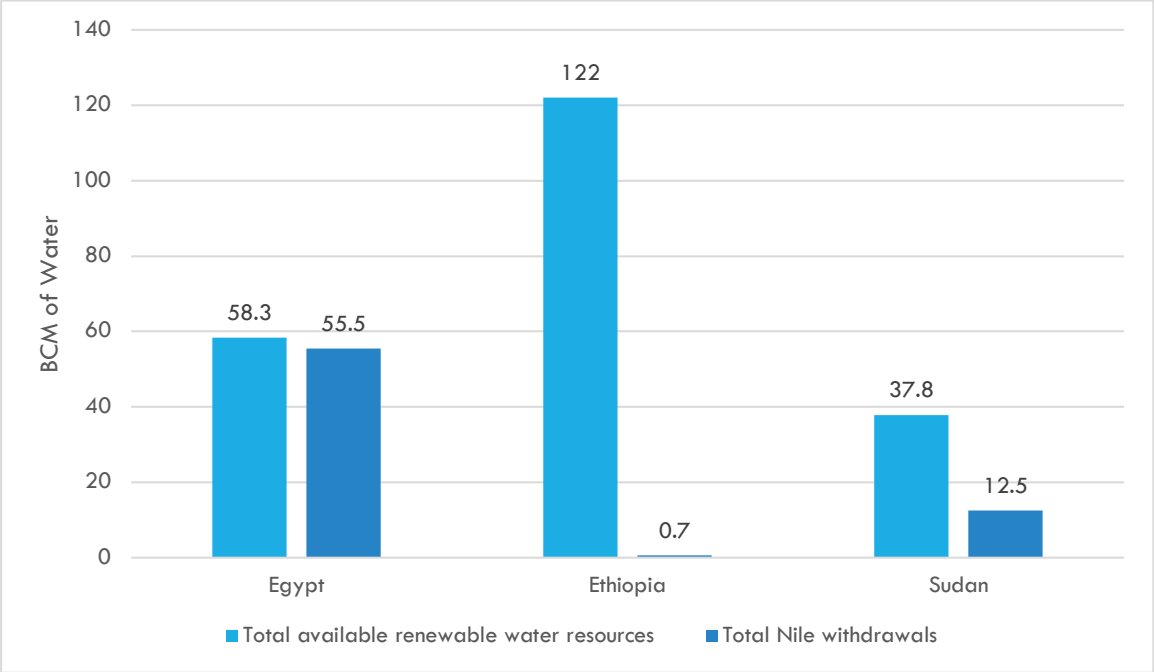
Sudan, on the other hand, is estimated to withdraw an annual total of 26.9 BCM of water per year since the independence of South Sudan in 2011[6]. However, the Sudanese government report official withdrawals of 12.5 BCM when "current utilisation might already be reaching 14.6 BCM" (Cascão 2009a: 247). Thus, these estimates give further indications of how Egypt may be using more Nile water than it officially discloses through the underestimation of the available water at the Egyptian border.

On the other hand, Ethiopia's total national withdrawals per year of 5.56 BCM can only be described as insignificant when compared with the withdrawals of its counterparts downstream. Not even 1 BCM of Ethiopia's withdrawals are from the Nile Basin, with estimates from Arsano and Tamrat (2005: 16) putting the figure closer to 0.7 BCM. With Nile resources in Ethiopia so under-exploited, the disparity

[6] It is important to note that the FAO Aquastat data has not been adequately updated for the Republic of Sudan since the cessation of South Sudan.

between downstream and upstream use is made all the clearer when examining the legal basis for Nile water allocations.

Figure 7 - Water resources availability & utilisation in Eastern Nile Basin (FAO 2014)



2.3.3 LEGAL ALLOCATIONS

Asymmetry is also witnessed in the volumetric legal allocations of waters in the Nile Basin.

The only notable legal instrument by which the allocation, consequent control and utilisation of these shared waters has been governed over the last 50 years is the *1959 Agreement for the full Utilisation of the Nile Waters* effected between Egypt and Sudan. Although there existed a colonial-era treaty [the *1929 Nile Water Agreement*] which predated it, this was superseded and replaced by the 1959 agreement following the independence of Sudan (Cascão 2009b)[7]. In a move that Whittington et al. (2014) describe as having induced longstanding bitterness and an atmosphere of mistrust in the basin since, the two downstream countries on the Nile signed a bilateral agreement effectively allocating themselves all of the Nile's waters (Republic of the Sudan and the United Arab Republic 1959). With the annual flow of the river estimated at 84 BCM, Egypt was allocated 55.5 BCM and Sudan 18.5 BCM, leaving the remaining 10 BCM for anticipated environmental losses through surface evaporation and seepage at the Aswan High Dam (Said 1993; Cascão 2009a; Swain 2011). It is important to note, here, that although there was very little accurate flow data at their disposal, this lack of information did not

[7] Egypt first gained its independence from Britain in 1922 while Sudan achieved the same in 1956 (APS Blaustein *et al.* 1977).

prevent the ratification and execution of the 1959 deal (Waterbury 2002). The following five provisions were established under the terms of this Agreement:

1. **Acquired rights** – downstream historical rights to the Nile were emphasized within Article 1 of the Agreement while the principle of prior allocation defined in the 1929 Agreement was reaffirmed.
2. **Asymmetric allocation** – in an expansion of the 1929 Agreement, Article 2(4) of the 1959 Agreement allocated Egypt 55.5 BCM and Sudan 18.5 BCM of Nile waters per year. Additionally, it gave Egypt further "rights" to the Nile pursuant to the completion of the High Aswan Dam (HAD). Although it appears that Sudan was a net-beneficiary of water through this agreement, it became increasingly clear over time that the Egyptian government granted this with the full knowledge that the Sudanese would not be in a position to exploit its full allocation in the short or medium run. Instead, Egyptian negotiators used this provision to incentivise Sudanese compliance whilst recognising that, ultimately, they would be the beneficiaries of any unused Sudanese flows.
3. **Monitoring of flows and supervision Sudanese projects** – As part of Article 4(1) of the Agreement, the two countries formalised their collaboration on the Nile by establishing a Permanent Joint Technical Committee responsible for the coordination of future hydraulic infrastructure projects (Swain 1997: 679). With the establishment of the PJTC, the Egyptian government realised an enduring capacity to survey any Sudanese projects on the Nile and to monitor the river's flows from within Sudan. This act effectively allowed Egypt unfettered access to Nile hydrological data whilst guarding against the prospect of any surprise hydraulic development in Sudan. The work of the PJTC continues to the present day with "several Egyptian engineers stationed in Sudan in order to monitor the Nile's flows on a daily basis" (Cascão 2009b: 162).
4. **United position vis-à-vis upstream riparians** – Through Article 5(1), the agreement compelled both sides to agree on a unified position if it becomes necessary to hold negotiations concerning the Nile or in the event of any claims to the waters by other riparian states. The agreement over this article signalled the formation of a joint-position on Nile matters between Egypt and Sudan going forward – a unity which lasted through the rest of the 20th century but has begun to fray in recent years (as discussed in Section 6.3.2.3.1).
5. **Exclusion of upstream riparians and complete control of river** – This Agreement was entered into by Egypt and Sudan alone, with no other riparian parties included in its formulation nor accounted for in its execution. Additionally, in the preamble of the Agreement it was acknowledged that as the 1929 Agreement only provided for the partial use of Nile waters, the 1959 agreement would extend to include the complete control of the river. Even with this acknowledgement, no upstream riparians were accounted for in the volumetric allocations of the waters, with Egypt receiving the lion's share and Sudan the rest.

Effectively, this agreement meant that the six remaining riparians of the day including Ethiopia, from which, 86-95% of the Nile's seasonal flow is derived, were excluded, leaving them no specific legal entitlement to these waters under this deal (Republic of the Sudan and the United Arab Republic 1959)[8].

To this day, the 1959 agreement continues to be the only legal accord by which Nile water sharing between some riparian states is governed. Egypt and Sudan are the only two riparians that have formally acknowledged their respective rights to the waters of the Nile "while the other [nine] riparians recognize neither the Egypto-Sudanese claims nor any other riparian claims" (Waterbury 2002: 15). The asymmetry, in this regard, between upstream and downstream allocations has produced a deadlock in water negotiations today, with upstream riparians actively promoting a new basin-wide agreement while downstream riparians have resisted these moves in an effort to maintain their historic rights as stipulated under the terms of the 1959 Agreement (Cascão 2009a).

[8] In 1959 South Sudan was still part of the Republic of Sudan meaning its voice on Nile matters was represented by the Khartoum government.

2.4 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

This section aims to lay out the landscape of hydropolitical relations and developments in the Eastern Nile Basin through a thematically organized approach to this substantial body of literature. By critically assessing the hydropolitical literature already produced on the Eastern Nile, this review provides insights into the hydropolitical conditions of and power relations between riparian states within the Basin.

In this section, the hydropolitical history of the Eastern Nile Basin[9] is examined by focusing on the contending schools of thought that have attempted to explain the changing relations between its riparians over time. These changing relations and history will form the basis for the study's research questions while contributing to the development of a theoretical framework in chapter 3 and informing its subsequent empirical chapters.

2.4.1 THE HYDRAULIC MISSION ON THE NILE: TECHNICAL INTERVENTIONS AND CONTROL

The implications of developing shared, but particularly scarce, transboundary resources have been thoroughly researched and analyzed through the prism of conflict for decades (Ashton 2000; Homer-Dixon 2001). The literature on the Nile is no different. The Nile has been the subject of scrutiny for political players, philosophers, geographers, historians and engineers. In addition, the Basin has long been the stage for political negotiations and contention over the control and management of scarce water resources. The history of Nile hydropolitics has been summed up by some as symptomatic of downstream dependence characterized by intrigue, threats and aspirations for control, accentuated by deep-seated suspicion among upstream states (Degefu 2003; Phillips 1997; Schiffler 1998).

As established in Section 2.3.2, downstream riparians, Sudan and Egypt, have historically been the highest net users of Nile water - with it forming the basis of development in both countries since the beginnings of flood-recession agriculture in the region about 7,000 years ago (Adams 1977; Chesworth in Howell and Allan 1994). While this is not the space to discuss early attempts at technical control of the Nile in depth, dams have featured for long for flood control (Twigger 2013).

The technology in the 19th century was particularly instrumental at augmenting efforts aimed at controlling and utilizing the Nile's waters (Cascão 2009b). The beginning of this century saw Egypt, under the Ottoman leader Muhammad Ali, advance the first 'hydraulic mission' on the Nile with the preliminary development of canals and barrages as well as the planned expansion of irrigation (Collins 1994; Shapland 1997). Ali, inspired by the unfulfilled hydraulic plans of his predecessor Napoleon, eventually built the first modern dam on the Nile - the *barrage du Nil* in Sudan (Twigger 2013: 222). The arrival of European colonial powers to the Basin, at the end of the nineteenth century, prompted the beginnings of the sustained competition for Nile waters that we have witnessed since. In this period Great Britain, France and Italy grappled for control of the basin with Britain and France almost succumbing to war over *Fashoda* in Sudan - a location both powers regarded as a focal point for Nile control (Bates 1984).

[9] For a more holistic annotated bibliography of the literature on this subject from a historical perspective, one can refer to Tvedt's Volume I and II of a bibliography on the Nile (2000 and 2006)

The consolidation of British imperial rule in Egypt and Sudan at the end of the 19th century spurred the next phase in the construction of hydraulic infrastructure and irrigation systems on the Nile (Allan 1983; Howell and Allan 1994; Tvedt 2006). It was during this time that the British, in an effort to secure their water resources to feed a rising Egyptian population and to propel the economy, developed the first integrated basin-wide plan aimed at controlling and efficiently utilizing Nile waters. The British hydraulic mission on the Nile led the charge in the construction of knowledge about the integrated and inter-connected nature of Nile hydrology. In this regard, knowledge about the river's varied stakeholders, and the lands which they occupied, was considered critical to the scope of colonial plans for the region being devised in imperial capitals beyond the Basin.

The beginning of the 20th century heralded the implementation of the British unified plan and led to the construction of the first *Aswan* Dam in 1902, a number of new irrigation canals and barrages. With the consolidation of imperial rule in Sudan, British plans, much like the Nile River itself, took on a transboundary complexion as pipeline projects were implemented on the Blue Nile with the construction of the *Sennar* Dam and completion of the *Gezira* Irrigation Scheme (Howell and Allan 1994). These developments signalled the beginning of Sudan's 'hydraulic mission' and with it, a frustrating relationship borne out of British-engineered mutual interests and shared benefits. The first of these frustrations were at the risk of escalating when Egypt became wary of the British plan to increase cotton production in Sudan (Howell and Allan 1994; Swain 2011). As Egypt feared the potential diminishment of Nile flows into the country from large-scale agriculture upstream, the British began to use Nile water "as a 'carrot and stick' vis-à-vis rising Egyptian nationalism" (Swain 2011: 690). In fact, following the assassination of the most senior British official in Anglo-Egyptian Sudan in 1925, Britain, blaming the Egyptian government, "demanded reparations from Egypt and threatened to divert Nile water to the Gezira scheme" in Sudan (Waterbury 2002: 73). Some of these disputes were temporarily laid to rest in 1929 with the answering of long-standing questions related to legal entitlements to Nile water, following the signing of the *1929 Nile Water Agreement* between Egypt and Britain - on behalf of Sudan (Agreement 1929; Godana 1985).

The integrated control of the Nile being established by Britain in downstream Sudan and Egypt had significant implications for Ethiopia. During this period, the Nile Basin would exemplify the clash between colonial ambitions for the region and the existing practices of an independent state on the River. Particularly, the *1929 Nile Water Agreement* posed a challenge to Ethiopia's right to and use of the Nile. As a non-party to the agreement, the government refused to acknowledge it. Nonetheless, the two downstream riparians proceeded with the arrangement, thus side-lining Ethiopia and establishing the "the legal basis for [all future] Egyptian and Sudanese claims to historical rights over Nile waters" (Cascão 2009b: 44). British imperium over the White Nile made the launch of such a basin-wide hydraulic mission possible as the Empire stretched uninterrupted from Entebbe, Uganda to Alexandria in Egypt (Waterbury 2002). However, the existence of an independent Ethiopia on the Blue Nile made the implementation of these plans in the Eastern Nile problematic. During this time, knowledge constructed by the British on the critical and precious nature of Nile water resources to downstream states depicted

Egypt and Sudan as naturally entitled to the flows while undermining any Ethiopian claim to the waters, as a result of the seeming abundance of alternative water resources upstream. For example, the resistance of the Ethiopian Imperial Government to British plans for Lake Tana will be discussed further in Section 5.3.1.2.

Hydraulic infrastructure further facilitated greater technical control over water on the Nile—though this was the case only for Egypt and Sudan. Cairo and Khartoum had successfully made plans for large-scale unilateral developments on the River but had to cooperate with each other in order to see them to fruition (El-Zain 2007; Collins 1994). This was particularly made possible by two events of the 1950s: 1) an agreement permitting the unilateral constructions of the colossal *Aswan* High Dam in Egypt and the *Roseires* Dam in Sudan and; (2) the renegotiation and replacement of the 1929 agreement with the *1959 Agreement for the full Utilisation of the Nile Waters* (Swain 2011; Waterbury 2002). Hydropolitical relations between downstream Sudan and Egypt, following the signing of the 1959 agreement, remained politicized even though they were characterized by a fairly high-level of hydraulic cooperation (Zeitoun and Mirumachi 2008). In this case, it was observed that the allocative agreement of 1959 coupled with under-utilization of the Sudanese allocation ensured unquestioned consent to these asymmetric allocations. Relations with upstream riparians, on the other hand, though similarly politicized, were not cooperative, as Ethiopia in particular, continued to confront and contest this agreement. Ethiopia rejected the 1959 agreement as non-binding, arguing that it was unfair, based on inequitable principles, exclusive, monopolistic and more importantly a throwback to colonialism (Godana 1985; Tilahun 1979).

Ethiopia's response to this bilateral agreement was to extend an invitation to the Bureau of Reclamation of the U.S. Department of the Interior "to carry out an extensive survey of the Blue Nile and *Tekeze* watersheds with a view toward developing [its] water resources" (Waterbury 2002: 69, UBSR 1964). As part of its ambition to construct a series of dams in the Ethiopian Nile Basin, the Government of Ethiopia argued that it would be growing its economy and safeguarding national food security by utilising its own water resources (Abate 1994), thereby challenging the existing allocations of water in the Basin. Egypt amounted these statements to threats to national security and consistently opposed the plans in Ethiopia, even going so far as to use the threat of the military force in order to make its point. In the end, these remonstrations came to nought as Ethiopia did not pursue its objections to the 1959 agreement in the international community and had not the economic means to follow up on the Bureau of Reclamation plans (Waterbury 2002). This period in the hydropolitical relations of the Eastern Nile Basin, characterized by rivalry, saw the transition of the 'low politics' of water management into the 'high politics' of national security as Egypt increasingly associated water with security in its desire to curtail Ethiopia's hydraulic ambitions. Nonetheless, Ethiopia continued to assert its objections to the downstream monopolisation of Nile waters, as exemplified by its participation at the UN Water Conference in 1977. Ethiopia presented a paper during the conference largely based on the 1964 United States Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) survey, warning that the country's development depended on the full implementation of a series of water development projects in the Nile watershed (Waterbury 2002: 70). Similarly, Ethiopia strongly protested attempts by Egypt to construct a fresh water canal into the Sinai Peninsula in

1979 citing it as "a unilateral act and an extra-basin transfer of water from the Nile" (Waterbury 2002:71). In the same period rumours of Ethiopia, building dams on the Blue Nile's main tributary with the help of Israel propelled President Sadat to threaten war if it meant securing Egypt's water supply and defending Sudanese interests as well. This was captured in Sadat's infamous warning to Ethiopia and the international community: "…tampering with the rights of a nation to water is tampering with its life; and a decision to go to war on this score is indisputable in the international community…any action that would endanger the waters of the Blue Nile will be faced with reaction on the part of Egypt, even if that action should lead to war" (in Brunee and Toope 2002: 106). Here, any potential upstream development along the Blue Nile is treated as an existential threat downstream, thereby elevating transboundary water interactions on the Nile to the highest political level and a matter of national security. These statements and threats of intent notwithstanding, there was to be no development of hydraulic infrastructure upstream during this period as a lack of economic and technological capacity and sustained regional conflict hampered the ambitions of Ethiopia's government (Swain 2011).

The historical trends in the Basin encouraged some scholars to forecast that the Nile Basin would finally see water wars in the 21st century (Bulloch and Darwish 1993; Gleick *et al*. 1994). However, although there has been protracted and somewhat intractable tension on the Nile and silent conflict stemming from the asymmetric legal allocation of water, this has yet to have escalated into acute militarised conflict (Degefu 2003; Cascão 2009a).

2.4.2 COOPERATION: DIALOGUE, ENGAGEMENT AND TRUST-BUILDING

Although much of the scholarly work on this subject has understood the period before the 1991 as purely a time of intense competition and conflict among Nile riparians, it is important to note that the Basin still witnessed attempts at cooperation. In fact, a growing portion of the literature contends that transboundary resource disputes are unlikely to degenerate into conflict because there are more incentives for cooperation than for war, and by implication, that a mere adjustment of the existing framework will cement trust and collaboration (Dolatyar 2002, Shaheen 2000). Others have gone even further at times by arguing the obsolete and hyperbolic nature of the water war scenario by dismissing the possibility of water resources acting as sources of conflict (Turton and Kent 2000, Stroh 2003). Further to this, some have pointed to the last twenty years in particular as having seen a "startling degree of international and transnational integration, and a concomitant reduction in inter-state conflict" (Selby 2007: 7).

One does not have to look further than the relations between Egypt and Sudan in order to find examples of some cooperation in the basin during the 20th century. Although the 1929 agreement and all that came before it was signed under auspices of colonialism (Okidi 1982), the 1959 agreement remains the only arrangement on Nile utilisation accepted as binding by both signatories (Waterbury 2002). It has been argued that the post-1959 agreement period, and the discontent upstream which characterized it, served to warm strained relations between Sudan and Egypt with their priorities instead turned towards the sustained domination and hydraulic control of the Nile (Swain 2011). A fact highlighted by a pre-

emptive stipulation within the agreement that in the event of any future upstream claims for water Egypt and Sudan would negotiate jointly (Republic of the Sudan and the United Arab Republic 1959). These relations remained largely unchanged for the rest of the Cold War period with Sudan pursuing projects, including the *Jonglei* Canal to the South (Allen 2010; Howell and Allan 1994; Cascão 2009a), aimed at increasing the flow of the Nile further downstream. Importantly, this period of collaboration between Egypt and Sudan has also helped uncover the importance of factoring in domestic politics into the analysis of hydropolitics at the basin level. This is illustrated by the events in Sudan preceding independence, when Egyptian officials covertly supported the coup d'état which ushered into power a military regime that was more sympathetic to Egyptian demands (Swain 1997). In the end, it was this regime which went on to sign and ratify the terms of the 1959 Agreement on the Nile between the two countries.

It is also important to note that attempts at cooperation during this period did not merely occur between Sudan and Egypt. As early as the 1960s, Egypt, with the support of the World Meteorological Organisation, initiated a project aimed at surveying rainfall in regions affected by the rise in levels of Lake Victoria and other equatorial lakes (Waterbury 2002). In addition to Egypt and Sudan, the Hydromet project, for the first time in the Basin's history, incorporated the hydrological issues of flooding in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, and later Rwanda and Burundi, into its agendas (Swain 2011). The Ethiopian government, consistently distrustful of any downstream initiatives, tentatively engaged it as an observer in 1971, five years after its initial launch (Waterbury 2002). Although Hydromet ultimately failed in its attempts to develop a new basin-wide deal on the Nile it still cannot be underestimated as an early attempt at inclusive cooperation among riparians. Indeed Stroh (2003) argues that projects such as Hydromet, despite being impotent in tackling thorny issues surrounding water sharing, legitimately contribute to confidence building between states that can have tangible benefits when substantive discussions occur. Alongside Hydromet, a group of riparians led by Egypt launched the *UNDUGU* (a Swahili word meaning brotherhood) group of Nile riparians in 1983. This arrangement, although short-lived and completely boycotted by Ethiopia, demonstrated the Egyptian desire to develop basin-wide cooperation but, as noted, this was more likely aimed at "helping other riparians develop alternatives to Nile water" than to change the existing legal agreement in place (Waterbury 2002: 76; Cascão 2009b). In these examples, cooperation is actually a form of conflict in that it is strategically deployed in order to divert and stall upstream development interests. However, these forms of cooperation on the Nile have also been interpreted as part of silent conflicts in the Basin. Here, it is argued that these offers of cooperation are actually part of the elaborate c*ontainment* strategies deployed by more powerful riparian states in their attempts to achieve consolidated control over the River's water resources (Zeitoun and Warner 2006). Thus, Ethiopian officials that maintained an arms-length approach to cooperative endeavors involving Egypt perpetuated these silent conflicts as a means by which to contest rising Egyptian influence upstream.

Significant developments in the basin took place following the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1991 and with it an end to the Cold War. As Allan (1999: 5) notes "the 1990s have seen remarkable rapprochements between entities involved in apparently intractable hot and cold conflicts". Soviet disengagement in

Africa coincided with the fall of the *Derg* regime in Ethiopia, regime change in Sudan and the Basin's growing engagement with the international community (Swain 2002). Due to decades of Egyptian neglect discussed in Section 6.2.1.2, Nile relations with upstream Ethiopia throughout the Cold War had been characterised by animosity and distrust. However, the end of the civil war in Ethiopia in 1991 and the coming to power of a transitional government led by the EPRDF (discussed in Section 5.2.2.1), represented an opportunity for the reconfiguration of these relations.

The Framework for General Co-operation signed on 1 July 1993 in Addis Ababa between former Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak and Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE) President Meles Zenawi "acknowledged the 'close relations' shared by the two countries 'linked by the Nile River with its basin as a centre of mutual interest'" (Arsano 2007: 102). Amongst other issues of mutual concern including trade and development, the agreement attempted to address the countries' future engagements over the Nile by incorporating:

1. **Principle of Appreciable Harm:** Article 5 of the Agreement stipulated that "each party refrain from engaging in any activity related to the Nile waters that may cause appreciable harm to the interests of the other party". By virtue of the physical geography of the Nile, this principle only served to constrain the upstream party, Ethiopia, from engaging in development that could cause harm to the interests of the downstream party, Egypt.
2. **Principle of Prior Consultation:** Articles 7 of the Agreement called on both parties to pledge to hold "periodic consultations on matters of mutual concern, including the Nile waters". Once again, this principle is aimed at restraining future development upstream by compelling Ethiopia to consult with Egypt in cases where it intends to utilise and develop the Nile within its territory.
3. **Increased Flows and Efficiency:** Articles 6 and 8 of the Agreement aim to "enhance the volume of flow and reduce the loss of Nile water" as well as to "undertake to consult and cooperate in projects that are mutually advantageous, such as… integrated development schemes". This provision also plays into Egyptian hegemonic strategies on the Nile by laying the burden of responsibility for the enhancement and conservation of flows at Ethiopia's door while taking up the benefit of the impacts of these projects.

As with bilateral agreements of 1929 and 1959, these principles of the 1993 Framework can be viewed through the prism of containment – as Egypt attempted to maintain its control over Nile flows while ensuring it had advance notice of any future attempts at upstream hydraulic development initiated by Ethiopia.

In addition to these bilateral engagements, the 1990s also brought with it an acceleration in attempts at finding avenues for more comprehensive multilateral cooperation in the basin following the failure of cooperative endeavours in 1970s and 1980s. The period was widely perceived in the scholarly literature to have heralded an era ripe for (1) initiatives that would form the basis for comprehensive cooperation

in the basin and (2) evaluation of water resource development activities aimed at improving the efficacy of water utilisation (Shady *et al*. 1994; Allan 1999).

The first of these multilateral initiatives, Tecconile, was successfully launched in 1992 with the aim of acting as a successor to the Hydromet project (Swain 2011). The Technical Committee for the Promotion of the Development and Environmental Protection of the Nile Basin (Tecconile) was established by the water ministers of six-member states: Egypt, Sudan, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (now Zaire) with the remaining four riparians – Ethiopia, Kenya, Burundi and Eritrea[10] – acting as observers (Waterbury 2002). The launch of Tecconile represented the first basin-wide initiative which, in one form or another, all Nile riparians were incorporated. Alongside the activities of Tecconile, riparians also decided, crucially, to establish the Nile 2002 Conference series. A parallel activity aimed at assembling the technical experts, professionals and ministers of the ten riparians at forums intended to foster informal dialogue and discussions regarding wider cooperation within Nile Basin (Swain 2011). The effects of this had the potential to change pre-existing notions of the water rights downstream versus the inequitable allocations within the basin. Scholars including Shady argued that the Nile 2002 conferences and Tecconile contributed to the bridging of differences, building of confidence, awareness raising and promotion of dialogue among riparians as they took important steps towards all-inclusive cooperation in the Nile Basin (Shady *et al*. 1994; Allan 1999, Cascão 2009b). Scholars here have also highlighted that these initiatives went a long way towards creating the conditions that allowed for the beginnings of a rapprochement between the basin's two principal riparians – Ethiopia and Egypt (Abraham 1997; Allan 1999; Erlich 2002). Amdetsion (2008) particularly points to the 1993 Memorandum of Understanding between the two states expressing their desire to utilize Nile water resources for mutual benefit as proof of this emerging rapprochement. This has been supported by shifts in public discourse among riparians away from conflictual distrust towards more diplomatic and accommodating tones (Arsano 2007; Cascão 2009b). These shifts in approach from the Ethiopian side, in particular, cannot be looked at in a vacuum, and can be attributed to changes at the domestic level, where the state was in flux following the coming to power of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF).

However, this 'cooperation' needs to be further examined in detail to fully understand its processes and impacts. The cooperative momentum in the basin culminated with the endorsement of a new Nile River Basin Action Plan which eventually resulted in the formal launching of the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) in 1999 (Allan 1999, Swain 2011). Alongside the establishment of the NBI a group of riparians, primarily led by Ethiopia (Waterbury 2002), launched a proposal aimed at addressing the "elephant in the basin" – issues associated with the Nile's legal and institutional asymmetry. It is argued that this move was motivated by the upstream view that regarded the Action Plan as a cosmetic solution which would be of no benefit to their economies. Once again, with Ethiopian officials and experts promoting the idea of new legal and institutional arrangement that could drive economic development within the Basin, this

[10] Newly independent following its cessation from Ethiopia in 1991 and referendum in 1993.

illustrates the influence of domestic political priorities, propelled by the developmental state model, on the Government's positions at the international level. This proposal, then known as the D3 project, was to later develop into the Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA). A further development which emerged out of these processes was a consensus that "the Nile Basin, [previously] treated as a whole at the insistence of Egypt, could be considered as two entities - the Eastern Nile and the Southern Nile" (Allan 1999: 7). Thus, although issues of water allocation were not necessarily addressed, these initiatives began to lay the foundations for the eventual transformation of the Basin away from the asymmetric arrangements enshrined under the 1959 Agreement.

Scholars have also highlighted how throughout these multi-faceted cooperative processes the international community remained reliable partners to riparians with steady political and financial support facilitating the early stages of institution-building in the Basin (Tafesse 1997). Most notably, the World Bank was instrumental in the launch of the International Consortium for Cooperation on the Nile (ICCON) where donors initially pledged $140 million USD with a view to eventually full financing the first phase of the investment programme to the tune of $3 billion USD (Swain 2011: 693). The active engagement of donors within the Basin has also allowed for the introduction and testing of new global concepts of hydropolitical cooperation in the basin, including integrated water resources management (IWRM) and benefit sharing (Cascão 2009b). The work of Sadoff and Grey, in particular, promotes a more qualitative understanding of cooperation by developing the concept of benefit sharing (Sadoff and Grey 2002). An idea that has taken hold in both the crafting of the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) and in the recent water policy positions of a number of riparian countries aiming to develop their water resources (Swain 2002, Teshome 2008). As pointed out by Mapedza *et al.* (2008: 1), "benefit sharing is increasingly gaining currency as a mechanism to engage riparian countries to look beyond physical water allocation to the allocation of benefits coming from water". In the context of the Nile, the NBI under its Shared Vision Program has championed a number of these initiatives including the Socio-Economic Development and Benefit-Sharing Project (NBI 2001). This reflects the influence of third parties from beyond the Basin in its hydropolitics as upstream riparians, such as Ethiopia, have used platforms financed and facilitated by international actors, to promote change within the Basin.

The scholarly literature on the subject of recent cooperation in the Basin can generally be described as cautiously optimistic. By viewing cooperative developments on the Nile through rose coloured lenses, regional analysts have exaggerated perceived goods while under-emphasizing actual negatives. Regional scholars consistently point to cooperative achievements thus far, while forecasting the potential benefits that cooperation can bring to the entire basin in future (Arsano 2007; Amer *et al.* 2005; Arsano and Tamerat 2005; Teshome 2008). On the other hand, international scholars, while acknowledging the importance of these initiatives to swinging basin relations away from conflict towards cooperation, have largely erred between restrained optimism and scepticism in their work. The scholars who tend to be fairly optimistic about prospects for cooperation include those who consider the NBI and its many progenies praiseworthy transboundary water cooperation instruments (Nicol *et al.* 2001; Stroh 2003; Sadoff and Grey 2005; Whittington *et al.* 2005; Jägerskog *et al.* 2007). Others, however, continue to

view the emergence of cooperation in the basin with uncertainty as they contend that the principal stumbling blocks for Nile cooperation – questions of asymmetric allocation and use – remain highly contentious in light of shifting power relations between riparians and growing technical and financial capacity for hydraulic development upstream (Waterbury 2002; Cascão 2009a; Nicol and Cascão 2011; Swain 2011). In particular, the Benefit-Sharing Framework has been critiqued in the literature for assuming all forms of cooperation are better than no cooperation and for not taking adequate account of factors including: riparian power relations; foreign policy goals; historical relations and the role of third parties (Tawfik 2016; Hensengerth *et al*. 2012). Similarly, Dombrowsky (2009) argues that the framework assumes wrongly that the benefits of cooperation can be a direct alternative to the sharing of water resources.

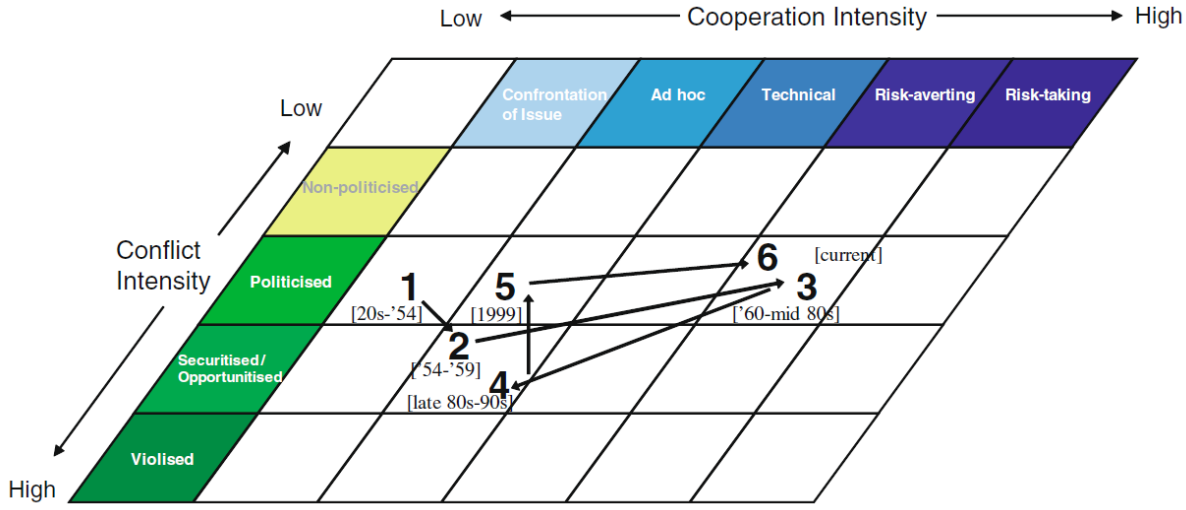
The majority of the literature conceptualizes conflict and cooperation within the Nile as a dichotomized object of study. Although basin cooperation is frequently viewed as a public good (Jägerskog *et al*. 2007) by scholars, practitioners and technical experts alike, this has increasingly created an opportunity in recent years for academia to look beyond the dichotomy into the uncertainty in riparian relations based on an understanding of the coexistence of conflict *and* cooperation. As Amdetsion (2008) explained although Nile riparians have a lot to gain from genuine cooperation, in recent years, they have increasingly opted for unilateral, often divergent paths that are leading them towards short-term gains and long-term calamity.

2.4.3 THE COEXISTENCE OF CONFLICT AND COOPERATION: THE RISE OF UNCERTAINTY

The development of transboundary water interaction analysis using the Transboundary Water Interactions NexuS (TWINS) approach by Mirumachi (2015) in particular, has helped push the scholarly debate in understanding conflict and cooperation not at opposing ends of a continuum but instead as an interaction borne out of their co-existence (Zeitoun and Mirumachi 2008). The studies that attempt to unmask the different faces of cooperation have, in recent years, provided counter-points to the widely-held notion of cooperation as always good and conflict as always bad (Zeitoun and Mirumachi 2008). In their analysis of transboundary water interactions, Zeitoun and Mirumachi (2008: 305) assert that not all cooperation is pretty and "the value of cooperation over the selected issues should be understood within the [prevailing] political context of riparian interactions". With the decline of outright conflict in the international system, some have highlighted that conflict has essentially 'gone underground' by embedding itself within the international cooperative mechanisms riparians engage in. Selby (2007: 9) supports this when arguing that "conflicts are increasingly practised and pursued through institutional and regulatory mechanisms (whether UN organisations or law courts, or indeed bilateral and regional treaties which are as much forums for conflict as they are for cooperation)". In the context of the Nile Basin, this claim is supported by Waterbury (2002) who showed in his seminal work that the national or domestic political interests of basin states often preclude and do supersede collective action within the Basin. Similarly, it can be argued that these domestic priorities shape international engagements between riparians – across the conflict-cooperation continuum.

Thus, one can claim that although this coexistence has only recently been conceptualised within the literature, this new perspective shed light on existing phenomena within Nile hydropolitics. As explained by Amdetsion (2008: 14), "even as the ancient empires of Punt and Axum, which correspond to modern-day Ethiopia and parts of Sudan, enjoyed considerable trade relations with ancient Egypt, the [political] issues related to the Nile were predominant" (Phillips 1997). The politicisation of Nile flows has continued to dominate hydropolitical relations between riparians well into modernity with downstream states generally deploying strategies aimed at maintaining the status quo while constraining upstream states' work towards overturning it. Some scholars have argued successfully that the nuances of this coexistence persist beyond the traditional split between upstream and downstream, as demonstrated in the examination of Egyptian-Sudanese hydropolitical relations. Cascão, in Zeitoun and Mirumachi (2008), best illustrates this dynamic concomitance when plotting their relations over time onto a TWINS matrix. Particularly striking in this case was the period leading up to and immediately after the signing of the 1959 agreement where relations between the two riparians jerked drastically from securitized ad hoc cooperation (negative interaction) to politicized risk-averting cooperation (medium-high) due to changes to the leadership in Sudan following military revolution (Zeitoun and Mirumachi 2008: 308).

Figure 8 - TWINS matrix of conflict and cooperation applied to hydropolitical bilateral relations over time between Sudan and Egypt (Zeitoun and Mirumachi 2008: 307)



The last decade, in particular, has seen significant changes in Eastern Nile hydropolitical dynamics as Ethiopia has enjoyed domestic political stability, sustained economic growth and access to alternate sources of finance for their ever-more ambitious hydraulic plans (Nicol and Cascão 2011; Swain 2011). This has impacted Egyptian water security considerations within the Eastern Nile, as officials in both Ethiopia and Sudan have begun to flex their newly acquired socio-political and economic muscle by initiating unilateral projects at the expense of the status quo (Cascão 2009a). This is emblematic of the determining role which domestic political factors play in the contestation of hydro-hegemony within a

given transboundary river basin. In the case of Ethiopia, a brief examination of how its domestic conditions have changed since the early 1990s can help illustrate the critical juncture at which the Basin's hydropolitics moved away from the historical processes of hydro-hegemony, represented by consent, towards counter-hegemony, as exemplified by contestation.

Throughout its political history, the Ethiopian state has consistently been plagued by centrifugal tendencies. This has often forced a variety of regimes into the same choice - to focus their resources on regime survival at the cost of their development ambitions (Gebreluel 2014). This feature of the Ethiopian political experience has in the last two decades been reversed with the rise to power of the Ethiopia People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). By co-opting or defeating the majority of armed opposition groups operating within the country, the regime has been able to consolidate its authority thus allowing it to register impressive economic progress and development over the last decade (*Ibd* 29). Domestic political stability, rapid growth, changing demographics, greater military power, weakening of historical regional adversaries such as Somalia, Egypt and Eritrea, has seen the country emerge as a central player in regional and continental diplomacy (*Ibd* 29). Ethiopia has recently been able to play an important role in the fight against extremism in the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea, mediation in South Sudan, AU peacekeeping operations and regional economic integration agendas. As a result, "the Ethiopian state, whose international relations was for decades mainly limited to the objective of ensuring state survival, now possesses the diplomatic influence, strategic weight, and economic as well as military resources to pursue one of its perennial aspirations: successfully challenging Egypt's hegemony in the Nile Basin" (*Ibd* 30). This is most exemplified by Ethiopia's lead role in the NBI and CFA negotiations coupled with its pursuit of an ambitious hydraulic mission exemplified by the unilateral construction of the GERD. In the current political circumstances, Ethiopia has emerged as both a regional leader in the Horn of Africa and a leading voice in the transformation of Nile hydropolitics.

Prior to the current furore over unilateralism on the Nile, Waterbury (2002) had pointed to the gradual resurrection of the Harmon Doctrine in the Basin, pointing to the rise of incipient upstream unilateralism in Ethiopia in particular. Over the years, the pace of this rise has only accelerated as Ethiopia with the benefit of Chinese investment (Bosshard 2009) and support of the World Bank under NBI auspices has been able to initiate its own 'hydraulic mission'. In this regard, the last three years have seen a flurry of construction activity on Nile tributaries in Ethiopia with the completion of the Tekeze Dam and Tana-Beles Link projects and ongoing work on the GERD (Whittington, Waterbury and Jeuland 2014). Consequently, some have gone even further by arguing that the end of hydropolitical status quo on the Nile has already come to pass and that "Ethiopia, with its strategy of hydro-agricultural state-building and its vision of regional leadership through energy diplomacy" is leading the pack in claims to Egypt's throne (Verhoeven 2013). Nicol and Cascão (2011) have described how recent cooperation on the Nile, as represented by basin-wide ventures, masks simmering riparian unilateralism. This notwithstanding, the unilateral construction of the GERD has ushered in a period of increased dialogue and cooperation on the Eastern Nile, engaging the three riparians in tripartite negotiations. Nicol and Cascão (2016) have

further argued that the GERD, has in fact, contributed to the existence of new norms of cooperation within the Basin, thus exemplifying the coexistence of unilateralism and multilateralism in the Basin.

Another important aspect of how intensities of conflict and cooperation are changing in the Basin has been exemplified by the CFA. The CFA aims to transform the asymmetric allocation of Nile waters by replacing previous treaties on the Nile (1929 and 1959) with a new accord based on the international principle of equitable and reasonable utilisation. The Ethiopian government has attempted to: (1) influence the direction and content of the CFA; (2) unify upstream riparians in downplaying past Nile water agreements; (3) isolate Egypt and to a lesser extent Sudan in their defense of historical rights and (4) advance national NBI projects financially supported by the World Bank (Waterbury 2002; Cascão 2009a). As of 2014, six of the upstream riparians – known as the Entebbe Group - have signed the CFA (Whittington, Waterbury and Jeuland 2014) based on equitable and reasonable utilisation (Swain 2011) with South Sudan having publicly announced its intention to sign[11]. This represents an important shift on the Nile, as upstream riparians, led by Ethiopia, continue to flex their muscle by using cooperative institutional platforms to pursue the transformation of the Basin.

The growing pressures of systemic factors including population growth, the need for industrialisation and potential effects of climate change have served to compound riparian uncertainty in an era of shifting power relations. Malthusian speculations about the inevitable conflicts that will arise with the projected doubling of Northeastern Africa's population by 2050, and accompanying water scarcity and food security, especially, are providing the backdrop for growing uncertainty (Chellaney 2013). Furthermore, despite improving diplomatic relations between riparians, historical distrust on the Nile remains: downstream Egypt and Sudan refuse to renegotiate their 1959 water allocations; Sudan and Ethiopia have aligned on the development of large-scale hydropower dams, such as the GERD, on the Blue Nile; and upstream riparians, led by Ethiopia continue to reject the 1959 agreement while pushing forward the transformative but contentious CFA (Cascão 2008).

It seems in concert with the re-emergence of mistrust and suspicion, Nile riparian states have reverted to what Mason (2005: 115) has described as the 'scorpion problematique':

"The scorpion approached several animals asking if he could ride on their back across the river but no one dared to trust the scorpion and declined until he asked the sheep, because the scorpion said that if he struck during the crossing, both would die. So, in the middle of the river, the scorpion struck, and as they both sank, the sheep cried 'why?' The scorpion said, 'I could not do anything else, I am a scorpion'"

One could argue that the coexistence of conflict and cooperation in the basin is directly reflected in the desire of riparian states to 'have their cake and eat it' as they pursue both unilateralism and multilateralism. The decisions of states to engage in a two-track approach to basin development can be attributed to the uncertainty surrounding the various cooperative processes currently being pursued by

[11] Egypt and Sudan have not signed the agreement, Eritrea remains an observer at the NBI and the Democratic Republic of Congo have the matter under consideration.

riparians. The futures of both the CFA and NBI process are yet unclear with the cracks created by this uncertainty prone to a state 'hedging of bets' in the form of unilateral hydraulic development. The unilateral construction of the GERD and the associated tripartite process it has created; and the multilateral pursuit of a basin-wide legal framework, display, in particular, how the Eastern Nile's pre-eminent contrarian, Ethiopia, is attempting to have its cake while eating it.

3 THEORETICAL FOUNDATION AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter will be to unpack and enrich the existing analytical debates surrounding the complex processes and constructed knowledge that shapes transboundary water relations. In an effort to help understand this complexity and answer overarching questions surrounding the access and allocation of contested water resources a number of scholars have successfully argued that hydraulic control is not achieved through water wars but through an assemblage of power-related tactics and strategies (Frey 1993; Lowi 1993; Homer-Dixon 2001; Wolf 2002; Zeitoun and Warner 2006; McCaffrey 2007; Cascão 2009a; Kehl 2011; Dinar *et al.* 2012; Schmeier *et al.* 2016). Recent studies that have revealed the coexistence of conflict and cooperation and the dynamics borne out of these interactions have gone further in highlighting the conceptual importance of power in explaining hydropolitical relations (Zeitoun and Mirumachi 2008; Zeitoun *et al.* 2011; Mirumachi 2015; Zeitoun *et al.* 2016). However, despite the increasing popularity of these approaches, this research will argue that our understanding of transboundary water interactions is yet limited, and that our analysis, in its current form, continues to overlook the conceptual importance of the relationality between domestic politics and international relations in the study transboundary water relations.

This chapter will seek to address these issues by highlighting a more critical approach to the study of hydropolitics that adequately accounts for the domestic and international factors which determine the foreign policy pursued by riparian states in their basin-level interactions with other riparians. Sneddon and Fox (2006) in calling for a critical hydropolitics captured the largely state-centric focus of the majority of the literature on this subject explaining that much of the work on transboundary water conflict has very little to say about the multi-actor character of water politics. Equally, Giordano and Wolf (2002) argued that studies on transboundary water relations have separated interstate relations over shared water resources from the circumstances which produce them within the state, thus neglecting the role played by domestic politics in shaping a given state's diplomatic activities. In an era of globalisation and interdependence, to properly understand the context within which hydropolitics play out, there is a need to analyse the role of state elites who balance "a complex array of domestic political, social and economic goals with international threats and opportunities" in pursuit of their hydraulic missions (Deets 2009: 39). It is important to account for the domestic scale in the analysis of transboundary water interactions as the interests and decision-making of domestic elites serves to drive hegemonic agendas and dynamics within the basin. Equally, the influence of the international system and global political-economy on these central decision-makers, and by extension the management and/or mismanagement of regional water relations, cannot be underestimated and must be explored. By accounting for the impacts of these two-level factors on hydropolitical relations, this research will seek to investigate the dynamics of water interactions between riparian states in transboundary river basins characterised by

asymmetric control. For the purposes of this research, there will not be an attempt at theory-building within this analytical framework. Instead, the theory of counter-hegemony in association with the logic of the two-level game will be applied to the empirical case of Ethiopia.

Following an examination of the framework of hydro-hegemony in the next sections, the chapter, building on Cascão's (2009b) work on counter-hegemony, will introduce Putnam's (1988) two-level game to capture the domestic and international factors shaping the contestation of hydro-hegemony on the Nile that we are witnessing today. Thus, the chapter will draw on the concepts developed in earlier sections in order to specifically examine the two-level game being played by Ethiopia in its contestation of Egyptian hydro-hegemony on the Nile.

3.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

As previously introduced in Chapter 1, the study is concerned with the following research questions:

The main research question of this study is – How has Ethiopia, a non-hegemonic riparian, attempted to counter Egypt's hegemonic control of transboundary water resources in the Eastern Nile Basin, and what are its goals in challenging this status quo?

Sub-question A – What domestic hegemonic strategies is the Ethiopian government pursuing in its attempts to access and utilise a greater share of Eastern Nile water resources?

> Sub-question A1 – To what extent do domestic hegemonic strategies and tactics contribute to the control of transboundary water resources?

Sub-question B – What basin-wide counter-hegemonic strategies and tactics are Ethiopian officials employing in their attempts to challenge Egyptian hegemonic control within the Eastern Nile Basin?

> Sub-question B1 – How has Ethiopia been historically impacted by Egyptian hydro-hegemony in the Nile Basin?
>
> Sub-question B2 – To what extent do basin-wide counter-hegemonic strategies and tactics contest Egyptian asymmetric control of Nile water resources within the Basin?

Sub-question C – How has the Ethiopian government deployed discursive power regionally in support of its construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam along the Blue Nile?

> Sub-question C1 – How have Ethiopian officials amplified and promoted alternative discourses, within the Basin, in support of upstream hydraulic development?
>
> Sub-question C2 - To what extent does the discursive power legitimise the unilateral construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam by the Ethiopian Government?

3.3 FRAMEWORK OF HYDRO-HEGEMONY

In the study of hydropolitical relations, the framework of Hydro-hegemony (FHH) has emerged as an innovative theoretical framework by which scholars are currently analysing transboundary water relations. In their pioneering work, Zeitoun and Warner identified how cooperation between riparians in river basins masks the existence of silent water conflicts and that the power asymmetry between riparians, and the hegemony it begets, are the prime determinants of the degree of control over shared waters that riparians can attain (Zeitoun and Warner 2006: 436). FHH has proved fundamental to the development of the present analytical framework. Consequently, the following sections of this chapter will aim to introduce the key concepts and relevant ideas advanced by these authors and others in the analysis of the role of power relations in the management of transboundary water resources.

3.3.1 POWER

The fundamental nature of power and our understanding of it has always been governed by the asymmetry with which it is both distributed and exercised. Whether it is people, corporations or states, power has never been bestowed equally.

We can similarly observe this asymmetry in the act of engaging in competition over shared or transboundary water resources where the respective strengths and weaknesses of each competitor are revealed (Zeitoun and Warner 2006: 442). With the FHH, Zeitoun and Warner identified the asymmetric distribution of power inherent in competition over scarce and/or shared water resources.

In framing the asymmetry of power within the FHH, Zeitoun and Warner leaned on Daoudy (2005) and Turton's (2005) understanding of power as both '*puissance*' (i.e. potential power) and '*pouvoir*' (i.e. actualized power). As summarized by Zeitoun and Warner, *puissance* is potential power, power as might, such as the physical wherewithal power to explode an atomic bomb, *pouvoir* is actualized power, the authority or 'powers' to stop the rocket being launched (Zeitoun and Warner 2006: 442). By locating '*pouvoir*' within Steven Lukes' (2005 [1974]) wider conceptualisation, power is understood as having three distinct but complementary faces: (1) *material*; (2) *bargaining*; and (3) *ideational* (Zeitoun and Allan 2008). Bachrat and Baratz in their 1962 work on this topic refer to power as having distinct faces. Faces that Lukes (2005 [1974]) argues are progressively more profound and hidden than the last. FHH distinguishes the following three dimensions of power as the primary influencers of competition for transboundary waters:

1. "Power in its most recognisable form is the *material* capacity of one party to gain the compliance of the other" (Zeitoun and Allan 2008: 7). At the state level, this can include everything from military might and economic strength to political support, size of territory, riparian position and so on (Strange 1987). In the case of river basins, the riparians geographic position along the river can be a factor in explaining the asymmetric control of water as being upstream can yield an advantageous bargaining position for a riparian compared to a downstream competitor.

2. Identified originally by Bachrach and Baratz (1962) the second face of power, *bargaining*, refers to a given actor's ability to set the agenda, control the rules of the game or crucially "decide where the goalposts are, and to move them at will" (Zeitoun and Allan 2008: 7). In real terms, Lukes (2005:11) describes this as the power of the stronger party to strip a weaker competitor of the choice between compliance and non-compliance.
3. Although *Ideational* power is the least visible form of power, it can be argued that it is the most effective and impactful face. Steven Lukes (2005) refers to this as the "power to prevent people, to whatever degree, from having grievances by shaping their perceptions, cognitions and preferences in such a way that they accept their role in the existing" status quo. In this case, power is exercised in order to co-opt the ideas of the weak by implanting self-serving ideologies and agendas in their minds leaving them unable to voice true dissent or engage in transformative debate (Strange 1994: 176).

Zeitoun and Allan (2008) capture the interplay between these faces of power ("*Force, deals* and *ideas*") when they outline that actors in privileged positions can maintain or even improve their lot by (1) deploying *material* power in a coercive mode; (2) using power over the *bargaining* process to ensure success where formal and informal opportunities for negotiation exist; and (3) co-opting those without power into believing that their predicaments are reasonable, and not worth questioning at all. The principal quality of this multi-faced approach to power, for our purposes, is that it can provide a more in-depth and textured method of analysis for the asymmetry that typically exists in transboundary water interactions. The approach can help us identify where power determines what is known, what is emphasized and who prevails while heightening our awareness of the invisible and clandestine processes that will often explain these outcomes (Zeitoun and Allan 2008: 9).

By effectively wielding and exercising these forms of power FHH helps explain how stronger parties can ensure a leading hegemonic position for years, decades and even centuries to come.

3.3.2 HEGEMONY

As an essentially contested concept hegemony has been a loosely used and often abused term in the popular press and culture. Zeitoun and Warner (2006: 437) have themselves described it as an oft convenient epithet by which the behaviour of great powers has been lambasted.

A central concept to this study, hegemony as defined by FHH is largely informed by Gramscian and neo-Gramscian scholarship as opposed to the realist and liberal schools (Waltz 1979; Keohane 1984). Hegemony is a useful concept by which the analysis and communication of asymmetric international power relations are made possible (Zeitoun and Allan 2008: 9). In explaining hegemony, Gramsci (1971) argued that it was a relation of consent by means of ideological and political leadership rather than domination by force. In distinguishing the difference between these two approaches, FHH contends that "hegemony can be considered as leadership buttressed by authority" while "dominance is defined as leadership buttressed by coercion" (Zeitoun and Warner 2006: 438). This distinction between leadership

and domination is critical to FHH as hegemony should not simply be viewed as a product of force or intimidation but rather is about the legitimacy borne out of consent. Rush (1992: 53) explaining legitimacy within such a context highlights that it is "the extent to which social or political norms are accepted, especially those applying to the exercise of power over some individuals or groups of individuals by others". Furthermore, powerful states can achieve success in a hegemonic strategy by building cohesion through a balance between attraction and intimidation rather than just bullying (Zeitoun and Allan 2008). In the same vein, Gramsci (1971) elaborated on the complementary mixture of force and consent necessary for hegemony by using Machiavelli's analogy of the mythical centaur – half man, half beast – to help explain how the bourgeoisie can effectively manipulate the proletariat in order to avert revolution. In other terms, as hegemonic power must take into account the non-hegemon in order to be effectively deployed, it will always require two (or more) to tango.

Zeitoun and Warner (2006: 438) explain that theories of hegemony such as FHH "attempt to explain how groups with power (hegemons) can maintain their pole position (control) [over non-hegemons], other than through mere repression". However, in order to apply such theories of hegemony to an empirical context, it is important to understand and identify what mechanisms can be used to attain the compliance of non-hegemons. By drawing on Lustick's (2002) work on compliance, informed by the prior scholarship of Amitai Etzioni and David Held, FHH adopts the view that there exist four types of these mechanisms. In order of their increasing efficiency they are identified as:

1. *Coercive* (force or direct threat of force)
2. *Utilitarian* (bribes, trades of service)
3. *Normative* agreement (a conscious belief that it is in the non-hegemon's best interest to comply, thereby reinforcing the legitimacy of the hegemon)
4. Gramscian ideological hegemony (beliefs manufactured by hegemons to be perceived by non-hegemon as common sense)

Although all of these methods can theoretically be deployed by the hegemon, whether in reality they are or not, is dependent on the capacity of the hegemon to write the rules of the game that non-hegemons are expected to comply with.

In spite of the commonly held negative misperceptions about the concept previously mentioned, Zeitoun and Warner (2006) as with the present research, take hegemony as a conceptually value-free term. Hegemony, in practice, however, can manifest itself both positively and negatively with FHH describing its empirical iterations as "somewhere between the poles of enlightened leadership and oppressive domination" (Zeitoun and Warner 2006: 439). The specific strategies and tactics employed by powerful states in order to preserve their chosen brand of hegemony will be discussed in relation to the asymmetric control over shared water resources in the next section.

3.3.3 HYDRO-HEGEMONY

In marrying these conceptions of power and hegemony with an understanding of the existence of silent conflict within transboundary river basins, Zeitoun and Warner (2006) appropriately theorized the concept of hydro-hegemony. At its most basic hydro-hegemony can simply be described as hegemony exercised within a river basin. Furthermore, Warner (2008) explains that river basins are a particular arena of international relations, where relations between basin states almost inevitably get tense due to their respective hydraulic ambitions for the shared river. These tensions, which manifest themselves as competition, when coupled with existing power asymmetries create the conditions necessary for hydro-hegemony. FHH advances the view that asymmetric power is the determining factor in "the outcome of competition for, and the degree of control that is realised over, shared water resources" (Cascão 2009b: 75). It is worth noting that hydro-hegemony has been critiqued for its state-centrism and its neglect of non-hegemonic riparians in basins characterised by asymmetric control of water resources. These critiques will be discussed in relation to the framework of counter-hegemony in Section 3.4.

According to FHH, hydro-hegemony is "achieved through water resource control strategies such as resource capture, integration and containment. The strategies are executed through an array of tactics (e.g. coercion-pressure, treaties, knowledge construction, etc.) that are enabled by the exploitation of existing power asymmetries" (Zeitoun and Warner 2006: 435). By categorizing them within Lustick's compliance-producing mechanisms of increasing efficiency (*Coercive – Utilitarian – Normative – Ideological/hegemonic*), FHH identifies *resource capture*, *integration* and *containment* as the principal strategic outcomes desired by hydro-hegemons. Furthermore, Zeitoun and Warner propose various tactics by which hydro-hegemons can achieve these water control strategies. By expanding on and discussing these strategies and tactics within the context of Eastern Nile basin hydropolitics one can better understand how hydro-hegemons achieve the desired asymmetric control over transboundary water resources.

3.3.3.1 WATER RESOURCE CONTROL STRATEGIES

Resource capture strategies are aimed at guaranteeing the technical control of water resources through the construction of hydraulic projects that affect flow or quality. By establishing 'facts on the ground' riparian states enable the physical management of water whilst creating new hydropolitical realities within a basin (Zeitoun and Warner 2006). Through this strategy, riparians can gain access to and control water resources thus shifting the resource's distribution in their favour (Homer-Dixon 2001). Within the Eastern Nile basin, Egypt's construction of the Aswan High Dam is one example of how states can pursue *resource capture* strategies through the construction of large hydraulic infrastructure (Waterbury 2002). Although this strategy is usually associated with unilateralism, it is useful to note that it can be combined with other strategies (*integration* or *containment*) and tactics (agreements, treaties, incentives etc.) in order to ensure control.

Containment strategies aim to contain riparian competitors in a position of weakness by engaging them bilaterally or through multilateral mechanisms so as to ensure their continued compliance (Zeitoun and

Warner 2006). Hydro-hegemons may also opt to sign favourable legal agreements with their riparian neighbours in order to curb their room to manoeuvre (Fischhendler 2008a). Legal agreements and treaties have formed a significant part of Egyptian containment strategies on the Nile. The signing of the *1959 Agreement for the full Utilisation of the Nile Waters* between Sudan and Egypt effectively allocated them 90% of Nile waters. The agreement was also successful in co-opting Sudan into a seemingly permanent alliance with Egypt that ensured they would negotiate jointly in the event of any future upstream claims to the water (Republic of the Sudan and the United Arab Republic 1959). The 1959 Agreement was particularly targeted at: 1) throttling Sudanese utilisation; 2) incorporating Sudan into Egyptian Nile policy while strong-arming it into a downstream alliance in direct competition with upstream riparians and; 3) legitimising downstream historical rights to Nile water resources. These considerations which were included within the particulars of the agreement clinched Sudanese compliance on the Nile – bolstering the Egyptian position for decades to come. Equally, the agreement served to prevent upstream utilisation of the Nile thus containing their hydraulic ambitions. The 1959 Agreement can be considered the lynchpin of Egypt's historical containment strategy with the practices it enshrined still the bedrock of the Egyptian position on the Nile today.

Similarly, *integration* strategies rely on the hydro-hegemon's engagement with its riparian competitors but instead through the proffering of incentives aimed at encouraging compliance which is derived through consensus (Zeitoun and Warner 2006). This compliance is engineered through what Zeitoun, Mirumachi and Warner (2011) refer to as the integrative exercise of 'soft' power. Wherein the hydro-hegemon discursively frames the issue in such a way that it is accepted without debate and in extreme cases as the 'natural' 'order of things' as opposed to the 'current' 'order of things' (Zeitoun, Mirumachi and Warner 2011: 163). This strategy can be executed bilaterally or multilaterally at the basin scale through treaties, agreements or the creation of river basin organisations (RBOs). It has also been noted that hydro-hegemons may seek to 'buy off' discontent by offering the 'carrots' of cooperation in the form of loans or gifts thus creating an obligation on the part of the accepting party to comply. An example of this strategy in action was observed with the Egyptian-led launch of the *UNDUGU* group of Nile riparians in 1983 that was boycotted by Ethiopia. Although the scheme was established under the auspices of fostering greater basin-wide cooperation, it was most likely aimed at "helping [upstream] riparians develop alternatives to Nile water" while consolidating Egyptian control (Waterbury 2002: 76).

As demonstrated above hydro-hegemons can resort to a number of inter-linked strategies in order to achieve and consolidate their asymmetric control over shared water resources. Within the context of the Eastern Nile basin, understanding these strategies and how they have been deployed by the hydro-hegemon, Egypt, helps explain why control of the basin's water is characterized by asymmetry. As mentioned earlier, however, these hydro-hegemonic strategies can only be achieved by utilising a number of supporting tactics. In defining these tactics, FHH categorizes them according to Lustick's (2002) four compliance-producing mechanisms. The following sub-section will draw heavily on Zeitoun and

Warner (2006) and elaborate upon these tactics while exemplifying them with empirical detail from the Eastern Nile.

3.3.3.2 WATER RESOURCE CONTROL TACTICS

Coercive tactics can mostly be attributed to the success of a *containment* strategy and may be revealed in several forms:

Military force tactics, although rare in competition over water, occur when riparian states mobilize and deploy their armed forces in hydropolitical disputes with other riparians. Indeed, as Dinar (2009) showed the use of force in hydropolitics is not just rare but also not cost-effective.

Covert action occurs when a riparian intervenes, by proxy or undercover, in the internal affairs of a competitor in order to weaken its political, socio-economic, military and/or hydraulic apparatus. A proxy, in this case, can take the form of an opposition group or rebel movement which is being provided with external assistance. The Eastern Nile has been a staging ground for this tactic on numerous occasions with Egypt supporting Somali irredentism and Eritrean secessionists in order to destabilize upstream Ethiopia (Zeitoun and Warner 2006).

Coercion-pressure can be called the most commonly used tactic of all. It refers to the use of political, military, diplomatic or economic threats against a riparian so as to ensure compliance. By threatening military action, economic sanctions or even political isolation hydro-hegemons can influence weaker riparians away from plans that oppose their own (Cascão 2009b: 81). Historically, Egypt has resorted to the use of military threats in order to dissuade upstream Ethiopia from pursuing its hydraulic plans for the Nile (Brunee and Toope 2002). From Sadat to Morsi, Egyptian leadership has used *coercion-pressure* tactics in order to ensure the compliance of both Ethiopia and Sudan.

Utilitarian tactics are the opposite of the *coercive* tactics mentioned above with hydro-hegemons instead offering *incentives* to fellow riparians so as to ensure their compliance. These tactics are most often associated with *resource capture* and/or *integration* water control strategies.

These *incentives* could represent the sharing of benefits accrued from the implementation of a given hydraulic project or agreement, economic benefits such as financial compensation, favourable trade deals or grants and diplomatic or military protection. For example, Egypt has recently signed a raft of trade agreements with Ethiopia following their well-publicized disagreements over the latter's construction of the GERD. It is also important to note that through the provision of these *incentives* and the compliance they garner hydro-hegemons can also more easily push on with controversial hydraulic infrastructure projects (Cascão 2009b).

For example, Egypt deployed *utilitarian* tactics including incentivisation in its dealings with Sudan over the 1959 Agreement. These incentives included:

1. **Approval for the building of Roseires Dam in Sudan**: Article 2(1) of the Agreement states that "in order to enable the Sudan to utilise its share of the [Nile] water, the two republics agree that the Republic of Sudan shall construct the Roseires Dam on the Blue Nile". This was a significant incentive offered by Egypt as it had historically opposed the construction of dams in Sudan for fear of increased utilisation from irrigation. Instead, here, this incentive was used as part of a containment strategy which succeeded in locking down the legal allocation of Nile waters to the Sudan. The Roseires Dam would eventually allow Sudan to increase water storage for the purposes of irrigation in the Gezira Scheme and hydropower generation.
2. **Compensation for construction of the HAD:** In Article 2(6) the Egyptian government agreed to pay compensation worth 15 million Egyptian pounds to the Sudan "for the damage resulting to the Sudanese existing properties as a result of the storage in the Suud el Aali Reservoir" created by the HAD. In a subsequent article of the agreement, the Sudanese government agreed to the final transfer of inhabitants in the reservoir area whose lands would be submerged by its waters.
3. **Increased allocation of water:** As part of this agreement, Sudan received an increased share of the Nile water they were allocated under the terms of the 1929 Agreement. Where before Sudan was only allocated 4 BCM, Article 2(4) granted it an additional 14.5 BCM bringing its annual allocation to a total of 18.5 BCM. Furthermore, in the event of an increase in the annual flows of the Nile above the agreed 84 BCM, both parties agreed to equally divide any increase in flows.
4. **Sharing of new and recovered waters:** Article 3(1) established that any increased yields of water from conservation infrastructure in the upstream swamps and tributaries of the Nile in Sudan would be divided equally between the two countries. Additionally, the costs of any such infrastructure projects would be contributed to equally by both governments.

Normative tactics look to institutionalize relations between riparians through *treaties* thus retaining the ability to contribute to the success of all water control strategies pursued by hydro-hegemons.

Treaties can be either bilateral or multilateral and can cover a variety of hydraulic issues but should never be seen as strictly constructive or of general benefit. Indeed, many scholars (Fischhendler 2008b, Zeitoun and Mirumachi 2008) have argued that such *treaties* have the potential to mask the real aims of the actors involved and can have a hydro-hegemonic agenda guiding proceedings thereby perpetuating the asymmetric allocation and utilisation of water. The signing of the *1959 Agreement for the full Utilisation of the Nile Waters* between Sudan and Egypt remains an enduring example of how *normative* tactics in the Eastern Nile have served to maintain asymmetric control.

Hegemonic tactics, in much the same way as Lustick's mechanisms of growing efficiency, are considered the most efficient tactics by which to ensure compliance in hydropolitical relations. These tactics represent the apex of both bargaining and ideational powers and hydro-hegemons, by definition, have considerable capacities to deploy them. Consequently, these tactics can contribute to the success of all water control strategies discussed earlier in this chapter.

Sanctioned discourse framed by Gramsci (1971) and FHH refers to the prevailing ideas and narratives that are politically legitimised by the hydro-hegemon in an effort to support and/or advance political interests. By deliberately emphasizing or de-emphasizing certain discourses hydro-hegemons are able to control and manipulate debates surrounding hydropolitics as they see fit. Within the context of the Nile, Egypt has continually looked to emphasize principles such as 'prior use' and 'historic rights' while de-emphasizing existing asymmetry and inequity within the basin (Swain 2011).

Securitization goes hand in hand with *sanctioned discourse* in that it refers to states upgrading issues of low-politics, such as water in this case, to the realm of high-politics and national security. This process legitimises the state to take exceptional measures – including armed force – in order to preserve national security (Buzan *et al*. 1998: 5). As was the case with the construction of Egypt's Aswan High Dam, the *securitization* of water can be used as a justification for the initiation of large hydraulic infrastructure projects (Cascão 2009b: 85). However, *securitization* can also be judged a *coercive* tactic in that it actively lets your fellow riparians know that you are willing to go to any lengths to defend your position vis-à-vis water resources.

In the same way as *securitization* can politicize and upgrade certain issues it can also be used in order to depoliticize through *silentization* or the silencing of political processes. This can be used by hydro-hegemons in order to underplay factors they deem unfavourable to their position. By deploying the tactic in this way, riparians are able to keep certain issues off the table while in the process complimenting their ability to *sanction the discourse*. Egypt has *silentized* issues related to unilateral out-of-basin water transfer projects such as the South Valley/Toshka Project (Cascão 2009a: 249).

Knowledge construction, which is also closely related tactic to *sanctioned discourse,* relates to the hydro-hegemons ability to control access to available data, information and knowledge related to the hydropolitical (Allan 2004). This is most often revealed in the sanctioning of hydraulic data and lends itself to asymmetry in the knowledge that exists as a result of sustained hydro-hegemony. Thus the hydro-hegemon is in a position to take advantage of this asymmetry in knowledge in order to present sanctioned information and 'stack the decks' in their favour at the negotiating table (Cascão 2009b). Here Egypt's ability to "give different perspectives on its hydro-situation to its own people, to international donors and its riparian competitors or friends [has] created more room to manoeuvre by reducing apparent external pressure" (Zeitoun and Warner 2006: 448).

Active stalling can be deployed by hydro-hegemonic riparians in an effort to maintain the existing status quo (Zeitoun 2006: 244). By "playing with time" the hydro-hegemon can delay negotiations or agreements as it desires thereby holding back any changes that may negatively affect its interests (Rubinstein 1985: 1153 – 1154). This tactic can most clearly be observed in the negotiations over the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) with Egypt consistently delaying and stalling negotiations over a new deal on the Nile in an effort to prolong its asymmetric control over the waters.

3.4 COUNTER-HEGEMONY AS A TWO-LEVEL GAME

In Greek mythology, the Lernaean Hydra was an ancient serpent-like water monster with reptilian traits. It possessed many heads — the poets mention more heads than the vase-painters could paint — and for each head cut off, it grew two more.

The evolving literature on basin level hegemony discussed earlier in this chapter, has left largely under-theorized the contestation of these hydro-hegemonic strategies by non-hegemons as well as the factors, both domestic and international, which shape these interactions. Mainstream scholarship on hydropolitics tends to focus on existing inter-state relations, in particular, how hydro-hegemonic riparians push agendas aimed at the consolidation and maintenance of hydraulic control. For example, analysis of the counter strategies and tactics deployed by non-hegemons Syria and Iraq on the Tigres-Euphrates could provide a valuable insight into the processes and outcomes of transboundary water interactions (Schulz 1995, Kibaroglu 1996, Warner 2008). Similarly, counter-hegemonic analysis of the Amu Darya Basin could reveal how non-hegemonic riparians in a basin without a clear hydro-hegemon pursue hydraulic control (Wegerich 2008). In other words, "literature challenging existing relationships is not common" (Cascão 2008: 16). This section will aim to flesh out FHH, the analytical approach conceptualized by Zeitoun and Warner (2006), to expand on the concepts of contestation present in the framework of Counter-hegemony (Cascão 2007; 2008; 2009a; 2009b; 2010). Furthermore, by incorporating the logic of the two-level game as conceptualised by Putnam (1988), this research will bring greater nuance to the existing debates surrounding counter-hegemony - adequately accounting for the domestic determinants of foreign policy decisions on transboundary water development.

This approach, while based upon Gramscian conceptualisations of power, hegemony and resistance, provides an analytical lens by which it is possible to comprehensively examine counter-hegemonic actions within transboundary river basins at two interrelated levels - domestic and international. This analysis reveals how these interactions have direct implications on the strategic and tactical choices made by non-hegemonic riparians in their engagements with hydro-hegemonic riparians. In subsequent chapters, this approach is applied to the analysis of Ethiopia's contestation of Egyptian hydro-hegemony in the Eastern Nile Basin.

3.4.1 COUNTER-HEGEMONY AND CHANGE

For all its merits, discussed earlier in this chapter, one of the most notable shortcomings of FHH lies in one of its strengths – its focus on the agency of hydro-hegemonic riparians. Although FHH has been able to identify and analyse the importance of asymmetric power relations in transboundary river basins and the various strategies and tactics that hydro-hegemons deploy to maintain it, some including its authors (Zeitoun and Warner 2006; Warner 2008) have argued for the need to go further. Cascão (2009b) was the first author to attempt to definitively address these limitations when she argued for the need to consider the perspective of non-hegemonic riparians operating in transboundary river basins characterized by hydro-hegemony. She went on to argue that though FHH has allowed scholars to uncover the strategies used to perpetuate hydro-hegemony, it has said very little about the responses of

non-hegemons to these dynamics and any counter-strategies adopted by them to challenge this status quo (Cascão 2009b). Without explicit consideration of the non-hegemonic position, we fail to analyse the total picture of riparian relations within transboundary river basins.

Before proceeding, it is worth mentioning again, the importance of IPE scholarship to the development of this study. IPE has allowed for a more critical analysis of the inter-related roles played by the political, economic and trans-national in shaping transboundary water interactions. By leaning on neo-Gramscian thinkers to conceptualize the relationship between power and hegemony, it has been possible to elaborate on FHH. However, another important contribution of the IPE/neo-Gramscian tradition can be found in its analytical focus. In addition to the processes related to power and hegemony, this critical focus allows for the exploration of the nature of *change* existent in these processes. Thus, forming the backbone of Cascão's inquiry into and elaboration of a framework for counter-hegemony (2009b).

Gramsci (in Simon 1982: 37) himself, accepted the nature of change in hegemony in that hegemony is never static nor is it ever to be "taken for granted but instead has to be continually fought for afresh". This was later followed up by neo-Gramscians such as Cox (1983) who likewise argued that power in its various forms and hegemonic configurations do not remain unchanged or uncontested over time. As Gill (1993: 25) also noted hegemonies in their various manifestations are not subject to a "historical inevitability" as they develop through time. Inevitably, as hegemonies are the product of the relations of different actors at various levels over time, differing perspectives and goals will collide. Hegemony never develops in isolation and wherever it is found "automatically generates challenge, resistance and dynamics of counter-hegemony, and so hegemony and resistance may be conceptualized as a dialectical pair" (Cascão 2009b: 73). It is in understanding the contexts of these struggles that we can be able to understand how hegemonic configurations may be challenged and contested within transboundary river basins.

For this Cascão (2009b) returns to Gramsci and the concepts of the *war of position, resistance* and *counter-hegemony*. The *war of position* is described as a long-term strategy in which a broad bloc of varied social forces is built up in order to transform existing hegemonic relationships. *Resistance* and *counter-hegemony* it is argued can be viewed as two sides of the same coin in that one is "more reactive in its motivation and refractory in consequence" while the other "is more deliberate in actions and comprehensive in terms of its transformative potential" (Persaud 2001: 7). These three concepts are at the heart of Cascão's (2009b) framework of counter-hegemony, which is critical to the present study.

In short, counter-hydro-hegemony can be defined as the practices of contestation and resistance that are carried out in basins characterized by hydro-hegemony, pursued through several strategies. The framework begins with the assumption that weaker parties are not necessarily without power in these basins. Cascão (2009b: 89) asserts that non-hegemons "do not always consent to, or comply with, hegemonic dynamics". When non-hegemonic riparians counter hegemony it is assumed that their goals are linked to challenging the status quo and/or promoting an alternative to the existing status quo

(Farrands 2002). The processes of resistance and counter-hegemony are complementary and often occur in sequence starting with the contestation of hegemonic legitimacy followed by challenges made to the hegemonic status quo and finally the creation of alternatives to a hydropolitical regime (Cascão 2009b).

Although non-hegemons have a scarcity of power when compared to their hydro-hegemonic counterparts, they are still able to engage in strategies aimed at initiating the process by which shifts in the hydropolitical configuration of the basin can be made possible. Much in the same way as FHH, Cascão (2009b) identified three strategies by which hegemony could be resisted and/or countered in transboundary settings: *coercive resistance, leverage* and *liberating strategies*. By expanding on and discussing these strategies and their associated tactics in the case of the Eastern Nile basin, we can better recognize how counter-hegemons contest and challenge the asymmetric control of transboundary water resources.

3.4.1.1 STRATEGIES AND TACTICS OF RESISTANCE AND COUNTER-HEGEMONY

Coercive resistance strategies manifest when non-hegemonic actors deploy force or violence as politics (Tilly 2003). In other words, non-hegemons can resort to the use of force in an effort to 'send a message' to the hydro-hegemonic status quo. Since this strategic approach does not retain constructive or transformative potential, it is often adopted in cases of resistance rather than counter-hegemony. Within the context of the Eastern Nile hydropolitics *coercive resistance* strategies have been pursued by both Ethiopia and Sudan through three coercive resistance tactics.

Military acts of sabotage or destruction against hydraulic infrastructure that is seen to benefit the hydro-hegemonic configuration. The bombing and incapacitation of the *Jonglei* Canal project in 1985 by the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) is an example of how a non-state actor within Sudan resisted the hydro-hegemonic alliance of the Sudanese government and Egypt by attacking an important bilateral project (Waterbury 2002; Aalen 2014).

Covert support occurs when non-hegemonic actors intervene in the internal affairs of another riparian through the support of a proxy such as an opposition or rebel group in order to 'send a message' to the hydro-hegemon. Ethiopia's support to the SPLA throughout the 1980s indefinitely disrupted Sudanese and Egyptian hydraulic plans for the *Jonglei* Canal on the White Nile (Section 6.3.1.2).

Threats and rumours can be deployed by non-hegemons so as to let hydro-hegemons know of their displeasure or dissatisfaction with the current state of affairs. Ethiopia's political rapprochement with Israel during the 1980s was viewed as a threat to Egypt (Section 6.3.1.1). Rumours that the then President of Ethiopia, Mengistu Hailemariam, was planning on building dams on the Blue Nile with the support of Israeli engineers was met with threats of war from Egyptian President Sadat (Waterbury 2002: 71; Cascão 2009b).

Leverage strategies can be deployed for the purposes of both resistance and counter-hegemony. These strategies are developed in an effort to allow non-hegemonic riparians increased bargaining power in

their relations and interactions with the hydro-hegemonic order. Thus, these strategies serve to support the non-hegemonic 'winning of the game' under the terms set by the hydro-hegemon (Zeitoun *et al*. 2016). However, these strategies do not necessarily reflect a challenge to the game's legitimacy.

Diplomacy may be used in either a proactive or reactive manner. In cases where non-hegemonic riparians use diplomatic tools reactively, they aim to resist short-term hydropolitical developments in the basin. On the other hand, non-hegemons can also proactively employ diplomacy in order to increase bargaining power, counter hydro-hegemony and lay the groundwork for the eventual transformation of the basin.

A much-referenced example of reactive diplomacy on the part of Ethiopia was witnessed following the signing of the *1959 United Arab Republic and Sudan Agreement for the Full Utilisation of the Nile Waters* when Emperor Haile Selassie II sent a strongly worded letter of protest to Egypt (Cascão 2009b). Proactive diplomacy can be exemplified by Ethiopia's incentivisation of Sudan since the 1990s (Section 6.3.2.3.1). This incentivisation, which is *utilitarian* by nature, is exemplified on the Eastern Nile by the alignment of views between Sudan and Ethiopia on the GERD. Furthermore, the involvement of all three riparians in tripartite negotiations over the GERD and the promotion of the CFA is evidence of the growing deployment of proactive diplomacy in the Basin. The engagement of all Eastern Nile riparians in the Ethiopian-initiated tripartite negotiations over the impacts of GERD is discussed in further detail in Section 6.3.2.3.2.

International water law can form part of the bargaining power present in the relations between non-hegemonic riparians and hydro-hegemons. By referencing accepted legal principles, riparians are able to increase their legitimacy and clout in the negotiation process (Daoudy 2005). Ethiopia's consistent calls for a Nile basin governed according to the principles of equitable and reasonable utilisation has yielded some success in helping it mobilize its fellow upstream riparians behind the CFA. However, it is worth noting that as both hydro-hegemons and non-hegemonic riparians have deployed international water law to advance their aims in the Basin, the effectiveness of this tactic is unclear.

Mobilisation of alternative funding is a critical leverage strategy for non-hegemons that have been denied access to international funding due to the *containment* strategies of the hydro-hegemonic regime in the basin. Historically, one could point to the blocking of international funding for upstream projects due to the influence of Egypt within Bretton-Woods financial institutions. In recent years, however, things have changed with the emergence of China as a significant financier of infrastructure projects on the Nile (Section 6.3.2.2). As Cascão (2009b: 95) explains, "China's emergence as an influential power within a 'global dams industry' represents a positional shift for international funding and hydraulic infrastructure construction [in Africa]". This has been the case in the Eastern Nile, over the last decade, with significant Chinese finance currently fuelling hydraulic projects in both Ethiopia and Sudan.

Unilateral construction of infrastructure can be used by the non-hegemon in a similar fashion to the hydro-hegemonic strategy of *resource capture* - in order to secure the water resource and to establish facts-on-the-ground. In both cases, this can contribute to an increase in the bargaining power of the non-hegemonic

riparian within the basin. This tactic in action is currently being illustrated by the unilateral construction of the GERD in Ethiopia. It is important to note that without the *mobilisation of alternative funding* this tactic cannot be deployed.

LIBERATING strategies are primarily designed in order to counter hegemony by not only challenging the legitimacy of the hegemonic order but by also undermining its ideological supremacy through the advancement of the following inter-related liberation tactics: *alternative/enhanced knowledge* and *discourse alternatives*.

Alternative/enhanced knowledge can support non-hegemonic riparians in reducing the knowledge gap through investment to enhance national expertise and capacity building. By building their capacity to not only collect and process but also disseminate alternative knowledge non-hegemons can better challenge *sanctioned discourses* that favour the hydro-hegemonic regime (Cascão 2009b). By doing so, non-hegemons can enhance their bargaining power in future negotiations within the basin and beyond (Section 6.3.3.1).

Similarly, *discourse alternatives* also aim to construct and disseminate alternative discourses in order to challenge existing hydro-hegemonic discourses within a basin. Non-hegemonic actors may opt to present and highlight counter-narratives and storylines that are in direct opposition to ideas sanctioned by the status quo (Section 6.3.3.2). A strong example of the promotion of new discourses on the Nile can be seen in the signing and ratification of the CFA by Ethiopia. Through this act a new discourse of posited cooperation as desirable only if a legal and/or institutional agreement was in place and possible with or without downstream Sudan and Egypt.

3.4.2 THE TWO-LEVEL GAME IN HYDROPOLITICS

The complex politics of transboundary rivers, just as with the water resources they are founded on, are by their nature fluid and unbound by the man-made political boundaries they flow across. This complexity is compounded by the fact that as rivers cross from the national to the international, they often act to stitch "otherwise unwilling states – and their political economies – together" thus incorporating the international system in the process (Cascão and Zeitoun 2010: 29). Accordingly, it would be misguided to attempt to examine hydropolitics between states, without accounting for the foreign policies which produce them – themselves a direct product of domestic political interests. Peter Gourevitch (1978: 11) supported this position by arguing that, contrary to the view of domestic structures as independent (and sometimes irrelevant) variables for international affairs, international relations and domestic politics are so interrelated they should be analysed simultaneously, as wholes. In taking this position forward, Putnam (1988: 430) similarly asserted that "neither purely domestic nor a purely international analysis accounts simultaneously for the interaction of domestic and international factors... [suggesting the] need for a conceptual framework for understanding how diplomacy and domestic politics interact".

In theorising the logic of the two-level game, Putnam (1988: 432) attempted to go beyond the traditionally state-centric analysis of foreign policy (Keohane & Nye 1977; Katzenstein 1977; Krasner 1978) by reinterpreting the state not as a unitary-actor or "it", but as "they" - a collection of central executives with special roles in mediating domestic and international pressures. In reconceptualising the state in foreign policy in this way, Putnam rejects purely structural analysis emphasising state strength, in favour of a more nuanced view which stresses the importance of domestic politics in determining international relations.

Building on the work of Luzi (2008), Warner (2008), Warner (2012), Warner and Zawahri (2012) and Menga (2016), this research conceives transboundary water interactions between riparian states as a type of two-level game. According to Putnam (1988: 434) this means that "at the national level, domestic groups pursue their interests by pressuring the government to adopt favourable policies, and politicians seek power by constructing coalitions among those groups… at the international level, national governments seek to maximise their own ability to satisfy domestic pressures, while minimising the adverse consequences of foreign developments". These two levels can be decomposed into a negotiation phase (Level I) and a ratification phase (Level II), further exhibiting the interconnected nature of international engagements with the domestic considerations. As transboundary water issues are often linked synergistically, wherein domestic outcomes are not exogenous from international engagements, modelling these two levels independently from one another would be problematic (Putnam 1988: 456).

Nonetheless, there must be an acknowledgement of the limitations of this model, as far as its applicability to these contexts is concerned. Firstly, Putnam's (1988) over-reliance on rationalism and his binary separation of the domestic and international levels, ignores the interactive nature of the engagements between domestic and international actors. This is especially true in hydropolitics where state elites from the domestic hydrocracy routinely interact with their counterparts from riparian countries, private business and representatives of international organisations on a variety of inter-related stages. Furthermore, by assuming that Level I negotiators "have clear self-interests, represent certain domestic and state interests, and seek to maximise these interests;" the model does not account for how these interests come to exists nor how they can change over time (Deets 2009: 39). These critiques are further supported by the work of Houghton (2007) on foreign policy who argues that any such analysis must not only pay attention to domestic interests and identities, but must aspire to understand the interactive processes among domestic and international actors through which these interests and identities can be shaped and transformed. Even so, however, the value of Putnam's model to this research does not only lie in its identification of these two-levels of analysis but also in its recognition of the multiple 'spaces of appearance' in which state elites need to perform (Menga 2016b: 707). This notwithstanding, the research does not intend to engage in theory-building but will instead apply these theoretical frameworks to the empirical case.

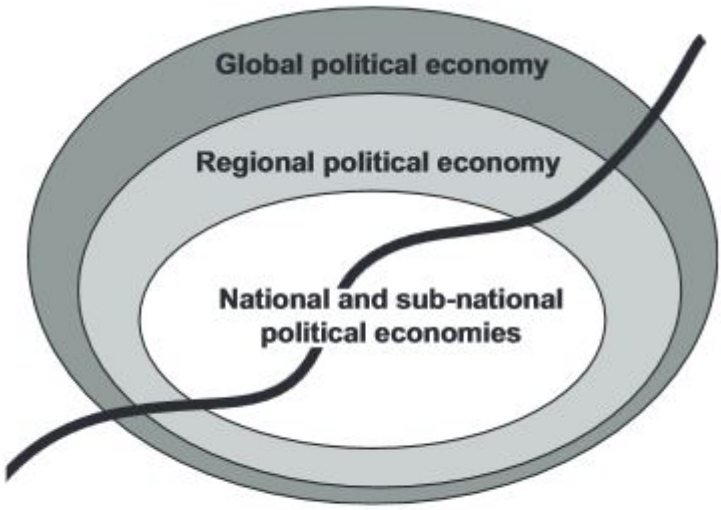
Although states undoubtedly wield the most influence in hydropolitics due to their explicit sovereignty over territories, this does not preclude other actors from influencing decision-making to varying degrees. This research argues that this dynamic and the influence of actors at Level I and Level II on transboundary

water interactions between states in the Eastern Nile demand further academic inquiry. While the pioneering work of Waterbury (2002) on the domestic drivers of multilateral cooperation on the Nile must be acknowledged here, there is yet more that can be done in the field. In the critical tradition, Gramsci and others have analysed hegemony at both the domestic and transnational levels (Warner 2008). Sneddon and Fox (2006: 183) in calling for a critical hydropolitics argue that the narrowing of disciplinary practice and analytical focus have given rise to a state-centric view of hydropolitics. Furthermore, the state-centric approach is both theoretically and empirically problematic because (1) studies founded on constructivist approaches in international relations theory favour the pluralistic approach which incorporates a multiplicity of actors beyond just the state and; (2) co-riparian states are not the only actors involved in the political processes in transboundary river contexts that we observe. Warner (2008) himself admitted that despite the focus on interstate relations and hegemony between riparians, hegemony is considered to be a 'multi-layered cake'. Cascão (2009b: 127) herself acknowledges that although her work has focused on the inter-state and state-global relations scale, the domestic level of analysis is as crucial and would significantly contribute to the building of a comprehensive understanding of basin power relations. By looking 'beyond' the state at the role of governing elites within the state at Level II that frame water issues, it is hoped that this research will contribute to the refining of hydropolitical analysis. Furthermore, as shown in Deets (2009) work on the interests and identities surrounding the Gabcikovo-Nagymaros Dam conflict, Putnam's model for the two-level game can help shed light on the interaction between domestic interests and international identities in engagements between riparian states over shared rivers. Analysis that is sensitive to these nuances can help shift attention away from outcomes of hegemony to reveal the processes by which that hegemony is achieved and/or contested (Harris 2002). It is, with this in mind, that this research, as Selby (2007) called for, will analyse hydro-hegemony not just at one level but at both the domestic and international levels. By expanding Putnam's (1988) modelling of the two-level game played by states in their international engagements through Cascao's (2009b) framework of counter-hegemony, this research will create a more nuanced understanding of Ethiopia's contestation of Egyptian hydro-hegemony in the Eastern Nile.

This notwithstanding, in applying these frameworks to the empirical case of Ethiopia, there will be an explicit focus on the state and governmental actors within Ethiopia. This, however, offers distinct advantages to the research. Firstly, as Ethiopia is currently governed as a developmental state where policy-making and infrastructure planning are directed from the centre of government, an analysis of influential government actors within this system reveals the domestic determinants of the country's hydraulic mission on the Nile. Additionally, a focus on government sources helps uncover not only the domestic, but also the international factors currently influencing the contestation of Egyptian hegemonic control over Nile water resources. Although this approach appears state-centric, the focus on the state is maintained because of the significant role it plays in imposing dominant ideas and shaping plans for water resources management.

Consequently, the following section aims to elaborate upon FHH and counter-hegemony by outlining the two-level game played by Ethiopia domestically and internationally in their engagements over Nile utilisation with downstream riparians, Egypt and Sudan. It is hoped that this will help in identifying how the strategies deployed by non-hegemonic riparians interact at these levels in the process of contesting hydro-hegemonic regimes.

Figure 9 - The cross-cutting fluid nature of transboundary hydropolitics (Cascão and Zeitoun 2010: 30)



3.4.2.1 LEVEL II: DOMESTIC DETERMINANTS OF TRANSBOUNDARY WATER DEVELOPMENT

In Mollinga's (2001) account of the different levels of water and politics, he described the domestic level of the politics of water as the politics of national water resources policy, development and management. By this, he refers to the design and implementation of water policy by a relevant state organ and its contestation by various actors directly or indirectly affected by the policy. Mollinga (2001: 737) identifies the potential thematic sources of this contestation as dam resistance, counter water agendas pushed by civil society groups or internal dynamics within the state apparatus regarding water policies and/or their implementation. Actors within this domain would include competing organs of the hydraulic bureaucracy and/or domestic NGOs engaged in activism against government policies and discourses. Within this level, one can also incorporate the local through what Mollinga (2001: 737) considers the everyday politics of water use where one can observe the contested nature of water relations between individuals and/or entities, such as farmers and cattle herders in the Ethiopian context. As is the case with regional or global hegemons, domestically, the state elites must continually secure their interests and position against the challenges of other actors. Particularly in the case of states borne out of quite violent processes, there exists an insecurity often motivated by an uncertainty of their continued existence (Migdal 1988). It has also been argued that Gramsci (1971) himself, contrary to the state-centric

mainstream schools of the discipline of International Relations, originally theorized hegemony as a matter of domestic relations between state and society (Warner 2008).

Domestic elites in government can pursue the state-building process by developing water infrastructure projects, such as hydropower or irrigation, with the technical support of the 'hydrocracy', to expand political control through development (Warner 2008). The hydrocracy, or the hydraulic bureaucracy, is comprised of bureaucratic agencies, such as ministries and departments responsible for agriculture, irrigation, water resources and energy (Wester 2008). The hydrocracy accumulates vast amounts of knowledge and information through their use of technical expertise about potential river development projects that inform the state's hegemonic agenda. The hydrocracy is often supported or directed by politicians seeking to influence (and gain) from these projects (Molle, Mollinga and Wester, 2009).

State-building through hydraulic development can currently be observed in Ethiopia where the construction of water infrastructure seeks to improve the state economy's structural strength while helping entrench the ruling elite's grip on political power. This is supported in Allouche (2007: 53) who argues that states use water in the accumulation of power and strategic influence. As highlighted by Menga (2016) in his conceptualisation of states as processes rather than pre-existing entities, he explains how domestic elites can utilise symbols and symbolisms, such as dam projects, to legitimise their state-building activities. These elites, made up of a coalition of ethno-based parties known as the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), have led the country since coming to power in 1991. The power of the development drive for the state lies in that fact that it is an aspiration, not a reality and thus can be presented as the promise of 'win-win' versus the difficult compromises of 'zero-sum' allocation (Warner 2008). This is especially so in the case of Ethiopia's hydraulic mission where the state has promised its citizen's prosperity through development in exchange for their compliance[12]. Further to this, the Ethiopian government has also recognized the need to 'bring in' the historically agnostic/antagonistic populations of the south and west by incorporating them within the developmental framework of the hydraulic mission. The government has argued that the resettlement induced by a number of hydropower projects will provide a unique opportunity to extend public services and formal employment to peripheral groups that have been largely disengaged from development. In a throwback to the 'irrigation crusades' of the 1800s and their 'civilising mission', early in 2011, Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi spoke of the importance of the sugar development projects in the Omo Valley, made possible by hydraulic infrastructure, to the local economy:

> *"In the coming five years, there will be a very big irrigation project and related agricultural development in this zone. Even though this area is known as backward in terms of civilisation, it will become an example of rapid development" (Brown 2012).*

According to Verhoeven (2013), the government's development plans for the periphery have a strong Tennessee Valley Authority imprint as integrative projects aimed at providing job creation and regional

[12] Ohlsson and Turton (1999) refer to the transition from local to state-directed water resources development as the birth of the 'hydraulic mission'

development while ensuring increased government control. In much the same way, it has been noted by Selby (2007) that governments will often use population displacement and resettlement as a means of consolidating control over the totality of their territory. Through the expansion of large-scale farming, hydropower development and the centralisation of water control, the Ethiopian government is consolidating its control over the country through a *resource capture* strategy. It has attempted to justify these strategies by promoting discourses surrounding the economic empowerment and developmental benefit of engaging the historically marginalized groups from the periphery, as will be shown in Section 5.3.2 on Ethiopia's hydraulic mission. However, alternate discourses surrounding these issues claim that these strategies are in fact contributing to further marginalisation, exploitation and dispossession of local subsistence farmers through land grabbing. These counter discourses are currently being advanced by international NGOs, think tanks and human rights groups who contend that these government strategies could well lead to further marginalisation and economic insecurity for 'beneficiaries' (Oakland Institute 2011).

The Ethiopian government has also shown its readiness to deploy *normative* tactics at home in an effort to consolidate control. Over the last decade, the government has managed to co-opt most armed opposition groups operating within the country by signing a number of peace treaties – an unprecedented development in the country's political history (Gebreluel 2014). In 2010 it brought factions of the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) and the United Western Somali Liberation Front (UWSLF) back to the negotiating table so as to foster sustainable peace in the Somali regional state in Eastern Ethiopia. More importantly, however, in 2012 the government claimed to have signed a peace deal with the Benishangul People's Liberation Movement (BPLM) - a rebel group from the Benishangul Gumuz region, where the GERD, the government's flagship infrastructure project, is currently under construction (Woldetsadik 2013). Under the terms of this deal, the government reported to have used further incentives to sweeten the deal including amnesty for all members of the group as well as support to help them engage in the "developmental activities of the region" (Sudan Tribune, June 2013). This came only a year after the BPLM had walked away from negotiations with the government and rejected the construction of the GERD (then known as the Millennium Dam) citing it as a state instrument aimed at the displacement, impoverishment and exploitation of the Benishangul peoples. Furthermore, contrary to government claims, the BPLM have continued their struggle against the state, though not the GERD, as their leadership urges the people of Benishangul-Gumuz region to resist the government so as to rightfully claim ownership of the GERD for themselves (BPLM 2014). It is important to mention here that the intra-state contestation of the government's hydraulic policies can be observed in growing activism by local tribes and international anti-dam groups against hydropower and irrigation development on the Omo River.

Swyngedouw (1999) has also displayed how a hydraulic mission can act as a substitute for a lost empire with states pursuing strategies aimed at restoring national pride and prestige. Since coming to power in 1991, following two decades of civil war, Ethiopia's ruling coalition has made the socio-economic transformation and the restoration of Ethiopian greatness its overarching objectives (Tronvoll 2009). This

has been made clear in recent fund-raising campaigns for the GERD project where citizens have been urged to contribute based on public information campaigns founded on patriotism and the reclamation of Ethiopia's former greatness. As highlighted by Warner (2008: 275) "hegemonic states are involved in image-building in the press, public information campaigns, education and cultural life, so that others believe and subscribe to their authority". Through the construction of these national narratives, the state is deploying *hegemonic* tactics in order to legitimise the state-building and development processes associated with the 'hydraulic mission' (Allouche 2007). However, as mentioned above, this national narrative is not without objections as the case of anti-dam activism by local tribes surrounding the development of large-scale irrigation and hydropower Omo River illustrates.

In an effort to consolidate its domestic hegemony, the Ethiopian government, through the hydrocracy, has pursued *resource capture, integration* and *containment* strategies. By deploying a variety of tactics associated with these strategies the government has been attempting to achieve greater technical control over its water resources through the expansion of hydraulic infrastructure (Chapter 5). However, these domestic strategies have had important ripple effects internationally where the development of national water resources can lead to transboundary water disputes.

3.4.2.2 LEVEL I AND THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM: EXTERNAL INFLUENCES, BASIN ENGAGEMENTS

The overlay of global governance can have a decisive impact on how transboundary water relations are managed or mismanaged, as relations between riparians can form part of grander international manoeuvrings (Warner 2008). Here, the research endeavours to go beyond Putnam's Level I game by accounting for a third level of analysis as discussed by Patterson (1997), that of the international system and specifically its impacts on the Level I contestation of hydro-hegemony in the Eastern Nile Basin through: an examination of the influence of the global political economy on the hegemonic processes taking place in the Basin (discussed further in Chapter 6) and; the analysis of the role of global hegemonic discourses and ideas on the leverage available to non-hegemonic riparians in transboundary water interactions (examined in detail in Chapter 7). As explained in Menga and Mirumachi (2016: 374), in the context of transboundary natural resources management, power can "influence the way countries decide to develop their natural resources, position their foreign policy, and establish diplomatic and economic ties, in their abstraction, utilisation and trade". Allouche (2007) expands on this by showing how states can use the development of water resources to operate transnationally in their attempts to increase their strategic influence and regional power.

The influence of competition in the global political economy has historically played a significant role in the hegemonic processes of the Eastern Nile Basin. Whether through British colonial management in the early 20th century or intense superpower competition during the Cold War, the external influences on the politics of the Nile Basin have persisted across the decades. Recent years have proved no different. Since the fall of the Berlin Wall, the strategic significance of the Horn of Africa has continued to grow with global powers reconfiguring their strategic positions and goals in relation to the countries of the region. With events including state-failure in Somalia, the rise of military Islamists in the Republic of

Sudan and sustained conflict in South Sudan, both East and Western powers have lauded the EPRDF's Ethiopia as a stable, able and trustworthy partner in the region. The significance of Ethiopia has since had reverberating impacts on Nile Basin relations, as the global security and energy agendas have bolstered the country's growing international influence (Verhoeven 2015).

Furthermore, the rise in inter-African energy diplomacy has seen states like Ethiopia - possessors of untapped hydropower potential - pursue ever-more ambitious energy strategies, with the blessing of global powers and international financial institutions (Verhoeven 2013). However, more significant, has been the arrival of new powers and financiers in energy and agriculture, who have contributed to the rapid development of hydraulic infrastructure in the Basin at the expense of an increasingly more vulnerable hydro-hegemonic status quo. As Verhoeven (2013: 11) explains "Chinese state-owned enterprises and private companies have partnered their extensive financial resources and technical expertise with the political commitment of regimes yearning to launch hydro-agricultural missions (Sudan) or a sprawling dam programme (Ethiopia)". In addition to rapid Chinese intervention, the Gulf States, Turkey, India, East Asian states, Brazil, sovereign wealth funds, financial speculators and agro-industrial corporations have been making large investments in agriculture and water in the region as a way to hedge against rising food prices (Verhoeven 2013). This has meant a rise in both the bargaining and material power of states such as Ethiopia, whose hydraulic plans, until recently, were politically and financially unattainable. External influences of this nature can lead to the intensification of contestation in the Basin as previously out-of-reach *leverage* mechanisms become available to non-hegemons attempting to access and utilise these shared water resources (Zeitoun *et al*. 2015).

In addition to the overt exercise of power expressed through the unilateral construction of hydraulic infrastructure, covert forms of power have also been shown to influence and explain the disparity in bargaining power between states engaged in hegemonic processes (Agnew 2003; Lindermann 2008; Allen 2011; Buscher 2014). Within a transboundary water context, such as the Nile, these 'softer' forms of power are often expressed by the discursive framing of environmental challenges and the subsequent social construction of the panacea of river basin development as a comprehensive solution to these conflicts (Sneddon and Fox 2006). Similarly, Harris and Alatout (2010) have examined the ways in which discourses have been used by states in their attempts to narrowly define and justify forms of hydraulic development as solutions to issues of nation and state-building. In relation to transboundary river basins characterised by hydro-hegemony, Menga and Mirumachi (2016) demonstrated how non-hegemons use discursive power to try to demonstrate leadership for the achievement of hydraulic infrastructure. In taking this further, it is argued in this study, that justifications for hydraulic development on the Nile, are currently being discursively framed and amplified by non-hegemons through the strategic appropriation of global hydro-hegemonic discourses (GHDs).

Selby (2007: 5) further explains that for "contemporary Gramscians, hegemony is established and maintained at a transnational level, through classes, ideologies and institutions which have all transgressed nation-state boundaries". Similarly, Conker (2014) explains that the coalescing of global norms and ideas with the state and its actors and institutions at the international level can denote the

trans-nationalisation of hydropolitics. For the purposes of this study, GHDs are understood as certain ideas and discourses that have become dominant within global water and development circles which have been readily promoted as universal and transferable to all contexts. Inspired by the work of Molle (2008: 132), who established the existence of 'nirvana' concepts, these potent global ideas, fronted by the facades of development 'success stories' and 'best practices', emanate out "of complex webs of interests, ideologies and power". Sneddon (2013), in going further, described these global discourses, widely disseminated and adopted on the back of influential development thinkers, policy networks and donors as hegemonic and transnational in nature. These GHDs, which can also be described as a form of transnational sanctioned discourses, are currently being discursively deployed by the Ethiopian Government to legitimise the development of hydraulic infrastructure upstream in the Eastern Nile Basin. Specifically, Ethiopian officials at both Level I have deployed GHDs linking dam-building with economic development and regional benefits to legitimise the current construction of the GERD (Section 7.4).

By building on the existing frameworks of hydro-hegemony and counter-hegemony, this research will aim to examine the impacts of the international system on the overt and covert strategies pursued by the Ethiopian state through its two-level game. With the emergence of alternative funding for hydraulic infrastructure and the ubiquity of global hegemonic discourses on dam development within the Basin, non-hegemonic riparians, such as Ethiopia, have been emboldened in their Level I contestation of hydro-hegemony. Whether through 'hydro-opportunism' or proactive and planned strategizing, non-hegemons on the Eastern Nile have more leverage and bargaining power than ever before. And, as will be shown in the case of Ethiopia, they have been increasingly unafraid to deploy it in all of its forms.

3.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter has identified how riparians in transboundary river basins characterised by asymmetric control have a variety of strategies and tactics at their disposal by which to pursue their hydraulic agendas. The frameworks of hydro-hegemony and counter-hegemony can be applied to riparian states pursuing or contesting the asymmetric control of water resources. The chapter showed that where hydro-hegemons can pursue control through *resource capture, containment and integration* strategies, these tactics can be countered by non-hegemonic riparians through *coercive resistance*, *leverage* and *liberating* strategies.

The two-level game approach to counter-hegemony utilised in this study, moves beyond a state-centric approach to the analysis of riparian power relations, by recognising that central decision-makers strive to reconcile domestic and international imperatives simultaneously in their engagements over transboundary waters (Putnam 1988: 460). By incorporating Putnam's (1988) logic of the two-level game into counter-hegemonic analysis, the study reveals the reciprocal influence between domestic and international affairs present in contested transboundary river basins. This two-level intermingling of domestic politics with international relations is exemplified by the current contestation of Egyptian hydro-hegemony by Ethiopia in the Eastern Nile Basin. The study argues that previous examinations of counter-hegemony at the Basin-level must go further than inter-state relations to capture the nature of change within Nile hydropolitics. Thus, the study analyses the domestic determinants of counter-hegemonic processes at the inter-state level to show how hydro-hegemonic contestation in the Eastern Nile is being driven by the domestic politics of state-formation and development in Ethiopia and framed by global discourses correlating dam-building with political, socio-economic and environmental benefits.

In summation, this chapter has displayed how traditional state-centric approaches to hegemony fail to examine the role of government actors within the state in contesting or consenting to hydro-hegemonic processes within transboundary river basins. In interrogating the domestic and transnational factors and actors driving water resources development in Ethiopia, the study will aim to show how Eastern Nile hydropolitics are a function of hegemonic processes occurring within and beyond the state.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This study employs diverse but complementary research methodology in an effort to critically appraise the role of power relations on the hydropolitics of the Eastern Nile Basin. Deploying a mixed methods approach of this type has enabled the triangulation of findings, contributing to a higher degree of accuracy as well as validity.

The subsequent sections delve into greater detail regarding the methodological approaches deployed during the course of this research as well as the justifications for these techniques. Particular attention is paid to the principal method employed in the study: elite interviews.

4.2 THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS OF METHODOLOGICAL INQUIRY AND RESEARCH APPROACH

The study combines multiple research approaches in order to facilitate the testing of research questions and hypotheses. *Interpretive* and *Liberatory Inquiry* as defined by Pimbert (2004) and Smith *et al.* (1997) are the principal approaches adopted. *Interpretive Inquiry* endeavours to capture and understand the subjective meanings of the socially and subjectively constructed realities and knowledge of the world. Similarly, *Liberatory Inquiry* is equally concerned with socially and subjectively constructed realities but instead focuses on understanding these realities within historical contexts and existing power relations while implying the possibility and inevitability of transformative processes (Pimbert 2004). This research combines these approaches with other methods of inquiry such as interviews, discourse analysis and limited participant observation in order to support a critical analysis of power relations in the Eastern Nile Basin.

Interpretive Inquiry is deployed in the analysis of historical and existing power relations in the Eastern Nile whilst *Liberatory Inquiry* has assisted the researcher in capturing the shifting of power relations and with them the challenges to the status quo in the sub-basin. As such the analytical framework that guides this research is drawn from the critical tradition in international relations which aims to understand socio-political phenomena. The ontological underpinnings of the research are rooted in a two-level analysis of power relations in the Eastern Nile Basin – namely in the analysis of how the domestic and international factors impinge on transboundary water relations in the Nile Basin.

4.3 RESEARCH METHODS

This section includes a review of each of the methodological approaches used in the process of conducting this research and their specific relevance to the testing of research questions. The methodology selected for the conducting of interviews is elaborated separately in Section 4.4.

4.3.1 DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

Secondary sources have proved essential to the preliminary investigation into the history of Nile hydropolitical relations between Eastern Nile Riparians. There is a large body of work including journal articles, books, theses as well as media reports and grey literature which have been published on the hydropolitics of the Basin while the history of the Nile has been similarly well documented as highlighted by the existence of at least three annotated bibliographies of the Nile to date (Collins 1991; Tvedt 2000, 2006). In order to support the systematic analysis of documentary evidence on this subject, the researcher approached the task by thematically analysing this historical context through the lenses of competition, cooperation and their coexistence in attempts at controlling Nile water. These themes have been identified and discussed in the preceding Literature Review chapter of the research.

4.3.2 HISTORIOGRAPHY

As a complementary methodology to document analysis, historiography – "the study of the way history has been and is written … and the changing interpretations of those events in the works of individual historians" (Furay and Salevouris 1998 in Cascão 2009b: 117) – was also used during the course of the research. Given that the scholar accepts that more often than not it is only the 'winners' that are party to the 'crafting and writing' of history, it quickly becomes evident that in the case of the Nile much of the existing literature has overwhelmingly favoured Egypt. As Cascão (2009b: 118) explains "Egypt has had the power to construct knowledge and shape discourse in the Basin, and there is far more literature on, and from, that state than there is for the other riparians". In this regard, historiography, and particularly critical historiography can support the researcher in uncovering which information, knowledge and discourses have been amplified and/or silenced within these hegemonic narratives. As Ankersmit (1989:142) argues historical interpretations of the past first acquire their identity when juxtaposed with contrasting interpretations in that they "are what they are only on the basis of what they are *not*". As a result, historiography will help the researcher identify and account for the context within which the narratives and discourses on Nile hydropolitics have been forged, consolidated and sanctioned.

4.3.3 CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

The researcher will aim to use critical discourse analysis (CDA) in conjunction with other methods such as interviews and document analysis in order to test the study's research questions. Wodak and Fairclough (1997: 258) describe discourse as a social practice in that it reflects a "dialectical relationship between a particular discursive event and the situation(s), institution(s) and social structure(s) which frame it. A dialectical relationship is a two-way relationship: the discursive event is shaped by situations, institutions and social structures, but it also shapes them".

Hence, the interdisciplinary nature of CDA will support the researcher in deconstructing the discourses of Eastern Nile hydropolitics and the social relationships of power and dominance they have constructed and continue to reinforce (Keller 2013). More specifically, CDA is used to analyse the results of interviews conducted with Eastern Nile actors and in the analysis of public discourses surrounding its hydropolitics. The public discourses that this research will rely on have been identified as:

1. Institutional documents in the public domain as well as informal communications by Ethiopian government bodies and regional organisations working on Eastern Nile water resources
    - Ministry of Water Resources, Irrigation and Electricity, Ethiopia (MoWIE) – National Water Strategy, Integrated Development Master Plans, IWRM Management Policy, Ethiopia Country Papers, Impact Assessments, Feasibility Studies, Project and Program documents
    - Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ethiopia (MFA) – Joint communiques, press releases, articles, newsletters
    - International agreements, treaties and joint communiques issued by Eastern Nile governments - E.g. 1929 Nile Waters Agreement, 1959 Agreement for the Full Utilization of the Nile Waters, 1993 Framework for general co-operation between the Arab Republic of Egypt and Ethiopia
    - Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) – Strategic Action Program, Nile Basin Act, Shared Vision project briefs, communiques,
    - Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office (ENTRO) – Action plans, project inception reports, presentations, white papers
    - Eastern Nile Subsidiary Action Program (ENSAP) – Plans, reports
    - United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) – Factsheets
    - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) – 2004 Water Development Report
    - United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) – World Water Resources Reports, AQUASTAT databases
    - World Bank technical papers, reports, project appraisal documents, project information documents
    - USBR 1964 Survey and Plan
    - Global Environmental Facility (GEF), International Consortium for Cooperation on the Nile (ICCON) - Papers, speeches
    - ICG (International Crisis Group) (2002) God, Oil and Country - Changing the Logic of War in Sudan. Africa Report 39. Brussels: International Crisis Group.
    - International Law Commission (ILC) Convention on the Law of the Non-navigational Uses of International Watercourses.

- International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) Integrated water and land management research and capacity building priorities for Ethiopia.
- International Water Management Institute (IWMI) Reports
- Water Works Design and Supervision Enterprise, Ethiopia (WWDSE) – Water Sector Review and Development Program Documents

2. Mass media resources including domestic and regional newspapers, online news websites, audio-visual content from sources detailed below.

Table 1 - Media sources accessed for critical discourse analysis

Name	Media type	Affiliation
Addis Admas	Newspaper	Independent
Addis Fortune	Newspaper	Independent
Addis Zemen	Newspaper	State
Aigaforum	Website	Independent
Al-Ahram	Website	Independent
Awramba Times	Website	State
Capital Ethiopia	Newspaper	Independent
Ethiopia Broadcast Corporation (EBC)	Television	State
ECADForum	Website	Opposition
ENA	Website	Online
ESAT	Website	Opposition
Ethiomedia	Website	Opposition
The Ethiopian Herald	Newspaper	State
The Ethiopian Reporter	Newspaper	Independent
Ethiopian Review	Website	Opposition
HornAffairs	Website	Independent
Revolutionary Democracy	Newspaper	State

Sendek Newspaper	Newspaper	Independent
Sudan Tribune	Website	Independent
Tadias Magazine	Website	Independent
Tigrai Online	Website	Independent
Walta	Website	State

My command of both my native Amharic and the English language has enabled me to access and extract discursive information from these sources. In concert with critical historiography, CDA has supported the contextualisation of these discourses on the Nile while helping identify their intertextual relationships to other discourses. It is the primary method employed in the analysis of secondary data and constitutes the principal method by which research interviews have been interpreted.

4.3.4 PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION

In a limited number of cases, participant observation was employed as a research strategy. This methodology was primarily deployed in cases such as panel discussions in an effort to help develop a familiarity with the active players related to the study. The cultivation of this familiarity lead to a process of constructive feedback and improvements to the study throughout the course of the research. In addition to this, participant observation has supported the identification of unexplored interviewees while helping widen the researcher's network of key contacts.

4.4 PRINCIPAL METHOD: ELITE INTERVIEWS

"The greater part of opinion research rests on kindness and confidence: kindness in the willingness of respondents to give time to the interview…, confidence in accepting the implicit or explicit assurance of the interviewer that … the survey will in no way harm [the interviewee's] interests." (Dexter 1964: 556)

Elite interviews have formed the principal basis by which this research was conducted. Although the social science community has long grappled with the term 'elite' and its connotations of superiority in the context of interviews, no other term has, as of yet, emerged that adequately captures the special nature of this type of interview. Elite interviewing as defined by Dexter (2006), and Riesman before him, can be explained as "an interview with *any* interviewee – and stress should be placed on the word 'any' – who in terms of the current purposes of the interviewer is given special, non-standardized treatment" (Dexter 2006: 18). The fundamental difference between standard interviewing versus elite interviewing becomes particularly clear when examining the role of the interviewer. In standardized interviewing the investigator defines both the questions and the problem; meaning they will only be looking for answers bound by their framing of the matter. On the other hand, elite interviewers, are more interested in letting the interviewee teach them what the problem, the question, the situation, is within the limits of the investigator's capacity to perceive their relationships to his overarching research area. Further to this point, Dexter (2006: 19) highlights that elite interviewees are often "unwilling to accept the assumptions with which the investigator starts; they insist on explaining to him/[her] how they see the situation, what the real problems are as they view the matter".

This methodological approach has been employed in the collection of both primary data, secondary documentation and related information associated with the historical and contemporary hydropolitics in the Eastern Nile. Interviewing is particularly relevant to the analysis of the present instability taking place in the basin as a result of shifting hydropolitical configurations. In this period, due to the absence of significant secondary sources, most notably in the case of Ethiopia, interviews and the data they yield will prove critical to the research process.

4.4.1 INSTITUTIONAL ANONYMITY AND LOCATION OF TARGET GROUPS

As the aim of this research is in analysing the hydropolitics of the Eastern Nile and, in particular, the role of Ethiopia in these basin dynamics, a preliminary list of target stakeholder groups has been identified. The table below details the epistemic groups, which include the elite interviewees, whose activities influence directly or indirectly the public discourses surrounding water resources in Ethiopia, and by extension the Eastern Nile Basin. Interviewees were primarily chosen according to publicly available information on their positions and responsibilities within a given institution. During the course of the interviews, however, selections were also made on the basis of recommendations from interviewees and informal networking by the researcher.

In order to ensure confidentiality and institutional anonymity, the interviewees will be grouped according to the following stakeholder groups.

Table 2 - Stakeholder groups of interviewees

Stakeholder Group	Examples
Academia *[based both locally and internationally]*	Public universities, independent think tanks, research centres and academics working on Ethiopia and the Nile
Business *[based in Ethiopia]*	Engineering firms, construction companies, international consultants and investors engaged in hydraulic and development in Ethiopia
Government *[based in Ethiopia]*	Ethiopian officials, representatives and technocrats from Government ministries and departments engaged directly or indirectly in the water sector
Media *[based both locally and internationally]*	Members of public or private media or news organisations in Ethiopia
Regional Organisations *[based in Ethiopia]*	Sub-basin and Basin organisations, regional developmental organisations and their associated partners

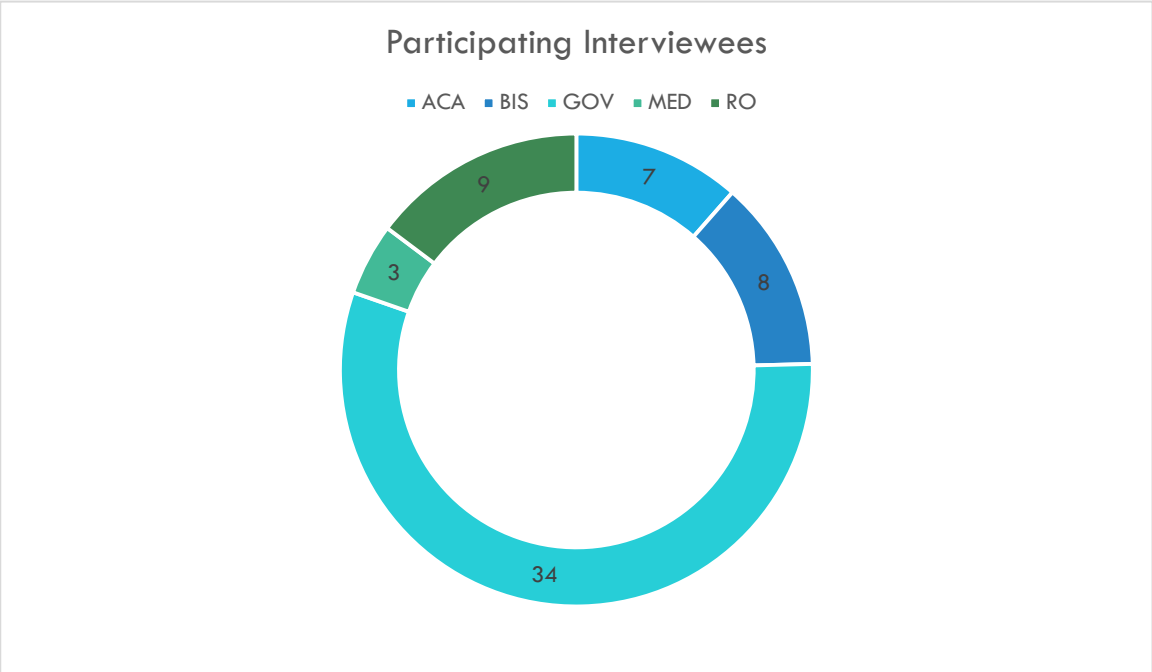
All interviewees were granted institutional anonymity as standard unless they explicitly consented to their quotes being directly attributed. An option that no interviewee exercised owing to the politically sensitive nature of the subject. As the research deals with a politically sensitive subject, a coding system will be applied so as to further protect the anonymity of interviewees. Interviewees within the study are not directly cited but instead are identified by the following coding system which is correlated with the stakeholder groups in Table 2. For example:

- **ACAxx** – Academia; **BISxx** – Business; **GOVxx** – Government; **MEDxx** – Media and; **ROxx** – Regional Organisations

4.4.2 TIME AND PLACE OF INTERVIEWS

Interviews were conducted in Ethiopia during the main fieldwork period and data analysis phase, which lasted for about 13 months. The interviews took place mainly in Addis Ababa at the offices of the interviewees (for example Ministries, research institutes, media offices, regional organisations etc…) but were also conducted in more informal settings such as hotels and cafes. Limited interviews were also conducted in the UK at various locations, including at the Ethiopian Embassy in London.

Table 3 - Interviewees participating in study organised per stakeholder groups



In total, 61 interviewees participated in the study with some interviewees agreeing to take part in multiple interviews. The breakdown, as illustrated above, shows that an overwhelming number of interviews were conducted with stakeholders from the Ethiopian Government with more than half of interviewees from this group.

4.5 REFLEXIVITY OF THE INTERVIEWER

"All researchers are positioned… by age, gender, race, class, nationality, institutional affiliation, historic personal circumstance, and intellectual predisposition" (Chiseri-Strater 1996: 115)

The concept of positionality, when married with the practice of self-reflexivity rooted in critical ethnography, can help establish an awareness and assessment of the researcher's own contributions and influence on the research and results (Salzman 2002). By acknowledging the researcher's inherent subjectivity, it is hoped that it was possible to produce a more nuanced and holistic understanding of the relationship between the investigator and interviewee. Consequently, the researcher hoped to be better aware of and able to account for his personal influence on the research process.

Although many researchers in the social sciences, particularly in the study of hydropolitics, have often aspired to present themselves as more objective and detached, Chiseri-Strater (1996) argues that researchers take no more risk in adopting subjective and reflexive roles. As such, at this early stage, the researcher will disclose the key attributes and factors that could influence or affect the research data and its conclusions going forward.

4.5.1 FIXED OR CULTURALLY ASCRIBED ATTRIBUTES

The researcher is an Ethiopian national of mixed ethnic heritage with his appearance reflecting this fact. His light complexion is similar to that of many people from the Ethiopian highlands namely those from the *Tigray*, *Amhara, Oromo* and *Gurage* ethnic groups. It is important to note, however, that the areas where much of Ethiopia's hydraulic infrastructure is being built are areas populated by ethnic minorities outside of the highlands, particularly in the south and west.

Although the researcher was born in Ethiopia, he has lived much of his life outside the country (Kenya, Italy, Uganda, United Kingdom). As a result, although a native speaker of *Amharic*, the official working language of Ethiopia, his proficiency in English has frequently caused him to be labelled a member of the Ethiopian diaspora. This could have the unintended consequence of interviewees perceiving the researcher as an outsider, thereby further limiting the validity of interview responses or worse yet preventing interview access. It is hoped that disclosing information about his background and roots in Ethiopia as well as his local work experience can alleviate some of these concerns. Furthermore, the researcher will try to fit into the environments he finds himself in, while maintaining the professionalism associated with PhD research.

4.5.2 SUBJECTIVE-CONTEXTUAL FACTORS

The researcher has always exhibited a keen interest in the politics and international relations of Ethiopia. He is not affiliated with any political parties in Ethiopia but has been working within and for government institutions since 2012. Although the researcher is neither for nor against Ethiopia's current hydraulic plans and energy policies, as a result of his employment in government he has had to contribute a portion of his salary towards the purchasing of government bonds for the financing of the GERD Project. Having

been educated abroad for much of his life, especially in the UK where he has done all of his tertiary education (BA, MSc, PhD), he considers himself a liberal in his views on both international relations and the environment.

Potential assumptions of the researcher's position and motives are often an inevitable consequence during the course of a study of this nature. These assumptions would likely have an impact upon the research relationship between the interviewer and interviewee. Based on the existing institutional ties that the researcher has with government institutions in Ethiopia, interviewees could very easily presume that the researcher would be working for, or on behalf of the government of Ethiopia, in conducting research in this area. Such an assumption could present very different outcomes depending on what target group the particular interviewee is drawn from. In the case of interviewees from the hydrocracy group, the researcher's affiliation with government institutions served, in some cases, to put the interviewee at ease, allowing for a more candid and open conversation. On the other hand, for the remaining non-government institutions, some interviewees appeared more guarded and possibly fed false answers which they believed government elites would like to hear. In both of these cases, particularly the latter, the researcher made clear in introductions his origin, research and neutrality. By disclosing clear information on the researcher's background, it is hoped that interviewees were comfortable during the course of the interview interaction, thereby providing more honest responses to the investigator's questions.

4.6 TRIANGULATION

In an effort to ensure that the research methodology provides multiple insights and is reliable, the researcher has made use of the instrument of triangulation. As Flick (2009: 443) identified, triangulation can be described as "the perspectivizing arrangement of different methodological procedures and databases for an overall analysis". This will involve the "integration of data, theories and/or methods so that diverse viewpoints may cast light upon a topic" (Cascão 2009b: 126). As the research was primarily conducted in Ethiopia with the involvement of different epistemic communities, triangulation served the purpose of cross-cutting the discourses, opinions, perceptions and understandings of hydropolitical relations in the Eastern Nile Basin. Thus, in the context of this research, triangulation has taken the form of data triangulation, theory triangulation and methodological triangulation.

Data triangulation was used in an effort to co-register and account for the interview data from elite interviewees from different epistemic communities. As Dexter (2006) explains, when the researcher knows a good deal about the topic, as in the case of this research, they can make "appropriate discounts for interviewee statements by reference to other sorts of data – including 'common sense', common knowledge, and so forth. In many instances, different interviewees, especially if selected with such a possibility in view, can be used to check and correct one another" (Dexter 2006: 24). In addition to the triangulation of primary data, this will also be cross-checked against the available secondary data sources. Theory triangulation was adopted in the crafting of the research's theoretical chapter where diverse theoretical scholarship and multidisciplinary approaches were reconciled to help develop robust analytical frameworks. This framework triangulates between realist, liberal and critical schools of international relations theory while incorporating findings from related academia including economics, physical geography, history, political science and other social science disciplines. Methodological triangulation is the process by which the researchers will aim to use different methods in order to achieve a higher degree of accuracy and up to date information on the research findings. As highlighted in the prior sections, a number of different methodological approaches including elite interviews, document analysis, historiography and case studies, among others, have been employed in concert to support the investigation and testing of research questions and hypotheses.

4.7 LIMITATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

As is inevitable in academic research, although the methodology for this study has been the subject of careful selection, the researcher admits that it is necessary to acknowledge some considerations and the potential for the emergence of problems. Nonetheless, it is important to note that the researcher will endeavour to address, avoid or reduce the potential for these errors during the course of the study.

4.7.1 LIMITED SCOPE OF ANALYSIS AND GENERALISABILITY

As has been explained in previous chapters, the scope of the research is limited to the study of the Eastern Nile River Basin with particular focus given to Ethiopia. Although the Eastern Nile is largely considered the most important sub-basin of the Nile in both hydrological and geopolitical terms, the researcher acknowledges that the majority of the Nile's eleven riparians are found in the Equatorial Nile sub-basin. The researcher equally accepts the varying degrees to which these riparians have impacted the overall hydropolitical state of the Nile Basin. Practicality and pragmatism, however, have dictated the research's partial scope while the researcher recognizes that a single study at this academic level would find it near-impossible to examine the Basin's riparians in totality. As a result, the investigation's research questions and conclusions have limited generalizability and should be assumed to strictly relate to the hydropolitics of the Eastern Nile Basin and more specifically Ethiopia.

4.7.2 CAPTURING CHANGE AND TEMPORAL CONSTRAINTS

Similarly, the time constraints of conducting limited academic research will inevitably affect the study's ability to fully capture changes to the hydropolitical state of the basin beyond the research's temporal scope (1991-2016). The timeframe has been chosen in an attempt to properly capture recent developments and key trends within the Eastern Nile Basin, and more specifically in Ethiopia, which have affected the hydropolitical configuration of the Nile. Nonetheless, it is anticipated that the conclusions of the study will contribute to a better understanding of what lies in store for the basin over the coming years.

4.7.3 VALIDITY AND DEPENDABILITY

Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue that since there can be no validity without dependability, demonstrating one is sufficient to establish the other. Thus, we can extrapolate that dependability can be understood as a consequence of validity within a study. As this research has been conducted in an extremely politicized context and environment, the researcher fully recognizes that the knowledge and discourses he has been exposed to during the course of data collection are socially and politically constructed. Consequently, the researcher accepts the risk that data and information provided by interviewees may be of limited validity and dependability. Within these socially constructed realities, Golafshani (2003) explains that in order to acquire validity and dependability research must engage multiple methods. In an effort to counter these risks, the researcher has employed CDA in concert with other social scientific methods in order to triangulate and co-register all data.

4.7.4 ACCESS AND SAMPLING BIAS

While the researcher has leaned heavily on his professional network and personal relationships for access to the majority of interviewees, he still acknowledges the widely-accepted difficulties related to access in qualitative work. Although every effort was made on the part of the researcher to be flexible in terms of meeting locations and timings with interviewees, in some cases access to certain interviewees still proved elusive. The nature of the interviewees the researcher accessed during the course of the fieldwork have limited the types of discursive data he was able to obtain. In other words, due to the restricted political space in Ethiopia currently, interviewees with dissenting opinions of government policy often self-censor for the sake of their wellbeing. As a result, the majority of counter-discourses tend to emanate from the Ethiopian diaspora abroad - a highly segmented and scattered community that proved difficult to comprehensively capture.

Consequently, as this research includes a heavy emphasis on state-led hydraulic policies within Ethiopia and how they relate to the contestation of the asymmetric water control in the Nile Basin, the researcher understands that these circumstances open the research up to potential sampling bias in regard to interviewees. In order to address these biases, the researcher triangulated methodology by co-registering interview data with secondary documentary sources thus supporting the investigation and testing of research questions. The researcher aimed to achieve this by contrasting the public discourses employed by the hydrocracy through official communication outlets such as public relations departments, public information campaigns and tightly controlled state media with counter discourses found in independent and opposition media and interviews with independent experts and representatives of institutions working in the region. When combined with the theory triangulation that has already taken place in the development of the research's analytical framework it was hoped that the researcher improved data validity while limiting bias.

4.8 RESEARCH SCHEDULE

The schedule laid out for the research has been divided into three principal section.

4.8.1 LITERATURE REVIEW & ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK (SEPTEMBER 2013 – APRIL 2015)

The first phases of the PhD involved the development of a contextual understanding of the principal issues surrounding the research subject as well as the collection and synthesis of the relevant documentary evidence and literature (Introduction and Literature Review). This period also saw the formal articulation of the study's principal questions, eventually contributing to the development of an analytical framework (Theoretical Chapter). Alongside these activities, the researcher's attendance at a number of related and relevant lectures, conferences, panel discussions and symposiums further enriched the content of the study's preliminary chapters. To mention but a few, these included London Water Research Group guest lectures and events series, HH7 Contesting Hegemony Conference at UEA London (sessions focused on the framework of transboundary water interaction, counter-hegemony and dams) as well as panel discussions centred on 'Africa, Dams and Development' at the University of Oxford.

4.8.2 PRELIMINARY FIELD VISIT (JANUARY 2015 - FEBRUARY 2015)

During this month, spent principally in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia), the researcher was able to renew contact with former colleagues at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, reorienting himself with the country's general political landscape while assessing the potential constraints facing researchers. Further networking was enabled through the organising committee for an upcoming national panel discussion on hydropower supported by the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its associated publication. As the Executive Editor of this upcoming publication ("Cooperative Waters – The Nile") and a member of the organising committee, the researcher will be able to gain better access to decision-makers in the water sector in Ethiopia during his fieldwork. Through these formal and informal meetings and integration into a wider network, essential introductions to contacts working in the areas of water planning, energy policy and foreign policy in Ethiopia were made.

4.8.3 FIELDWORK (MAY 2015 – JANUARY 2016)

During the course of the main fieldwork period, the researcher leveraged the contacts and networks established before and during the preliminary phases of the project to conduct data collection in the field. The researcher spent 60 days in Ethiopia conducting semi-structured informal interviews with target interviewees as well as collecting secondary data and grey literature. Interviews were transcribed throughout these months, as travel was split into three principal trips, with times in the field followed by time back in the UK. Trips were split in this way so as to ensure the adequate spacing out of interviews, retention of detail and to mitigate the effects of over-interviewing. The result of this was the collection of the relevant primary data required for the study. During the same period, the researcher was also engaged in the production of content for Cooperative Waters magazine, in his role as Executive Editor.

4.8.4 DATA ANALYSIS (FEBRUARY 2016 – AUGUST 2016)

During this period, the researcher was engaged in the transcription of the last of the interviewee data as well as the finalisation of Cooperative Waters Magazine in anticipation of its publication in December 2016. This period also saw the final analysis of interviewee data collected during the main fieldwork phase and their integration into the theoretical framework. This analysis facilitated the testing of the research questions in line with the study's conceptual framework.

4.8.5 WRITING UP PHASE (SEPTEMBER 2016 – SEPTEMBER 2017)

In the final phase of the study, the analytical and concluding chapters were written-up and the final thesis prepared and completed for September 2017.

5 HYDRAULIC STATE-BUILDING: THE ETHIOPIAN EXPERIENCE

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to critically examine the domestic drivers behind Ethiopia's attempts to access and secure Nile water resources. As discussed in the Literature Review of this research, Egypt, with the compliance of Sudan, have historically exercised hydro-hegemony over the River Nile, controlling and utilising the majority of its waters. In recent decades, Ethiopia has embarked on an ambitious program of hydraulic development along many of the transboundary river basins located within its territory. In this regard, the Ethiopian Nile has been no different, with large-scale hydraulic projects currently being implemented along its course. These domestic developments upstream have put the Ethiopian government, led by the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), at odds with historical hydro-hegemony downstream.

Ethiopia, as the source of over 85% of Nile flows in the Basin, is a critical actor in the hydropolitics of the Eastern Nile Basin. Though the country has an estimated hydropower potential of 45,000MW and an estimated irrigation potential of 30-70 million hectares, it has only been in recent decades that it has begun to develop its vast potential for water development (Worqlul *et al.* 2015). A historical lack of hydraulic development in Ethiopia has largely been put down to the country's lack of material capacity: namely its economic underdevelopment, the non-prioritisation of its water sector and the lack of continuity in its water policies and plans (Cascão 2009b: 236). As a result, since coming to power in 1991, the EPRDF has made the country's "socio-economic transformation and restoration of Ethiopian greatness its overarching objectives" (Verhoeven 2013: 5). These objectives, which have been accompanied by a restructuring of the Ethiopian state, are being pursued through an ambitious hydraulic mission centred on the development of large-scale hydropower and irrigation projects. It is argued in this chapter that the Ethiopian government's recent pursuit of hydraulic development along the Nile can only be understood, as Allouche (2007) asserts, when contextualised within the larger state-building activities it is pursuing domestically.

Thus, the chapter will seek to answer sub-questions A and A1 of this research, namely: what domestic hegemonic strategies is the Ethiopian government pursuing in its attempts to access and utilise a greater share of Eastern Nile water resources; and to what extent do domestic hegemonic strategies and tactics contribute to the control of transboundary water resources? In order to address these research questions, the chapter will begin by examining previous attempts at state-building by Ethiopian governments and their relationship to the EPRDF's current state-building activities. The EPRDF-era of the last 26 years is particularly unique because of the emphasis on hydraulic infrastructure as a means of transforming the Ethiopian state. Even with these differences, EPRDF state-building shares a number of similarities with state-building under previous regimes. Thus, the history of modern state formation in Ethiopia merits

analysis herein. This analysis will be followed by an examination of Ethiopia's long-emerging hydraulic mission and the hydraulic bureaucracy (hydrocracy) pursuing it. In mapping the Ethiopian hydrocracy, this chapter will contribute to an original analysis of the power asymmetries which currently characterise the Ethiopian water sector and their impacts on hydraulic planning and development. In this context, the final section will identify the hegemonic strategies and tactics being deployed domestically by the Ethiopian hydrocracy in its attempts to develop Nile water resources.

The analysis presented in this chapter is drawn from secondary literature on historical state formation dynamics and hydraulic development in Ethiopia and, more significantly, from three rounds of elite interviews conducted in Ethiopia between: December 2014 – February 2015; August – October 2015 and; December 2015 – February 2016. These elite interviews were conducted with members of Ethiopia's government, investors, academics, consultants, journalists and representatives of regional organisations.

5.2 STATE FORMATION IN ETHIOPIA

> *"[Emperor] Tewodros [II] jailed British emissaries when he found Queen Victoria insincere in addressing his request for engineers from Britain to help him in his drive to modernise the country. When the British reacted angrily and sent troops to liberate their diplomats, Tewodros reacted by commissioning his local artisans to construct a cannon of epic proportions, which he named Sebastopol. When the day of the battle arrived, the cannon failed. Tewodros, rather than be captured and face humiliation, took his own life. In the end, he died for the future of the country in more ways than one." (GOV33)*

Domestic state-building in Ethiopia has historically been concerned with the resolution of two existential challenges: how to project political power across a vast and disconnected territory and how to effectively govern a populous characterised by ethnic heterogeneity. Ethiopian governments have traditionally responded to these challenges through the joint pursuits of modernisation and centralisation. It is argued in this research that these aspirations are foundational to any analysis of the hydraulic mission in Ethiopia due to their enduring influence over water governance and infrastructure development in the country. Thus, this section analyses the domestic state-building activities of governments led by the EPRDF in the federal era, covering the time period since the end of the civil war in 1991. Although the scope of this section has been narrowed to the post-1991 period, domestic state-building in Ethiopia during the federal era cannot be understood without being contextualised within the wider historical dynamics of the state which predate this period. Thus, limited references to pre-federal state-building dynamics will be made herein.

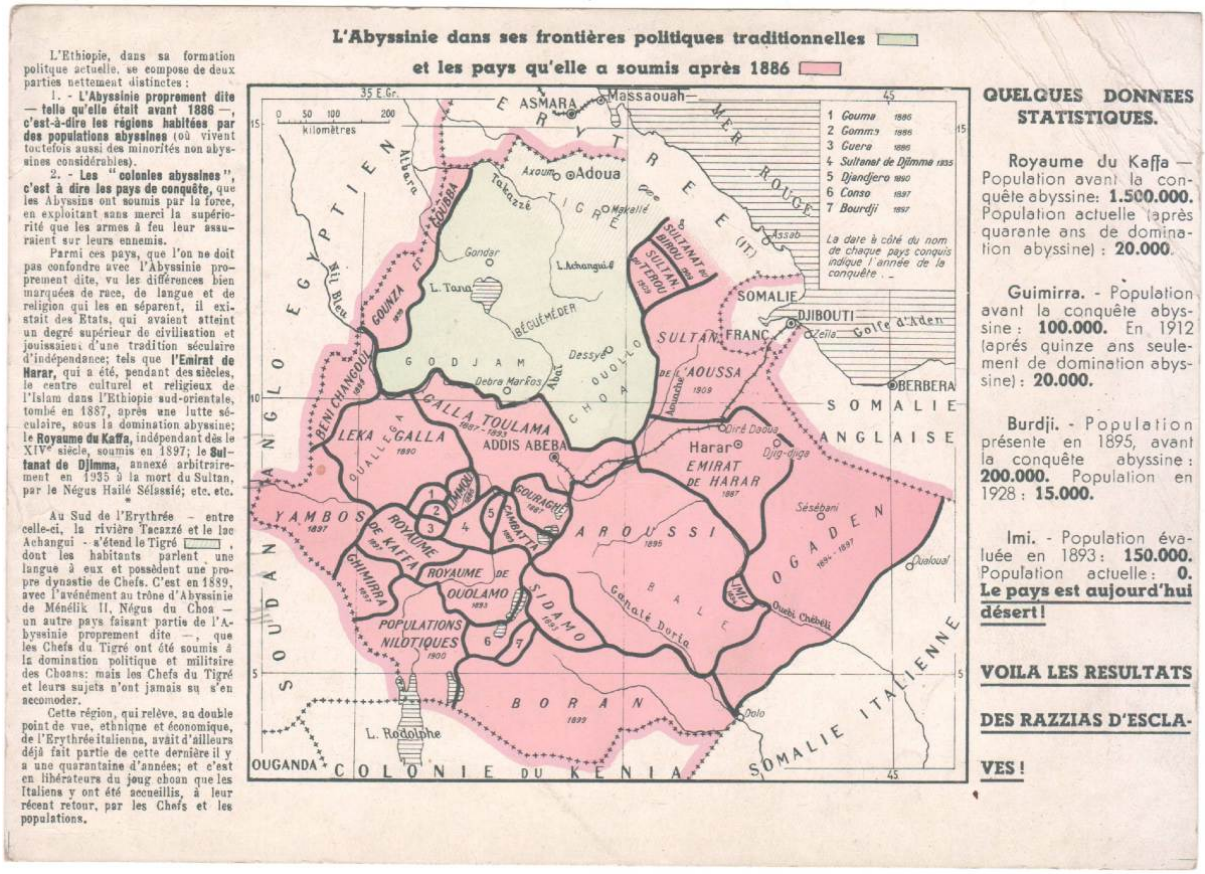
5.2.1 DOMESTIC STATE-BUILDING UNDER THE EPRDF

Following the downfall of the *Derg* regime in 1991, the victorious Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (TPLF), under the umbrella of the EPRDF[13], inherited a state fractured by two-decades of conflict and an economy in ruins. The state as structured under regimes in the pre-federal era, had been converted into an arena, wherein ruling elites from the core competed for power at the expense of peripheral communities. As explained by Christopher Clapham (2000: 3), the modern history of Ethiopian state-building has been characterised by the continuous attempts of administrations from this highland core to project their hegemonic power over peripheral territories. The highland core, as the historical foundation upon which the modern Ethiopian state was established, is located in the north of the country (as depicted in Figure 10 below, in light green). The north has been the source of the country's historical state-building activities with successive *Amhara* and *Tigrayan* administrations shaping the nature and scale of the imperial Ethiopian polity. With shared cultural institutions, including the highly influential Ethiopian Orthodox Church, and languages based on the same liturgical tongue (*Ge'ez*), groups in the region

[13] The EPRDF was originally formed towards the end of the struggle against the *Derg* when the TPLF and EPDM (Ethiopian Peoples Democratic Movement) allied in order to extend their insurgency beyond their northern bases.

competed across generations for influence and control over the state (see Zewde 1991). This centralised system of rule actively perpetuated cultural suppression with the perceived aim of denying the ethnic identities of peripheral groups within the state's territories (Vaughan and Tronvoll 2003). Though attempts were made early on in the *Derg*-era to decentralise political power in an effort to accommodate and balance the heterogeneous ethnic make-up of the state, these moves were quickly extinguished in favour of Colonel Mengistu Hailemariam's desire to consolidate power in the post-revolution period. In fact, the repeated centralising dynamics that dominated state-formation in the imperial era were refashioned under the *Derg*, with the independence of institutions and decentralisation of development held back through a tightly controlled and hierarchical one-party structure. These historical core-periphery dynamics and the existential questions they posed emerged as fundamental state challenges for the incoming EPRDF to address following their ascension to power in 1991.

Figure 10 - Ethiopian state expansion under Emperor Menilik II



The Transitional Charter established in 1991 proved to be the first significant step in the EPRDF's new state-building project. The Charter was significant as it established the rules of engagement for the restructuring of the state under the EPRDF – rules based primarily on the decentralisation of power and the democratisation of the political system. These initiatives were both radical departures from the centralisation and authoritarianism witnessed under previous regimes and were expected to lay the foundations for the transformation of the Ethiopian state. The process which went on to shape the Charter

at the 1991 Peace and Democracy Conference was illustrative of these twin ambitions (Vaughan and Tronvoll 2003). The conference in bringing together 25 political organisations under a single roof[14] aimed to promote the peaceful resolution of *Derg-era* conflicts through dialogue and was expected to establish "a legitimate, broad-based" transitional government which it was hoped could lay the foundations for the eventual democratic transformation of the country (Gudina 2011: 667). The Transitional Charter represented the principal source of law for the Transitional Government as well as the administrative rules governing the transitional period. The charter, as the foundation for a new Ethiopia, marked "the end of an era of subjugation and oppression [under the *Derg*]" (TGE 1991:1). This supported the establishment of a clear narrative on national history demonstrated in the Charter's language as being marred by regional prejudices, marginalisation and oppression. Thus, the Charter made a case for decentralisation and democratisation as the sole redress for the historical injustices perpetrated by previous iterations of the Ethiopian state.

In its first article the Charter enshrined the new transitional regime's commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights including: a) freedom of conscience, expression, association and peaceable assembly as well as; b) the rights to engage in unrestricted political activity and to organise political parties, provided the exercise of such rights do not infringe upon the rights of others (TGE 1991: 2). *Article Two* dealt particularly with the historical issue of a multi-ethnic Ethiopia affirming the right of nations, nationalities and peoples to self-determination. Going further, it directly tackled the nationalities question by guaranteeing each nation, nationality and people the right to: a) preserve its identity and have it respected, promote its culture and history and use and develop its language; b) administer its own affairs within its own defined territory and effectively participate in the central government on the basis of freedom, and fair and proper representation; c) exercise its right to self-determination of independence, when concerned, nation/nationality and people is convinced that the above rights are denied, abridged or abrogated (TGE 1991: 2). *Article Two* of the Charter effectively replicated the *Derg's* unfulfilled solution to the nationalities question, establishing the basis for decentralisation going forward. The decentralise promised under the TGE would be critical to the survival of the state, which following almost two decades of civil war and economic weakness, was particularly precarious. Furthermore, this decentralisation, if fully implemented, threatened to overturn the history of top-down development, which had yielded limited success in the country's modern political history. In particular, the stalled hydraulic mission of the previous century was identified early on by TGE President Meles Zenawi as an important vehicle for the economic development of the state. The impacts of decentralisation, or a lack thereof, on the hydraulic mission and water governance will be explained in Section 5.3.2.

[14] Importantly, detractors of the conference point to the EPRDF hand-selecting and inviting participants – thereby ensuring that the parties invited were disorganised, weak and amenable to the leaderships' strategic aims while more established political entities were excluded completely. The stand-out exception to this was the participation of the *Oromo* Liberation Front (OLF), a long established armed insurgency purporting to represent the largest ethnic group in the country.

5.2.2 ESTABLISHING THE CONFEDERATION

The decentralising and pluralistic momentum behind the conference and the Charter led to the establishment of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE) – comprised of an 87 seat Council of Representatives embracing 32 different political organisations (Adegehe 2009). Though this was seen as a move away from centralised decision-making, it is important to note that the EPRDF retained the key executive and leadership positions within the TGE. Meles Zenawi, the charismatic leader of the EPRDF, emerged as interim president of the TGE and led the party's expansion and extension of power, as part of its state-building project, in anticipation of the 1992 regional elections and the 1995 general elections.

Figure 11 - The Regional States of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

In one of its first acts, the TGE redrew the country's administrative borders – replacing the long-established imperial provinces with 11 new regional administrations (shown in figure 11) organised along ethnolinguistic lines and equipped with devolved decision-making authority. In order to consolidate state power in these regional constituencies in anticipation of regional elections, the EPRDF deployed its fighters and cadres in the peripheries through a network of People's Democratic Organisations (PDOs). The regional political organisations drawn from ethnic constituencies across the country are designed to facilitate the mass mobilisation of the public behind the party's policies. As described by an interviewee with knowledge of the workings of the EPRDF, "the party only achieved national status when it articulated its agendas in local languages and recruited through local people. This has proved critical to the party's legitimacy in the regions since" (BIS21). This view is confirmed by other scholars who confirm that the EPRDF's use of "ethnic mobilisation was both instrumental and ideological" and capitalised on a strategy

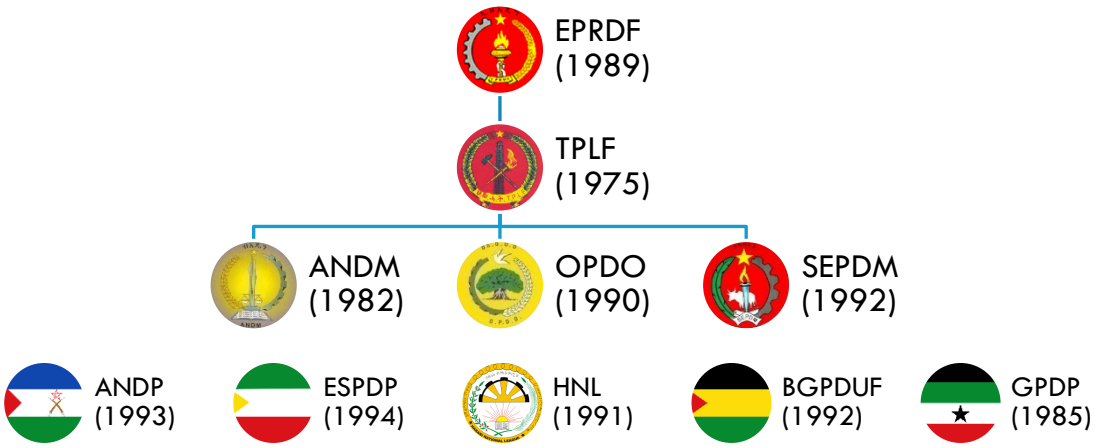
of "speaking through the mouths" of ethnic groups across Ethiopia (Vaughan 2011: 627; Gudina 2011: 667). Thus, the party deployed a new form of ethnic-based politics in its efforts to achieve the nationwide support-base it required to legitimise its vision for a new Ethiopia. These dynamics mimicked the pre-federal governance tactics of the imperial and Derg regimes as central officials used the patronage of peripheral elites to project political power domestically, thereby establishing legitimacy and consolidating hegemony in the peripheries. In this vision, the EPRDF promised the country's "peripheries a stake in a united Ethiopia through ethnic federalism and decentralized development" – going as far as promising the peripheries a constitutional right to self-determination if this promise was unfulfilled (Verhoeven 2013: 8).

In this arrangement, there existed two types of PDOs within the EPRDF. The first category of PDOs are directly made up of the members of the EPRDF coalition and are labelled *member parties*, whilst the second group are described as *affiliates/allied* parties. The EPRDF, governed by its 2006 Statute, describes that "all members of the Front having the same rights and responsibilities, will have the right to consult equally on common issues, participate in decision-making processes and to be equally represented in the Front leadership" (EPRDF 2006: 5). However, as illustrated in figure 12, the EPRDF's operation, though purporting to be egalitarian on the surface, is characterised by centralisation and the existence of power asymmetries amongst its constituent members. This paradox is captured in the same EPRDF statute (2006) wherein it states that a system of democratic centralism is in operation within the Front and that respect for the system is a requirement for membership.

As a founding member of the EPRDF, the TPLF combined it's existing ideological as well as organisational practices with this ethnic mobilisation of PDOs in order to act as a de-facto vanguard part within the coalition. The associated asymmetry of this arrangement allowed the TPLF, through these PDOs, to exercise greater political control over parts of the country where it had not previously operated (Vaughan 2011: 627). Aalen (2000: 80) goes further, explaining that,

> "The centralised party structure of the EPRDF is clearly contradictory to the provisions of the federal and regional constituencies, which give these levels the right to self-determination. It promotes upward accountability to the party organs above rather than downward accountability to the people of the region, *woreda* and *kebele*. The constitutional rights for the regions to formulate and implement plans and policies are severely diminished by the fact that the regional governments, which are all under the EPRDF's hegemony, follow the centrally designed policies and five-year plans… in the Ethiopian case, the party structures are centralized, and when the state and party are the same, this leads inevitably to a centralised division of state power."

Figure 12 - Members of the EPRDF and visual depiction of Front's hierarchy (Vaughan and Tronvoll 2003)



In this regard, member parties, and the regional constituencies they represent, include: the *Tigray* Peoples' Liberation Front (TPLF) in the **Tigray Regional State;** the *Amhara* National Democratic Movement (ANDM) in the **Amhara Regional State;** the *Oromo* People's Democratic Organisation (OPDO) in the **Oromia Regional State** and; the *Southern* Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement (SEPDM) in the **Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Regional State.** On the other hand EPRDF affiliates or allied parties include: the *Afar* National Democratic Party (ANDP) in the **Afar Regional State;** the Ethiopian *Somali* People's Democratic Party (ESPDP) in the **Ethiopian Somali Regional State;** the *Harari* National League (HNL) in the **Harari People's Regional State;** the *Benishangul/Gumuz* Peoples Democratic Unity Front (BGPDUF) in the **Benishangul-Gumuz Regional State** and; the *Gambella* Peoples Democratic Movement (GPDM) in the **Gambella People's Regional State.** Although this appeared to indicate the first systematic decentralisation of power to peripheral groups in Ethiopia's modern history, this expansion and extension of the EPRDF ultimately resulted in the further centralisation of power, not unlike the country's previous regimes. Therefore, it is argued that through the deployment of these PDOs to the regions, the EPRDF was implicitly reconstituting the historical core and periphery dynamic of the Ethiopian political experience. The further centralisation of decision-making in Ethiopia under the party and PDO system, under the guise of federalism, has maintained the top-down nature of development in the country. With the Federal Government in Addis Ababa continuing to govern from the centre at the expense of self-determination in the regional states.

Following regional elections in 1992, which the EPRDF and its affiliates effectively swept, the TGE moved onto the finalisation of the constitutional process which would formally transform the Republic into a Federation. Having consolidated its position in the TGE and effectively dominated the Council of Representatives, the EPRDF was successful in selecting a majority of its own members for the Constitution Drafting Commission while strictly vetting any other members through the same council (Gudina 2011). The 1995 constitution which emerged out of this process, firmly established the EPRDF as the dominant

party in the Ethiopian multi-party system for years to come[15]. According to Samuel Huntington, an American political scientist, who advised the EPRDF in this process, the multiparty system established by the constitution contributed to the development of a dominant party system in which, "one broad-based party that has a wide appeal to a number of groups, regularly wins elections and more or less continuously controls government" (Huntington 1993: 271). Thus, the EPRDF laid the foundation for their domestic political hegemony, setting themselves up as a "semi-permanent ruling party" for decades to come (Adegehe 2009).

On paper, the federal system under the EPRDF has empowered the peripheries like no time in the country's modern history. Regional states in this arrangement retain all residual powers and sovereignty, enjoying the right to self-determination up to secession and allowing for the existence of the Federal Government insofar as they will it (Vaughan and Tronvoll 2003: 12). In practice, however, the influence of centralised policy-making from a dominant ruling party, a lack of capacity in the regions and the flow of the bulk of regional state budgets from the core have countered decentralisation in the country. Further discussion of the impact of this dynamic on the actors and decision-making associated with water governance in Ethiopia during this period will take place in Section 5.3.2.1.

5.2.2.1 DEVELOPMENTAL STATE-BUILDING

Emerging out of the establishment of the federal system and in the aftermath of the EPRDF's electoral success in 1992 and 1995, were two aspects of resource control related to the government's devolution of power and the country's socio-economic transformation. First, the establishment of a dominant party system provided the Federal Government, led by the EPRDF, with the political stability needed to pursue the country's economic development and to attract the foreign investment necessary to stimulate growth. Secondly, the democratic legitimacy of multi-party politics helped secure the endorsement of western governments and donors previously suspicious of the party's Marxist-Leninist roots, thereby facilitating the flow of foreign development aid to its coffers. International legitimacy provided by donors and foreign expertise and finance have been important to the Government's current pursuit of hydraulic development, as exemplified by the GERD. This will be analysed in further depth in Chapters 6 and 7.

Mirroring the ambitions of historical state-building projects under the imperial and military governments, the Federal Government, under the EPRDF, has been engaged in the pursuit of modernisation, albeit under the new moniker of development. As the government of Africa's second most populous state and

[15] Adopted in mid-1995, it established a federation of nine National Regional States (NRS) drawn along the lines of Ethiopia's major language groups and enjoying full rights of 'self-determination up to and including secession', along with two cities (Dire Dawa and Addis Ababa) administered by the Federal Government. The nine States are dramatically asymmetrical in terms of every social indicator, with vast differences in demographic distribution and profile, development indices, resources and so on (Vaughan and Tronvoll 2003). The constitution was unanimously adopted with every article of the draft subjected to only one or two dissenting voices among the 547-member Constituent Assembly before approval (Gudina 2011:669).

one of the world's poorest countries, the EPRDF has, over the last two decades, prioritised the alleviation of poverty and the pursuit of state-led developmental capitalism. Accordingly, the Government introduced limited economic liberalisation – namely, the abolishing of price controls and the privatisation of some parastatal enterprises (Dercon 2006: 3-4). This has been illustrated by the Government's liberalisation of the investment code and privatisation of hundreds of state enterprises including the Lega Dembi Gold Mine in the late 1990s (*Addis Fortune*, 5 October 2014; Vaughan and Tronvoll 2003: 19). Crucially, however, the EPRDF, true to its Marxist roots, maintained state ownership of both rural and urban land as well as all natural resources, while inheriting the *Derg*'s monopolies over profitable economic sectors including telecommunications and electricity. For example, state-owned Ethio-Telecom remains the sole provider of fixed, mobile, internet and data services in the country while the Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU)[16] is responsible for the distribution and sale of all electricity both domestically and regionally.

In its objective to rebuild and transform the Ethiopian economy, in the last two decades, the EPRDF has engaged in a series of ambitious five-year development plans aimed at achieving the overarching strategy of Agricultural-led Industrial Development (Verhoeven 2011: 5). These plans have included the: 2005 – 2010 Plan for Accelerated and Sustainable Development to End Poverty (PASDEP); 2010 – 2015 Growth and Transformation Plan I and; 2015 – 2020 Growth and Transformation Plan II (FDRE 2010: vii). These plans, which have been modelled on the East Asian development miracle of the late 20th century, have attempted to diversify the economy away from its dependence on rain-fed subsistence agriculture by rejecting neoliberalism in favour of state-led investments in infrastructure and public services (ODI 2015). Per a number of interviewees, the plans have largely succeeded in helping the country "achieve sustained double-digit economic growth contributing substantially to the government's struggle against poverty" (GOV6; GOV35; RO20; ACA27). Coupled with the budgetary support of generous donors, amounting to roughly $1.5 billion USD annually, these policies have registered significant improvements in the country's socio-economic indicators (Verhoeven 2011: 5).

The EPRDF's developmental state-building has in the last decade been consumed with the construction of large-scale physical infrastructure including roads, railways and, most notably, dams (*African Business Magazine*, 21 March 2017). The EPRDF, having emerged in an era characterised by vulnerability to drought and the debilitating effects of man-made famine, identified the development of water resources through hydropower and irrigation as key to the socio-economic transformation of Ethiopia. For example, during the Growth and Transformation Plan I (GTP I) period, the hydropower generation capacity in the country was doubled from 2,000MW to 4,180MW (FDRE 2016: 36). In the same period, the Government launched construction of the largest dam in Africa, in the process challenging the historic hydro-hegemony of Egypt in the Nile Basin. The allure of power generation and large-scale water storage have reactivated the country's long-emerging hydraulic mission on the Nile (discussed in section 5.3.2), thus introducing a new element to the state-building project in Ethiopia. The next section will unpack the role

[16] Formerly known as the Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation (EEPCo),

of hydraulic development in the state-building process currently taking place in Ethiopia. It will be argued that the EPRDF, through an increasingly more empowered hydraulic bureaucracy, has been pursuing a depoliticized hydraulic state-building project on the Ethiopian Nile which is having important ripple-effects downstream.

5.3 HYDRAULIC STATE-BUILDING ON THE ETHIOPIAN NILE

"Water is one of the least-developed natural resources of Ethiopia… development of the water resources of Ethiopia is an essential prerequisite for the development of its agricultural and industrial potential. Equally important is the development of hydroelectric power which will provide relatively cheap energy (Abate 1994: 21).

These words from the 1994 book of Zewdie Abate, former head of the country's Environmental Protection Agency, are not new. In fact, the view of hydraulic development as indispensable to the modernisation has been echoed by the leaders of successive governments in Ethiopia's modern history. The development of the nation's water resources has been perceived as "an essential means of mitigating the ever-worsening poverty situations and meeting the nation's food security" (Arsano 2007: 167). In particular, the idea of developing, storing and utilising the waters of the country's 'greatest river', the Nile, has occupied the psyche of the leaders and peoples of the highlands it emanates from for centuries (Erlikh 2002).

The Eastern Nile Basin in Ethiopia, comprised of the *Abbay*, *Tekeze* and *Baro-Akobo* rivers, constitutes approximately "68% of the available water resources of the country" (Arsano and Tamrat 2005: 16). According to measures at Aswan in Egypt, Ethiopia's contributions to the Nile, once it exits the country, constitute an average of 86% of the river's total flows. Until recently, however, there has been limited development along the Nile in Ethiopia, with the country only able to "utilise 5% of its total surface water, or a meagre 0.6% of the water resources of the Nile Basin" (Arsano and Tamrat 2005: 16). Nonetheless, this chapter will examine the country's hydraulic mission on the Ethiopian Nile which dates to the imperial period and has been long-emerging in the century since.

The hydraulic mission, as first described by Ricardo Macias Picavaea, is defined as a strategy for the development of water resources which channels national forces, behind the hydrocracy, in the planning and execution of large-scale infrastructure (Swyngedouw 1999). The birth of the hydraulic mission in Ethiopia was signalled by the transition of water resources development from the local to the state-level under Emperor Menelik II and is today embodied by the ambitious dam-building program of the EPRDF. The continuity in government plans to develop national water resources is indicative of the emergence of a hydraulic mission on the Ethiopian Nile over the last century. Under the imperial regime's economic development plans of 1956-61, 1962-1967 and 1968-73, there was a high emphasis placed on the development of hydropower, irrigation and capacity in the water sector. This period saw the conducting of the landmark Abbay Master Plan Study as well as the establishment of the first specialised water department in the country, the Water Resources Department (WRC). Similarly, under the Derg, the push to develop national water resources continued with the establishment of basin development agencies tasked with the expansion of large and medium-scale irrigation as part of the Ten-Year Perspective Plan (1984-1993). Thus, it is argued herein, that the country's hydraulic mission, though only forming part of

the Ethiopian state-building project of the 20th century, is today the lynchpin of domestic state-building in the EPRDF-era.

This section will begin by introducing the origins of the hydraulic mission in the Ethiopian Nile during the pre-federal period, including the development of the first national legislation and institutions aimed at facilitating the deployment of hydraulic infrastructure. Before then detailing the influence of a hegemonic hydrocracy in accelerating hydraulic development on the Nile in the EPRDF-era, while discussing the contributions of these activities to the consolidation of hydraulic control on the Nile. Thus, the section will highlight the role played by an increasingly politicised hydraulic mission in the current government's attempts to strengthen the domestic economy and consolidate political power as part of its developmental state-building project.

5.3.1 ORIGINS OF THE HYDRAULIC MISSION

The following section will examine the origins of the hydraulic mission on the Ethiopian Nile, detailing the legislative and institutional mechanisms established by pre-federal governments in Ethiopia to enable the development of their water resources. This examination will contextualise the acceleration of the hydraulic mission and consolidation of water control that is currently taking place under the EPRDF.

5.3.1.1 PRE-FEDERAL WATER LEGISLATION

When delving into a discussion of the legislative instruments of the imperial era, one cannot afford to neglect the *Fetha Nagast*, the oldest set of codified laws in Ethiopia (Arsano 2007). *Fetha Nagast,* which when translated from *Ge'ez* means the '**Law of the Kings**', was the principal source of adjudication in the country during imperial rule. In line with the historical coupling of church and state, the *Fetha Nagast* to this day remains the basis by which the Ethiopian Orthodox *Tewahido* Church is administered (Straus 1968).

As described in Arsano (2007:110) the *Fetha Nagast* establishes four general principles for the management and utilisation of water resources based around:

a. Flow of water**:** downstream inhabitants have the right to receive the flow of water that flows from the source upstream. Upstream inhabitants retain the right to compensation for the fertile soils upstream received by downstream inhabitants due to the flow of water. Compensation may be offered in kinds, for instance, in the form of cereals (sec. 1179, Straus 1968)

b. Drawing of water**:** the following principles presume permission for the utilisation of the water resources from the relevant authority. The right to use water outside of its natural banks stops automatically when the period fixed for the utilisation expires. Similarly, the right to bring water or to use the waterway ceases following the expiry date of the type of use indicated (sec. 1180-1181, Straus 1968)

c. Access to a watering point**:** a person who's land is not bordering the water point has the right to a corridor of access in order to water his animals (sec. 1182, Straus 1968)

d. Deposited soils due to erosion**:** where the flow of a river between two adjacent lands erodes land from one and deposits onto the other, without explicit knowledge of the owner, the addition still belongs to the owner of the eroded lands (sec. 1184, Straus 1968)

As was common under imperial administration, the *Fetha Nagast* considers water, as was the case with most natural resources, among those things that are not for sale or purchase and belongs to a category of resources which are freely available and publicly owned (Straus 1968). This law was a critical foundation for the hydraulic mission in Ethiopia, setting a precedent for the public ownership of all water resources. In essence, this went on to guarantee government control of water resources in Ethiopia for decades to come, creating an enabling environment for the development of hydraulic infrastructure. The enacting of these laws fed into the larger state program of centralisation taking place in the country during the imperial period. Though the permeation and level of implementation of these laws in the peripheries is unclear, they are still indicative of the centralising agendas of the imperial state.

During the pre-federal period, Ethiopia also experienced two constitutions and one civil code which contained provisions governing the management and utilisation of water resources.

In specifically dealing with water, *Article 130* of the **1955 Revised Constitution** of the Imperial Ethiopian Government stated,

> "A) the natural resources of, and in the sub-soil of the Empire including those beneath its waters, are State Domain. (B) The natural resources in the waters, forests, land, air, lakes, rivers and ports of the Empire are sacred trust for the benefit of present and succeeding generations of the Ethiopian people. The conservation of the said resources is essential for the preservation of the Empire. The Imperial Ethiopian Government shall accordingly take all such measures as may be necessary and proper, in conformity with the Constitution, for the conservation of said resources. (C) None of the said resources shall be exploited by any person, natural or juridical, in violation of the principles of conservation established by Imperial Law. (D) All property not held and possessed in the name of any person natural or juridical, including all land in escheat, and all abandoned properties, whether real or personal, as well as all products of the sub-soil, all forests and all grazing lands, watercourses, lakes and territorial waters are State Domain." (IEG 1955)

Similarly, in *Article 13* of the **1987 Constitution** of the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, the state maintained ownership of all natural resources stipulating,

> "1) state ownership is public ownership. 2) The state shall, through the ownership of key production, distribution and service enterprises, play the leading role in the economy. Natural resources, land, minerals, water and forest, are state property. The development and utilisation of natural resources shall be determined by law." (PDRE 1987)

Although the two constitutions were enacted under different regimes, there remained continuity in their approaches to the management of water resources with the state viewed as the sole guarantor for the sustainable management and exploitation of water resources was the state. In the context of the centralising agendas shared by both governments, it is unsurprising that public ownership of natural resources persisted in Ethiopia. Crucially, public ownership of these resources through the state explicitly eschewed the possibility of private ownership and management of water in the country.

Finally, as one of the rare legal instruments to have survived all three regimes in Ethiopian history, the **Civil Code** of the Empire of Ethiopia (IEG 1960) stipulates the rules which continue to govern the individual ownership and use of water resources in Ethiopia. *Book III, Title VII, Chapter 2, Section 3* of the Code, in particular, lays out the rights and obligations of individuals with regard to ownership, access and utilisation of these resources in a number of articles (IEG 1960: Art. 1228 – Art 1256).

At the time of its writing, the scope of the Civil Code was understandably limited to regulating the water rights and obligations of users at the local scale rather than to account for the emergence of large-scale hydraulic development. Nonetheless, what provisions would affect the development of larger scale hydraulic schemes included:

a. **Art. 1228** covering **use by community** - (1) the community shall have priority in the use of all running and still water; (2) Such water shall be controlled and protected by the competent authority
b. **Art. 1236** covering **irrigation** – (1) An owner whose land is crossed or bordered by running water may use such water for irrigating his land; (2) Such rights may not be exercised to the detriment of those who on the land or downstream, use such water for domestic purposes or to water their cattle.
c. **Art. 1237** covering **priority of domestic use** – (1) Where the use of water for purposes of irrigation is or may be detrimental to persons downstream who use such water for purposes other than domestic, the said persons may, where they show the existence of vested rights to their benefit, object to the water being used for irrigation; (2) There shall be deemed to be vested rights on the use of water for purposes other than domestic where apparent or notorious works or installations have been done on the ground with a view to using the water for such purposes.
d. **Art. 1239** covering **compensation** – The owner of the land upstream shall be entitled to compensation where the exploitation of his land is impaired or rendered impossible by the prohibition from using water crossing or bordering his land.
e. **Art 1240 (3)** covering the **amount of compensation** - Compensation shall in all cases include the value of the works or installations the use of which is prohibited by the court and which have been done in good faith without the persons downstream objecting thereto.
f. **Art. 1242** covering **industrial use** – (1) The owner of land, which is crossed or bordered by water, may use such water for industrial or commercial undertakings such as water mills, wash-

houses or bathing establishments. (2) He shall ensure that the water flowing from his land is unsoiled and fit for the use to which it may normally be put.

g. **Art. 1244** covering **hydraulic power** – Only those undertakings which have been granted a concession by the competent authority may do work on rivers with a view to distributing, carrying or selling hydraulic power.

Although the Code does not remain as comprehensive today as it was in 1960, it is still significant in its upholding of the *Fetha Nagast* - codifying water as public property, deeming access to and management of it under the jurisdiction of competent state authorities. In concert with the constitutions of 1955 and 1987, the Code was important in establishing a trend of centralised administration of water resources – a trend that has continued to dominate the development of hydraulic infrastructure in Ethiopia to this day.

5.3.1.2 PRE-FEDERAL INSTITUTIONS AND NILE PROJECTS

Institutional governance and hydraulic development in the water sector in Ethiopia is nascent in many respects. For starters, modern institutions engaged in the management and development of water resources have only existed in the country for just over fifty years. Most these institutions have historically been established to facilitate the implementation of specific technical and/or physical projects – particularly related to irrigation.

Additionally, Ethiopia's water sector has neither been free from nor immune to the historical processes of centralisation that have characterised state-formation in the country. Thus, water sector decisions have historically been made at the highest political levels with limited technical input and on an *ad-hoc* basis "in response to needs as they were perceived over time" (Abate 1994: 86). Across all pre-federal regimes, this commonality has been illustrated by heads of state taking an active and at times counter-productive role in the sector. For example, during imperial rule, "the president of the national water sector was the Emperor himself, while the Crown Prince, the Prime Minister and the members of the Crown Council were members of the Advisory Council" (Arsano 2007: 126). In a similar fashion, national water resources during *Derg* rule were under the strict purview of the Council of Ministers chaired by the Head of State. This impacted institutional growth and continuity under these regimes as their mandates were politically sanctioned with little legislative recourse. The following section will detail what limited institutional and hydraulic development has taken place on the Ethiopian Nile prior to the coming to power of the EPRDF. Notably, it will be illustrative of the factors which have contributed to the failure of Ethiopian counter-hegemony on the Nile during this period.

Lake Tana Project (1925)

Following their colonisation of Egypt, Sudan, Kenya and Uganda towards the tail-end of the 19th century, Great Britain emerged as the dominant hegemonic power in the Nile Basin. In an effort to make their colonies in the Basin more profitable, British planners and engineers set their sights on the exploitation of the River Nile for the benefit of large-scale agricultural investment plans slated for their colonies (Willcocks and Craig 1913). Consequently, their plans to better utilize and exploit the water resources of the Nile launched what can be described as the first 'hydraulic mission' on the river. British plans to develop the cotton industries in Egypt and Sudan led them to the formulation of an integrated development plan for the Nile basin aimed at increasing storage capacity upstream for the benefit of year-round supply downstream (Collins 1990). The British aimed to develop reservoirs on the White Nile for Egyptian cotton production and on the Blue Nile for its Sudanese plantations.

Ethiopia, from which the entirety of the Blue Nile emanated, was the only sovereign nation in the Basin, posing a significant challenge to Britain's ambitions on the River. In an effort to circumvent the Ethiopian side, Britain went about signing several agreements with Italy, the most influential colonial power in the Horn of Africa and a historical adversary to Ethiopian independence. In these treaties, Italy provided assurances that it would not engage in any hydraulic development that would modify the flow of the Blue Nile in Ethiopia whilst Britain accepted Ethiopian territory as an Italian area of influence (Arsano 2007). However, when Italy was resoundingly defeated at the Battle of Adwa by the Ethiopians in 1896, Britain quickly pivoted towards direct negotiations with the imperial government of Emperor Menelik II.

The roots of the **Lake Tana project** lie in the ashes of two-decades of failed attempts, by the British, to negotiate a concession on the lake for its use as a reservoir for colonial agricultural developments in Sudan and Egypt. Successive imperial regimes including those of Emperor Menelik, Empress Zewditu and Haile Selassie resisted Britain's hegemonic resource capture strategies, aimed at developing a century's worth of water storage on the Lake, based on territorial sovereignty, local political dynamics and the conservation of historical sites[17] (Arsano 2007). In 1925, British frustrations with the Imperial Government of Ethiopia led them to sign a new set of agreements with Italy. In exchange for permitting an Italian plan to construct a railway through Ethiopia to connect its other two territories in Somalia and Eritrea, the British negotiated the right to construct a dam on Lake Tana. Crucially, these agreements, which were bilateral in nature, excluded Ethiopia who were not bound by or party to their terms.

In response, the Imperial Government, under Haile Selassie I, went about planning their own Lake Tana project, aiming to construct it with the support of American investment and engineering. These attempts at counter-hegemony, as represented by leverage strategies, hoped to profit from American irritation at the loss of their market share in cotton following the entry of cheaper Anglo-Egyptian and Sudanese

[17] Powerful regional kings in the *Amhara* provinces of *Gojjam* and *Gondar* who controlled the lands and rivers surrounding the Lake were reluctant to accept any deals negotiated with Addis Ababa that fell under their traditional jurisdiction. Additionally, the Ethiopian Orthodox clergy would not accept any development which jeopardised the existence of historical island churches and monasteries on the Lake.

alternatives. Direct talks between both sides in Washington produced an agreement which would see the New York-based G.J. White Engineering Corporation construct a barrage at the outlet of Lake Tana with the larger aim of selling water at a profit to the British in Sudan. For this, it was agreed that G.J. White would pay fixed royalties to the Ethiopian Government from these sales (Arsano 2007). Eventually, G.J. White carried out a survey of the project area on two separate occasions in 1930 and 1934 and assessed that the overall project would cost an estimated $10 million USD.

Finally, however, the project was shelved for three reasons, thereby scuppering early attempts by the Imperial Government to counter Egyptian hydro-hegemony on the Nile. Reasons included: 1) The British colonial government successfully lobbying the US government, and by extension the G.J. White Engineering Corporation, to abandon a project that would tamper with the head-waters of the Nile; 2) the onset of world depression in 1929 and 1930 saw global cotton prices tumble, significantly harming the project's economic feasibility and 3) With World War two looming on the horizon, the Ethiopian government was much more occupied with preparing for an Italian invasion (Arsano 2007:153).

Water Resources Department (WRD) (1956)

Prior to the passing of the revised Constitution in 1955, the role of government in the development of water resources was "minimal" per a historian with knowledge of the sector (ACA25). The establishment of the **Water Resources Department (WRD)** in 1956, thus represented a watershed moment in the history of water governance in the country. Formed as an organ of the Ministry of Works and Urban Development, it was aimed at supporting Ethiopian engineers and technicians working on the joint Ethiopia-US *Abbay* (Blue Nile) study program and creating conditions for this group to conduct similar studies in other river basins of Ethiopia (Abate 1994: 63; Arsano 2007). Indicative of the limited technical capacity in the country at the time, it was set up with a limited workforce "consisting of just one engineer and a maximum of 50 technicians" (ACA25). This represented the first institutional attempt by an Ethiopian government to deploy counter-hegemonic tactics on the Nile through the establishment of alternative sources of scientific knowledge and enhanced technical expertise about its water resources.

The WRD was a junior partner on the Ethiopian side for the joint *Abbay* Basin Study Program conducted by the Imperial Government and the USBR of the Department of Interior. The study was commissioned upon the invitation of the Ethiopian Government in order to perform a thorough investigation of the hydrology of the upper Blue Nile Basin (Block and Strzepek 2010). Through this program the WRD and USBR successfully: "1) provided aerial maps for the entire basin of the Blue Nile within Ethiopia; provided hydro-meteorological services to the study program; 3) establishing the basis for the future development and expansion of hydro-meteorological services throughout Ethiopia" (Arsano 2007: 127). Ultimately, the study was aimed at equipping the Ethiopian Government with the scientific data required to strongly negotiate the country's position vis-à-vis the utilisation and management of the Nile with downstream riparians. This liberating strategy was envisioned to operate in two ways, by allowing the Ethiopian government to: use the results of the study as a modality for water sharing in the Basin in the event of negotiations with downstream countries" or; exercise leverage in the Basin through the implementation

of projects identified in the study. The study delivered on its primary aim by drawing up an ambitious list of potential hydroelectric and irrigation projects along the Blue Nile and Atbara Rivers including their preliminary designs. Importantly, the USBR-WRD potential projects identified mutual benefits for both Ethiopia and its downstream neighbours including the regulation of flood waters, reduced evaporation losses and more efficient year-round storage (Block and Strzepek 2010).

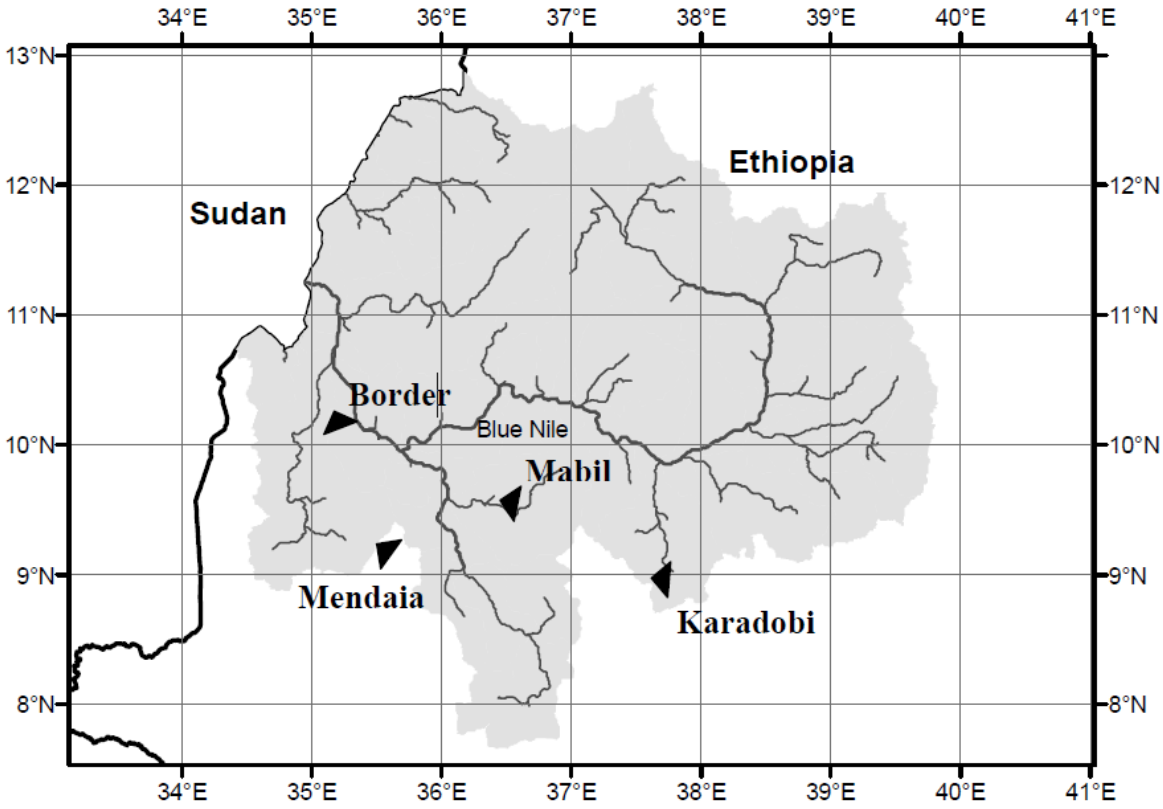
Figure 13 - Abbay Basin annotated with USBR-WRD proposed dams (University of Texas 2011)

Although the WRD was formally disbanded following the conclusion of *Abbay* Basin Study Program in 1964, it went on to form the basis for the establishment of further institutions in the water sector in the years that followed. In particular, the establishment of the National Water Resources Commission (NRWC) and the Ethiopian Valley's Development Studies Authority (EVDSA).

Abbay Master Plan Study Project (1958)

The Imperial Government had to wait over two decades before it embarked on its follow-up to the Lake Tana Project. In 1958, the Ethiopian Government again turned to the US in its attempts to develop the Nile in Ethiopia, but this time it greater ambitions – aiming to develop the totality of the Blue Nile basin. By launching the ***Abbay* Master Plan Study**, the Government planned to: "1) compile a complete inventory of the water and other natural resources in the basin; 2) establish a model for other basin studies in the country; and 3) to create and develop human resource capacity for the development of the water sector" (Arsano 2007: 153). These studies anticipated benefits which included the provision of regulated water supply for planned hydropower and irrigation as well as to eventually use data from the study in future negotiations over water sharing with downstream countries.

Figure 14 - USBR proposed hydropower dams in Ethiopian Blue Nile (Block *et al.* 2007: 5)



This project, as the original foundation of scientific knowledge and hydraulic planning on the Ethiopian Nile, would provide Ethiopian officials for years to come with the bargaining power to resist Egyptian hydro-hegemony on the Nile through reactive diplomacy and the knowledge required to eventually pursue the construction of dams in hydropower-favourable locations upstream. It continues to act as an important building block for the counter-hegemony we are witnessing on the Nile today.

In technical and financial partnership with the US Government, the study took a total of five years and produced wide-ranging data on the basin's "hydrology, water quality hypsography, geology, sedimentation, mineral resources, land resources, groundwater and local socio-economic situation" (Collins 1990: 279). This is significant as it was the first scientific study of its kind in the Basin – providing the Ethiopian government with valuable data and modelling on the possibilities and benefits of development in the Basin. The study went on to recommend that four dams be installed downstream with an anticipated storage capacity of 51 BCM per year of which 6 BCM could be used for irrigation. In regard to hydropower production, the study estimated that these dams could eventually produce three times the electricity of the Aswan High Dam in Egypt, the largest example of hydraulic infrastructure in the entire basin.

Table 4 - Reservoir and hydropower capacity of USBR proposed dams (Block *et al.* 2007: 6)

Project Name	**Reservoir Capacity (BCM)**	**Flow at Design Head (m^3/s)**	**Installed Hydropower Capacity (MW)**
Karadobi	32.5	948	1350
Mabil	13.6	1346	1200
Mendaia	15.9	1758	1620
Border	11.1	2378	1400

Once again, Ethiopia's attempts at counter-hegemony were halted before they could get started. The results of these studies were never implemented as domestic financial constraints and the refusal of international financial institutions to offer loans for these projects doomed them. With the lack of implementation, the Ethiopian Government lost critical leverage and influence in the Basin hydropolitics as Egypt and Sudan continued to negotiate Nile water quotas exclusively among themselves. However, not all was lost, as the Abbay Master Plan Study Project supported the "training of a whole generation of Ethiopian hydrologists and experts, and in turn gave rise to the Ethiopian Water Resources Department" (ACA41).

Gilgel Abbay Study Project (1962)

A lesser known project from this era was known as the ***Gilgel Abbay*** or 'baby *Abbay*' which was located at the source of the Blue Nile (Arsano 2007). In the early part of the 1960s, a German engineering team conducted a comprehensive study of this part of the basin identifying it as a high potential area for the

development of commercial agriculture (Lahmeyer Consulting Engineers 1962). It was projected that the area could be the source of foreign currency for the Ethiopian Government through the production of oilseeds, pulses and fodder for export. Eventually, the study was incorporated into the larger *Abbay* Basin study with its proposals remaining unfulfilled, relegated to history. While not as high-profile as other projects in the Basin, this project is still significant as it acted as a precursor to the future development of large-scale irrigation on the Ethiopian Nile. This prospect became a short-lived reality with the Tana-Beles project but has remained in government plans in the EPRDF-era. This was the earliest example of a counter-hegemonic *resource capture* strategy on the Ethiopian Nile as the Imperial Government toyed with the idea of unilaterally constructing multi-purpose hydraulic infrastructure aimed at both energy generation and agricultural production.

Awash Valley Authority (AVA) (1962)

Located outside the Nile Basin, the *Awash* River is significant in Ethiopia as it is one of few rivers in the country that is not transboundary in nature. The Government first established the **Awash Valley Authority (AVA)** in 1962 through the Government General Notice No. 299 to support the growth of both private and state-owned large-scale mechanised farming enterprises (Arsano 2007).

The AVA emerged as the first water management institute in the country and was tasked with: "1) Administering water usage and rights in the valley; 2) Coordinating the activities of all government organs in the valley; 3) Constructing and administering dams and canals in the valley; 4) Allocating water for irrigation and other purposes; and 5) Fixing and collecting fees for the use of water and other facilities" (Arsano 2007: 128). The AVA's governance was also a first for the country – it had a charter and was led by a ministerial board of governors which included the concerned ministers (Agriculture, Commerce and Industry, Interior and Public Works). Within the context of early Ethiopian counter-hegemony, the establishment of the AVA represents government attempts to reduce the knowledge gap in relation to water resources development through investments in institution-building and human resources. Alternative or enhanced knowledge built through the AVA was seen as important to the building of greater bargaining capacity within the domestic water sector, and by extension internationally at the basin level.

National Water Resources Commission (NWRC) (1971)

The **National Water Resources Commission (NWRC)** was established in 1971 by the Imperial Government with the main purposes of "providing full attention to the protection, and efficient utilisation and management of all activities relating to the water resources of the country" (Arsano 2007: 129). The NWRC was also tasked with the coordination of hydraulic activities including water quantity and quality, implementation of technologies and the maintenance of standards. Furthermore, it was "entrusted to provide institutional and managerial facilitation for a clean and adequate water supply for domestic use and livestock watering purposes, for irrigation, for municipal and industrial use and for hydroelectric power development" (Arsano 2007: 129). Under the *Derg* regime, the NWRC was re-established in

1981 with no significant changes to its mandate or activities. The formation of the NWRC was significant in working to promote enhanced knowledge and expertise within the water sector in Ethiopia. Through the building of capacity domestically, the Government laid the foundation for eventual attempts at counter-hegemonic liberating strategies on the Nile.

Finchaa-Amarti Project (1972)

The **Finchaa-Amarti Project** initiated by Emperor Haile Selassie I in 1968 and commissioned in 1972 on the Finchaa River, a tributary of the Blue Nile, is a rare example of successful Ethiopian counter-hegemonic tactic in the pre-Federal era. "Funded in large part by the World Bank, this $34 million USD project" represents the only fully accomplished *resource capture* strategy on the Ethiopian Nile in the 20th century (ACA41). It was originally identified within the Abbay Master Plan Study Project, and was envisioned to be multi-purpose - with hydropower and irrigation components. Though Egypt strongly protested its commissioning, these protests fell on deaf ears as the project's hydropower component went on to become a principal source of electricity to Ethiopia's capital, Addis Ababa, for the following four decades (Waterbury 2002: 121). This project represented the counter-hegemonic tactic of the unilateral construction of infrastructure as the Ethiopian Government did not consult or inform downstream Egypt of its intention to pursue the project.

Valleys Agricultural Development Authority (VADA) & Awash Valley Development Agency (AVDA) (1977)

Following the 1974 revolution, all private enterprises were nationalised whilst all land property in the country was retained as public property owned by the state. Naturally, the AVA and its original mandate were transformed to reflect the change in political regime and owing to a "lack of general coordination and duplication of effort, particularly between the NWRC and the AVA" (Abate 1994: 63). The **Valleys Agricultural Development Authority (VADA)** was proclaimed in 1977, with the new entity retaining the powers and duties of the AVA but with jurisdiction limited to all national water resources. To avoid conflict with the AVA, the **Awash Valley Development Agency (AVDA)** was also formed and was instructed to "facilitate the transformation of agricultural and agro-industrial activities in the Awash Valley into state enterprises" (Arsano 2007: 128). In addition to its activities in the valley, the AVDA was also charged with reconstituting and managing agri-businesses in accordance with the development and expansion of state-owned collective farms in the rest of the country. Nonetheless, the AVDA was eventually abandoned in favour of the Ethiopian Valleys Development Studies Authority (EVDSA) and the Water Resources Development Authority (WRDA), whose remit overlapped with the activities of the National Water Resources Commission (NWRC), in 1987. Ultimately, though these institutions failed to translate their mandates into the development outcomes the *Derg* leadership desired, they laid the foundations for the adoption of similar integrated river basin development authorities in future. The enhanced knowledge and expertise these authorities contributed to in the water sector was significant to the growing counter-hegemonic leverage and liberating strategies pursued by the Ethiopian government in the post-Cold war period.

Tana-Beles Project (1984)

The middle of the 1980s saw the rekindling of interest in developing the water resources of the Nile Basin in Ethiopia. This time, the *Derg* relied on the plans identified in the *Abbay* basin master plan study of years prior in an effort to develop the Beles River. In the original plans, the river, which flows adjacent to Lake Tana before eventually joining the Blue Nile, had been favourably identified for its hydropower and irrigation potential.

The *Derg* launched the **Tana-Beles project** to address the plethora of issues which had engulfed large parts of the country following the 1984/5 droughts and famines. The Beles River valley development set out to resettle populations from drought-affected areas in Northern Ethiopia and from overpopulated areas in the central highlands to irrigated agricultural lands downstream of the River. The project also included the development of hydropower upstream and received funding worth $300 million USD from the Italian Government under the Ethiopian Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (Tafesse 2001). The resettlement program ultimately failed. The new settlers largely drawn from the highland ethnic groups of the *Amhara, Tigray, Gurage* and *Wolaiyta* completely overwhelmed the indigenous populations in the area, leading to an exodus of the local *Begga* community. The Tana-Beles project in failing to centre the development it promised on the local population ended up fuelling yet more political instability in the region and perpetuating food insecurity. Eventually, this further contributed to the failure of Ethiopian counter-hegemony in the pre-Federal era, as infrastructure projects were left unrealised, institutions were weakened by politicisation and the development of the Ethiopian Nile was deprioritised in favour of security considerations across the country.

In conclusion, institutions and planned hydraulic projects on the Ethiopian Nile Basin represented much promise but delivered little during the pre-federal era. Ethiopia's inability to mobilise the required domestic and international finance, a dearth of technical capacity and continuity in it's few institutions, Cold War meddling in the Basin and seemingly never-ending political conflict within and around Ethiopia, severely curtailed any attempts at developing water infrastructure in the country. This is supported by Abate (1994: 155) when he wrote that, in the past, Ethiopia was unable to develop its transboundary Nile waters "due to various factors such as perpetual instability of the country, lack of skilled manpower and shortage of financial resources". Ultimately, counter hegemony was not achieved. This is captured by a senior official who described that "it has previously been difficult to develop even the smallest irrigation schemes on the Nile… We have had to knock on many doors for finance, but they rarely opened" (GOV54). Additionally, the onset of the 1974 revolution was particularly damaging to the water sector, with institutions "losing valuable educated professionals and experienced leaders to a combination of politically motivated purges and economic brain-drain" (ACA57). Ohlsson and Turton (1999) refer "to the transition from local to state-directed water resources development as the birth of the hydraulic mission, embodied in a central government agency consisting of hydraulic engineers". Although the hydraulic mission stalled in the pre-federal period, it will be shown that the establishment of water institutions, including the EVDSA and NWRC, and the commissioning of the *Abbay* Master Plan

Study have acted as important foundations for the eventual pursuit of hydraulic development and counter-hegemony on the Nile during the EPRDF era.

5.3.2 THE HEGEMONY OF HYDRAULIC DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE EPRDF

This section will begin by examining how, over the last two decades, the historical hydraulic mission on the Nile has been accelerated as part of an ambitious state-building project under the EPRDF. In line with Warner (2008), it will be argued that the Federal Government, led by the Prime Minister's Office and select ministries, is engaged in a two-level game in its pursuit of developmental state-building through water infrastructure projects on the Ethiopian Nile. As identified by Mollinga (2001), these domestic dynamics of national water resources policy, development and management are representative of the nature of hydro-hegemonic processes in transboundary river basins. Therefore, by analysing hydro-hegemony on the Nile at the domestic scale, this section will reveal how the Ethiopian government's Level I engagements within the Basin are being determined by factors at Level II influencing its pursuit of hydraulic control domestically.

5.3.2.1 ADVANCING THE HYDRAULIC MISSION

"Meles [Zenawi] always had a plan for the Nile even before the EPRDF came to power in 1991. In fact, of the few things on the wall in his office was a map of the Blue Nile Basin." (MED21)

Established in the 1970s, the TPLF emerged at a moment in Ethiopia's history in which the country's historical vulnerability to drought and the state's structural weaknesses spurred a series of humanitarian catastrophes that culminated in the devastating famines of the 1980s. As a regional liberation movement, based in *Tigray,* the region hardest-hit by this man-made famine, the leadership of the TPLF was acutely aware of the importance of tackling this food insecurity and under-development. Thus, since coming to power in 1991, the EPRDF's developmental state-building project has hinged on addressing three interrelated challenges, framed as existential threats to Ethiopian statehood: (1) re-establishing peace and security; (2) restructuring the relationship of the many people who constitute Ethiopia with the political centre and; (3) delivering sustainable growth to reduce Ethiopia's vulnerability to climate and hydrology (Verhoeven 2013: 5). Whilst constitutional decentralisation under the federal system (discussed in Section 5.2.2) has contributed to the partial resolution of the former two, in the Front's attempt to meet the latter challenge, it has opted to accelerate the country's hydraulic mission through the construction of large dams.

The Office of the Prime Minister (PMO), held by Meles Zenawi for 17 years prior to his death in 2012, has spearheaded the socio-economic transformation of Ethiopia, referred to, in recent years, as the 'Ethiopian Renaissance'. During this time, the PMO has directed and set strategy across government, with the Prime Minister, as head of the Executive and Chairman of the EPRDF, exerting significant personal influence over policy-making in the country. As explained by an interviewee with knowledge of party politics, this can be attributed to the "EPRDF culture [which] has been very hierarchical and centralised and, feeds into the workings of Government… both policy-making and decision-making during Meles'

time came from the top" (MED21). In the same way, the ambitious dam-building currently at the centre of the government's economic planning and a prominent feature of its foreign policy, though formally led by the MoWIE, has been politically driven by Level II considerations at the PMO (Verhoeven 2011: 5). This view is supported by an adviser within government who states that, on transboundary issues and "the Nile, in particular, policy direction has been set by the PM's office with other ministries expected to follow [suit] and adjust their activities" (GOV56). This view is supported by Jones *et al.* (2012) when they highlight that institutions like the PMO, a bureaucratic enclave of knowledge and policy-making with a special politico-administrative status within Government, currently drive the remaking of the domestic political economy in Ethiopia. The PMO has historically exercised its power across government through a combination of the charismatic and tight-fisted leadership of Meles Zenawi, the conflation of party and civil service politics and the influence of formerly high-ranking party and state officials, turned political advisors (Vaughan and Tronvoll 2003). The latter dynamic has especially characterised the water sector, with two former cabinet ministers at MoWIE and several high-ranking heads of water-related state corporations, including sugar and electricity, having been appointed advisors at the PMO in various cabinet cycles. The remit of these advisors and their relationship to the institutions which they intersect with "remain unclear and at the discretion of the PM" (GOV56). The large role played by the PMO in advancing the hydraulic mission in Ethiopia is understood within the context of Level II governance factors in the country, namely the hyper-concentration of policy-making and decision-making capacity at the centre of the Federal Government.

The acceleration of the hydraulic mission, under the EPRDF, began following the transitional period with the proclamation of the Federal Constitution and reorganisation of the water sector. The Constitution (FDRE 1995) as the highest codified legal document in Ethiopia contained several clauses governing the country's natural resources. Crucially, the Constitution, though federal in spirit, maintained the centralisation of the water sector established under both imperial and socialist governments. For example:

- Article 40 (3) of the Constitution while maintaining the public ownership of all natural resources, went further by stipulating that the water resources of the country – both surface and underground – as part of the public domain, would be vested in the state on behalf of the people (FDRE 1995).
- Article 51.5 and 52.2d established the supremacy of the policies and laws of the Federal Government in the administration and management of water resources within Regional States (FDRE 1995).
- Article 51 (11) confers on the Federal Government the powers to determine and administer the utilisation of water resources (including river and lakes) linking two or more regional states or crossing the country's national borders (FDRE 1995). Thus, the use, allocation, protection and governance of national water resources largely rests with the Federal Government (FAO 2013). This is significant as most of the river basins in Ethiopia are transboundary in nature. Thus

conferring the mandate and authority to determine the administration and utilisation of the vast majority of rivers in the country exclusively to the Federal Government.

- Articles 44 and 92 address the rights of citizens in relation to the planning and implementation of development programs and projects. Herein, citizens have the right to a clean and healthy environment and the right to full consultations at all stages in the execution of environmental projects affecting them directly (FDRE 1995).

The Constitution firmly established the Federal Government and the institutions which fall under it as the ultimate decision-makers in the governance and development of water resources in Ethiopia. By making the Regional States largely subservient in the development of their water resources, the Constitution, as framed and authored by senior leaders within the EPRDF, contributed to the further centralisation of decision-making in the water sector. Thus, it is argued that, further to the existing concentration of policy and decision-making within the Federal Government, water development in Ethiopia during the EPRDF-era has been shaped by the ideas and prognostications of a narrow group of political elites at the centre of Government. This is supported by the views of successive interviewees who lamented the lack of participation in policy-making within the sector, with one explaining that "policy ideas and direction in previous years were *set* not debated. Though the policies were not bad in themselves, the process was not participatory and lacked transparency" (GOV55). This is illustrative of larger trends within Ethiopia during the EPRDF-era, where the shrinking of political and democratic space has severely hampered the role of civil society within the state. Owing, in particular, to the tightly controlled and centralised nature of decision-making in the developmental state system favoured by the EPRDF, the role played by civil society within the water sector as a whole has been limited by design. In this regard, the Government has engaged any such groups for specific purposes such as the marketing and promotion of agendas related to state-led infrastructure projects, such as the GERD.

The 1995 Constitutional process also laid the foundations for the reconfiguration of the water sector through the establishment of a new institutional framework in line with the Federal Government's new mandates for water management and development. Proclamation No. 4/1995 was significant, in this regard, for formally establishing the Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR), "the first time ever, the Ethiopian water sector was raised to the level of a fully-fledged ministry (Arsano 2007: 132). The Proclamation also ensured that the functions of previous institutions, including the EVDSA and the WRDA as well as the short-lived Ministry of Natural Resources Development and Environmental Protection (MONRDEP), would be absorbed and incorporated into MoWR. As described by an interviewee working in the area, "the Ministry was entrusted with all water development functions, making it the central body in water-related decision-making in the country" (GOV45). The MoWR has undergone several changes to its name since its establishment – going from MoWR in 1996 to the Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Energy (MoWIE) in 2010, and the Ministry of Water and Electricity (MoWIE) in 2015. As explained by an interviewee in the sector "the name changes did not necessarily reflect a change in the Ministry's functions but represented its reshaping following government appraisals" (RO13). Article 26 of Proclamation 691/2010 stipulates that,

> "the powers and functions vested in MoWIE, include the promotion of the development of water and energy resources, the completion of basin studies determining both ground and surface water resources and plans for development, the determination of conditions and methods required for optimum and equitable allocation and utilisation of water, the undertaking of negotiations for treaties pertaining to the utilisation of boundary and transboundary water bodies, the expansion of medium and large-scale irrigation dams, the administration of dams and water structures, the expansion of potable water, the undertaking of studies for the development and utilisation of electric energy and the promotion of the development of alternative energy sources."

Per an official with knowledge of MoWIE workings, "[its] principal activities are undertaken as part of the implementation of Ethiopian water management provisions including the management policy and proclamation as well as the water sector development programme" (GOV54).

The **1999 Ethiopian Water Resources Management Policy (EWRM)**, in concert with elements of previous Proclamations (including *No. 7/1992*, *No. 41/1993*, *No. 94/1994*, *No. 4/1995*[18]), was the first attempt to establish contemporary Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) in the country. The Policy aimed at "enhancing and promoting all national efforts towards the efficient, equitably and optimum use of the available water resources of Ethiopia for significant socioeconomic development on a sustainable basis" (FDRE 1999: 1.1). Crucially, the Policy was also underpinned by the notion that water resources development and management should, in the spirit of federalism, be decentralised to ensure the participation of all parties in the decision-making process (FAO 2013: 5). The '**Ethiopian Water Resources Management Proclamation**' (*Proclamation 197/2000*) which followed, however, took a centralising tone as it reaffirmed the state-led development of water resources, adding that a supervising body would "ensure that the water resources of the country are protected and used for the highest social and economic benefits of the people of Ethiopia…" (FDRE 2000) The proclamation also set out the powers and responsibilities of the 'supervising body', defined as the MoWIE or any organ delegated by the Ministry and went on to describe these functions as the responsibility "for management of the water sector, the power to issue permits for water use, the power to determine allocation and use, and the establishment of quality standards" (ODI 2015: 26). Finally, the Proclamation underlined that any laws, regulations, directives, guidelines or practices relating to matters it covered would have no force

[18] *Proclamation No. 7/1992*: Empowerment of regional governments to administer, develop and protect the natural resources of their regions.

Proclamation No. 41/1993: Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Bureaus of regional governments have been empowered "to manage and develop their natural resources including water resources". The proclamation further empowers the Ministry Natural Resources and Environmental Protection to dictate over transboundary water resources and on water resources in general to all regions.

Proclamation No. 94/1994: A proclamation to provide for the utilization of water resources.

or effect on it to the extent that they conflicted with the provisions it set out (FDRE 2000: 32.2). By rolling back the decentralisation promised by the incorporation of IWRM principles within the EWRM, in favour of centralised top-down decision-making offered by the Federal Government, this proclamation served to lay the foundations for the launch of the domestic hydraulic mission, thereby contributing to Ethiopia's pursuit of unilateral resource-capture in the Nile Basin.

The **2002 Ethiopian Water Sector Development Programme (WSDP)**, which formed part of the 2001 Ethiopian Water Strategy, was adopted by the Federal government with the express aim of implementing the EWRM policy and proclamation (FDRE 2002). By providing for water resources management at the basin level, the WSDP set out an ambitious vision for the development and management of water in the country over the subsequent 15-year period (2002-16). In line with the decentralising aims of the 1999 water policy, it recommended the establishment of separate River Basin Authorities (RBAs) in seven of the country's river basins. However, in the absence of the RBAs, which would require parliamentary authorisation by proclamation, it was hoped that the relevant Ministry and regional administrations would take on the task of implementing and coordinating the strategy with the engagement of other stakeholders where appropriate (ODI 2015).

In the two decades since its establishment, the MoWIE has faced several internal and external challenges in its attempts to fulfil its mandate as the leading water institution in the country. These have included institutional fragmentation, the repeated redefinition of its mandate and subsequent clashes with other ministries, weak political leadership and influence at the PMO and limitations to both its financial and technical capacity. As an interviewee within the sector explained "in the PASDEP and GTP periods, the Ministry [MoWIE] was found in evaluations to have failed in its implementation of its sectoral plans" (GOV35). Interviewees identified a technical skills gap within MoWIE owing to staff turnover, bureaucratic hiring practices, budget limitations for training and capacity-building (GOV54; GOV48). For example, as of 2015, the investment plan anticipated to operationalise the WSDP's implementation over the last 15 years had yet to be completed by the Ministry (GOV44). The lack of an operationalised WSDP has acted to create a disconnect between the Ministry's water plans and the cross-sectoral development plans (GTP I and II) currently driving the bulk of the Government's decision-making in water-related sectors.

Additionally, mandate clashes with the other institutions have also emerged as an issue of concern, particularly in relation to developments along transboundary rivers. For example, an interviewee, working regionally on the Nile, identified issues stemming from mandate-overlaps as impediments to tripartite negotiations over the GERD:

> "the Nile in Ethiopia is treated as a technical matter to be addressed by the MoWIE. Unfortunately, the GERD issue was unnecessarily politicised by Egypt, compelling the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) to become involved in negotiations. This was counter-productive and sent the wrong message to the international community. Eventually, the impact was even more

> damaging as technical issues were being dealt with politically between the PMO and MFA, finally resulting in the Malabo Declaration. A total disaster created by a lack of technical involvement from MoWIE. The Minister [of MoWIE] was not even present!" (RO13)

The Malabo Declaration, on the sidelines of the 2014 African Union (AU) Summit in Equatorial Guinea, pledged Ethiopia to "avoid any potential adverse effects of the GERD on the water uses of Egypt" and to respect the studies of the external consultants studying the impacts of the Dam (Cooperative Waters 2016: 85). This was seen at MoWIE as contrary to the Ethiopian position, a fact emphasised by the Minister, himself, to the PMO and MFA in subsequent private meetings (GOV3).

Similarly, the process which resulted in the Declaration of Principles (DOP) was led by the MFA, with MoWIE experts only consulting on the drafting. Thus, though MoWIE is formally recognised as having the mandate to undertake negotiations over the utilisation of transboundary waters, in practice, this has led to clashes with the parallel activities of the MFA which is also mandated to negotiate and sign treaties and agreements Ethiopia enters into with other states, albeit in consultation with other organs of Government. Although in this case, these mandate clashes between Ethiopian government institutions did not undermine the Ethiopian position in relation to the DOP - as shown during Malabo, this lack of coordination can sometimes have a delegitimising effect on the counter-hegemonic leverage strategies being pursued by Ethiopia.

The side-lining of MoWIE officials has been a feature of government for several years, with experts attributing this to "the appointment of politically 'weaker' ministers from less influential parties within the EPRDF to MoWIE" (RO13). This view is supported by the party affiliations of previous MoWIE ministers in the EPRDF-era, which include three ministers from the SEPDM, 1 from the OPDO (who served for the first ten years of the institution's establishment) and the current Minister, a non-party member[19]. As one interviewee put it "it is telling that in the history of cabinet appointments to MoWIE, a TPLF official has never been Minister" (GOV33). Though formally depoliticised on paper, the existence of power asymmetries within the Cabinet is a product of the ubiquity of party hierarchy across state institutions and the civil bureaucracy (Vaughan and Tronvoll 2003). As an interviewee with knowledge of Government workings explained "ministers within Government are appointed in order to balance regional interests at the party-level… their capacity and effectiveness are secondary considerations. Thus, hierarchies within the party are reconstituted and reflected in the PM's appointment of ministers to his cabinet" (BIS29).

The WSDP, in line with water planning under previous regimes, firmly established the river basin as a planning and management unit for the governance of water resources in the country under the EPRDF. The choice to define the river basin as the territorial unit for water governance cannot be understood

[19] Shiferaw Jarso (OPDO) 1996 – 2006; Asfaw Dingamo (SEPDM) 2006 – 2010; Alemayehu Tegenu (SEPDM) 2010 – 2015; Motuma Mekassa (SEPDM) 2015 – 2016 and; Dr Sileshi Bekele (Non-party) 2016 – current.

outside global trends in the sector and are representative of the Level I influences in domestic policy. The continuity of these global trends in the water sector in Ethiopia is also emblematic of the historical evolution of the sector (discussed in Section 5.3.1) including the commissioning of the *Abbay* Master Plan Study and the establishment of various valley institutions. As discussed in Warner *et al*. (2008: 122), the renewed emphasis, since the early 1990s, "on river basin management can be understood as a third wave of interest in the river basin concept". The first wave of the late 19th century, typified by Hurst plan for Century Storage in the Nile Basin (Hurst 1952), was concerned with the basin-wide planning of water development. The second wave, inspired by the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) model of the 1930s, promoted the creation of river basin authorities tasked with the comprehensive planning and development of water resources in a basin in order to achieve regional socio-economic development (Warner *et al*. 2008: 122). The current third wave is defined by an ecosystems approach to the river basin, which considers water resources as an integral part of the ecosystem and, thus, promotes an integrated and participatory approach to their management at the basin-scale.

In the current phase of the hydraulic mission in Ethiopia, the influence of this third wave is illustrated in Proclamation No. 534/2007, also known as '**the River Basin Councils and Authorities Proclamation**', which authorised the creation of River Basin High Councils (RBHCs) and RBAs of the country's major river basins[20]. These RBHCs and RBAs were primarily tasked with the promotion and monitoring of the IWRM process in their respective basin jurisdictions. Additionally, RBHCs were to provide "provide policy guidance and planning oversight to ensure a high level of coordination among stakeholders for the implementation of IWRM, and direct the preparation of the river basin plan and submit same for approval by the Government" (FDRE 2007: 6.1-8). Other noteworthy responsibilities these organisations were mandated to perform included: "to examine and decide on appropriateness and prioritisation of constructing major waterworks; to manage water use disputes between regional states within the basin; and to provide information and advisory support to the body in charge of negotiating with neighbouring countries with respect to the basin where the basin is part of a transboundary basin" (FDRE 2007: 6.1-8). The growing influence and impacts of global hegemonic trends in water governance on developments in the Ethiopian Nile will be discussed in further detail in Chapter 7 of this research.

However, the implementation and adoption of these concepts within the water sector in Ethiopia has faced some significant bottlenecks. For example, there are currently only three RBAs established in Ethiopia of the eight authorities envisioned by Proclamation 534/2007 (GOV36). As explained by an interviewee involved in the sector, "the decision-making in relation to the establishment of Basin councils and their authorities are not always clear… [but] economic and political interests from Addis [Ababa] seem to be key considerations (GOV13). Furthermore, the mandate of existing RBAs to produce and implement master plans for their respective basins are behind schedule due to a lack of "human and financial resources" required for the launch of a basin planning process (ODI 2015: 34). In relation to

[20] The river basins included the *Abbay* Basin, *Aisha* Basin, *Awash* Basin, *Baro-Akobo* Basin, *Danakil* Basin, *Genale-Dawa* Basin, *Mereb* Basin, *Ogaden* Basin, *Omo-Ghibe* Basin, *Tekeze* Basin, Rift Valley Lakes Basin and the *Wabi*-Shebelle Basin.

Ethiopia's pursuit of counter-hegemonic liberating strategies, a lack of domestic capacity continues to act as an incentive for the Ethiopian government's attempts to develop enhanced knowledge and expertise through participation in the NBI cooperative process. This is discussed in further detail in Section 6.3.3.1. This lack of resources, though linked to a national dearth of capacity, also relates to a lack of prioritisation at the Federal level. As highlighted by an interviewee with knowledge of the working of the *Abbay* RBA, "the Council which governs the operations of the authority and harmonises its plans with the regional states, has barely any time to get together with many its members busy with their day-to-day activities" (GOV36). This is supported by another interviewee who lamented that "as members of these councils are appointed directly by the Prime Minister, they tend to be officials at the federal and regional levels with competing demands on their time" (GOV55). Once again, this is likely reflective of the reproduction of party hierarchy in the appointment of positions at the Federal level, with "positions being viewed as prizes for loyalty or prestige for regional coalition partners" (BIS29). RBHCs and RBAs, though important markers of the Government's attempts to decentralise the water sector, continue to be hampered by a lack of prioritisation and coordination from stakeholders at various levels, insufficient funding, inadequate personnel and technology and poor data systems and limited monitoring (ODI 2015). This has meant that key strategic and investment decisions in the water sector today continue to be directed by the Federal Government, often within the PMO.

In addition to the legal and policy provisions discussed above, the domestic hydraulic mission has also been advanced by Federal development plans aimed at extricating the country from poverty through sustained economic growth. The development agenda has been critical to the EPRDF's domestic state-building project over the last two decades. These domestic development plans, which include PASDEP, GTP I and GTP II, have contributed to the pursuit of what Verhoeven (2013: 5) terms "the most ambitious dam programme in African history". In relation to the EPRDF's objective to spur Ethiopia's socio-economic transformation, the dams are aimed at providing: (1) greater domestic electricity production both for internal consumption and external sale and; (2) large-scale irrigation in order to reduce the country's vulnerability to climate and hydrology. According to a World Bank report (2006) titled, 'Ethiopia: managing water resources to maximize growth', Ethiopia's circumstances leave its "economic performance virtually hostage to its hydrology". This is corroborated by the ODI (2015: 12) who support the view that "unmitigated hydrological variability, compounded by climate change", costs Ethiopia roughly one-third of its growth potential. The expansion of hydropower and irrigation form the backbone of the Government's attempts to develop greater hydraulic storage in the country. This strategy is captured by views of both Meles Zenawi and his successor Hailemariam Desalegn: "the ability to store water through hydro-infrastructure is key to tackling food insecurity and adapting to climate change" (Verhoeven 2013: 6).

Further to GTP I's expressed aim to ensure "better adaptation to climate variability", the pursuit of further hydraulic development in Ethiopia has been supported by the launch in 2011 of the Climate Resilient Green Economy strategy (CRGE). The strategy aims to create a framework within which green opportunities can be identified and international partners can engage in the financing and construction

of these projects in Ethiopia (ODI 2015: 27). The CRGE highlights the development of water resources, through the expansion of hydropower and irrigation, as the key to achieving green economic growth and climate resilience (FDRE 2011: 8). Thus, the MoWIE is one of the key institutional actors engaged in the "formulation and implementation of the green economy" (FDRE 2011: 48). Although MoWIE is described as a key actor in the CRGE, the strategy itself was initiated and launched within the Prime Minister's Office, with the support of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (MEF) and the Ethiopian Development Research Institute (EDRI). In addition to these institutions, the Federal Government is working with an "inter-governmental organisation called the Global Green Growth Institution [GGGI] on the green economy [CRGE] to hire senior technical advisors and international consultants embedded within the relevant ministries to make up for gaps in our technical capacity" (GOV35). The way these initiatives have been filtered down to the ministerial level, following their inception elsewhere, has been disempowering for the concerned ministries who lack both the capacity and influence to work outside these parameters. This has proved significant to the consolidation of domestic hegemony at Level II by officials at the heart of the Federal Government interested in the further concentration of policy-making and decision-making at the centre. Thus, allowing for the rubber-stamping of development projects and initiatives within the water sector by disempowered institutions and government agencies with limited involvement in their inception. This mimics dynamics which have existed previously at the regional level, where informal political advisers from Addis Ababa would be dispatched to serve within the executives of peripheral regional administrations to align their activities with federal priorities (Vaughan and Tronvoll 2003).

Under these plans, the Government expects to exploit the country's vast potential for hydropower, which per Government estimates, is between 40,000 – 45,000 MW (BIS51). This is supported by an interviewee working on CRGE issues who confirms that "one of the main pillars of the strategy is supporting the development of the country's huge renewable resource potential, especially the 45,000 MW from hydropower" (GOV35). Thus, increasing the installed generation capacity in the country from the current 2,178 MW to 24,092 MW by 2030 (GOV4). As an interviewee in the energy sector underlined "hydropower will be the backbone of the country's energy sector going forward, as it is both abundant and sustainable" (GOV38). The need for this ambitious strategy is captured by the fact that "only a fifth of the Ethiopian population [is] connected to the [electric] grid and demand growth by households and business close to 25% per annum" (Verhoeven 2013: 6). Similarly, the expansion of medium and large-scale irrigation in this period is planned to "cover 1.8 million ha of land", a sevenfold increase from the currently developed 237,000 ha (ODI 2015: 19). Propelling these developments is the Government's desire to boost domestic electricity consumption in previously unelectrified peripheries and to support the industrialisation of the wider economy through export-oriented agriculture and manufacturing. These strategies exhibit the EPRDF's close association of the hydropower agenda with the country's political stability and economic transformation.

Table 5 - Ethiopian Nile Basin: Water resources development potential (Arsano and Tamrat 2005: 18)

Sub-basin	Average annual runoff (km^3)	% of total river's runoff	Irrigation potential (ha)	Hydropower potential (GWh/year)
Abbay	52.62	48.3	711,000	75,550
Tekeze	8.13	7.0	302,000	5,910
Baro-Akobo	23.55	10.8	483,000	19,250
Total	**84.3**	**66.1**	**1,496,000**	**102,710**

The Government's plans for large-scale dam-building have centred, in particular, on two of the country's most significant transboundary river basins – namely, the *Omo-Ghibe* and *Abbay* (Blue Nile) Basins. Though outside the scope of this research, Government plans on the *Omo*, which encompasses the construction of a cascade of dams linked to both hydropower generation and large-scale agriculture, are further proof of the current zeal with which hydraulic development and domestic state-building are being pursued in the country (see Verhoeven 2013). The following section will examine the hegemonic nature of the hydraulic mission being pursued on the Ethiopian Nile today, namely the construction of the GERD and its relationship to the EPRDF's state-building project.

5.3.2.2 THE DOMESTIC HEGEMONY OF THE ABBAY GERD PROJECT

"In laying the foundation stone for the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) in 2011, our late Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi, further eroded the foundations of inequitable access to utilisation of the Nile's waters. Since then, this flagship development project has galvanised our people, garnering massive public support both at home and in the diaspora". (Deputy Prime Minister Demeke Mekonnen, in Cooperative Waters 2016: 8-9)

The hydraulic mission on the Ethiopian Nile, and more specifically in the *Abbay* Basin, has historically centred on the recognition of successive Ethiopian governments that the country retains a comparative advantage in the production of hydroelectric power. Master plan studies as part of the WSDP (2001) revealed that of the 75,550 GWh/year potential that the *Abbay* possesses, only a fraction had been developed thus far. Over the last decade, however, the PMO, operating through MoWIE, EEP (formerly EEPCo) and the Metals and Engineering Corporation (METEC), has accelerated its attempts to exploit this unrealised potential on the Ethiopian Nile. This 'drive', a term used intentionally to reflect the conviction with which the current government is taking the lead in the development of these water resources, is currently typified by the national momentum behind the construction of the GERD. Discourses constructed at Level II by Ethiopian officials have presented this project as a source of national pride and unity, restorer of historical greatness as well as the zenith of the country's development achievements to date. These discourses have had significant popular support within civil society as NGOs, youth associations,

artists and sports personalities have legitimised the project within the public imagination and popular culture. Examples of this have been the involvement of civil society groups in the popular SMS fundraising scheme for the GERD, "8100A", and in regular events held in commemoration of the anniversary of the project.

The GERD project, launched in 2011, is a mega-dam currently under construction on the Blue Nile in the *Benishangul-Gumuz* Regional State in Ethiopia, 20 km upstream from the Ethiopia-Sudan border. The dam is being constructed at the cost of $4.8 billion USD, according to Ethiopian officials, and will be expected to justify this significant public investment through the generation of up to 6,000 MW of electricity (GOV4; GOV11; GOV12; Zhang, Erkyihum and Block 2016). The announcement of the GERD, which was greeted with controversy internationally, was launched domestically by Prime Minister Meles Zenawi as a transformative project for Ethiopia, and the Basin, as a whole. It is also expected to store up to 74 BCM of the Blue Nile's flow, a fact Ethiopian officials have made sure not to over-emphasise in their interactions over the project with Egypt and Sudan (ACA 22). The transnational discourses deployed by the Ethiopian government to legitimise construction of the GERD will be investigated in further detail in Section 7.4. Domestically, however, the GERD has been deployed as a *utilitarian* and *hegemonic* tactic in the Government's pursuit of greater hydraulic and political control.

Primarily, the GERD has been deployed domestically as an integrative project offering Ethiopians a future free from poverty and deprivation by promising: rural electrification and development in previously under-developed peripheries; cheap electricity for manufacturing sectors which will in turn stimulate job-growth and catalyse the industrialisation of the wider economy; foreign currency through the regional sale of surplus electricity. These goals are captured by an interviewee associated with the GERD who stated that domestically "the GERD will support the maintenance of double-digit economic growth, guarantee universal electrical access and will create numerous job opportunities" (GOV52). This view is corroborated by the Deputy Prime Minister Demeke Mekonnen who wrote that "the GERD will also prove critical to us on the road to middle-income status and industrialisation by supplying our economy with the consistent power supply required for rapid growth. Meeting our increasing demand will go a long way towards supporting our government's plan to transform the economy from its current agrarian base towards one based on manufacturing and led by industry…the successful completion of the GERD will be crucial to maintaining the rapid economic growth required for the structural and economic transformation of Ethiopia" (Deputy Prime Minister Demeke Mekonnen, in Cooperative Water 2016: 9).

This promise of socio-economic transformation is significant to Ethiopia, "a country that in the 2000s had one of the highest poverty rates in the world" according to the World Bank (2015). Government discourses surrounding the hydraulic mission on the *Abbay* river, as exemplified by the GERD, is closely associated with both national and regional development outcomes for Ethiopians. Civil society have largely endorsed these developmental discourses on the GERD, with the public appropriating many of the Government's narratives related to the project's contributions to economic transformation and the

prosperity of the nation. In particular, this is exemplified by the common repetition of Government figures related to the 6,000MW power generation capacity at the GERD site across civil society.

In Benishangul-Gumuz, "one of the most, if not the most, under-developed regional state in Ethiopia", the GERD's development has meant the arrival of development activities to the region (MED21). As highlighted in Veilleux (2013), the construction of the Dam has brought with it the concurrent construction of bridges, roads and electricity grids as well as the expansion of towns with public services for displaced communities. According to government figures, the number of people displaced by the GERD "are minimal in comparison to any other dam project of this size… 3,700 households will be moved to towns equipped to provide them with basic services they previously had no access to in their villages" (GOV52). In response, civil society representatives within the region have held public consultations with regional officials with limited results. Government approaches to hydropower dams in Ethiopia adopt a TVA model with the implementation of projects associated with wider socio-economic benefits for the regions in which they are constructed. Though the GERD is set to affect the livelihoods of local people engaged in flood-recession farming, fisheries and gold-panning, the Regional Government has promised development opportunities including healthcare facilities, education and improved access to markets (Veilleux 2013). The TVA model aligns with the early promises of the EPRDF which pledged to "give the peripheries a stake in a united Ethiopia through ethnic federalism and decentralised development" (Verhoeven 2013: 8). The Regional Government, though empowered in constitutional terms, has historically been influenced by the centre through: the direct membership of elected EPRDF representatives onto state councils; the deployment of political advisers attached to the regional executive, ensuring an alignment with decision-making in Addis Ababa; the delivery of centrally administered and designed seminars, courses and education functions to regional bureaucrats and officials; and disciplinary actions including dismissal (Vaughan and Tronvoll 2003). The GERD's integrative approach has attempted to give displaced communities around the Dam site and the region-at-large ownership of the project, though "it was conceived at the Federal level and has always been a national project" (BIS29). Civil society groups in the region have reacted to this with "cautious optimism [that the project will provide] greater opportunities for displaced peoples in the form of access to education, health care and economic opportunity" (ACA48).

The sprawling GERD site is, in itself, symbolic of the momentum behind the project with it being home to around 10,000 workers served by cafes, markets and other facilities. The GERD which, according to Government officials, is being constructed 24 hours a day is covered regularly within the domestic media with regular reports on its progress and milestones. Ethiopian state-owned and affiliated media, such as the Ethiopian Broadcast Corporation (EBC) and Fana Broadcasting Corporation (FBC) have both ensured the visibility of the project in the public imagination and regularly transmit official statements that report the Government's vision for the project.

Figure 15 - Public campaign from Addis Ababa City Council, reading: "Let not a single one of us die in a traffic accident before witnessing the completion of the Renaissance Dam‼" (2015)

Furthermore, mottos including "teamwork is the fuel that allows ordinary people to produce extraordinary results" and "as we have started it, we will finish it!", are some examples of the current public hegemonic discourses surrounding the project (GOV15).

> *"Indeed, it is no exaggeration to claim that, for Ethiopians, the GERD has been representative of the aspiration for a rising Ethiopia – a revival far removed from the famine, poverty and civil strife of our recent history. Its invocation of a 'can-do attitude' in the Ethiopian collective spirit has gone a long way towards restoring confidence and national pride in our battles against poverty." (Deputy Prime Minister Demeke Mekonnen, in Cooperative Waters 2016: 9)*

In its efforts to construct the GERD, the Federal Government announced the decision to fund the project entirely from domestic sources of finance. These sources of finance include funding through the national budget; the sale of infrastructure bonds and a variety of public fund-raising initiatives. Crucially, the sale of these infrastructure bonds have taken on a multi-spatial element as they been concurrently targeted at the domestic public and marketed at the Ethiopian diaspora abroad through the country's diplomatic representations. As one interviewee explained "public money is not to build GERD but is about raising national sentiment at the grassroots. That's why the SMS fundraising the Government conducts only asks for 3 birr [£0.10 GBP] and not 1,000 birr [£31 GBP]" (MED21). The public mobilisation of funding domestically has been accompanied by the participation of government officials, media personalities, public intellectuals and religious leaders in the promotion of bond sales. This promotion is exemplified by the below quotes from the leaders of the Orthodox Church and Islamic Affairs Council:

> *"the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church supports the construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam on the [Abbay] river… We call upon all of our people to contribute their fair*

share to the successful conclusion of the Renaissance Dam" (Patriarch of Ethiopia, Abune Mathias, in Cooperative Waters 2016: 29)

"we all need to exert our efforts and make unreserved contributions towards the realisation of this noble objective... I believe that Ethiopian Muslims, need to contribute our share to the purchasing of [GERD] bonds so as to play our part in the successful and timely conclusion of this project" (Chairman of Ethiopian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, Sheikh Mohammed Amin Jamal, in Cooperative Waters 2016: 37)

The bonds, thus, serve a dual-service – both financing the project physical construction whilst committing the public to its success. This has contributed to the promotion of a hegemonic discourse surrounding the national consensus on the project serving to unify the nation and its diverse inhabitants. According to an interviewee "People rallied behind this [GERD] project not because they were urged to do so but because they believed in it" (GOV14). This view is supported by the former Minister at MoWIE who affirmed that "the national consensus we have among the Ethiopian people over the GERD is very important. We must replicate this in all of our development endeavours. If we rally together, there is no reason why we will not succeed in defeating poverty. I urge all of us to join hands as we will only succeed together" (Former Minister of MoWIE, Motuma Mekassa, in Cooperative Waters 2016: 24). This forms part of a hegemonic strategy centered on a depiction of the GERD by government officials as the "renaissance of the Ethiopian nation, and the building of national unity and a strong national identity" (GOV53). As another government interviewee explained, "the GERD is more than just one infrastructure project, it is in the hearts of Ethiopians as a source of national pride and confidence" (GOV39).

Other government elites and public intellectuals have also highlighted the importance of the GERD in relation to the restoration of Ethiopia's historical greatness. As an academic interviewed explained "for many Ethiopians, the GERD's importance lies in a return to Ethiopian greatness not seen since the glory of Axum, Lalibela and Gondar. For them, the project is about more than just the Nile. It is about history, nation and how this generation of Ethiopians will be remembered by the next" (ACA27). This is emphasised by a government official involved in GERD promotion work who elaborated, "the Ethiopian people, across the nation, are determined to implement the GERD and see the project to its end. Not just for themselves but for the next generation and the ones that come after that. Just as we remember the bravery of our forefathers and mothers at Adwa and celebrate their sacrifices for the nation, Ethiopians today are working towards the GERD project as a way to fulfil a historic duty to the nation" (GOV14).

Figure 16 - Photo of advertising for local bar in Oromia, reading: "'Come in, let us build the Grand Dam together' Mead Bar" (2015)

In a further attempt to foster greater national consensus on the GERD, government elites have also framed the project as a defence of Ethiopia from external aggressors intent on being obstacles to the development and prosperity of its people. In this regard, the principal target of these public discourses has unsurprisingly been Egypt - a hydrohegemonic riparian on the Nile which has historically opposed any development in the upstream Nile. Egypt's role as a hydro-hegemon on the Nile and the strategies it has deployed to consolidate its control of Nile waters at the expense of Ethiopia are discussed in more detail in Section 6.2. The rivalry with Egypt is captured by the words of an interviewee working in the water sector who stated that,

"on the Nile, the enemies of Ethiopian development are clear. It is Egypt and Egypt alone who has consistently worked against us. They have never wanted peace in Ethiopia, as peace means development. This is why the GERD is so important. It is our chance to prove what we can do and that we can do it on our own. No need to beg for international funding. It is our project and as our late Prime Minister said, 'we will finish it as we started it!'" (GOV12).

By framing the GERD as an "assertion of sovereignty against an antagonistic neighbour", government officials have used a form of 'othering' in order to unite the public behind the project (Menga 2016b: 714). As put by an interviewee within the domestic media, "the strategy to portray GERD as an issue of

sovereignty with Egypt capitalises on the culture of independence enjoyed and appreciated by Ethiopians. Invoking a foreign aggressor to unite the public is an age-old tactic which has been used by imperial, Derg and EPRDF governments. It has worked in the past and is working today as well." (MED21). This ties together with the patriotism and national duty associated with the GERD, and has been a discursive hegemonic tactic regularly deployed by government elites to fuel enthusiasm and support for the project thus far.

It has been argued that the GERD project is a hegemonic *resource capture* strategy currently being pursued on the Blue Nile as part of the Government's wider hydraulic state-building strategy. This analysis aligns with previous scholarship on critical hydropolitics which has highlighted the role that the construction of hydraulic infrastructure can play in the preservation of social control by elites and the modernisation of the state (Swyngedouw 1999; Allouche 2007; Giglioli and Swyngedouw 2008). It has also shown how the PMO has strategically framed the GERD domestically as an integrative project, uniting Ethiopia and its diverse nations and nationalities in a bid to restore the country to its former greatness. Furthermore, it has illustrated how the Government has deployed *utilitarian* and *hegemonic* tactics to galvanise the public behind the project through a program of consensus building and grassroots promotion of the project.

5.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter has examined the relationship between hydraulic development and state-building in Ethiopia, asserting that the domestic development of water resources represents the continuation of historic state-formation dynamics. The chapter has shown that under three governments, namely the Imperial, Military and Federal regimes, the country has been engaged in state-building through the pursuit of the twin ambitions of centralisation and modernisation. This current enthusiasm for hydraulic development is captured by Block and Strzepek (2010: 156) when they explain that "Ethiopia is at a critical crossroads with a burgeoning population, a depressed national economy, insufficient agricultural production, and a minimal number of developed energy… it is pursuing plans and programs to develop hydropower and irrigation to bolster these sectors".

The second section of the chapter examined the origins of Ethiopia's hydraulic mission, demonstrating how hydraulic development on the country's most significant transboundary river basin, the Nile, has dominated the plans of successive governments in its modern history. Though, these plans were unsuccessful under previous regimes, the current government led by the EPRDF has re-launched the hydraulic mission on the Nile since its ascent to power in the 1990s. In an effort to exploit its Nile water resources, the Government has continued centralisation in the water sector, contrary to its constitutional pledges to radically decentralise decision-making throughout the country. Instead, the chapter helped explore the top-down nature of hydraulic planning in the country and the hegemony of the hydraulic mission currently being accelerated through the Executive. Finally, the chapter briefly analysed the domestic hegemony of the GERD project currently under construction on the Nile. As the first mega-dam on the Blue Nile in Ethiopia, it was shown how the Government is deploying *utilitarian* and *hegemonic* tactics in an effort to support the construction of the project, while in the process, advancing its nation-building project. However, the launch of an upstream hydraulic mission on a transboundary river basin is by its very nature multi-spatial, requiring further analysis beyond Ethiopia.

Thus, the next section will focus on how the Ethiopian government is attempting to secure greater access to and utilisation of Nile water resources in a transboundary basin characterised by downstream hydro-hegemonic control. The chapter will focus on the strategies and tactics that Ethiopia has pursued in an effort to undermine and contest the status quo and the opposing tactics which this hegemonic order, led by Egypt, has deployed to consolidate its asymmetric control.

6 COUNTERING HYDRO-HEGEMONY IN THE EASTERN NILE

6.1 INTRODUCTION

As analysed in the previous chapter, since the coming to power of the EPRDF in 1991, the Ethiopian state has been engaged in a domestic state-building project supported by the development of water resources through physical infrastructure. The government's attempts to exploit and control the many transboundary rivers which emanate from within its territory have inevitably internationalised hydraulic development in Ethiopia. Most notably, recent tensions over the construction of dams on the Blue Nile have put the government's hydraulic strategies at odds with an entrenched hydro-hegemonic status quo downstream.

This chapter will examine the hydro-hegemonic dynamics at the basin level within the Eastern Nile through the analysis of: (1) the genesis and manifestations of the current hydropolitical status quo; (2) the historical resistance and emerging counter-hegemony of Ethiopia; and (3) the hydro-hegemonic responses to these resistive challenges. The chapter will address sub-questions B, B1 and B2 of this research, namely:

> Sub-question B – What basin-wide counter-hegemonic strategies and tactics are Ethiopian officials employing in their attempts to challenge Egyptian hegemonic control within the Eastern Nile Basin?
>
> Sub-question B1 – How has Ethiopia been historically impacted by Egyptian hydro-hegemony in the Nile Basin?
>
> Sub-question B2 – To what extent do basin-wide counter-hegemonic strategies and tactics contest Egyptian asymmetric control of Nile water resources within the Basin?

The first section (6.2) will deal with the existing asymmetry in the allocation, utilisation and control of Eastern Nile waters, namely how asymmetric power relations within the Basin have resulted in the establishment of a hydro-hegemonic status quo. Section 6.3 focuses on the counter-hegemonic strategies and tactics pursued by Ethiopia at the basin-level in its efforts to contest the existing hydro-hegemonic order. In accomplishing this, the section will also reveal the responses of the hegemonic status quo to the contestation of hydro-hegemony in the Basin and how riparian power relations have changed as a result.

As elaborated in Chapter 4, this analysis is the outcome of fieldwork interviews conducted in Ethiopia between 2013 and 2016 and the review of secondary literature.

6.2 HISTORICAL EGYPTIAN HYDRO-HEGEMONY ON THE NILE

As established in Chapter 2, the three riparian countries of the Eastern Nile Basin exercise asymmetric levels of control over Nile water resources. More specifically, the extent to which these riparians are able to access, utilise and allocate these resources is varied, with some exercising higher degrees of technical control and others less. Technical control is defined as the control and securing of water resources through the establishment of hydraulic infrastructure and storage as part of the development of the hydraulic mission (Reisner 1993).

An examination of hydro-hegemony is necessary, here, as it lays the foundation for a richer analysis of the conditions within which counter-hegemony, as a resistive process pursued by Ethiopia, has taken hold. Furthermore, the section establishes how the hydro-hegemon, Egypt, has repeatedly attempted to re-make and re-establish its leading position within the Basin in response to this upstream resistance.

Egypt was the earliest developer of its hydraulic mission on the Nile, initiating its development in the nineteenth century before going on to accelerate its hydraulic activities during the twentieth century. The apex of its hydraulic mission is widely recognised as its successful construction of the Aswan High Dam in the 1960s – a piece of hydraulic infrastructure which finally gave the country the capacity to retain over-year water storage, and by extension year-round irrigation water (Abd-el Monsef *et al.* 2015). On the other hand, the hydraulic missions of both Sudan and Ethiopia are nascent having only been in development in recent decades. Although hydraulic infrastructure and storage capacity within both countries are still not at the levels seen in Egypt, momentum is now building, with both countries set to dramatically increase their capacity in the coming decades. As discussed in Chapter 5, Ethiopia has an ambitious hydropower agenda aimed at transforming the country into a global manufacturing hub and renewable energy exporter. Similarly, Sudan has embarked on a plan to expand the country's agricultural production, with Gulf investors financing a series of dams and irrigation schemes in Northern Sudan (al-Monitor, 6 January 2016). For the moment, however, there still remains a large disparity in technical control between Egypt and its two co-riparians upstream. The deployment of hydraulic infrastructure as a hegemonic strategy aimed at maintaining power asymmetry will be discussed in Section 6.2.2.1.

Furthermore, as shown in Chapter 2, the utilisation of Nile waters by the three riparians is asymmetric in its nature. Ethiopia withdraws significantly less water from the river than both Sudan and Egypt, with the latter utilising the majority of water in the Basin. This asymmetry is further accentuated by its codification under the terms of the bilateral 1959 Agreement for the full Utilisation of the Nile Waters, which excluded Ethiopia, whilst establishing legal allocations of Nile water for Egypt and Sudan. By design, this legal agreement, which was always been contested by Ethiopia, served a hegemonic agenda perpetuated by Egypt, which aimed to disenfranchise it and other upstream riparians within the Basin. With the failure to reach a new agreement on the Nile to date, Egypt and Sudan continue to be bound by its terms, while Ethiopia, along with other upstream riparians, has continued to pursue the establishment of a new cooperative regime for the Nile. Thus, the asymmetric relationship between the three Eastern

Nile countries persists, with Egypt's hegemonic position legitimised by the provisions of this agreement and the lack of consensus over a new inclusive basin-wide framework. The containment and integration strategies of Egypt as a hegemon will be discussed in further detail in Section 6.2.2.2 of this chapter.

It can be argued that Egypt has historically maintained effective control of Eastern Nile water resources partly due to the limited material capacity of its co-riparians, Sudan and Ethiopia, in controlling, utilising and allocating these resources. In attempting to explain the asymmetries that exist amongst these riparians, this research shares the view of Zeitoun and Warner who argue that power relations are the prime determinants of the degree of control over shared waters (Zeitoun and Warner 2006: 436). In this Eastern Nile case, it is argued that power is deployed through an assemblage of strategies and tactics aimed at maintaining the asymmetric advantages reaped by basin hegemons in their control over water resources. The following section (6.2.2) will discuss the existing power asymmetries in the Eastern Nile whilst paying special attention to the hydro-hegemonic status quo which has historically deployed these strategies and tactics in an effort to consolidate its control over Nile water resources.

6.2.1 THE HYDRO-HEGEMONIC STATUS QUO AND ETHIOPIA

The following section will aim to understand how the complementary strategies historically deployed by the hydro-hegemonic status quo in its efforts to achieve and maintain consolidated control over Nile water resources have affected Ethiopia. The three principal strategies by which hydro-hegemons in the Eastern Nile have pursued control include resource capture (6.2.2.1) and containment and integration strategies (6.2.2.2) will be dealt with briefly below.

6.2.1.1 RESOURCE CAPTURE

In the deployment of water resource capture strategies powerful riparians aim to unilaterally impose their demands on a resource thereby shifting "resource distribution in their favour" often at the expense of other riparians (Homer-Dixon 2001: 177). As described in Waterbury (1997: 279), this riverine unilateralism manifests when riparians push ahead with projects which can affect the flow and/or quality of water resources without the consent or knowledge of other riparians. *Resource capture* strategies in the Eastern Nile Basin have been shown to be an important element in the attainment of hydro-hegemonic control over shared water resources. This strategy is translated into practical action through the construction of the hydraulic infrastructure that often accompanies the beginnings of the 'hydraulic mission'.

The Egyptian hydraulic mission has been pivotal in shaping the way water allocation has been skewed in favour of downstream riparians on the Nile. Egypt has maintained a legacy of irrigation, canal, dam and barrage construction dating back to the beginnings of the 19th century (Collins 2002). However, the country's hydraulic mission was accelerated by British colonial engineers, who not only amassed significant scientific knowledge on the river, both in Egypt and in the rest of the Basin, but also proposed an ambitious integrated plan to control its waters from sources to estuary (Tvedt 2006). The plan, which was envisioned to propel Egyptian economic growth and guarantee food security to its growing

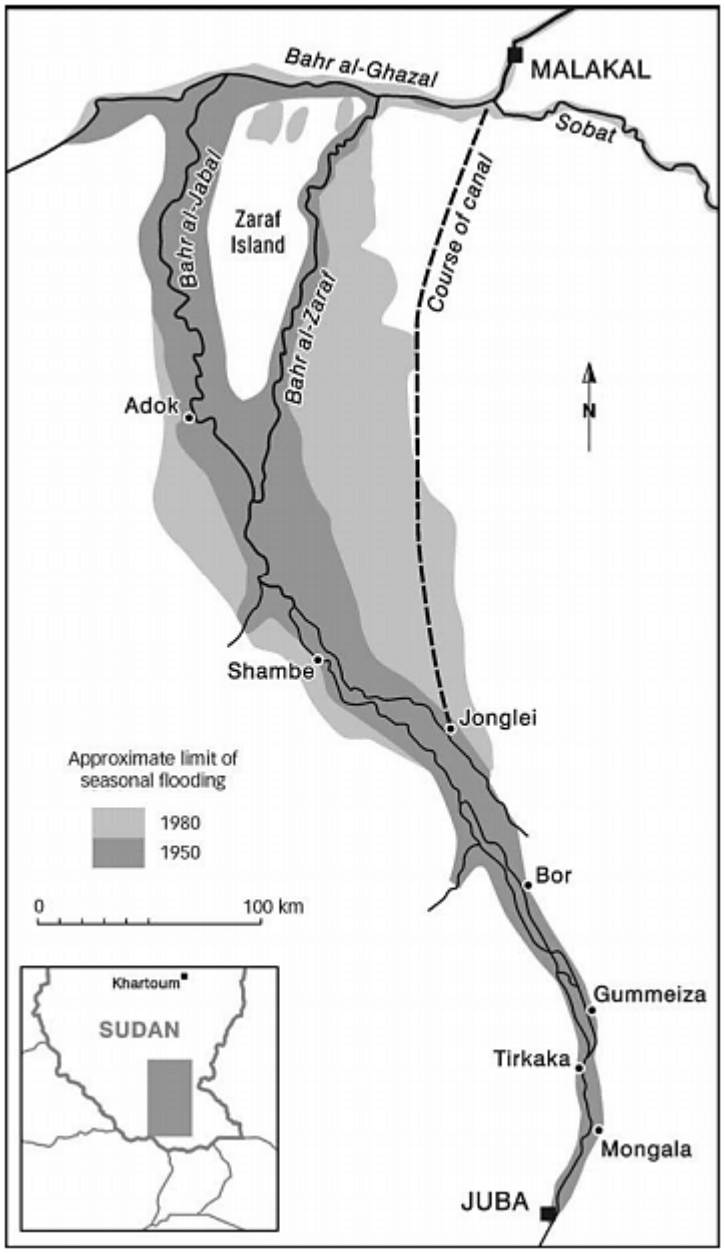
population, was developed by the colonial authorities to ensure the control and efficient utilisation of the Basin's water resources. During this phase of the Anglo-Egyptian hydraulic mission, several barrages and regulators were built along the Egyptian Nile eventually culminating in the construction of the first Aswan Dam in 1902 (Cascão 2009b: 150). With British colonial rule consolidated upstream along the White Nile, British engineers also implemented schemes including the *Sennar* Dam and the *Gezira* Irrigation Scheme in the Sudan aimed at exploiting the river for the sake of increased cotton production (Swain 2011). British hydraulic development on the river went on to consolidate an emerging concept - the Basin as a hydrological unit – eventually resulting in the 'Hurst plan' for century storage on the Nile (Hurst 1952). Hurst's plan for Nile control demonstrated the interrelation between the individual projects of the preceding decade to provide the most efficient solution to the total utilisation of Nile Basin waters (Erlikh and Gershoni 2000: 253). Here, we begin to see the foundations of hydro-hegemonic control.

Since independence, the Egyptian authorities have favoured a domestic agenda aimed at guaranteeing water storage and the nation's historical rights to the river. These nationalist motivations were founded on the development of infrastructure first conceptualised in the colonial era, namely the construction of large-scale hydraulic infrastructure within Egyptian territory (Cascão 2009b: 150). For President Nasser and Egyptian water planners, the HAD represented the opportunity to finally free the country from the recurring nightmare that the nation's water security would be victim to the whims of independent upstream riparians (Collins 2002: 164). By embarking on what Waterbury termed 'active unilateralism', Egyptian planner were successful in completing the largest *resource capture* project in the river's history. The HAD with its unprecedented over-year storage capacity of 169 BCM, would go on to represent the zenith of this Egyptian strategy (Cascão 2009b: 150). Crucially, the dam also supported the 55 BCM annual quota of water Egypt was allocated under the 1959 Agreement, further consolidating it as the 'red-line' in the country's Nile negotiations. Upon completion, the HAD guaranteed higher volumes of water for Egypt while increasing the proportion of irrigated lands in the country by 22% (Strzepek *et al.* 2008).

Concurrently, the newly independent Sudanese government was also planning its own infrastructure along the Nile, a move that risked damaging relations between the downstream neighbours. What would eventually emerge, however, was a negotiated settlement in which both sides consented to the construction of the *Aswan High Dam* and the *Roseires Dam*. This incentivisation of Sudan, per the terms of the 1959 Agreement, aimed to facilitate a critical Egyptian *resource capture* strategy whilst maintaining strict parameters on future Sudanese utilisation. Effectively, it represented the Egyptian negotiators giving with one hand while taking away with the other. This strategy also resulted in the inclusion of Sudan in Egyptian *resource capture*, a precedent that would go on to shape engagements between the two countries over the *Jonglei* Canal.

A key *resource capture* project propagated by the hydro-hegemonic status quo, the *Jonglei* Canal commenced in 1978 is yet to be completed. The *Jonglei* Canal, which formed the lynchpin of Hurst's plan for integrated Nile control, was the most complicated of his proposed projects (Erlikh and Gershoni 2000: 253). The project which looked to channel the White Nile through the swamps of the *Sudd*, in the process eliminating evaporation losses, hoped to provide increased water downstream for Egyptian and Sudanese farmers (Allen 2010). It was important to the authorities in Cairo and Khartoum as it would offer them a share in the increased flows made available by the shrinking of the *Sudd* wetlands. By jointly financing and completing the first phase of the Canal, Egypt and Sudan hoped to increase their annual allocations of water by 2 BCM respectively. The project was halted a few years after it was commenced following sabotage by southern Sudanese rebels with covert Ethiopian support (discussed in Section 6.3.1.1).

Figure 17 - Jonglei Canal Project, South Sudan (Ahmed 2008: 577)



After the halting of the project in 1983, there have been successive attempts by Egypt to rekindle it, including following the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between Sudan and the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) in 2005. For example, in 2009, then Egyptian Minister of Irrigation Mohammad Allam "issued a decree to form a delegation to visit Sudan to study the status of the *Jonglei* canal and the possibility of the completion of the canal" (WikiLeaks 2009a). Since, Egyptian government officials have continued to make trips to the newly independent South Sudan in successive attempts to protect Egyptian water interests on the White Nile (al-Monitor, 26 August 2013). The *Jonglei* Canal project demonstrates that *resource capture* on the Nile has not always been a straightforward endeavour, with Egyptian authorities experiencing much difficulty in their attempts to pursue this strategy beyond their borders.

With the failure of the *Jonglei* Canal project, the Egyptian authorities decided to engage in a slew of domestic land reclamation projects known as the *Toshka* project in the 1990s. Through these projects the authorities aimed at a 35% increase in agricultural lands by reclaiming barren lands in North Sinai, West Delta and southwestern Egypt with water from the HAD reservoir lake. The implications of these projects were two-fold: (1) for Egypt, it not only maintained but served to consolidate its hydro-hegemony by further expanding its existing utilisation of the Nile whilst; (2) for Ethiopia, it represented an attempt by Egypt to establish a precedent for the out-of-basin transfer of Nile waters. Ethiopian authorities contested this project as an attempt at producing a *fait accompli* on the Nile aimed at establishing further Egyptian utilisation of the Nile without the consent or knowledge of other riparians. This opposition notwithstanding, Egypt has continued to develop the *Toshka* project to the present day – although progress has been admittedly slow and hampered by domestic instability.

As illustrated in this section, although *resource capture* strategies have seemingly played an important role in the Egyptian pursuit of consolidated control over Nile water resources, they alone fail to account for the factors which have perpetuated hydro-hegemony on the Nile. For Egypt, the unilateral deployment of facts-on-the-ground has served to free it from its enduring fear of dependence on upstream countries for its water supply – enabling it substantial water storage capacity. By accomplishing infrastructure projects, the Nile flood – which affected Egyptian agriculture – was tamed. Here lies the critical element of the *resource capture* strategy. Unlike *containment and integration* strategies which require constant cultivation and deployment, the construction of hydraulic infrastructure only needs to occur once to create a shift in the distribution water resources, and by extension power, in a given basin. In the case of Egypt, the high-point of its *resource capture* strategy, as represented by the construction of the HAD, firmly established its hegemony in the Basin, laying the foundation for the subsequent deployment of *containment and integration* strategies aimed at consolidating this position. Through this analysis, it is argued that the greatest impacts of *resource capture* strategies lie in allowing the riparian who deploys them effectively, unprecedented leverage in their ensuing engagements on the river. This is evidenced by the construction of the HAD, but also the Ethiopian hydraulic mission's project GERD, in more recent years, and its reverberating impacts on riparian relations in the Eastern Nile (discussed in Section 6.3.2.2).

Furthermore, this section has also shown the difficulty of deploying *resource capture* strategies beyond national borders. As shown in the case of the *Jonglei Canal*, although successive attempts have been made by the hydro-hegemonic status quo to accomplish the project, without the compliance of a variety of parties at multiple scales such projects are doomed to fail. This section has shown that *resource capture* alone fails to tell the full story of how hydro-hegemonic processes have worked in the Eastern Nile. Thus, the next section (6.2.2.2) will elaborate on how this strategy has been combined with *containment and integration* strategies to help bolster and consolidate Egypt's hydro-hegemonic control in the Eastern Nile.

6.2.1.2 CONTAINMENT AND INTEGRATION STRATEGIES

As defined by Zeitoun and Warner (2006: 445), containment strategies aim to either integrate competitors or to contain them in as asymmetric a position as possible, by *coercive, utilitarian, normative* or *ideological* compliance-producing tactics. On the other hand, *integrative* strategies occur when the hydro-hegemonic regime "concedes some privileges offered through its relative power… [where] benefits may be more equitably distributed… and interactions [are] characterised by shared control" (Zeitoun and Warner 2006: 445). Contrary to the forms of unilateralism preferred in strategies of *resource capture*, in both *containment* and *integration* strategies hydro-hegemons engage other riparians bilaterally and/or multilaterally to preserve their dominant position in the Basin. Historically, Egypt has mainly pursued its *containment* and *integration* strategies on the Nile through approaches aimed at ensuring compliance including: incentives, treaties or agreements and integrative discourses. Critically, however, this chapter accepts Cascão's (2009b: 156) conclusion that, "Egypt's *integration* strategy (demonstrated through incentives and cooperation) is mainly discursive, and in fact conceals a *containment* strategy… Egypt does not seek to change the current hydropolitical situation, to make concessions on previous agreements and water allocations, or to promote a new legal framework for the Basin… Egypt's main goal remains the protection of the status quo". This approach has remained largely the same in recent years with Egyptian *integration* strategies on the Nile acting as discursive camouflage for continued *containment* strategies aimed at the maintenance of their consolidated control. As confirmed by an Ethiopian diplomat working on Nile issues, "Egypt wants to maintain 'historic rights' by taking advantage of 'crisis' on GERD. Egypt trying to buy time to secure this though it is totally impossible. They fail to recognise that Nile of 1950s and 1960s is not the same as in the 21st century. They agree that Ethiopia can own the GERD but not the water" (GOV16).

It is important to point out that Ethiopia has featured very little in Egypt's *containment* strategy in the Eastern Nile. Instead, Egypt's priorities on the Nile have largely been focused on Sudan with have inevitably impacted on Ethiopia's position within the Basin. As the only Nile riparian bordering Egypt, Cairo's *containment* strategies on the river have been aimed at aligning the Sudanese Nile positions with its own vis-à-vis upstream riparians including Ethiopia. This can be seen in the repeated efforts of successive Egyptian regimes to contain Sudanese Nile water withdrawals during both the British colonial period and in the aftermath of its independence. In both cases, Egyptian *containment* strategies took the form of legal agreements over the Nile: the *1929* and *1959 Nile Waters Agreements*, respectively. These

agreements, although separated by three decades, were targeted to achieve the same ends: to curb Sudanese withdrawals of Nile water; to establish Sudanese recognition of Egypt's priority rights over the river's water resources; and to entangle Sudan in Egypt's Nile policy thereby encouraging both countries to maintain the same downstream position in future negotiations with upstream riparians (Cascão 2009b: 154). These c*ontainment* strategies worked towards the blurring of the Nile positions of both countries, locking Sudan into a downstream coalition which appeared unrepresentative of its long-term interests on the Nile. Consequently, analysis of this containment strategy is crucial to address how downstream coalition effectively acted to freeze Ethiopia out of any negotiations. Moreover, the effects of this strategy can be understood through the stalled development of Ethio-Sudanese cooperation on Nile matters. Thus, it can be argued that existing asymmetries within the Basin were consolidated, contributing to a lack of trust amongst these riparian actors.

Additionally, through the deployment of calculated incentives alongside these bilateral treaties, Egyptian governments were better able to reinforce their attempts to restrict Sudanese water use. For example, under the terms of the 1929 Agreement Egypt accepted that Sudan might ultimately withdraw more water from the river for irrigation in the Gezira scheme (Republic of the Sudan and the United Arab Republic 1959). Similarly, the 1959 Agreement saw Egypt acquiesce to an increase in Sudan's legal allocation of Nile waters from 4 BCM to 18.5 BCM and to the construction of new dams in Sudan. In relation to the period surrounding the signing of the 1959 Agreement, these c*ontainment* strategies served to complement Egyptian resource captures strategies of the day by ensuring the future compliance of post-independence Sudan. As explained by a regional expert interviewed for this research, "1959 [Agreement] was strategically significant. Like two birds with one stone, it both laid the foundation for the building of [High] Aswan Dam and limited future possibilities of Sudan doing anything on river without Egyptian say so" (ACA22). The incentivisation of Sudan as part of a broader c*ontainment* strategy served to hamstring the country in the long-run as its Nile policies, positions and plans became intertwined with Egypt's own hegemonic strategies. As explained by Cascão (2009b: 154), "[Egypt] co-opted Sudan for an indefinite period in the status quo configuration and prevented it from adopting an individual position in the Basin hydropolitics".

Even though Ethiopia has not been the primary target of these c*ontainment* strategies, they have still had a significant impact on its ability to utilise Nile water resources. Importantly, by strategically disregarding Ethiopia in its engagements on the Eastern Nile, Egyptian authorities have attempted to undermine and delegitimise Ethiopian interests on the Nile. Going further, this neglect was ultimately aimed at granting Egypt and Sudan exclusive access to the river at the cost of all upstream riparians. For example, no riparians save for Sudan and Egypt were even consulted, included or engaged when it came to the 1959 Agreement (Shapland 1997). In this regard, it can be said that Egypt took the position that a policy of disregarding upstream riparians would be more beneficial to its ambitions on the Nile than a policy of engagement. Unsurprisingly, this approach manifested following the signing of the 1959 Agreement when in the face of Ethiopian complaints regarding the exclusion of upstream riparians, the Egyptian government opted to neglect these objections in favour of ploughing on with their hydraulic plans. This

approach largely stemmed from the fact that Egypt historically exerted limited political influence or leverage upstream, thus viewing riparians outside of Sudan as impediments to the fruition of their hydraulic plans. In fact, Egyptian *containment* strategies upstream only emerged in the decades following the construction of the HAD, when economic and political incentives were offered to Equatorial Nile riparians under the guise of promoting greater cooperation on the Nile (Cascão 2009b: 155).

Notably, it was only after the Cold War that the Egyptian *containment* strategy began targeting Ethiopia. This was primarily because of the emergence of a new regime in Addis Ababa led by Meles Zenawi. With relations between the two countries at an all-time low following the sabre-rattling of the 1970s and 1980s, the normalisation of relations between the two countries in the 1990s was desired by an Egyptian regime eager to contain any Nile ambitions harboured in Addis Ababa. As an interviewee explained "Meles [Zenawi of the TPLF] and Isayas [Afewerki of the EPLF] who had coveted Egyptian support during the civil war against the Derg in the 1980s, were viewed as friendly faces in Cairo" (MED21). This rapprochement culminated in the signing of the Framework of General Cooperation in 1993 – an agreement which closely imitated the 1959 Agreement with Sudan in its aim to restrict future Ethiopian claims to the Nile. The agreement committed the two riparians to avoiding appreciable harm and to mutual consultations before the implementation of future projects – commitments which, to this day, continue to be viewed by the Ethiopian side as detrimental to the national position and success for the Egyptian *containment* strategy (Waterbury 2002: 83).

Although this Agreement was largely seen as a step in the wrong direction by Ethiopian commentators, Ethiopian officials have since maintained that it was never an agreement but more a framework for future negotiations, which by its very nature was non-binding (Arsano 2007: 103). Whether this document is to be considered an Agreement or a framework, it is clear, however, that it was an Egyptian attempt at containing future Ethiopian utilisation of the Nile and protecting existing Egyptian rights to it. Through the inclusion of the principles of 'appreciable harm' and 'prior consultation' as well as more practical provisions aimed at enhancing Nile flows downstream, Egyptian negotiators attempted to legitimise the hegemonic status quo on the river.

In the years since the 1993 Framework, riparian states have largely been preoccupied with negotiations over a new multilateral basin-wide legal framework under the auspices of the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI). This notwithstanding, Egyptian CFA negotiators attempted to apply the same tactics throughout CFA negotiations, ultimately deciding to leave the NBI following their failure to insert amendments that would protect their downstream rights.

Specifically, having agreed to a total of 45 legal articles, Egyptian and Sudanese negotiators strongly contested a single article - Article 14b on water security (Cascão and Nicol 2016: 7). According to the attachments to the Agreement, Article 14b which compels states "not to significantly affect the water security of any other Nile Basin states" was agreed to by all other states except Egypt and Sudan (Agreement on the Nile Basin Cooperative Framework 2010: 70). It continues that "to this effect, Egypt

proposed that Article 14(b) should be replaced by the following wording: 'not to adversely affect the water security and current uses and rights of any other Nile Basin State'" (Agreement on the Nile Basin Cooperative Framework 2010: 70). This represented a return to the hegemonic tactics of the past, in that Egyptian negotiators saw Article 14b as an opportunity to definitively establish their acquired and historic rights to the Nile as enshrined in the 1959 Agreement. As a result of the deadlock between upstream and downstream riparians, it was consequently decided that this specific article would be annexed and resolved within six months of the establishment of the Nile River Basin Commission. Following the annexation of Article 14b, all upstream riparians opted to move forward on the negotiated article and on 14 May 2010, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda and Burundi proceeded to sign the CFA (Cascão and Nicol 2016: 7). In protest at the signing, Egypt and Sudan froze their memberships of the NBI and their participation in its associated programmes and projects (Sudan Tribune, 28 June 2010). Thus, in an example of 'throwing the baby out with the bath water', the failure of Egyptian *normative* tactics in the CFA process led to their wholesale departure from the cooperative process entirely.

Crucially, Zenawi and the EPRDF had Nile ambitions dating back to their time fighting the Derg and would not be satisfied with the continuation of the status quo on the Nile. As illustrated by an interviewee paraphrasing a recent interview with Eritrea's president Isayas Afewerki,

> "In the 1980s, Meles and I travelled to Cairo to raise the issue of the Nile with Egyptian government officials. At a meeting with Omar Suleiman [then deputy head of Egyptian Intelligence], Meles asked about Nile development in Ethiopia. Immediately, Suleiman rebuked him saying 'who are you to ask about the Nile?'. I advised Meles to leave the issue alone, but he could not." (MED59)

As this interviewee's quote represents, the Nile had been a long-time agenda of Zenawi and the TPLF which pre-dated their rise to power in Ethiopia. As discussed in Chapter 5, the Nile has since remained a key part of the EPRDF's state-building agenda and hydraulic mission. Illustrative of this long-term aspiration was the commencement of construction of the GERD in 2011, which represented a direct confrontation of Egyptian *containment* strategies on the Nile, and by extension hydro-hegemony. The GERD project has resulted in the deployment of *containment* strategies aimed at halting or modifying its construction and eventual operation. The DOP on the GERD signed in 2015 can be interpreted as a *normative* tactic executed by Egyptian negotiators to slow the dam's first filling, restrict the dam's operation to hydropower and to reduce any negative impacts on Egypt from the GERD (DOP 2015, APPENDIX D).

Principle II of the DOP explicitly states that "the purpose of the GERD is for power generation" limiting the use of the dam for hydropower and, critically for downstream states, not for irrigation (DOP 2015, APPENDIX D). This principle is specifically targeting at protecting downstream water security by restricting future Ethiopian water withdrawals from the GERD. By committing Ethiopia to not irrigating from the reservoir, downstream states hope to be able to protect the levels of water flowing down river

from the GERD. Principle V commits the countries to cooperate as per the recommendations of the International Panel of Experts (IPoE) and the Technical National Committee (TNC) final report on the first filling and operation of the GERD. These commitments are aimed at ensuring that the first filling of the GERD is conducted in a manner that does not endanger downstream flows. Similarly, the coordinated annual operation of the dam ensures that downstream dams face minimal disruption and efficiency losses as a result of the GERD. It also requires Ethiopia to inform Egypt and Sudan of any unexpected circumstances that demand adjustment in the operations of the GERD. The inclusion of this principle can be viewed as an attempt to safeguard current downstream utilisation of Nile waters.

Egypt's *utilitarian* tactics towards Ethiopia have mainly been economic and commercial in nature. These bilateral incentives, which are a complement to Egypt's wider policy of increased engagement in Africa, have included promises of investment, increased trade and technical assistance.

Historically, Egypt has used these incentives to vie for riparian support in its attempts to preserve its access to Nile water and contain utilisation upstream (Nasr and Neef 2016: 983). For example, following the visit of the Egyptian Prime Minister Ahmed Nazif to Ethiopia in December 2010, several Egyptian business leaders called for an increase in the trade volume between the two countries, which then stood at $51 million per year. The chairman of the Sixth October Investors Association went on to state that "increasing trade with Ethiopia was essential to preserving Egypt's national water security, given Ethiopia's location in the Nile Basin" (WikiLeaks 2010a). Furthermore, Ambassador Gamal Bayoumy, the Secretary-General of the Union of Arab Investors, called for the establishment of an Egyptian industrial zone in Ethiopia, while Hamed Al Shiaty, the head of the Agricultural Committee in the Egyptian Businessmen Association, voiced support for increasing Egypt's imports of Ethiopian meat and the construction of new roads between Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia (WikiLeaks 2010a). Interestingly, these tactics have been expanded since the launch of construction of the GERD in 2011. According to the Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce and Sectoral Association, Egyptian foreign direct investment in Ethiopia spiked following the GERD announcement from its previous levels of roughly $50 million to almost $78 million. These investments contributed to the creation of over 20,000 jobs in Ethiopia and the leasing of over 22,000 hectares of land to the National Bank of Egypt. The head of the Egyptian-Ethiopian Business Council, Ayman Eissa further explained that bilateral trade and investment has an important role to play in preventing future 'harm' to either country from unilateral development on the Nile (Nasr and Neef 2016: 981). Beyond the regular negotiations over the GERD, this tactic remains the main point of entry for Egypt in its bilateral engagements with Ethiopia. Egypt in this regard hopes to achieve greater influence in Ethiopia, through greater economic and business ties. As an interviewee within the media explained "Egyptian investment in Ethiopia is about creating dependency. Greater trade between us is all good and well but at what cost?" (MED59). By deploying this form of 'soft power', Egypt hopes to "improve Egypt's previously very weak political relations with upstream riparians, and above all, to maintain and reinforce Egyptian leadership in Nile Basin politics" (Cascão 2009b: 166).

The second form of incentivisation attempted by Egypt in upstream states is related to the provision of technical assistance. As described by Egyptian officials this is "one of Egypt's most important tools for diplomacy in the region" with the Foreign Minister personally approving all projects financed through the Egyptian Fund for Technical Cooperation with Africa (EFTCA) (WikiLeaks 2010b). As the former Deputy Assistant Foreign Minister of Egypt, Maher El-Adawy explained the "EFTCA's top priority is to provide assistance to its Nile Basin neighbours because of the water issue and to smooth any frictions in Egypt's relationships with these countries" (WikiLeaks 2010b). In addition to the softer elements of this technical assistance, in a material sense, it has also been deployed to facilitate hydraulic projects in upstream countries that can help build water capacity beyond reliance on the Nile. For example, Egypt has dug boreholes and wells, developed groundwater sources and constructed hydro-electric power plants upstream, all with the aim of ensuring that the quantity and quality of water reaching Egypt are not reduced (WikiLeaks 2009b).

These forms of incentivisation are particularly unique to Egypt's historically detached engagements with Ethiopia on the Nile, especially when contrasted with Egyptian tactics vis-à-vis Sudan. Specifically, the previous section (6.2.3.2 - A) demonstrated how the 1959 Agreement was used by the Egyptian government as part of its broader efforts to contain and curtail Sudanese ambitions for the Nile. This Agreement was laced with various incentives aimed at persuading the Sudanese government to comply with the construction of the HAD as well as a renegotiation of the colonial era 1929 Agreement. These incentives included: the approval of the building of the Roseires Dam; compensation for damages resulting from the construction of the HAD; an increase in its allocation of Nile waters to 18.5 BCM; and an equal share in any new or recovered waters as a result of jointly implemented infrastructure projects on the river. Where Egypt's incentivisation of Ethiopia has largely been limited to purely economic considerations, in the case of Sudan, Egyptian incentivisation has been directly linked to the Nile issue, and by extension its hydropolitical self-interest.

In going even further, Egypt has also complimented these incentives with wider economic and political benefits, thus ensuring the alignment of the Sudanese and Egyptian positions on the Nile for decades to come. As explained by Cascão (2009b: 165) since the 1959 Agreement "the Egyptian diplomatic position towards Sudan has been one of tactical political support as a trade-off for stable Nile political relations… [this has included Egyptian] support for Sudanese territorial integrity, special commercial and military ties and 'protection' of the Sudanese government in the international political arena".

Egyptian *utilitarian* tactics, in combination with the *coercive*, *normative* and *ideological* tactics have formed part of the broader Egyptian objective to lock Sudan and Ethiopia into total compliance with its interests on the Nile. Although these strategies have registered relative success in the case of Sudan, their impacts on Ethiopia's Nile position has been less significant. While Sudan became a stalwart ally and partner to Egyptian Nile policy for the rest of the century, Ethiopia retreated away from the Nile, opting to resist Egyptian hydro-hegemony through disengagement. In the last decade, however, things have begun to

change as Sudan's interests on the Nile have been decoupled from Egypt and oriented more closely with Ethiopia's upstream. This decoupling will be discussed and analysed in further detail in Section 6.3.2.3.1.

In short, C*ontainment* and *integration* strategies have been an effective method by which Egypt has historically pursued its hydro-hegemonic goals in the Nile Basin. Importantly, these strategies have allowed Egyptian governments to simultaneously deploy *normative* tactics including agreements and incentives in their efforts to contain riparian utilisation of the Nile and acquire compliance for their own plans for the river. Egypt's discursive *integration* strategies, on the other hand, have acted to camouflage and support these longstanding c*ontainment* approaches to the benefit of the status quo.

6.3 ETHIOPIA'S RESISTANCE AND COUNTER-HEGEMONY

This section will seek to outline the mechanisms of resistance and counter-hegemony deployed by Ethiopia in the Eastern Nile Basin in its attempts to challenge historical hydro-hegemony. As identified and detailed in Chapter 3 Section 3.3, these mechanisms include *coercive, leverage* and *liberating* strategies aimed at contesting existing asymmetry on transboundary rivers characterised by hydro-hegemony. Through the analysis of events related to this contestation of the basin's status quo, this section will able to answer sub-question B on what basin-wide counter-hegemonic strategies and tactics Ethiopian officials are employing in their attempts to challenge Egyptian hegemonic control within the Eastern Nile Basin. Furthermore, the section will highlight how these strategies intermingle with the domestically-driven hegemonic processes detailed in Chapter 5 towards the same ends. Through the analysis of the outcomes of these strategies, this section will be able to shed further light on whether or not they have contributed to effecting change in the Basin's hydropolitical make-up.

6.3.1 COERCIVE RESISTANCE STRATEGIES

Coercive resistance strategies manifest in scenarios where non-hegemonic actors deploy the use of force or violence in an effort to confront and resist the actions of the hydro-hegemonic status quo. These approaches which can be described as attempts by non-hegemons to 'send a message' are not usually geared towards long-term constructive or transformative ends. As the following sections will show, they are instead deployed in a reactionary manner as a form of resistance rather than counter-hegemony. Within transboundary river basins, these types of resistance can be exemplified by threats, the sabotage of hydraulic infrastructure or the covert support for groups with shared interests in contesting the status quo. The following section will detail how Ethiopia has contested the Egyptian government's hydro-hegemonic *coercive* compliance-producing tactics in the Eastern Nile through a combination of threats and covert support for militant groups in southern Sudan.

6.3.1.1 THREATS

At the outset, it is critical to highlight that there has never been a documented incident of riparians employing direct military force against one another over Nile waters. Nonetheless, the threat of military conflict has loomed over the Basin, with plans for new upstream developments frequently greeted with threats of war from Egypt and predictions of water war from the media. This longstanding position is illustrated well by a series of quotes from former Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, who repeatedly threatened war on the Nile during the Cold War period.

For instance, in the late 1970s, he claimed that "the only matter that could take Egypt to war again is water" (S. Dinar and A. Dinar 2016: 128). In response to Ethiopian threats to develop the Blue Nile basin in the 1980s, he warned that "any action that would endanger the waters of the Blue Nile will be faced with a firm reaction on the part of Egypt, even if that action should lead to war" (Kendie 1999:141). Similarly, Sadat threatened upstream countries with direct action confirming "bombing if even one dam should be built" (Beschorner 1992: 60). Fortunately for the Basin, these threats were never followed

through but remained an important *coercive* tactic regularly employed by Egyptian governments to encourage upstream compliance in the Eastern Nile. During the height of these Cold War tensions, however, Ethiopia under the Derg also resorted to the threat of dam-building on the Nile in order to push back on these Egyptian aggressions. These threats were made reactively to both counter what was perceived as the real risk of Egyptian military force against Ethiopia and to unite the domestic population in defiance of a 'historic enemy'. During this period of intense domestic instability and war with Somalia, the Derg regime regularly externalised threats to the state in an effort to shore up its position at home. Thus, it is no surprise that the Derg's threat of upstream hydraulic development would never be followed up with any 'facts on the ground' to back them up. This meant that any attempts by Ethiopia of pursuing a *resource capture* strategy on the Nile was shackled, therefore frustrating efforts geared towards greater upstream resistance and counter-hegemony.

Similarly, Egyptian governments also employed these tactics against their Sudanese neighbours in later years as their formerly aligned bilateral relations declined during the first Gulf War (1990-91). However, this approach led to the severance of diplomatic relations between the two countries while further accelerating the growing rapprochement between Sudan and Ethiopia – and preparing fertile ground for Ethiopia's counter-hegemonic incentivisation of Sudan away from its historical alliance with Egypt. Egypt and Sudan adopted divergent positions on the war – Egypt siding with the US while Sudan, led by a new Islamist government, supported Iraq - Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak threatened "he would attack the Sudan immediately if Egypt found any proof of an Iraqi transfer of weapons" and that it would pay a high price for attempting any attack on the HAD (*New York Times*, 30 January 1991). This event marked the beginning of: (1) a breakdown in Egyptian-Sudanese political relations and; (2) the political and economic rapprochement between Ethiopia and Sudan discussed further in Section 6.3.2.3.1. Tensions between the two downstream actors eventually peaked in 1995 with the attempted assassination of President Mubarak, by what the Egyptian government claimed were agents of the Sudan, during an official state visit to Ethiopia. Contrary to Sudanese public denials at the time, new testimony in 2010 from Islamist leader Hassan al-Turabi revealed that a former Vice President of Sudan, Ali Osman Mohamed Taha, was directly involved in "arranging the operation" to assassinate the Egyptian president (*Sudan Tribune*, 5 July 2016). Following the attempted assassination, the Egyptian government reacted with anger, further marginalising Sudan, who in turn responded by threatening to withdraw from the 1959 Agreement. This saw the then Egyptian Foreign Minister Amre Muhammad Mussa utter the famous words "playing with water, Sudan is playing with fire" (Schiffler 1998: 137). Although relations would be normalised by the end of the 1990s, this decade represented a critical period during which "Ethiopian officials and diplomats actively worked to further strengthen relations with [their] Sudanese counterparts" (GOV5). The breakdown of diplomatic relations between Egypt and Sudan created an opening for Ethiopian officials to deploy a counter-hegemonic leverage strategy aimed at incentivising Sudan to break from its historic downstream alliance with Egypt. This incentivisation of Sudan by the Ethiopian government, which has persisted for over a decade, will be discussed in more detail in Section 6.3.2.3.1.

More recently, although the threat of military action has dissipated in the Basin since the establishment of basin-wide cooperative mechanisms in the late 1990s, Ethiopia has deployed reactive threats on the Nile in response to Egyptian military threats over its desire to develop upstream infrastructure projects on the Blue Nile. In one particular incident, Former Prime Minister Meles Zenawi drawing on Ethiopia's history of independence and military prowess responded to these threats saying, "I am not worried that the Egyptians will suddenly invade Ethiopia… Nobody who has tried that has lived to tell the story. I don't think it will be any different [for the] Egyptians and I think they know that" (Meles Zenawi in Reuters, 23 November 2010). These responses, by an increasingly confident Ethiopia within the Basin, acted as pre-cursors to the unilateral launch of construction on the GERD only six months later. According to a senior Government official this "proved to the world that Egyptian military threats [on the Nile] would be no obstacle to the construction of dams in Ethiopia… the only way forward would be on the negotiating table" (GOV53). Thus, it could be argued that the lack of follow-through on military threats from Egypt in the face of this confrontational back and forth, acted to embolden the Ethiopian officials to move forward on their ambitious hydraulic plans on the Nile.

In the above examples, one thing remains apparent, threats on the Nile by both Ethiopia and Egypt, have been purely rhetorical and discursive political tools, rarely followed up with action on the ground. Their effectiveness, which relies on the perception which other riparians have as to the credibility of these threats, has been limited. As a *coercive* tactic, threats are a game of diminishing returns, in that their value depreciates the longer they are not followed up with direct action. As showcased in the case of Egyptian threats over hydraulic infrastructure upstream, the fact that construction of the GERD remains unaffected and negotiations aimed at defusing these tensions has continued, illustrates the ineffective nature of Egyptian military threats as a *coercive* compliance-producing tactic on the Nile. Similarly, Ethiopia's threats of unilateral development on the Nile in the 1980s have also registered limited results as they were wholly reactionary in nature and lacking in real credibility.

6.3.1.2 COVERT SUPPORT, SABOTAGE AND ACCUSATION

The second *coercive* tactic that has been deployed by Ethiopia against Egypt relates to the use of covert military support and influence in indirect theatres of conflict or upheaval. In the Eastern Nile, Ethiopia has supported groups working against the Egyptian interests in southern Sudan in response to Egyptian covert military and political support to parties within the Horn of Africa working against Ethiopian state interests (Cascão 2009b: 159). Although there have been repeated public denials from Ethiopian and Egyptian government officials of interference in the internal affairs of other states, recent accounts suggest the opposite may be true. Additionally, these covert operations tend to coincide with periods during which the targeted riparian state has been in the process of planning and/or launching projects along the Nile. Thus, it can be argued that these covert *coercive* tactics have been aimed at disrupting and containing riparians attempting to unilaterally develop these resources without the consent of their riparian neighbours.

In this regard, Ethiopia's deployment of covert support, sabotage and accusation across the decades have historically represented reactive and resistive manoeuvres adopted, often, as a direct result of Egyptian attempts at meddling in the internal affairs of Ethiopia. The rationale for this is captured by one interviewee in the Ethiopian media who lamented that "[according] to most Ethiopians, the path to Egyptian domination of the Nile has been paved thanks to the ruins of conflict in Ethiopia" (MED21). Furthermore, as claimed by an Ethiopian diplomat "It is not a coincidence that chaos in Ethiopia has historically worked in the favour of Egypt… while Ethiopia has struggled to keep the peace within its territory, Egypt has developed and prospered thanks to our waters" (GOV33). In an effort to prevent the unilateral development of Blue Nile water resources by Ethiopian governments, "Egyptian regimes have covertly supported actors in the region who would serve to destabilise the country" (GOV56). However, to counter this Egyptian interference, Ethiopian governments have deployed similar covert tactics within the Eastern Nile, particularly in relation to Egypt's historical partner on the Nile, Sudan. In the 1980s, the Mengistu Hailemariam-led Derg government of Ethiopia decided to target the Sudanese government in order to intensify its resistance efforts against the Nile's hydro-hegemonic status quo led by Egypt. As illustrated in the case of Ethiopia (discussed in Section 5.2), Sudanese state formation also faced various challenges related to core-periphery dynamics within its territory. In this case, elites governing from the centre in Khartoum attempted to assimilate or suppress ethnically and religiously diverse populations throughout the periphery (Aalen 2014: 626). Official Derg declarations consistently accused Sudan along with its Arab allies, Egypt and Saudi Arabia, of working to "counter the revolutionary class struggle in Ethiopia… airlifting arms and mercenaries to secessionist movements and counter-revolutionaries operating against the territorial integrity of socialist Ethiopia" (Aalen 2014: 634).

At a time of rising insurgency across Ethiopia, particularly in its peripheries, the Derg moved to facilitate the creation of a new South Sudanese political organisation – the SPLA. In a break with the past Imperial government, the Derg aspired for a South Sudanese movement established in its own likeness, a socialist organisation working not against but for national unity (Aalen 2014: 633). Thus, the SPLA, which would go on to be headquartered and trained in Ethiopia, was born (Young 1999: 331). By using this group as a proxy for operations in the borderlands and in southern Sudan, the Derg would act to concurrently pursue their domestic security agenda while working towards their wider regional goals which included the Nile. The Khartoum government, which for much of the 20th century had been locked into a strategic Nile alliance with Egypt, per an influential historian in the region, was viewed by the Ethiopian government of the time as the "soft underbelly of upstream Arab influence in the region" (A28).

The culmination of the arrangement between the SPLA and the Ethiopian government occurred with the sabotage of the *Jonglei* Canal project in 1984. The canal, a joint Nile water-saving project between the Sudanese and Egyptian governments, was attacked by the SPLA, who also went on to kidnap and hold the project's engineers at their headquarters across the border in Ethiopia (Collins 1988: 149). Although there has yet to be formal proof of direct Ethiopian involvement in the attack, commentators have argued that "within the wider political and regional context, it would not be a leap to suggest the same" (ACA25; Cascão 2009a: 245). This is further supported by the events of 1989 in which President Mengistu

Hailemariam openly threatened to launch a "joint SPLA-Ethiopian operation to take the Damazin and the Roseires dam (de Waal 2004: 188). Owing to the large frontier border shared by the two countries, the aspirations of successive Ethiopian regimes to penetrate and develop the state in its western-most peripheral areas inevitably created local tensions on either side of the Ethiopia-Sudan border. Although this threat failed to materialise into direct military action, it acts to exemplify the strategic cooperation between the two parties.

This instability has, however, not been limited to Sudan as violence has also been used within Ethiopia, including armed tactics in attempts to topple the EPRDF-led government, with suspected covert support by the Egyptian government. For example, Egypt has been widely accused by Ethiopia of supporting Eritrea in the 1998-2000 border war between the two countries (de Waal 2004, Kagwanja 2007: 326). Furthermore, as a number of interviewees cited, it is widely known among Ethiopian diplomatic and intelligence circles that Ginbot 7, an exiled Ethiopian group operating from Eritrea, and their leader Berhanu Nega, receive direct financing and support from Cairo for their activities aimed at overthrowing the EPRDF (GOV6; GOV56; MED21). These suspicions were realised in 2013 when a video famously emerged of a meeting between a group of Egyptian parliamentarians and the then Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi, in which various options regarding what to do about the GERD were openly debated. In this private meeting, mistakenly broadcast publicly, parliamentarians abandoned convention and openly discussed possibilities including conducting a military strike against the dam, sabotaging the dam through the intelligence services, taking the Ethiopian government to the UN and using the Suez Canal to put pressure on countries perceived to be funding and supporting the project. Importantly, however, there was also an extended conversation about how Ethiopia could be destabilised by instigating insurrection among the majority Oromo ethnic group through further engagement with the OLF and related movements. As an Ethiopian diplomat put it "their dirty laundry was officially aired. It proved to the public, what we had known privately for years" (GOV33).

In the most recent episode of civil insurrection in Ethiopia, the EPRDF government levelled accusations of Egyptian involvement in the escalating protests in the Amhara and Oromia regional states through state-owned TV and print media. Then Minister for Government Communication Affairs, Getachew Reda, accused "the traditional enemy - [Egypt] - of training and financing anti-peace forces in Ethiopia…" adding that "elements in the Egyptian political establishment, not directly linked with government [are fuelling rebellion in Ethiopia], in an effort to promote 'historical rights' over access to the River Nile" (Getachew Reda in BBC News, 10 October 2016). Consistent with their policy, the Egyptian government quickly pushed back on the claims, reaffirming its historic position of non-intervention in the internal affairs of other sovereign states and its absolute respect for Ethiopia's sovereignty (State Information Service, 10 October 2016). Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi went further in denying these accusations stating that "Egypt has never ever offered any support to the opposition and will not carry out any conspiratorial action against Ethiopia" (Nazret Blog, 12 January 2017). Soon after these accusations, however, it emerged that the Ethiopian government had arrested three Egyptians in Ethiopia as part of the nationwide state of emergency announced following the protests (Capital Ethiopia, 7 November

2016). Although the Egyptian nationals were eventually released without charge after the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs interceded on their behalf, the Ethiopian government has continued to be wary of undue influence from Cairo in its domestic affairs. Thus, even at a time of unprecedented dialogue between the two countries, cooperative engagements exist amidst mistrust, thus demonstrating the point that cooperation is not only normatively good and coexisting with other politicised dimensions of water allocation (Mirumachi 2015).

Though the *coercive* mechanisms deployed by the Ethiopian government have failed to result in the transformation of the Basin's hydropolitics, they nonetheless represent a concerted effort by a non-hegemon to deploy threats and provide covert support to proxies in its attempts to contest the strategies of the hydro-hegemonic status quo. It should be noted that these tactics were largely a reflection of the Cold War era in which they were deployed, wherein global superpowers played out their rivalries through proxies across the developing world. In these scenarios, states in the Eastern Nile were supporting groups in one another's territories whilst acting as proxies themselves in the larger global contest for supremacy. Since the end of the Cold War and the fall of the Derg, the EPRDF government has largely abandoned the use of these tactics on the Nile. Instead, the Ethiopian government has adopted what it terms a 'win-win policy' based on greater cooperation, engagement and negotiation in the Basin. In opting for this change in tone in the Basin, the Ethiopian government is currently pursuing a variety of leverage and liberation strategies, discussed in the next section, in order to secure greater access to and utilisation of Nile waters.

6.3.2 LEVERAGE STRATEGIES

Leverage strategies are developed and deployed by non-hegemons in an effort to increase their bargaining power and political leverage in their basin interactions with the hydro-hegemonic status quo. These strategies are limited in their effect because they act to facilitate non-hegemonic victory only within the parameters of the existing rules of the game. In other words, they do not necessarily lead to the transformation of the game as a whole. However, the leverage strategies require analysis because they can act as a bridge to the eventual transformation of the game by laying the foundation for increases in bargaining and ideational power necessary for non-hegemons to pursue counter-hegemony. In the Eastern Nile Basin, Ethiopia has deployed these leverage strategies to counter Egypt's deployment of complementary *normative* and *utilitarian* compliance-producing tactics. Examples of the associated leverage tactics currently being deployed by Ethiopia on the Nile include: reactive diplomacy, the mobilisation of alternative funding and unilateral construction of infrastructure, proactive diplomacy and international water law.

6.3.2.1 REACTIVE DIPLOMACY

Historically, the Ethiopian government has regularly turned to the use of resistive diplomacy to contest Egyptian hydro-hegemony on the Nile. Ethiopia's deployment of reactive diplomacy has taken a variety of forms including letters of protest, criticisms via the media and announcements at international meetings.

These reactive forms of diplomacy have been deployed in two forms by Ethiopian governments: to protest Egyptian unilateralism on the Nile, and as assertions of Ethiopia's intentions to develop its own Nile water resources unilaterally. As explained by an Ethiopian official involved in Nile negotiations, "historically, we have mainly exercised a policy of strongly objecting to downstream actions taken on the Nile on the back of illegal and bilateral treaties while promoting our own inalienable rights to develop these waters" (GOV8). Although, these may appear contradictory on a surface reading, in hydro-hegemonic contexts these approaches can act complementarily to the resistive efforts of non-hegemon players. In more recent years, Ethiopian officials have also resorted to the use of a resistive form of securitisation in their interactions with Egypt over the construction of the GERD.

As early as the 1950s, following the start of bilateral negotiations between Egypt and Sudan over the 1959 Agreement, the Ethiopian government engaged in a media campaign aimed at denouncing the bilateral and exclusive nature of the agreement. As explained by an Ethiopian historian, "the Imperial Government announced their unhappiness about the negotiations prior to the signing of the agreement itself before eventually going on to reject the agreement in its totality following its signing in 1959" (ACA28). These objections only intensified with the emergence of the details of the 1959 Agreement, which aimed to facilitate the constructions of the HAD in Egypt and the Roseires Dam in Sudan. The Ethiopian government reacted to these revelations by asserting its own right to unilaterally develop its Nile water resources irrespective of the needs of other riparian states. In an official communication, the Imperial Government stated that "Ethiopia reserves its right to utilise the water resources of the Nile for the benefit of its people, whatever might be the measure of utilisation of such waters sought by riparian states' (Ethiopian Imperial Government 1956, in Collins 1990: 277).

At the height of the Cold War era, Ethiopian officials used several international and regional water fora, including the United Nations Water Conference in Mar del Plata in 1977 and the Organisation of African Unity Summit in Lagos in 1980 to advance the country's Nile interests. They used the UN Conference in Argentina to assert "the sovereign right of any riparian state, in the absence of an international agreement, to proceed unilaterally with the development of water resources within its territory" (Ethiopian Government declaration, in Clarke 1991: 104). At these international conferences, Ethiopian officials repeatedly denounced Egyptian hydro-imperialism and hegemony whilst announcing their intentions to implement hydraulic projects along the Blue Nile. Through this use of international diplomacy, the Ethiopian government aimed to capitalise on the superpower rivalries of the day by using Nile Basin issues as a gateway into the strategic cold war politics of the Red Sea region (Cascão 2008: 22).

Ethiopian governments have consistently objected to Egyptian *resource capture* projects, including the 1979 *al-Salaam* Canal and the 1997 *Toshka* project. In the case of the *Toshka* project, its announcement was met with numerous letters of protest from the Ethiopian government condemning the unilateral nature of the project and the fact that it represented an out-of-basin transfer of Nile water. According to Meissner (2004: 7), the Ethiopian government led a "transnational lobbying campaign" against this new

stage in the Egyptian hydraulic mission, reacting immediately and firmly against the expansive project. For example, former Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi lamenting the situation stated that "while Egypt is taking the Nile water to transform the Sahara Desert into something green, we in Ethiopia - who are the source of 85% of that water - are denied the possibility of using it to feed ourselves. And we are being forced to beg for food every year" (Meles Zenawi in BBC News, 3 February 2005). In a further assertion of Ethiopia's right to unilaterally develop the river if necessary, Zenawi went on to highlight the unsustainability of the status quo stating that "there will come a time when the people of East Africa and Ethiopia will become too desperate to care about these diplomatic niceties. Then, they are going to act' (Prime Minister Meles Zenawi in BBC, 3 February 2005).

In more recent years, Nile interactions between Ethiopia and Egypt have largely centred on engagements related to the construction of the GERD. A more detailed elaboration of the hydropolitics, discursive politics and diplomacy of the GERD can be found in Chapter 7 of this research. With regards to the GERD, the Ethiopian government has deployed reactive diplomacy to advance its construction of this hydraulic infrastructure. The Ethiopian government has frequently rejected Egyptian proposals aimed at either modifying the design of the GERD or halting its construction pending the completion of impact studies. For example, as recently as January 2016, almost six years after the beginning of construction, the Ethiopian government rejected an Egyptian proposal aimed at increasing the number of water outlets on the GERD from two to four. As described by Bizuneh Tolcha, Public Relations Director at the Ethiopian Ministry of Water and Electricity, "the decision to build two openings came following intensive studies, and Ethiopia does not need to redesign the dam project" (Sudan Tribune 2016).

This section has shown how various Ethiopian governments have resorted to the use of reactive diplomacy in order to resist Egyptian hydro-hegemony on the Nile. By consistently objecting to unilateral downstream development on the river whilst also asserting its own right to develop its Nile water resources, Ethiopian officials contested downstream hegemony without explicitly denying their obligations to downstream riparians (McCaffrey 2007: 121). As Waterbury (2002:71) pointed out, however, these "bursts of protest or denunciation [were] followed [up] by little or no action" owing mainly to the lack of material capacity to develop Nile water resources. As explained in previous chapters, until recently, Ethiopia has not held sufficient domestic public funding to be able to develop large hydraulic infrastructure or to carry out feasibility studies on its own (Cascão 2008: 25). Thus, Ethiopian governments have frequently attempted to make up for this deficit in national capacity by seeking alternative sources of funding for these projects. The next section will discuss how the current Ethiopian government has used the mobilisation of alternative sources of funding for unilateral hydraulic development on the Nile as a key leverage strategy in its contestation of hydro-hegemony in the Basin.

6.3.2.2 UNILATERAL CONSTRUCTION OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND MOBILISATION OF ALTERNATIVE FUNDING

Running parallel to the hydro-hegemonic *resource capture* strategy discussed in Section 5.3.2, the unilateral construction of infrastructure is another important leverage mechanism available to non-

hegemons in transboundary river basins. The Ethiopian government, under the EPRDF in particular, has deployed these tactics in their efforts to utilise Nile water and to establish undeniable facts-on-the-ground. In both cases, these leverage tactics can contribute to an increase in the bargaining power of non-hegemonic riparians. The most evident example of these dynamics has been witnessed in the Eastern Nile following Ethiopia's unilateral decision to begin construction of the GERD in 2011. Although the GERD represents the largest upstream infrastructure project ever launched in the Basin, it is important to contextualise it within a wider hydraulic mission being pursued by the EPRDF in Ethiopia.

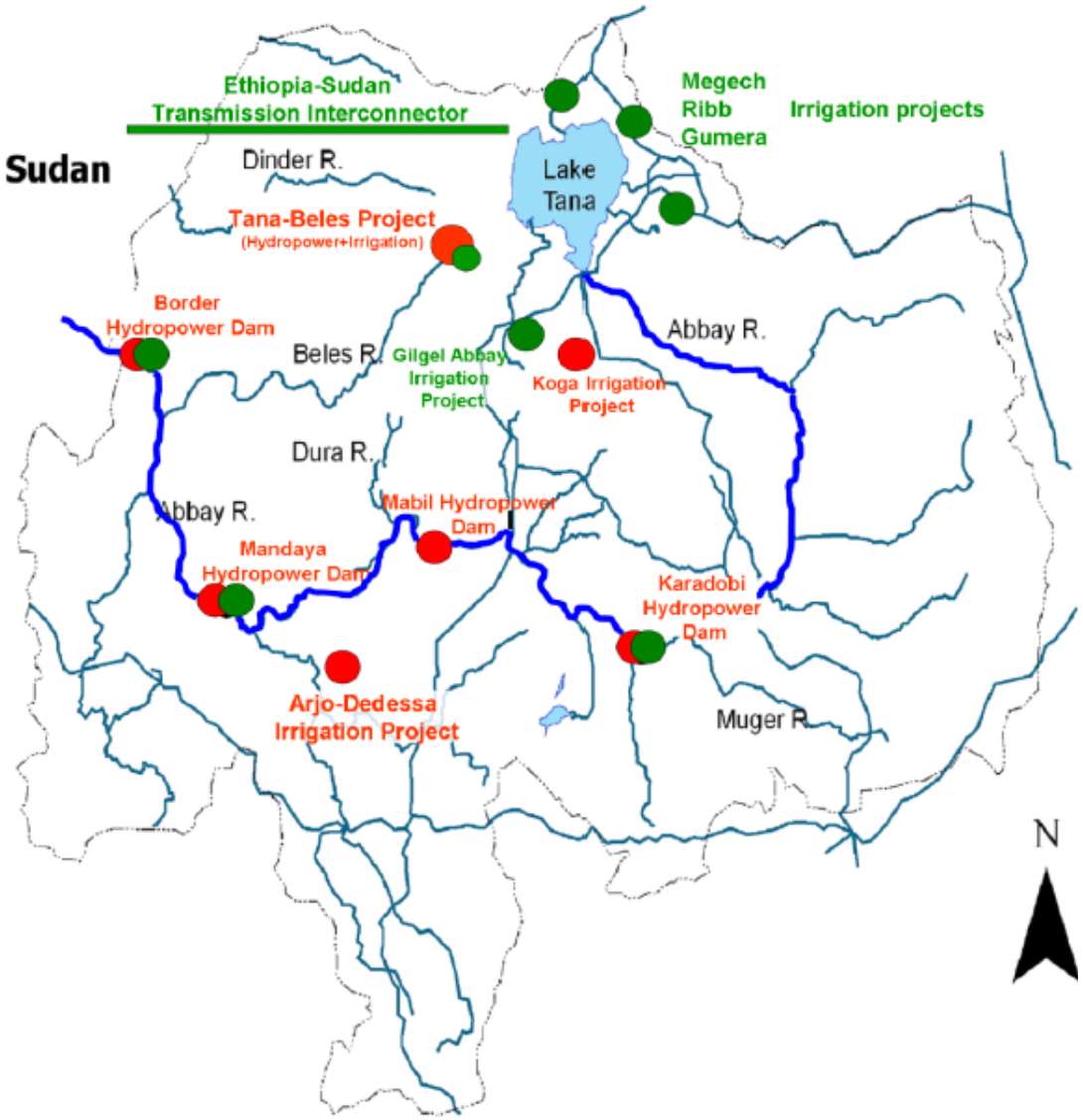
Prior to the GERD, Ethiopia registered limited infrastructural development on the Nile. The two principal reasons for this lay in successive government's concerns for the regional political ramifications of unilateral development and, more importantly, a lack of external funding for potential projects. As explained in Cascão (2009a: 248), "previous Ethiopian governments went no further than they did with large hydraulic projects because they were aware of the international political costs". Additionally, as discussed by an interviewee working on financing for development in the region, "Ethiopia struggled to secure any international funding from the big funders, such as the World Bank, due to a fear of international controversy and the political influence of Egypt and its international supporters" (IFB 37). Nonetheless, despite this lack of funding and support from international financial institutions, Ethiopia engaged in some unilateral planning and development on the Nile prior to 2011 (Arsano and Tamrat 2005: 15). In attempting to implement these projects, Ethiopia mobilised national or bilateral investment to make up for its budgetary gaps.

The majority of projects implemented on the Nile in Ethiopia have been constructed during the EPRDF era; the exceptions being the *Tis Abbay I hydropower dam* and the *Finchaa Dam and irrigation project* whose first phases were completed in the 1970s. Although a number of projects were identified for implementation as part of the USBR study (Section 5.3.1.2), intense downstream contestation and Egyptian lobbying made sure that possible international financing of the projects would not be forthcoming. For example, according to both Kendie (1999: 158) and Kagwanja (2007: 325), Egypt was instrumental in blocking funding from the African Development Bank (AfDB) for the *Tana-Beles* project. Additionally, the World Bank's Operational Directive 7.50 which essentially permitted Egypt, as a downstream state, to object to the bank's funding of any hydraulic project upstream, gave it a form of 'veto power' on the Nile (Waterbury 2002: 167). This position was reiterated well into the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) era, with the World Bank requiring Egyptian agreement before funding water projects along the Nile in upstream countries (WikiLeaks 2009c). Egyptian influence over international donors and institutions has remained one it's most effective hegemonic tools whilst also reflecting one of Ethiopia's greatest weaknesses.

Owing to the fact that the construction of dams in the Ethiopian highlands requires significant investment and technical capacity, the EPRDF-led government of Ethiopia has, since the early 1990s, endeavoured to cultivate new financial sources for new water infrastructure projects on the Nile. This is confirmed by an interviewee within the construction sector, familiar with Ethiopian hydropower projects, who explained

that "projects in Ethiopia, though advantageous in long-run, are labour-intensive, expensive and highly technical endeavours. These are all significant barriers to entry for most financiers and contractors" (BIS47). Where requests for investment from traditional lenders such as multilateral and regional financial institutions have fallen on deaf ears, the Government has increasingly sought alternatives from the private and public sectors. In addition to bilateral state donors such as Italy, France, Japan, Israel and Turkey, some international organisations have also engaged in the financing of water-related projects outside of the Ethiopian Nile Basin. These projects have included irrigation, watershed management, Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WaSH) as well as national capacity-building initiatives (Cascão 2008: 24).

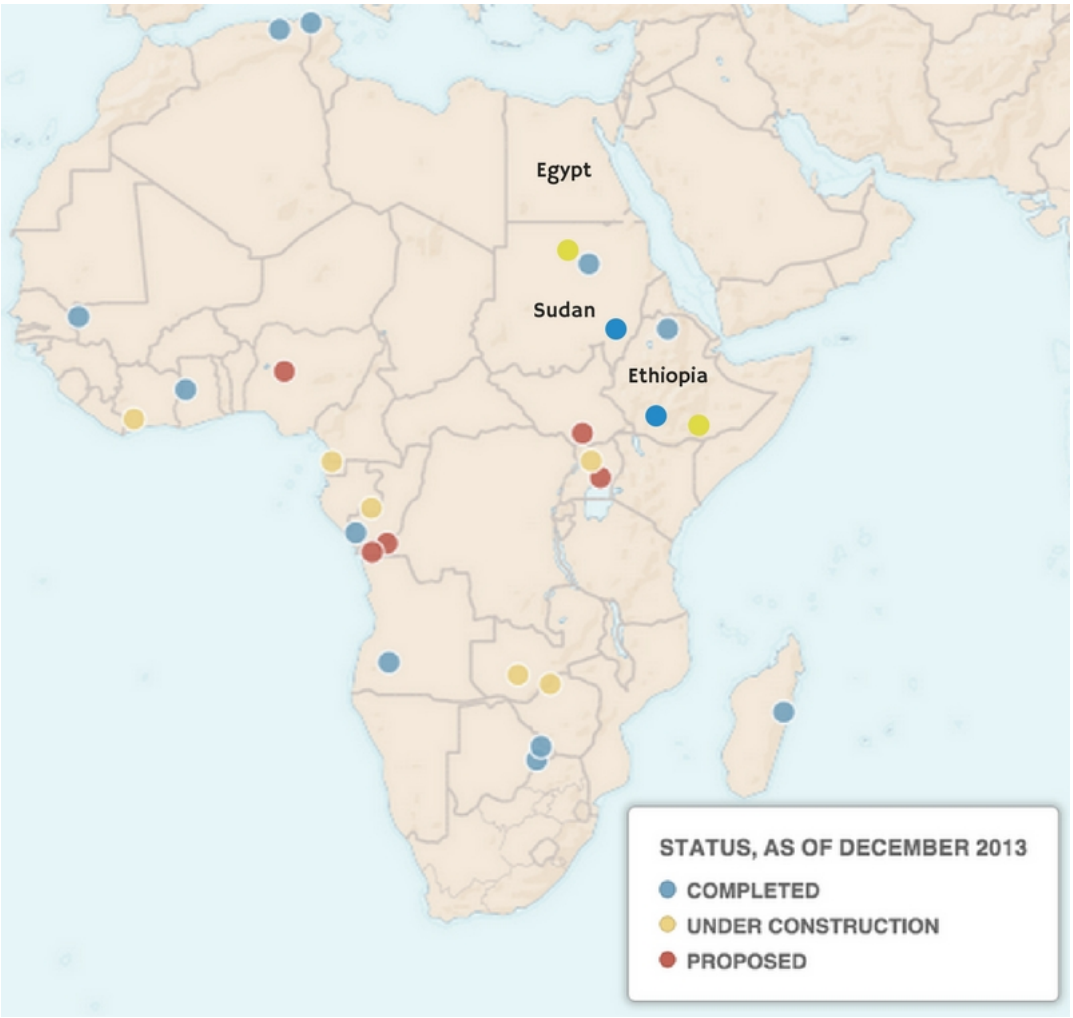
Figure 18 - Planned large-scale dams & irrigation projects in the Abbay Basin (Cascao 2009: 257)



Although international financial support for hydraulic projects in the Blue Nile or Atbara Basins has been less forthcoming, there have still been a few notable examples of international investment in the Nile development projects in Ethiopia. Chinese relations with the EPRDF have been under development since

the fall of the Derg in 1991. Following the end of the transitional period and the establishment of the constitution, the EPRDF's state-led ideology came under pressure from Western donors promoting free-market economics following the end of the Cold War. The EPRDF leadership saw the need to counterbalance these neoliberal pressures by aligning themselves with countries whose policies and practices were more in line with their own views, namely China (Adem 2012: 145). Bilateral relations between the two countries have continued to strengthen since they held their preliminary consultations in Beijing in 1995 and in Addis Ababa in 1996. As it stands, China currently represents Ethiopia's largest trading partner, with trade between the two countries amounting to $5.4 billion USD in 2016 (Xinhua, 11 August 2017). Furthermore, Ethiopia is considered one of China's most important economic and political partners in Africa, with former Chinese Ambassador Ai Ping highlighting that Ethiopia "plays a very unique and important role in both the sub-region and the continent as a whole" (Abraham 2005: 237). As the seat of the AU, whose state-of-the-art headquarters China financed and constructed, and an emerging continental power, Ethiopia is viewed as a strategic partner in China's future engagements in Africa. Illustrative of this view, are the words of Former Chinese President Hu Jintao who underlined that "Ethiopia could play a pivotal role in enabling China to consolidate its cooperation with other African countries (Adem 2012: 148).

Figure 19 - Major hydropower projects funded by China in Africa (adapted from Brautigum, Hwang & Wang 2015)



The Ethiopian government has secured favourable contracts, soft loans and engineering capacity to support the implementation of the *Tekeze* and *Koga* projects in particular, with Chinese involvement in the late 1990s as part of that government's 'going out' strategy (Abraham 2005; Bosshard 2009). The *Tekeze* Dam, in particular, which was officially commissioned in 2009, was financed by Chinese loans amounting to $350 million USD and constructed by China's leading hydropower contractor, Sinohydro. The project, located on the *Tekeze* River, a tributary of the Atbara, was highly significant not only for its size (then the tallest arch dam in Africa at 188m) and generating capacity (300MW) but as the first upstream dam built in the Nile Basin without Egyptian consent or knowledge. As explained by the head of a significant Chinese construction company operating in the sector, "when *Tekeze* [Dam] was finished, the Ethiopian government was very appreciative and wanted to do more work on the Blue Nile. However, the Chinese government said no due to Egyptian objections and preferred not to make anyone unhappy on international rivers…" (BIS50). Thus, the Chinese government opted not to engage directly in future Nile projects within Ethiopia so as not to offend Egypt, "the first African country to recognise China following the revolution in 1949" (BIS49). In addition to the *Tekeze* Dam, the Ethiopian government has collaborated with China and Italy in reviving, expanding and commissioning the 460MW *Tana Beles* project (Swain 2011: 700). Worth noting is also the fact that the Chinese have been a vital bilateral partner to Sudan, playing an indispensable role in financing the construction of the *Merowe* Dam and heightening of the *Roseires* Dam – both on the Nile. This is significant as it evidences the empowering impact of Chinese funding on non-hegemons' capacity to pursue hydraulic development in the Basin without the support and consent of Egypt. This trend in the basin has undoubtedly emboldened both Sudan and Ethiopia in launching national hydraulic missions aimed at securing and exploiting their Nile water resources.

In line with Ethiopian government's plans to become a top energy exporter on the African continent over the coming two decades (discussed in Section 7.4.2), China has been an important financier of Ethiopian infrastructure development and construction across the energy sector. Chinese companies are currently engaged in the surveying, planning, construction and management of a slew of projects in oil and gas, wind, solar and hydropower. In addition to Chinese involvement in the exploitation of new energy sources for power generation, a variety of donors, both bilateral and multilateral, are also engaged in the financing of electricity transmission and supply infrastructure. Interestingly, these donors, though unwilling to finance projects hydropower projects on the Blue Nile due to the sensitivity of Nile hydropolitics, are openly investing in the high-voltage transmission lines and power stations necessary to export Ethiopian hydroelectric power to neighbouring countries. For example, the AfDB, World Bank and French Agence Française de Développement (AFD) are currently financing construction of the $1.3 billion USD 500KV transmission line between Ethiopia and Kenya. Further to this, the construction of the first phase of the Ethiopia-Sudan Transmission Interconnection Project studied as part of the NBI framework were financed by the World Bank. This contradiction helps illustrate how the Ethiopian government, though unsuccessful in convincing major donors to finance construction of the GERD, has been effective in selling financiers on the regional benefits of investing in its future as a major energy exporter. As claimed by an Ethiopian

technocrat working in the sector, "we are building the GERD, they are building the transmission lines. In the future, they will help us build both the dams and the lines" (GOV45). The calculation on the part of the Ethiopian government appears to be that once the GERD is completed and operational, they will have the credibility required to convince major donors to finance similar hydropower projects in future. This is of particular importance when put into the context of the launch of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), a Chinese-backed alternative to the World Bank. Ethiopia, the third African country after South Africa and Egypt, officially became a member of the AIIB in May 2017 and hopes to access "adequate financing for its different projects" (ENA, 13 May 2017). But even if these donors continue to avoid funding new projects on the Ethiopian Nile, the Government as a contingency will be able to plough some of its export revenues from regional energy sales into the construction of future hydraulic infrastructure.

6.3.2.3 PROACTIVE DIPLOMACY

In addition to the reactive diplomacy discussed earlier in this chapter, Ethiopia has also engaged in the deployment of proactive forms of diplomacy in its attempts to contest hydro-hegemony in the Eastern Nile. These leverage strategies manifest when non-hegemonic riparians opt to use bilateral and multilateral engagement and cooperation to yield greater influence and bargaining power within the context of the basin's hydropolitics. Importantly, proactive diplomacy can also act as a bridge for non-hegemons between leverage strategies, which aim to win the game within the existing rules, and liberating strategies, which aim to transform the game altogether. As will be discussed in this section, since 1991 the Ethiopian government has been engaged in proactive diplomacy aimed at: (1) incentivising the decoupling of Sudan from its historical Nile alliance with Egypt while displaying leadership on regional issues; and (2) promoting tripartite and basin-wide cooperation as means of resolving disputes and facilitating change on the Nile.

6.3.2.3.1 SUDANESE INCENTIVISATION AND REGIONAL LEADERSHIP

Bilateral relations between Sudan and Ethiopia have historically been characterised by a lack of cooperation despite the obvious benefits that constructive relations between the two neighbours could yield (Abbas 2006: 17). A prominent Ethiopian historian remarked that "though Ethiopia and Sudan share an ancient history characterised by ups and downs, they are part of a mutual admiration club of sorts. They admire one another's cultures to the point that they have consistently adopted the music, art and language of the other, for themselves" (ACA28). Thus, as with much of the rest of the Horn of Africa, strong people-to-people relations have seen large communities of Ethiopians and Sudanese living, travelling and trading between the two countries. Bilateral cooperation between the two states has always been viewed as "a no-brainer and in everyone's benefit" per an Ethiopian diplomat working in the region (GOV12). However, until recently, these strong people-to-people relations have failed to translate into cooperation at the government level. This lack of bilateral cooperation has largely been attributed to recurring political conflicts between the two countries, discussed in Chapter 6.3.1, influenced by issues surrounding their common border and the Nile. Specifically, the historical hydropolitical alliance

between Egypt and Sudan in the Eastern Nile has played a negative role in the relations between Sudan and Ethiopia, acting to further isolate Ethiopia while consolidating downstream hydro-hegemony. As described by Waterbury (2002: 137), the "Big Blue temptation", otherwise known as Ethio-Sudanese Nile cooperation, has consequently been regarded as a threat by successive Egyptian regimes (Williams 2002). The fear of the development of Ethio-Sudanese cooperation in the Eastern Nile has historically fuelled the containment strategies of Egyptian regimes, which repeatedly intervened in the internal affairs of the Sudan in the period prior to the 1990s.

However, changes to the governments of Ethiopia and Sudan in the early 1990s saw the EPRDF in Ethiopia and the Islamists in Sudan begin to work towards the re-configuration of their previously destructive constructive bilateral relations. This rapprochement, which was exemplified by the 1991 signing of a bilateral cooperative pact, committed the two countries to cooperate on a variety of economic issues, including development on the Blue Nile and Atbara rivers (Cascão 2008: 22). This cooperative memorandum also established the Blue Nile Valley Organisation (BNVO) – a technical joint committee tasked with exchanging date, exploring cooperation on Nile issues and studying potential bilateral infrastructure development "with or without Egypt's approval" (Dellapenna 1997: 132-133). Though many analysts saw this as indicative of a shift in the hydropolitical relations between Egypt and Sudan, the momentum behind the BNVO was derailed in 1995 with the failed assassination attempt against the Egyptian President by Sudanese Islamists in Addis Ababa (Woodward 1996: 125). This event sent shockwaves through relations between the historical allies with both countries breaking off diplomatic relations, withdrawing ambassadors, suspending activities aimed at economic integration and suspending meetings of the Permanent Joint Technical Committee (Waterbury 2002: 135). In a further escalation, Islamist leader Hassan al-Turabi "threatened to stop the water to Egypt by redirecting the Nile's flow" (Swain 2011: 691). Following these events and the de-escalation of tensions, the Sudanese Nile position, which in the early 1990s had been oriented towards the expansion of hydraulic development with or without Egypt, reverted to its historical position of compliance (Cascão 2009b: 202). Thus, Sudanese officials opted to resume their position in a downstream Nile alliance with Egypt, though they maintained the bilateral rapprochement with Ethiopia on all other issues of mutual concern. The success of this rapprochement for Ethiopia is illustrated by the Sudanese government's decision to officially side with Ethiopia in its border war with Eritrea in the late 1990s (WikiLeaks 2006). An event which marked a watershed moment in the history of relations between the two countries[21].

Since the border war, "relations between Sudan and Ethiopia have continued to grow from strength to strength" (GOV12; GOV5). Following the emergence of Sudan in 1999 as a significant oil exporter with production of between 450,000 – 500,000 barrels per day, Ethiopia began to rely heavily on it for the majority (about 85%) of its fuel imports (Verhoeven 2011: 3). This dependence was fuelled, in large part, by a government-to-government deal where Sudan sold southern Sudanese oil to Ethiopia at below

[21] Previous Sudanese governments had covertly supported the activities of Eritrean rebel groups operating against Ethiopia, namely the Eritrean Peoples' Liberation Front (EPLF). The EPLF, reformed as the People's Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ) following independence, was in charge of Eritrea during its border-war with Ethiopia between 1998-2000.

global market price (Verhoeven 2011: 10). Further areas of cooperation between the two countries, since, have included a variety of cross-border development initiatives aimed at fostering greater economic and infrastructural integration. For example, joint commissions have been established regarding a number of strategic issues including the common border, defence and investment. Furthermore, there has been a rise in the commercial interactions between the two neighbours, thanks in part to the reconvening of the Ethiopia-Sudanese business forum, Ethiopia's increasing use of Sudanese ports as well as significant improvements to the road and communication networks between the two countries. Most recently, following a state visit to Ethiopia by President al-Bashir, the two states agreed to the launch of a free trade zone and a new railway line (*Ezega*, 2 April 2017).

In the last decade, the Nile has re-emerged as an issue of mutual cooperation between both countries. Specifically, the launch of the NBI process in 1999, saw technocrats and officials from both countries regularly engaged in negotiations aimed at charting out the future of the Basin. As part of this process, the two countries, through the Eastern Nile Subsidiary Action Programme (ENSAP), were involved in the implementation of joint projects in the Eastern Nile Basin including flood preparedness and early warning, watershed and irrigation management and Ethiopia-Sudan transmission and interconnection (Cascão 2009a: 254). Alongside these projects, Sudan and Ethiopia were also involved in consultations over joint multipurpose infrastructure projects (JMP) including the potential construction of hydropower dams in the Ethiopian Blue Nile. As part of these consultations, the site where the GERD is currently located was identified as a future location (border) for the construction of a mutually beneficial multipurpose dam. Thus, although the GERD was eventually unilaterally launched by the Ethiopian government, the Sudanese and Egyptian authorities had prior knowledge of the project during its inception as a JMP. During the ten-year NBI process, the advantages of greater hydraulic cooperation between Ethiopia and Sudan were crystallised and "grounded in practical and achievable terms for all to see" according to an interviewee on the Ethiopian side (GOV55). As early as 2008, the Sudanese government "expressed their support for the construction of hydraulic projects in Ethiopia, despite Egyptian opposition" (Cascão 2009b: 216). Additionally, in 2010, a Sudanese technocrat from the Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation admitted "it makes no sense to build [dams] here in Sudan: the opportunity cost is huge. There is no comparison: a dam in Ethiopia has more benefits for Sudan than for Ethiopia" (Verhoeven 2011: 12).

Thus, it came as no surprise to commentators in the Basin, when Sudan came out in support of the GERD project following its unilateral launch in 2011. Early on, the Ethiopian government was strategically framed the GERD as a win-win project in the Eastern Nile offering various environmental, economic and political benefits to downstream Sudan and Egypt. Further discussion of the discursive framing of the GERD as a multi-scalar benefit-sharing project on the Nile is found in in Section 7.4.2 of this research. The GERD has primarily been framed as hydropower project aimed at providing "reasonable, clean, and green energy to meet Ethiopia's needs and to produce substantial exports to Egypt and Sudan" (GOV2). Following the secession and independence of South Sudan in 2011, the Khartoum government, faced with the likelihood of a "diminishing oil economy" begun to strategically redeploy its resources in

an effort to diversify its economy, stimulate development and consolidate political power in the North (Verhoeven 2011: 14). The strategic redeployment of resources from oil to large-scale agriculture has meant an increased need for water and energy. A need that the Ethiopian authorities have capitalised on in their framing of the GERD project as a development project "generating cheap electricity and offering regulated and increased Nile flows to Sudan (GOV15). As further proof of the multi-spatial scale in which Eastern Nile hydropolitics take place - in 2015, President al-Bashir campaigned on a GERD platform at a nationally-broadcast campaign event in Blue Nile state. Al-Bashir stated to the gathered crowds that:

> "The Blue Nile State is Sudan's gate[way] to Ethiopia and South Sudan, and we are working to establish free zones on the border with Ethiopia. Blue Nile State would benefit from the electricity to be produced by the GERD… Electricity is the base of development. The electricity produced by Al-Roseires dam would be allotted for Blue Nile State, and if there is more need we will provide it from Merowe dam in northern Sudan as well as from the GERD" (*Xinhua*, 7 March 2015)

This is important as it illustrates how far Sudanese support for the GERD - an infrastructure project located, operated and owned by Ethiopia - has permeated domestically. However, Sudanese officials have not only come out in support of the project but increasingly the Ethiopian policy underlying it – based on the reasonable and equitable utilisation of Nile water resources. For example, in his most recent state visit to Ethiopia, President al-Bashir stated that both countries had "agreed to jointly promote the equitable use of Nile waters in the Basin (*Ezega*, 2 April 2017). This has represented a significant challenge to the hydro-hegemony of Egypt - representing both a departure from the historical unified downstream position and an informally coordinated upstream plan for further hydraulic development.

Additionally, the impact on Ethio-Sudanese relations of the Ethiopian government decision to object to the International Criminal Court's (ICC) indictment against al-Bashir and the role of its diplomats in promoting the development of the AU's common position on the issue, cannot be understated. As explained by an Ethiopian interviewee working on the issue, "the Ethiopian government, as a non-signatory of the Rome Statute, was able to come out fully in support of [President] Bashir at a time when he felt deserted by the international community… Bashir felt he was treated unjustly with the indictment, particularly considering his crucial role in implementing the South Sudan peace agreement" (GOV8). The combination of longstanding economic sanctions and the ICC's indictment served to isolate Sudan internationally at a precarious time for the region in the run-up to the 2011 South Sudanese independence referendum. The Ethiopian government stood with the Sudanese government during a time when it was largely considered a pariah state, even going as far as interceding on its behalf in discussions with the international community (WikiLeaks 2009d). Through these actions, the Ethiopian government was able to further consolidate its burgeoning bilateral relations with the Sudanese government, establishing a foundation for their future engagements.

Figure 20 - AU common position on ICC indictment against al-Bashir (Victor Ndula, 27 July 2010)

The above examples have demonstrated how the Ethiopian government has deployed proactive diplomacy to cultivate improved bilateral relations with the Government of Sudan through a wide-range of incentivising tactics. The direct result of this two-decade endeavour is best illustrated by the unified position both countries are currently maintaining on the GERD. This joint position represents the first example of a 'Big Blue coalition' in the history of the Nile and has brought the countries in direct opposition with Egyptian hydro-hegemony. The following section will examine how the Ethiopian government has effectively deployed proactive diplomacy in its tripartite engagements over the GERD to advance construction on the project and, in the process, rebalance power asymmetry.

6.3.2.3.2 TRIPARTITE COOPERATION OVER THE GERD

In addition to Ethiopia's use of reactive diplomacy in relation to the GERD (Section 6.3.2.1), the Ethiopian government has also deployed proactive diplomacy in the Eastern Nile to promote tripartite cooperation as the only way to resolve disagreements over its development. By analysing GERD-related cooperation since 2011, it is also argued that the Ethiopian government, with the support of Sudan, has: (1) challenged and weakened the influence of the 1959 agreement on hydropolitics; (2) firmly established the inevitability of upstream hydraulic development on the Nile and; (3) laid the foundations for the long-term transformation of the hydro-hegemonic status quo.

Shortly after the start of GERD construction, the three Eastern Nile riparians engaged in a series of high-level bilateral meetings aimed at defusing tensions arising from the unilateral launch of the project. This was illustrated by the exchange of official visits by the then prime ministers of Egypt and Ethiopia to

their respective countries in May and September 2011 (*al-Jazeera Online*, 17 September 2011). As explained by a senior Ethiopian diplomat with knowledge of the talks, "the Egyptians wanted us to stop construction and to negotiate directly with them on GERD. But we knew we could not afford to accept these conditions" (GOV8). This is significant as the Ethiopian government's refusal to accept these conditions demonstrated its increased bargaining power and its understanding that it would fare better in negotiations which included, rather than excluded, Sudan. This strategic decision can likely be explained by the two-decade rapprochement between Sudan and Ethiopia detailed in the previous section. It can be argued that had Ethiopia not been confident in eventually securing Sudanese support for the project, they would have had no strategic reason to specifically require their involvement in the talks. In this 'worst-case scenario' for the Ethiopian government, they would have rather negotiated directly with Egypt than face a united downstream coalition opposed to the GERD.

Subsequently, the Ethiopian government invited both Egypt and Sudan "to join it in establishing an International Panel of Experts (IPoE) to examine the impacts of the [GERD] project on downstream countries" (Cooperative Waters 2016: 56). According to a number of Ethiopian officials and experts, the establishment of the IPoE, composed of two members from each of the three riparian countries and four international experts, was an Ethiopian initiative accepted by Sudan and Egypt (GOV3; GOV11; GOV16; GOV33). This lends further credence to the argument that it was in the best interests of the Ethiopian government to upgrade the talks over the GERD from the bilateral to the trilateral level. The IPoE process was largely a technical affair with limited political intervention from the governments in the Basin prior to the release of its final report in May 2013[22]. In fact, even whilst the studies were taking place the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs released a report from a meeting held in Khartoum with the newly-appointed Ethiopian Ambassador to Sudan, in which the Sudanese President's declared his support for the GERD (*Sudan Tribune*, 5 April 2012). Following the eventual release of the report, the contrasting positions of the two downstream countries became clear. The Sudanese government came out heavily in favour of the GERD, downplaying its negative impacts and lauding its potential benefits for Sudan (Cascão and Nicol 2016: 15). On the other hand, the Egyptian government criticised the report's findings - though Egyptian experts were jointly involved in its writing - going as far as commissioning its own studies which unsurprisingly came to different conclusions (Daily News Egypt 2014). Since the IPoE's report, Sudan has not shifted its position on the GERD and has at various points acted as a de-facto mediator between Egypt and Ethiopia (*al-Ahram online*, 28 March 2012). Conversely, though successive Egyptian governments have opposed the idea of the project, they have gradually resigned themselves to the reality of the GERD's construction, instead attempting to extract further guarantees from any negotiations.

[22] The report's release was rife with controversy. First it was alleged that the report and its contents would only be presented to the heads of state of the three countries and its publication would be at their discretion. Then it emerged that the report had been leaked to the media. Egyptian officials accused Ethiopia of leaking it while Ethiopian officials believed the Egyptians were behind it. Eventually, all three countries published the report.

The tripartite cooperative process surrounding the GERD which continued after the release of the IPoE included several rounds of technical and political negotiations between the three countries. These negotiations, primarily aimed at advancing the commissioning of two remaining impact studies on the GERD, eventually culminated in the signing of the Agreement on the DOP on the GERD in March 2015 (see Salman 2016). In a departure from previous multilateral negotiations in the Basin, the DOP was project-centric, technical in nature and country-led. The declaration, the first deal of its kind in the Eastern Nile Basin, centred on the application of principles aimed at governing cooperative relations between the three countries over the GERD. The DOP established ten principles informing future cooperation and engagements over the GERD including "commonly accepted principles of international water law, such as 'no significant harm' and 'equitable and reasonable utilisation'; but they also included principles related to technical issues such as dam security, dam filling, operations policy and exchange of information" (Cascão and Nicol 2016: 17). The declaration primarily represented the formal recognition by Egypt and Sudan of the GERD as an indisputable fact-on-the-ground in the Basin. But more importantly, it also signalled a change to historical Egyptian opposition to any large-scale upstream development on the Nile. However, the DOP was not always proposed for these ends. As described by an Ethiopian diplomat privy to negotiations over the DOP, "it was initiated by Egyptian government, who sent us the document hoping it would be signed when [President] Sisi visited Ethiopia [in March 2015] … their draft was insulting as it aimed to reintroduce Egypt's hegemonic ambitions on the Nile. We rejected it!" (GOV24). As another interviewee with knowledge of DOP negotiations stated: "the DOP was initiated by Egypt, as are all of these types of things" (RO13). In rejecting the DOP and sending back amendments reflective of Ethiopia's Nile policy, Ethiopian technocrats were successful in convincing their Egyptian counterparts to compromise in order to achieve agreement. As explained by an Ethiopian diplomat involved in these negotiations "the re-drafting of the DOP on our part, was simply a case of copy and pasting the legal articles we had already agreed to as part of the CFA negotiations" (GOV24). This is corroborated by principles III and IV of the DOP on causing 'no significant harm' and 'equitable and reasonable utilisation' respectively.

Beyond this, however, the tripartite cooperation surrounding the GERD, as exemplified by the DOP, has uncovered shifts in the Basin's long-term hydropolitics. Firstly, tripartite cooperation has promoted the case for resolving disagreements and disputes on the Nile through dialogue. This is noted by Woldetsadik (in Cooperative Waters 2016: 72) when he notes that "ironically, the GERD, the scheme which has been the subject of intense conjectures and diplomatic squabbles, served as a convenient platform for unparalleled consultations and dialogues". These cooperative processes proved that even the most antagonistic and entrenched positions could be reconciled through communication and compromise. This bodes well for the future of the NBI and the deadlock that has existed in that institution since Egypt's disengagement from the process in 2010.

Secondly, by signing the DOP, Egypt has entered into its first legal-political agreement with its upstream riparian neighbours since the 1959 Agreement. In effect, this move represents a departure from Egypt's historical position and indicates a willingness on its part to go beyond the existing treaties on the Nile –

a red line it has previously been unwilling to cross. For Ethiopia, and other upstream riparians, this is vital as it could signal the beginning of a new era of "Egyptian accommodation with future infrastructure development" and a tacit acknowledgement on its part of the inevitability of upstream development (Cascão and Nicol 2016: 17). Finally, these shifts in the cooperative landscape are indicative of a more significant change in the power relations of the Basin. Ethiopia's desire to become a top energy exporter in the region, a middle-income economy and a food secure state is now the driving force behind hydraulic decision-making in the Eastern Nile. With its growing financial and technical capacity, the construction of further large-scale hydraulic infrastructure in the Blue Nile Basin is a possible reality today but an expectation of tomorrow. By driving the future trajectory of the Eastern Nile hydropolitics, Ethiopia is currently laying the foundations for the eventual transformation of the Basin away from the historical hydro-hegemony of downstream Egypt.

6.3.3 LIBERATING STRATEGIES

Liberating or transformative strategies deployed by non-hegemons primarily seek to achieve counter-hegemony through the direct or indirect undermining of the hydro-hegemon's ideological supremacy within a basin. These strategies support the questioning of the widely-accepted understandings of reality (i.e. 'common sense') constructed by the hydro-hegemonic status quo. In questioning this hydro-hegemonic reality, an *alternative* reality can be promoted through the construction of knowledge, development of discourse alternatives and deployment of international water law. In recent years, the Ethiopian government has pursued a number of so-called 'liberating strategies' in the Basin aimed at the transformation of the existing hegemonic order. Liberating strategies can often seem indistinguishable from leverage strategies as their "outcomes are not predetermined or readily predictable" (Zeitoun *et al.* 2016: 4). Nonetheless, these actions merit further analysis as they help illustrate what tools are available to non-hegemonic actors, with limited ideational power, looking to counter the constructed legitimacy of a hydro-hegemon.

6.3.3.1 ENHANCED KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE

As discussed previously in this research, Egypt, the hydro-hegemon on the Nile, has historically enjoyed a greater ability to mobilise and construct knowledge about the Basin. As explained by Warner (2000: 247), this knowledge lends itself to policies on the Nile because "it is impossible to separate knowledge production from the realisation and definition of material interests". The ability of other riparians to construct knowledge on the Nile has been described as "lagging far behind" in most respects (Cascão 2009b: 167). As a result, it can be argued that there still remains a significant structural knowledge gap between upstream and downstream states on the Nile (Cascão 2008: 25). As discussed in Chapter 5, Ethiopia has a limited number of experienced personnel operating within the government ministries tasked with water resources planning and development in the country. As explained by an Ethiopian water expert working regionally "Ethiopia has enough national capacity but this is not translated at the civil service level" (RO10). Repeated upheaval within government agencies caused by successive coup d'états and civil insecurity have left the country suffering from decades of 'brain drain' in a variety of

sectors including water. As discussed in Cascão and Nicol (2016), the lack of capacity and consistency among upstream countries, in this regard, has played a significant role in decision-making within the Basin, allowing hydro-hegemonic Egypt to influence: (1) the starting positions of non-hegemonic riparians; (2) preliminary discussions; (3) negotiations and bargaining; (4) final decisions and; (5) application and monitoring of associated water projects and initiatives. Consequently, Waterbury (2002: 71) has made the argument that for decades, Egypt "has won the war for expertise and for influence abroad virtually uncontested". The narrowing of the knowledge gap is critical to Ethiopia's attempts to contest hydro-hegemony and secure greater access to Nile water resources.

However, in the last decade, the Ethiopian government has been engaged in the training of several Ethiopian experts in technical, environmental and hydrological fields (Cascão 2008: 25). This is corroborated by a senior official in the water sector who explained that "though capacity is still not at the level required… there are a wide variety of capacity building programs taking place today in water, environmental and afforestation [sectors]" (GOV36). Thus, the Ethiopian government has been engaged in a liberating strategy aimed at the construction and consolidation of knowledge as well as its eventual interpretation and deployment. In addition to the domestic capacity building initiatives, Ethiopia has engaged in the NBI cooperative process as a means to reduce the knowledge gap on the Nile through an increase in the scientific and technical capacity of its water professionals. According to interviews conducted by Cascão (2009b: 259), "the majority of experts in the NBI institutions are Ethiopian; and although selection is based on merit, downstream riparians are unhappy with the distribution of posts". This is significant as an increased presence of Ethiopian experts within the NBI contributes both to an increase in the state's capacity while also allowing for greater Ethiopian influence in the formulation of institutional and regional water policies. This is captured by an interviewee within a regional organisation who emphasised that "the Ethiopian side have really made a concerted effort to engage in regional cooperative processes related to the NBI – supporting their technical experts, expanding scientific knowledge base, accessing funding for domestic capacity building and contributing to formulation of plans and policies. This has been a very different approach altogether to the lack of engagement seen from the Egyptians" (RO10). Furthermore, the engagement of Ethiopian water experts in the NBI's Decision Support System, which evaluates the impacts, negative and positive, of potential and existing projects in the basin, has allowed them to break free of sanctioned Egyptian knowledge in favour of more impartial scientific knowledge. For example, an Ethiopian technocrat formerly engaged in these processes remarked that "the DSS confirmed what we already knew since the Emperor's time, dam development upstream is in the downstream countries' interests" (GOV44). Thus, it is argued that Ethiopia has successfully used multilateral cooperation in order to access objective, neutral and unbiased scientific knowledge in an effort to reduce the knowledge gap between itself and the hydro-hegemonic status quo.

6.3.3.2 DISCOURSE ALTERNATIVES

Another important liberating strategy deployed by the Ethiopian government has been the promotion of new discourses on the management, allocation and development of Nile water resources. Chapter 7 will focus specifically on how Ethiopia has used discursive power in relation to the GERD to legitimise upstream hydraulic development whilst promoting a discourse alternative which has reframed water as purely a development issue on the Nile.

Sanctioned discourses on the Nile are a key factor in hegemonic strategies and have been described as "a political tool in water policy-making" (Allan 2002: 10). Egypt has pursued this form of hegemonic water policy-making through its strategic deployment of discourses and knowledge sanctioning issues of national water security and food self-sufficiency on the Nile as well as the promotion of land reclamation projects in Egypt. As detailed in Section 6.3.2.1 on reactive diplomacy, Ethiopia strongly objected to Egyptian land reclamation projects on the Nile, countering them by claiming such projects represented the extra-basin transfer of Nile water resources. Nonetheless, this counter-narrative was largely reactive in nature and thus limited in its liberating potential. With the failure of these methods to effect change on the Nile, following the coming to power of the EPRDF in 1991 the Ethiopian government embarked on a concerted effort to use regional and international fora in order to promote narratives in direct opposition to the historically sanctioned discourses of Egypt. For example, Ethiopia was able to use the Nile 2002 Conferences, and NBI process in general, to counter a damaging narrative of historical Ethiopian intransigence and uncooperativeness on Nile water issues (Schiffler 1998: 144). Below, some of the principal alternative discourses promoted by Ethiopia have been identified and analysed:

- **Cooperation as a win-win**: These conferences also provided an important platform for Ethiopian officials and experts to engage their counterparts from across the Basin in "knowledge-exchange, problem identification and harmonisation which was previously done on an ad-hoc or bilateral level… institutionalisation was very important" (GOV41). This is significant as it marked the establishment of epistemic communities within the basin, operating according to the shared norms, values and knowledge of the NBI. This would also go on to act as a catalyst for deeper cooperation, leading to the adoption of the principle of subsidiarity, proposed by Ethiopian experts, to manage the Basin at the lowest appropriate level (Cascão 2009b: 263). Subsidiarity led to the establishments of the Eastern Nile Subsidiarity Action Program (ENSAP) and the Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiarity Action Plan (NELSAP) in an effort to better structure Nile engagements at the sub-basin level. This strategic proposal from Ethiopian experts in 1994 would go on to have reverberating impacts on future hydropolitical relations between Eastern Nile riparians, laying the foundation for increased engagements and improved relations between Ethiopia and Egypt and Ethiopia and Sudan. As described by a regional water expert "the NBI program demonstrated the value of cooperation by bringing countries together and helping them appreciate the interconnectedness of the Nile" (RO10). It can be argued that, although this multilateral cooperation, though derailed by the departure of Egypt in 2010,

established a precedent within the basin for dialogue and negotiation as the only option for how to resolve Nile issues. A precedent that can be traced forward to the tripartite negotiations over the GERD in 2011.This discourse alternative was expressed by the former Ethiopian Foreign Minister, Dr Tedros Adhanom, at the height of the GERD crisis in 2013, when he stated to an Egyptian delegation "Dialogue is the only way forward. Let us swim together not sink together"[23].

- **Nile water resources for domestic and regional development**: Ethiopian officials have attempted to frame the Nile as a purely developmental issue. They have argued that contrary to the securitised framing of the river downstream, these water resources will catalyse Ethiopia's socio-economic development and support its fight against poverty while contributing to greater economic growth in the wider region. The deployment of this discourse in relation to the GERD is discussed in further detail in Chapter 7 Section 4.1.
- **Legal recognition of upstream water needs**: The Ethiopian Government has consistently promoted a discourse refuting the legitimacy of previous bilateral agreements over the Nile, including the 1959 Nile agreement signed between Egypt and Sudan. In recent decades, this has seen the Ethiopian government advocating a position aimed at rectifying this history by promoting negotiations over a comprehensive basin-wide legal agreement for the Nile. The negotiations, as part of the NBI process, lasted ten years between 1997-2007, culminating in the signing of the CFA. Ethiopia, one of six countries, to have signed the agreement has since deployed a discourse urging the remaining upstream countries to sign the Agreement while attempting to convince Egypt and Sudan to reconsider their objections to it. The Ethiopian government continues to view the CFA, which centres on the equitable and reasonable utilisation of Nile water resources and the causing of no significant harm, as central to the long-term Nile development aims of upstream riparian states.
- **Equitable and reasonable utilisation of Nile waters**: Ethiopian officials have consistently rejected the Egyptian discourse centering on "historic rights" and "prior use" in favour of discourses advocating the reasonable and equitable utilisation of Nile waters by all riparians within the Basin. The Ethiopian government's utilisation of international water law principles as a leverage and liberating strategy has been analysed in the Section 6.3.2.3.2 on tripartite cooperation.
- **Ethiopia as Africa's 'renewable energy hub' and leader on climate-change**: Since the launch of its hydraulic mission, the Ethiopian government has steadily promoted a discourse framing itself as a future energy hub of Africa and a leader in renewable energy. Through the generation of green energy, particularly from hydropower, Ethiopian officials have framed a future in which energy exports from domestic projects will result in greater economic development and integration throughout the region. In tandem with the Government's CRGE

[23] The interviewer was privy to this interaction during his time working at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Ethiopia in 2013.

strategy, these discourses have complemented Government discourses on climate-resilience and green growth.

- **Upstream dams for downstream benefits**: The Ethiopian government continues to promote a discourse which highlights the scientific evidence in favour of constructing hydraulic storage within the Basin further upstream. As discussed in Chapter 7 Section 4.2, this discourse has come to the fore in negotiations over the GERD as Ethiopia has attempted to convince Egypt and Sudan that the project holds many benefits for downstream riparian countries. The benefits of upstream dams emphasized by Ethiopian officials include the regulation of flows, reduction of sedimentation affecting operation of downstream dams, reduction in water losses from evaporation at downstream reservoirs and the mitigation of drought conditions and effects of climate change through coordinated operation.

Ethiopia's growing influence and bargaining power within the Basin, has enabled it to successfully promote these discourses in regional and international circles whilst shaping debates amongst riparian nations. In particular, the promotion of discourse alternatives in recent years, as part of the Ethiopian government's counter hegemonic liberation strategy, has proved significant to attempts at legitimising the construction of the GERD within the Eastern Nile. Counter hydro-hegemony is evidenced by the promotion of Ethiopia's twin discourses specifically framing the GERD as a benefit-sharing development project aimed at achieving socio-economic, political and environmental gains for the entire sub-basin. The promotion of this discourse has proven to be largely effective, with Sudanese compliance for the project legitimising its construction whilst contributing to efforts aimed at defusing conflict with Egypt through formal negotiations. In particular, the success of this approach is exemplified by the DOP on the GERD which, for the first time in the sub-basin's history, saw the Egyptian Government legally acknowledge Ethiopia's right to develop Nile water resources through hydraulic infrastructure. A significant departure from its previous position which sidelined and neglected upstream riparians to secure consolidated control of water resources downstream. This example shows that Ethiopia's current strategy on the Nile goes further than a *resource capture* strategy as it is directly contributing to the undermining of the legitimacy of the existing hegemonic order through the promotion of an alternative vision for the Basin. The Ethiopian government's appropriation of global hydro-hegemonic discourses and utilisation of international platforms to promote these discourses will be discussed in further detail in the next chapter.

6.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter has examined the basin-level contestation of the existing hydro-hegemonic status quo on the Nile from the Ethiopian perspective. Ethiopia has deployed a variety of strategies to counter asymmetric control in order to undermine the hegemonic order in the Eastern Nile. The outcomes of these approaches, in combination with Ethiopia's strategies at the domestic scale, have been the significant weakening of Egyptian hydro-hegemony in the Basin.

The chapter began by examining historical hydro-hegemony within the Nile Basin as exemplified by the successful Egyptian deployment of strategies aimed at the attainment and consolidation of asymmetric water control. It was shown that Egypt has historically been a hydro-hegemon in the Eastern Nile, while Sudan, though bolstering and benefiting from this hegemonic order, was a non-hegemonic riparian. In the second section of the chapter, there was a comprehensive analysis of Ethiopian strategies and tactics in the Eastern Nile over the last century. This revealed the existence of strategic shifts in Ethiopia's contestation of hydro-hegemony since the early 1990s, in line with the domestic changes discussed in Chapter 5. Significant in these shifts was Ethiopia's strategic incentivisation of Sudan over the past two decades, which has laid the foundation for the decoupling of Egypt and Sudan's historic joint position on the Nile. This decoupling has been illustrated by the divergence of downstream positions on the construction of the GERD, with Sudan actively supporting the project while Egypt has been firmly against it. In addition to this, Ethiopia's engagements with alternative sources of finance in the Basin, particularly China, have seen it develop further hydraulic infrastructure on the river, in the process increasing its utilisation of Nile water resources. Finally, the chapter also identified the liberating strategies being used by Ethiopia, in an effort to further contest the hegemonic order. These have included the deployment of discourse alternatives in the Basin, a tactic which will be expounded upon in the next chapter. These represent significant shifts in the asymmetric power relations in the Eastern Nile and a real challenge to historical Egyptian hydro-hegemony in the Basin.

As this chapter has shown, in the last decade, the Ethiopian government's contestation of Egyptian hydro-hegemony has been more clearly organised and articulated. Through a slew of resistive strategies and tactics, Ethiopian officials have: (1) contested the hegemonic legitimacy of Egypt in the Basin through the unilateral construction of the GERD; (2) challenged the downstream hegemonic *status quo* by actively working to decouple the historic alliance between Egypt and Sudan; and (3) proposed alternatives to this status quo in the form of shared control of the Nile through a basin-wide cooperative regime governed by a new multilateral legal water agreement. These consequences exemplify greater proactiveness on the part of Ethiopian officials currently pursuing hydraulic development in Ethiopia and have made significant contributions to the eventual transformation of the Basin's hydropolitics. This is a significant departure away from the reactive contestation and resistance of previous decades and when viewed in totality can be considered to represent an evolving counter-hegemonic strategy. Evolving, for the strategy has yet to meet its goal of transforming the Basin's hydropolitical regime. Taken together, this can be viewed as evidence of the start of Ethiopian counter-hegemony within the Eastern Nile Basin.

In particular, though the cooperative process surrounding the GERD has put in doubt the legitimacy of the 1959 Agreement, the lack of agreement over the CFA has meant that Ethiopia's vision of reasonable and equitable utilisation of Nile water resources has yet to be realised. The trends in the Basin, however, are increasingly pointing towards an end to Egyptian hydro-hegemony on the River – an end which will find its origins in the counter-hegemonic strategies Ethiopia is currently pursuing.

Chapter 7 will examine the Ethiopian government's deployment of discursive power in advancing the construction of the GERD. In particular, the chapter will focus on Ethiopia's appropriation of transnational hegemonic discourses surrounding water in its efforts to legitimise the development of hydraulic infrastructure on the Ethiopian Nile. Through an analysis of the deployment of these global hegemonic discourses by Ethiopian officials, the chapter will also reveal the transnational nature of Ethiopia's contestation of hydro-hegemony.

7 THE GLOBAL HYDRO-HEGEMONIC DISCOURSES OF DAM-BUILDING IN ETHIOPIA

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The GERD currently under construction in North-western Ethiopia is undoubtedly the most controversial infrastructure project in the Nile Basin today. Not since the Aswan High Dam has a *resource capture* strategy of this magnitude been pursued along the Nile, as analysed in Chapter 6. Furthermore, narratives about the long-term demographic and environmental trajectory of the Basin have kept the project in national and international news headlines (*al-Monitor*, 24 July 2017; *Sudan Tribune*, 2 March 2017; *The Economist*, 16 January 2016; *Addis Fortune*, 30 March 2015; *BBC News*, 22 March 2014). These headlines illustrate the highly-polarised discourse of the Dam, reflecting what seems to be a battle to capture hearts and minds to support (or thwart) the project at various levels. Particularly notable are the debates and arguments regarding the project between elites in Ethiopia and Egypt. Domestically in Ethiopia, the project has been framed as a return to glory – an opportunity for the country to emerge out of the shadows of poverty, drought and conflict to reclaim its place as a great regional power. On the other hand, in Egypt, the GERD has provoked vigorous criticism rooted in Malthusian fears of water scarcity and environmental disaster. Furthermore, with the faltering of basin-wide cooperative efforts through the NBI process and the deadlock surrounding the CFA, analysis of the GERD helps uncover strategies deployed on both sides of the debate in the continuing competition for control over Nile water resources.

The purpose of this chapter is to explore how the Ethiopian government has exercised 'soft' power through a discursive framing of the GERD project in an effort to advance the project's construction and promote upstream infrastructure development. In particular, the chapter examines how the project has been used to complement global hydro-hegemonic ideas regarding hydraulic development and cooperation. It will be shown in this chapter how the strained but non-violent conflict between Ethiopia and Egypt over the GERD can provide new insights to the existing scholarship on the role of power in the competition over shared transboundary water resources. This chapter thus tackles the examination of research sub-questions C, C1 and C2, which ask: how the Ethiopian government has deployed discursive power regionally in support of its construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam along the Blue Nile; how Ethiopian officials have amplified and promoted alternative discourses, within the Basin, in support of upstream hydraulic development; and to what extent discursive power legitimises the unilateral construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam by the Ethiopian Government.

As discussed in Section 3.4.4, 'soft' power is understood as "what appears to be a constant framing and reframing of problems and attempts to influence actors' perceptions of the problem, of the situation, and of each other" in the competition over transboundary water resources (Zeitoun *et al.* 2011: 161). More specifically, the chapter will illustrate how 'soft' power has functioned in the Eastern Nile Basin during the

process of the construction of the GERD, thereby helping examine the strengths and limitations of discursive strategies in the contestation of hydro-hegemony. This is important as it demonstrates the interaction of hegemonies at multiple levels in the Ethiopian government's attempts to contest and transform hydro-hegemony in the Eastern Nile.

Figure 21 - Location of the GERD in the Nile River Basin

The chapter investigates how the development of the GERD has been framed, in particular, by actors in Ethiopia to seek compliance from downstream riparians and support the legitimisation of the project within and beyond the basin. As is argued by Dewulf *et al.* (2005) the manner in which environmental projects are framed can reveal critical differences in how stakeholders interpret what is at stake and what should be done about it. Through the critical analysis of the non-violent deployment of power within the competition for transboundary water, the chapter will contribute to emerging scholarship (Zeitoun *et al.* 2011; Menga and Mirumachi 2015; Menga 2016a; Zeitoun *et al.* 2016) on the effectiveness of 'soft'

power. The chapter also examines the contributions of global hydro-hegemonic discourses surrounding dam-building and integrated river basin development in Ethiopia to the framing of the GERD.

This chapter will present an analysis of the discursive strategies utilised by the Ethiopian government at the domestic and international levels as part of its counter-hegemonic strategy to justify water resources development in Ethiopia. A counter-hegemonic analysis uncovers the deeply nuanced political rhetoric surrounding the GERD while enabling a more critical analysis of the goals of Ethiopian officials in challenging the basin's hydro-political status quo. This chapter will present an analysis of the strategic ways in which the Ethiopian government has developed a regional discourse on the benefits of the GERD, one that attempts to justify and legitimise its construction, in particular, and its 'hydraulic mission' more generally.

The next section (7.2) outlines the main characteristics of the GERD, discussing how it has affected the Nile Basin's hydro-political circumstances. Section 7.3. briefly revisits the notions of 'soft' power and global hydro-hegemonic discourses, locating them both within the wider analytical framework of counter-hegemony which informs this research. Section 7.4 will highlight the main features of Ethiopia's GERD discourses, categorising them according to the discursive mechanisms deployed to facilitate its construction. It will also examine how Ethiopia's GERD discourses have been received, analysing the extent to which these discursive tactics have been successful in garnering compliance to the upstream development of hydraulic infrastructure in the Eastern Nile.

7.2 THE GERD AS A FACT ON THE GROUND IN THE EASTERN NILE BASIN

When completed, the GERD, formerly known as the Grand Renaissance Dam, the Millennium Dam and Project X, will be the largest hydropower dam in Africa, producing over 6,000 MW of electricity in fulfilment of Ethiopia's growing energy demands (Mada Masr 2017). The Dam which is expected to cost at least $4.8 billion USD, to date has been exclusively financed from domestic sources including the government budget, domestic bond sales, donations and mass finance mobilisation schemes, including lotteries and raffles. The dam site, located less than 20km from the Sudanese border, has also resulted in the construction of bridges, roads, electricity infrastructure and the expansion of nearby towns with centralised services for populations displaced by construction.

Within the context of the Nile Basin, the GERD represents the single greatest infrastructure for water storage constructed on the river in the past half-century. Once complete, the dam, which will rise to a height of 145m, would be able to secure 68 BCM of Blue Nile flows behind it, providing Ethiopia over-year, not just seasonal storage, of the river (Whittington, Waterbury and Jeuland 2014: 599). Although the GERD is still under construction and there have as yet been no formal energy agreements for the electricity it will eventually produce, its construction alone has already yielded an important shift in the existing status quo on the Nile. In other words, wherein upstream riparians were previously unable to develop large-scale infrastructure, hydropower development from non-traditional sources of finance is now possible. This project possesses the significant potential to catalyse greater downstream dependence on Ethiopia for access to these waters. In an effort to allay downstream water security concerns, the Ethiopian government has repeatedly reiterated that the GERD will be a non-consumptive hydroelectric dam. In other words, water will flow through the turbines to generate electric power, thus allowing water to continue to flow downstream for further utilisation (RO13). In fact, during disagreements in 2013 following the diversion of the Nile to support construction, state-affiliated media even rebranded the project as the "Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Hydropower Project" (Fana FM Radio 2013; EBC Radio 2013). It was even explicitly stated in Article II of the 2015 DOP signed by the three riparian countries regarding the GERD that "the purpose of GERD is for power generation, to contribute to economic development, promotion of transboundary cooperation and regional integration through the generation of sustainable and reliable clean energy supply" (DOP 2015, Appendix D). Although it may be a non-consumptive infrastructure project in the long-term, its short-term impacts on the flow and allocation of water during the filling period could be significant depending on how quickly the Ethiopian operators choose to fill the reservoir (Whittington, Waterbury and Jeuland 2014: 601). It is reported that without a sub-basin framework for the filling of the GERD reservoir and coordinated operation with the Aswan High Dam, there could be a substantial loss of flows for downstream use of between 8-36% per year of filling (Wheeler *et al*. 2016: 626).

Table 6 - Comparison of GERD with HAD (adapted from Whittington, Waterbury and Jeuland 2014: 600)

Description	GERD (Ethiopia)	HAD (Egypt)
Dam height (m)	145	110
Annual flow (BCM)	48	65
Installed capacity (MW)	6,000	2,100
Gross storage (BCM)	68	153

Unsurprisingly, the GERD has been described by analysts as a game-changer along the Nile, bringing a new dimension to the Basin's existing hydro-hegemonic arrangement (Tawfik 2016; Bayeh 2015; Chen and Swain 2014; Gebreleul 2014; Whittington, Waterbury and Jeuland 2014). As discussed in previous chapters, Egypt has historically maintained hydro-hegemony over the Nile - accounting for the greatest allocation and utilisation of its waters. It has exercised a variety of inter-related hydro-hegemonic strategies and tactics to thwart the hydraulic ambitions of upstream riparians and consolidate its control over these water resources (Cascão 2009a). Since the GERD's launch in 2011, it has been opposed to the construction of the GERD, in contrast to midstream Sudan which has been vocal in its support for the project (Cascão and Nicol 2016). As discussed in Chapter 6, Egypt fears the GERD could strike a fatal blow to its water security; it views the project as a violation of its historical rights over Nile water resources. For example, an opinion piece penned by former Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Nabil Fahmy, clearly lays out this position, as can be easily discerned by the title "Ethiopia's Dam is a major risk for Egypt's water security" (Global Dialogue Review 2014). Furthermore, as the operation of the GERD would lead to the regulation of Nile flows, this could lead to increased water withdrawals within Sudan and an expansion of irrigated agricultural land. Egyptian officials have increasingly become concerned about future Sudanese utilisation, but have opted to express these fears by highlighting the potential risks posed by the construction of the GERD to Egyptian water security.

Other regional concerns in Sudan and Egypt raised include the Dam's potential impacts on: hydropower production at HAD; Roseries' biodiversity and fisheries; riverbed and bank erosion; groundwater recharge; flood-recession agriculture; and the brick industry (IPoE 2013). Finally, a supplementary regional concern which has also received attention is the potential precedent set by the unilateral construction of the GERD on hydraulic decision-making within the Basin. With fears that other upstream riparians will follow suit at the expense of more holistic and basin-wide planning (Tawfik 2016: 7). In addition, international concerns related to the project's impacts on growing political conflict within the Basin and the potential for it to be the cause for water war between Ethiopia and Egypt have also persisted. These fears, sparked in particular, by Egyptian water security concerns over upstream water withdrawals, have seen parties "including the United States, the EU, World Bank" make offers to mediate disagreements at various time (ACA31).

However, a more 'critical' analysis of the GERD also reveals transboundary interactions between Ethiopia and Egypt that are not just characterised by conflict and contest over this major development. In other words, there is coexistence of conflict and cooperation which manifests in the use of discursive power at various levels (Zeitoun *et al* 2016: 2). Specifically, the coexistence of conflict and cooperation is seen in events following the announcement of the GERD where, although the project elicited predictions of water war within the international media, the three riparians quickly initiated a process of trilateral collaboration separate from their engagements with the CFA and NBI process of the previous two decades. These collaborations ultimately led to the establishment of the IPoE in December 2011 – a panel comprising two national experts from each country and four international experts responsible for analysing the impacts of the GERD (Cascão and Nicol 2016: 15). The IPoE, which was viewed as a positive preliminary step in resolving tensions between the countries, eventually resulted in the production of a final report covering several technicalities and recommending further environmental and socio-economic impact studies as well as a new hydrological model (IPoE 2013). As expected the report was received well in Ethiopia and negatively in Egypt, but importantly the Sudanese reaction to it hinted at the beginning of the decoupling of the longstanding downstream coalition between Sudan and Egypt on Nile issues. The Sudanese government downplayed the adverse impacts of the GERD, instead opting to focus on the benefits the dam would offer its own hydro-agricultural ambitions.

The Egyptian government, led then by Mohammed Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood, criticised the IPoE report, disputed its findings and launched its own studies, eventually revealing results more supportive of their original position that the GERD would constitute a "significant threat to Egypt's national and water security" (Daily News Egypt 2014). The technical impasse changed to one of a politically charged issue with security implications following a blunder in which a private meeting between Morsi and other politicians discussing ways to sabotage the GERD was publicly broadcasted (YouTube 2013). In a time when the Morsi government was facing an uphill struggle in governing post-revolution Egypt, the spectre of the GERD was frequently summoned by the regime to deflect from its many internal issues. These actions finally culminated in political threats from Morsi at a popular conference organised by Islamic parties to discuss the GERD. There he warned: "all options are open to deal with this subject… If a single drop of the Nile is lost, our blood will be the alternative. We are not warmongers, but we will never allow anyone to threaten our security (*The Telegraph*, 12 June 2013; Daily News Egypt, 2013)". Tension between Egypt and Ethiopia were eventually eased following the fall of the Morsi government and the holding of a series of high-level bilateral talks between the riparians in Addis Ababa, Cairo and Khartoum. The new Egyptian government led by President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi took a more conciliatory tone on the GERD and accepted Sudanese proposals to restart the tripartite cooperative process. These early conflicts seem to have committed the basin states to resolving their issues at the negotiating table, ensuring the involvement of technical experts and political officials in an effort to lend the negotiations further credibility and weight. With both technical and political engagement in the process, six-party meetings involving the ministers of water and foreign affairs of the three countries led to the eventual drafting and signing of the DOP in 2015 (Cascão and Nicol 2016: 16). This event has been viewed as

a landmark in the history of the Eastern Nile Basin, thereby demonstrating the coexisting conflictive and cooperative nature of transboundary water interactions over the GERD.

However, the ongoing trilateral process surrounding the GERD has also been heavily influenced by destructive forms of cooperation, which have acted to support hydro-hegemonic control. Diplomatic conflict continues to typify relations between Egypt and Ethiopia and has not always been constructive. Egypt's position on the GERD has, for the most part, remained consistent bar one aspect – its recognition of the GERD as a fact-on-the-ground. As described by an Ethiopian official "the acquiescence of the Egyptian elites is clear behind closed doors, they say 'you can build it, just don't shout about it'" (GOV33). As another Ethiopian official put it, "Egypt has shifted position – before it was non-acceptance of any development but now its negotiating for guarantees" (GOV7). Beyond accepting the GERD as a fait-accompli, Egyptian officials have framed Nile water as a matter of life and death, a vital resource required to feed its people, energise its economy and the source of its statehood. This securitisation, elevating the project into one of urgent political decision-making (Mirumachi 2015), is intrinsically tied to Egypt's hydro-hegemonic discourse regarding both its "historical and acquired rights… as defined through its prior utilisation of the waters and existing water agreements" and its increasing demands for water in the future due to population growth and climate change (Godana 1985; Cascão 2009b: 53). Their objections to the GERD have mainly been based on the reduced availability of water during the reservoir filling, electricity generation losses at Aswan and economic losses in the irrigated agriculture sector.

In contrast, the Ethiopian discourse counters these narratives by depicting water as a key resource for the economic transformation of the country, with the GERD acting as a symbolic lynchpin of the national renaissance and a cooperative regional project contributing to wider integration. Ethiopian discourses surrounding the GERD also effectively tap into global developmental and climate change paradigms. These discourses serve multiple purposes in that they are concurrently targeted at stakeholders at multiple levels – both a domestic political audience and the international community with access to technical expertise and finance for associated projects (as discussed in Section 6.3.2.2). These discourses act as further evidence of how the construction of the GERD, though a material fact, has been more significantly shaped by 'soft' forms of power deployed by both Ethiopia and Egypt than by the projection of hard power. In its efforts to 'win the game', the Ethiopian government's deployment of counter-hegemonic leverage and transformative strategies alongside GHDs serve to portray it as a responsible state: (a) that should exercise its right to economic development through the construction of hydroelectric dams; (b) that must exploit its God-given hydropower potential to address the region's energy deficit thereby contributing to development, peace and integration in Africa and to wider global climate efforts; (c) that will construct infrastructure that will propel the nation's renaissance, restore national pride and achieve prosperity for its citizens.

7.3 GLOBAL HYDRO-HEGEMONIC DISCOURSES AND COUNTER-HEGEMONY

As discussed throughout this research, power is posited as the principal determining factor in the competition over transboundary water resources. As explained in Menga and Mirumachi (2016: 374), in the context of transboundary natural resources management, power can "influence the way countries decide to develop their natural resources, position their foreign policy, and establish diplomatic and economic ties, in their abstraction, utilisation and trade". As discussed in earlier chapters, contrary to the limited *Weberian* conception of power as strictly coercive, power can be classified per the notions of 'actualised' power and 'potential' power (Daoudy 2005, Turton 2005). In other words, power can manifest through three distinct but complementary faces (Lukes 1974). This chapter will focus on the more covert, less recognisable faces which form part of the softer sides of power, namely the exercise of bargaining and ideational power, to understand how Ethiopia has successfully pursued the construction of the GERD as part of its wider strategy to secure greater access to Nile water resources.

It is argued that Ethiopia's attempts to counter hydro-hegemony in the Eastern Nile through the construction of the GERD have been supported by the strategic projection of discursive power and reinforced by Global Hydro-hegemonic Discourses (GHDs) regarding dam development. GHDs are understood as certain ideas that become dominant within global water and development circles and are readily promoted as universal and transferable to *all* contexts. As Molle (2008) explains, the development sector, particularly the development and management of water resources, is littered with influential ideas and discourses which emerge through the complex global webs of interests, ideologies, and power fronted by the appealing facades of hand-picked "success stories" and "best practices". Sneddon and Fox (2006) in calling for a critical hydro-politics argue that competition over shared water resources often play out through the discursive engineering of transboundary basins by riparian states for specific development goals – framing the ensuing development and cooperative arrangement in their favour. GHDs, which operate transnationally, have been described by Sneddon (2013) as hegemonic and characterised by Molle (2008) as akin to 'Nirvana'; thus they are often widely disseminated and adopted across diverse contexts on the back of influential development and policy networks. Relatedly, Harris and Alatout (2010) showed how such discourses had been deployed to frame problems and lay the groundwork for pre-determined solutions aimed at justifying "particular spatial scales over others by attaching river development projects to nation and state-building" (Menga and Mirumachi 2016: 375). Hydraulic development on the Nile in Ethiopia has been accompanied by multiple GHDs. Moreover, a crucial element in the use of GHDs is how the Ethiopian government's discourses about the GERD have been interwoven with them to legitimise its construction.

In a context, such as the Eastern Nile, where power asymmetry exists between its riparians, there are a range of discursive and ideational strategies and tactics at the disposal of these actors to either maintain or contest the consolidated control of water resources. In the previous chapter, there was a brief discussion of how discursive forms of power have routinely been deployed in the basin by Egypt through hegemonic tactics including *sanctioned discourse*, *securitisation*, *silentisation* and *knowledge construction*. Similarly,

Section 6.3.3 highlighted how Ethiopia has been attempting to contest hydro-hegemony by deploying liberation tactics such as *alternative/enhanced knowledge* and *discourse alternatives* to undermine the hegemon's ideational supremacy. Furthering arguments made by Menga and Mirumachi (2016) on how discursive power can (and sometimes cannot) shape transboundary water outcomes over water utilisation, I discuss, below, how non-hegemonic basin states try to demonstrate leadership in transboundary river basins to achieve their ambitions for hydraulic development.

A contribution of this chapter is to demonstrate how the frameworks of hydro-hegemony (Zeitoun and Warner 2006) and counter-hegemony (Cascão 2009b) have underestimated the role played by non-coercive forms of power in the competition over transboundary water resources. Building on the work of Zeitoun *et al* (2011) and Menga and Mirumachi (2016) into the relationship between the deployment of 'soft' power, framing and compliance, this chapter shows how less powerful basin states such as Ethiopia can nevertheless reinforce their capacity for bargaining and ideational power through the adoption of GHDs into their counter-hegemonic strategies and tactics. In this context, 'soft' power can be grounded in the analysis through the role played by persuasion and ideology in attaining consent (Gramsci 1971). Here, producing consent (or contest) is a feature of discourse in hydro-hegemonic and/or counter-hegemonic processes. For example, in the case of large-scale hydraulic development projects such as the GERD, the adoption of GHDs relating to dam development and economic growth can amplify a riparian's exercise of 'soft' power thus legitimising national development goals and prioritising their achievement irrespective of their transboundary implications.

The discourses examined herein are based on extensive fieldwork in Ethiopia interviewing elite decision makers and influencers between 2013 and 2017. Elite decision-makers interviewed were drawn from the Ethiopian hydrocracy and included higher officials, technocrats and bureaucrats. Influencers interviewed included members of the business community, regional organisations and international funding bodies. In the case of Ethiopia, the discourses employed by the hydrocracy are hegemonic in nature and are consolidated by the top-down nature of decision-making within the federal system discussed in Section 5.2.2. Centralised top-down governance coupled with limited civil society space within the country, have supported the permeation and recycling of these discourses across society. The role of the tightly controlled political space has supported the promotion of these hegemonic discourses through state-owned media outlets which represent the dominant purveyors of news on the GERD, domestically. However, this chapter also examines the international deployment of discourses by Ethiopian elites in their efforts to legitimise the GERD project as a developmental project and source of benefits at multiple levels. Furthermore, due to the preferential access that Ethiopian elites have enjoyed to international media and fora, they have been better able to promote the GERD as a panacea to the problems of environmental disaster, economic underdevelopment and lack of regional integration. The following sections of the chapter examine in detail how the GERD has been framed as both a distributive and integrative project at multiple levels and how GHDs have contributed to efforts to legitimise it at these levels.

7.4 THE GLOBAL DISCOURSES ON THE GERD

By its very nature, the GERD, a mega-dam on a transboundary river, is a transnational development project. As a transnational infrastructure project, it is also a matter of foreign policy. Specifically, in beginning to uncover the principal discourses deployed by the Government of Ethiopia in its attempts to facilitate and legitimise the construction of the GERD, Ethiopia's existing foreign policy strategies and aims play a key role. In this regard, the principal institution charged with safeguarding the country's interests and relations with neighbouring countries has been the Ministry of Foreign Affairs – a government organ guided by the 2002 Foreign Affairs and National Security Strategy (FANSS). As explained by a senior Ethiopian diplomat, "the Ministry plays a vital role in the promotion of Ethiopia's Nile policy" (GOV2). Similarly, an Ethiopian technocrat involved with the GERD lamented that "although the Ministry [of Foreign Affairs] cooperates with other ministries in Ethiopia on GERD issue, their involvement in the case has steadily increased and negotiations with neighbouring countries have been led by them… at the cost of better placed technical stakeholders" (GOV57). Thus, in order to unpack the Ethiopian government's GERD discourses and their interrelation with GHDs, our starting point for an examination of the guiding ideology of these discursive strategies lays in the country's existing foreign policy orientation.

Since 2002 the country's diplomatic and foreign relations have been conducted based on the *Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia's Foreign Affairs and National Security Strategy* (FANSS), hereafter referred to as the FANSS (FDRE 2002b). A brief reading of the FANSS reveals what appears to be a paradox in that the three main principles, which serve as the foundation of the country's diplomatic engagements and national security, appear largely inward-looking. The FANSS is introduced with a gloomy appraisal of the country's circumstances which it characterises as "in a state of abject poverty and backwardness" (FDRE 2002b: 1). It subsequently argues that the keys to guaranteeing national security, state survival and peace lie in:

a) the development and building of a democratic system with particular focus given to activities in support of rapid economic development and the indispensable benefits it can offer to the Ethiopian people, namely "a life free from poverty, disease and ignorance" (FDRE 2002b: 6);
b) learning from the country's current "state of national humiliation" derived from poverty, backwardness and a lack of unity in order to forge a common course towards development and democracy - taking pride in the country's ancient civilisations and inspiration from the sacrifices of previous generations that resisted colonialism (FDRE 2002b: 11); and
c) "fully exploiting the opportunities globalisation provides" by becoming "active participants" in its processes and promoting Ethiopia's national interests within its existing socio-economic and legal frameworks in order to ensure mutual benefits and the country's rapid development and democratisation (FDRE 2002b: 19-20).

These three pillars underscore the fact that the country's foreign relations under the EPRDF are viewed strictly as a means to achieve its internal policies which prioritise economic development, stability and

democratisation. The FANSS embodies the government's attempts to address Ethiopia's longstanding internal political instability through its external relations. This represents a break with the past wherein regimes externalised almost all of the country's problems, opting to focus on the building up of military strength to combat "historical enemies of Ethiopia" (FDRE 2002b: 34-38). By focusing instead on internal priorities, the government espouses the belief that Level II considerations on the country's domestic prosperity and peace act as the foundation for pursuit of a peaceful, integrated and thriving region at Level I. Subsequent sections will show how the Ethiopian government has reflected these principles in its framing of the GERD at these levels and how these discourses interrelate and are legitimised by GHDs within the Eastern Nile.

7.4.1 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND DAMS

When relating Ethiopia's foreign policy principles with the GERD discourses throughout the project's lifecycle between 2011 and 2017, the need for rapid economic development is constantly underscored. Economic development is posited to extricate the country from the clutches of underdevelopment, with the role of extensive physical infrastructure aimed at the water, energy and agriculture sectors (something that cannot be underestimated in GERD discourses). Clearly, the foreign policy principles lay out a pathway of transformation aimed at guaranteeing Ethiopia's internal stability through socio-economic development.

In both the first and second five-year GTPs which have covered the GERD project lifecycle, the Ethiopian government has given special emphasis to investments in infrastructural development aimed at driving rapid economic growth (FDRE 2010; FDRE 2016). As described in GTP I, the construction of "physical and economic infrastructure, such as transportation, communication and energy make a crucial contribution to economic growth, employment creation, social welfare and the expansion of the industrial sector" (FDRE 2010: 68). Infrastructure investments in areas aimed at improving the quality and provision of public services such as energy have been a strong focus in the government's planning over the last decade. Regarding the energy sector, the Government, in both GTP I and II, has aimed to generate sufficient electricity for both domestic and external consumption while ensuring greater quality in its transmission and supply. Curiously, the GERD which has frequently been described by government officials as the country's "flagship development project" was never explicitly mentioned in GTP I[24]. However, in GTP II, the project is explicitly referenced as "a distinctive and prominent feature of GTP I" nearing completion (FDRE 2016: 72). Upon completion, the GERD is expected to contribute almost 6,000MW to the national grid – a contribution that will double the country's total generating capacity. This would go a long way towards supporting the Government's goal to become a significant exporter of cheap and renewable energy in the region.

[24] Any direct mention of the GERD in government plans which predate its announcement in 2011 can only be found in the Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation's 2010-11 annual corporate plan (EEPCo, now known as Ethiopian Electric Power) which highlights the need to conduct preliminary activities in relation to a 'Project X' which will have the capacity to generate more than 5000MW of electricity (EEPCo 2010).

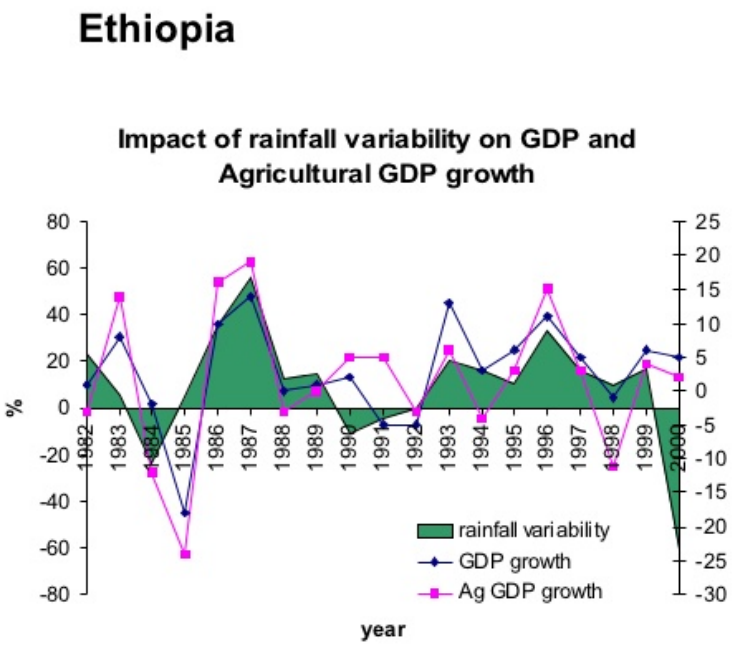
Moreover, the developmental discourse of the GERD deployed by the Government has explicitly linked the project with positive economic outcomes for both Ethiopia and the region. For instance, at the laying of the cornerstone for the GERD project in 2011, the late Prime Minister of Ethiopia Meles Zenawi underlined that "from every perspective, this project will play a major and decisive role in realizing the five-year GTP and the consequent advance towards the eradication of poverty [in Ethiopia]" (Zenawi, 2 April 2011). In the same speech, Zenawi went on to consolidate the link between hydraulic infrastructure and economic development saying "… [we] exercise our rights to use our own rivers in order to fight poverty in our own country" (Zenawi 2011). These arguments have continued to have traction within the Ethiopian government even after the passing of Zenawi, with officials repeating and emphasizing the important benefits the GERD offers to the country's development endeavours. As the Deputy Prime Minister Demeke Mekonnen underlined, "the successful completion of the GERD will be crucial to maintaining the rapid economic growth required for the structural and economic transformation of Ethiopia" (Cooperative Waters 2016: 9). As described by an interviewee in the energy sector, Ethiopia's "25-year energy master plan takes hydropower as the main source of power and a significant source of foreign currency for the country… [thus] energy production is given primacy in country's development endeavours" (GOV33). In line with this view, GTP II prioritises the country's energy potentials by order of importance, placing hydroelectric power generation as the top priority in the government's plans. It goes on to highlight that this energy production will aim to support the development of the industrial and service sectors "so as to position Ethiopia among the lower middle-income countries by 2025" (FDRE 2016: 177).

These discourses are aimed at addressing national concerns about the GERD in a way that depoliticises its construction, explicitly linking the project to development outcomes and the fight against poverty. In addition, this discourse has the effect of also addressing regional and international concerns related to potential conflict by reflecting the project's socio-economic benefits to the region and framing it as a win-win for all countries. These discourses, however, are not specific to Ethiopia, however, as poorer riparian nations frequently frame hydraulic development as "the only resource capable of generating large amounts of foreign exchange, critical for development and economic stability" (Bakker 1999: 210). For example, Laos in the Mekong Basin deployed these discourses in its attempts to justify the construction of the *Nam Theun 2* Dam arguing that it would "produce electricity for export to neighbouring Thailand, earning valuable foreign currency… it will use to alleviate poverty" (BBC 2005). Relatedly, the Ethiopian government has also used continental policy forums it hosts, such as the 2017 Tana High-Level Forum on Security, to promote the relationship between natural resources governance and sustainable economic development. The significance of utilising continental influence is to further legitimise dam development on Africa's rivers and at the same time normalising the need for greater electricity generation in Ethiopia. This is exemplified by the Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn who opened the 2017 Tana forum by saying, "proper governance of natural resources will help Africa to fully maximize the developmental benefits that it should accrue from exploiting the continent's rich natural resources". Thus,

the connection between economic development and hydraulic infrastructure is critical to any understanding of the discursive legitimisation of the GERD by the Ethiopian government.

Furthermore, this discourse is strengthened when interwoven with a potent GHD which associates water security, dams and national economic growth. This hydro-hegemonic discourse works off the simple but compelling causation that because a select group of industrialised wealthy states are found to have a high proportion of hydraulic infrastructure capable of storing and exploiting water resources, that their ability to exert technical control over water is what has allowed them to develop (Brown and Lall 2006). The causality is then reverse-engineered and applied to country-contexts by advisors, development agencies and international organisations making the argument that "hydrological variability seriously undermines growth and perpetuates poverty" in countries with high variability such as Ethiopia (Grey and Sadoff 2007: 557). The discourse which has gained currency in global development and water circles conjures what Gramsci terms 'common sense': it is increasingly accepted internationally and adopted at the country level. Within the context of FHH, this can be described as a globally sanctioned discourse which politically legitimises a narrow set of terms of debate surrounding water and development. These hegemonic ideas have gained the compliance of governments in developing countries through the influence of donors, development agencies and experts from industrialised states. Thus, the impact of these GHDs cannot be understated as these ideas go on to circulate and achieve the following: (a) form the basis of policy-planning and implementation at a country level; (b) repurposed as part of the discursive mechanisms deployed by governments to justify and legitimise projects; and (c) complete the cycle by further dispersion through media, international conferences, special reports, educational forums and the internet contributing to wider adoption still (Sneddon 2013: 17).

Figure 22 - Impact of rainfall variability on GDP in Ethiopia



To exemplify, in the World Bank report '*Managing Water Resources to Maximize Sustainable Growth: A Country Water Resources Assistance Strategy for Ethiopia*', it recommends that:

> "To de-link economic performance from rainfall and enable sustained growth and development… major investments in water resources infrastructure, institutions, and capacity to manage flows and develop storage at all scales must be seen as an e*conomy-wide development priority* (emphasis added). Ethiopia's growth will continue to be undermined until the country achieves water security by acquiring a minimum platform of infrastructure, institutions, and capacity to manage its water resources." (World Bank 2006: xi)

It can be argued that this report supported and written in conjunction with the Ethiopian hydrocracy, led to the application of these definitions of water security to government water resources planning in early pre-GTP consultations. As described by a senior Ethiopian technocrat, "multi-purpose water infrastructure offers the country better opportunities for poverty alleviation and economic development" (GOV55). This discourse attempts to address: (1) national concerns over the project by portraying the GERD as the optimal means by which to accelerate the country's economic development; while (2) also alleviating regional fears about the project's real purpose – framing it as purely for development and not politically motivated. Influential development actors in Ethiopia including the UK's Department for International Development (DFID), the Global Water Partnership (GWP) and the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) contributed to further adoption by repeating the assertion that there exists a direct correlation between increased storage and increased wealth (DFID 2009; GWP 2009: 9; UNEP 2006). These discourses are widespread within the Ethiopian hydrocracy as interviewees frequently repeated the belief that the success of Ethiopia's development plans is inextricably linked to the utilisation of water resources for hydropower and irrigation.

High-ranking Ethiopian officials attending international water conferences and events have used these fora to further cement narratives lauding the benefits of large-scale dams to economic development. For example, the AFRICA 2013 conference held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia was co-hosted by Aqua-Media International Ltd (Hydropower and Dams), the International Commission on Large Dams (ICOLD) and the Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation (EEPCo). The conference's theme was *Water Storage and Hydropower Development for Africa*. This conference received high-level support from the Ethiopian government through the "personal patronage" of Alemayehu Tegenu, Ethiopia's then Minister of Water and Electricity, who presided at the Opening and Closing Sessions and Conference Dinner, and the participation of two Deputy Prime Ministers of Ethiopia at the Plenary Opening Ceremony: Demeke Mekonnen, who was then the Minister of Education, and Debretsion Gebremichael, who is the Minister of Communications and Information Technology (Hydropower and Dams 2013). The participation of these individuals, particularly the deputy prime ministers, is significant as they represented the two most senior officials within the Federal Government, after the Prime Minister, and senior leaders within two organs of the EPRDF coalition, TPLF and ANDM. This exemplifies the attention given to hydropower at the highest

levels of power within Ethiopia and is further proof of the importance of hydropower development to the EPRDF Government's economic plans.

In his opening address, Tegenu pointed to the many challenges faced by African countries in their journeys to economic advancement including the negative impacts of hydrological variability exacerbated by climate change (Hydropower and Dams 2013). It can be argued that Ethiopian officials, through this conference, were successful in framing their own hydropower plans in line with GHDs linking the adverse impacts of hydrological variability on GDP and economic development. In a later session, Alessandro Palmieri, the lead Dam specialist at the World Bank, reiterated this hegemonic discourse, asserting that "major water infrastructure has been the platform for the development of now-rich countries, and not a single country has developed without it…investments in water infrastructure should be used as an opportunity for local development" (Hydropower and Dams 2013). This supporting statement by Palmieri works in favour of the Ethiopian discourse because it reaffirms, in the minds of government officials, the indispensability of hydropower development to economic development and growth.

These fora act as convenient amplifiers for the Ethiopian government's attempts to depoliticise dam-building upstream by framing it as a purely developmental endeavour and a much-needed one. Further evidence of the Ethiopian government's utilisation of international conferences in promoting these ideas includes the participation of Motuma Mekassa, a former MoWIE minister, at the *Water Security 2015* conference at Oxford University sponsored by a host of development actors[25]. This international conference, convened to advance and debate water security from the perspective of sustainable economic growth, saw the participation of some of the same actors responsible for the World Bank's 2006 report on Ethiopia discussed earlier[26]. Ideational intermingling happened at this conference in way that further reinforced the Government's discourse promoting the positive relationship between dam-building and economic development. In addition, ideational exchange can be said to have occurred at this conference, for example, during the panel discussions on day one entitled 'water security and sustainable growth', which saw the participation of MoWIE officials. It can be argued that such conferences enable the long-term transmission of globally sanctioned hegemonic discourses by actors including donors, NGOs and academia to the eventual adoption of these ideas in policy design and planning (Molle 2008).

The genesis of government development strategies such as the GTP is explained by an Ethiopian official saying, "the government looked at best practices from other rapidly developing countries and sought constructive input from members of the international community… a mixture of some policy ideas from abroad and some internal" (GOV36). Taking this into account, it should come as no surprise then that over the last decade, as with many countries in the global south, Ethiopia has embarked on an ambitious

[25] Sponsors included the OECD, UNICEF, DFID, Global Water Partnership and REACH amongst others.
[26] For example, the session which the Ethiopian Water Minister participated in was chaired by the World Bank's Claudia Sadoff and Oxford University Professor David Grey. In the writing of the 2006 World Bank report, Sadoff led the core team whilst Grey provided advice and guidance to them.

hydraulic mission (Chapter 5) characterised by the construction of large-scale dams (Zarfl *et al*. 2015). These hydraulic ambitions have further contributed to what Bakker (1999) refers to as a view of the 'river-as-resource' wherein countries have pursued sustainable development through infrastructure and the commodification of water resources.

Through the advancement of development discourses on the GERD, underpinned by GHDs, the Ethiopian hydrocracy has effectively deployed *discourse alternatives* which challenge the prevailing Egyptian narratives on hydraulic development upstream as part of a wider *liberation* strategy in the Basin. By challenging existing hydro-hegemonic discourses within the basin regarding the dangers of unfettered hydraulic development upstream to downstream countries, Ethiopia has directly confronted ideas historically sanctioned by the status quo on the Nile. The success of these tactics in the medium-term is exemplified within the language in Article II of the DOP over the GERD in which upstream countries consented to the construction of the GERD, accepting its contribution to economic development for Ethiopia and the region (DOP 2015, APPENDIX D). As described by a media commentator, "Egypt, through negotiations over GERD and DOP, has accepted that Nile is not just a matter of life and death but is a development issue" (MED21). This change in position is paramount as it illustrates the effectiveness of the increasing ideational power being exerted by Ethiopia in the basin – an area in which previous studies on hydro-hegemony have found it to be lacking (Zeitoun and Warner 2006: 460; Cascão 2009b: 243).

In addition, the analysis points out that international discourses on the GERD have been shaped by the Government's promotion of a depoliticised hydropower agenda, which emphasises its importance to the building of a climate-resilient green economy within Ethiopia and as a project mitigating the effects of climate change. Although, these discourses have not received as much acceptance as the regional discourses being promoted in relation to the GERD, they nonetheless illustrate the breadth of the Ethiopian government's discursive strategies in pursuit of counter-hegemony. This point will be further exemplified in the following section as well.

However, as discussed in Menga and Mirumachi (2016: 380) undermining *sanctioned discourses* in hydro-hegemonic basins cannot be done to immediate effect without 'softer' forms of power being underpinned by financial resources. However, the case of the GERD uncovers a further means available to non-hegemons aiming to contest hegemonic control in this way. Namely, the important role that GHDs can play in augmenting a riparian's soft power in its discursive engagements with hydro-hegemons. GHDs can act to level the discursive playing field, allowing non-hegemonic riparians to contest hegemony within the basin whilst displaying leadership internationally.

This section has shown how the Ethiopian government is framing the GERD as an infrastructural project which will contribute to the country's developmental endeavours and its fight against poverty in accordance with its FANSS. In tandem with a GHD conflating dams and economic development, the government has consistently framed the project in these terms to amplify its own ideational power and to justify the GERD's continuing construction. In the next section, there will be an examination of the

Ethiopian government's attempts to use *international diplomacy* to promote the GERD's direct and indirect benefits to the wider region to justify its pursuit of hydraulic development in the Eastern Nile.

7.4.2 GERD AS A REGIONAL, CONTINENTAL AND GLOBAL BENEFIT-SHARING PROJECT

The Ethiopian government deployed *international diplomacy* as a counter-hegemonic tactic in its efforts to promote the construction of the GERD and exploitation of the country's unexploited hydropower potential as a win-win solution to stakeholders at various levels. As mentioned above, the international discourse of the GERD has been framed by Ethiopian officials to complement the country's FANSS goal of fully exploiting the opportunities of globalisation and integration to ensure mutual benefits and rapid economic development. Specifically, this section will show how the GERD is being framed as a panacea at multiple spatial scales offering: a) increased and regular flows to downstream countries in the Eastern Nile sub-basin; b) rapid economic development through cheaper energy thereby contributing to regional integration and continental peace and security; and c) climate change mitigation and a reduction in global emissions. The section will also go on to demonstrate how the above international GERD discourses promoted by the Ethiopian government have been interlaced with the GHD of transboundary benefit-sharing which has informed the work of the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) over the past decade.

In a nutshell, the Benefit-Sharing Framework developed by World Bank water experts Sadoff and Grey (2002) states that with "better management of the ecosystems cooperation can provide '*benefits to the river*'; with cooperative management of shared rivers, benefits can be accrued '*from the river*' (e.g. increased food production and power); with easing of tensions between riparian states, costs '*because of the river*' could be reduced; and with cooperation between riparian states leading to economic integration comes '*benefits beyond the river*'" (Mapedza et. al 2011: 3). This framework effectively argues that multiple benefits can arise out of the cooperative management of transboundary river basins and can be categorised as *environmental*, *economic* and *political* benefits as well as *indirect* socio-economic benefits (Sadoff and Grey 2002). The underlying philosophy of transboundary benefit-sharing is the view that all riparian countries should always be better off with cooperation than without (Tawfik 2016: 3). This is a commonly held view among Ethiopian government officials who capture the spirit of the country's policy on the Nile when saying "we either swim together or we sink together, cooperation is the only way forward" (GOV2). Similarly, a senior Government official projected, "in the future, I see countries in the Basin working together for the benefit of all. We must all continue to bolster our current activities so that we can realise shared benefits for all" (GOV54). Although international non-governmental organisations working on Nile-related issues have tended not to publicly state their positions on the GERD, actors such as the World Bank, NBI and AfDB are currently engaged in activities indirectly related to the project. According to a representative of one such organisation, "though we have no formal relationship with the [GERD] project, we do accept its developing reality and continue to privately encourage the Government's attempts at promoting cooperation within the Basin." (RO37). On the other hand, however, international advocacy organisations have rejected this discourse arguing that Ethiopia's "unilateral construction of the GERD without consulting its downstream neighbours represents

the opposite of the cooperative spirit. Its actions since, which have included the continuation of construction and repeated delays to the conducting of downstream impact studies, prove that talk of cooperation is cheap" (RO18). This illustrates how amongst non-state actors, regional discourses on cooperation being promoted by Ethiopian officials have not been unassailable and have enjoyed a largely mixed reception.

Particularly, ideas of benefit sharing have been prevalent within the Nile Basin since the launch of the NBI in 1999. The NBI processes of the early 2000s, which involved a host of influential donor organisations including the World Bank, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the International Cooperation Consortium on the Nile (ICCON), contributed to the adoption of these ideas across the Basin as riparians, particularly upstream, sought opportunities to develop Nile water resources. The NBI shared vision, which aims "to achieve sustainable socioeconomic development through the equitable utilisation of, and benefit from, the common Nile Basin water resources", eventually led to the Shared Vision Programme (SVP) (World Bank 2005). This programme is significant for it grounded upstream aspirations for hydraulic development in an initiative seeking to create a "coordination mechanism and an enabling environment to realise the shared vision through action on the ground" (Council of Ministers of Water Affairs of the Nile Basin States 2001). 'Action on the ground' was expected to be achieved through funding for the SVP by the Nile Basin Trust Fund (NBTF) in concert with the World Bank, European Union Water Initiative, AfDB, Global Environment Facility and other bilateral donors. Among the seven projects of the SVP, the *Socioeconomic Development and Benefit Sharing (SDBS)* was established to strengthen Basin-wide socioeconomic cooperation and integration and eventually supported the promotion of Joint Multipurpose Projects (JMPs) at the sub-basin level through the Subsidiary Action Programs (SAPs). A key point of analysis is how the idea of benefit sharing is combined with the principle of subsidiarity. The SAPs, guided by the principle of subsidiarity, note "that actions and decisions are supposed to be taken at the lowest appropriate unit of governance" and thus supported the formation of sub-basin action plans – namely the Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Programme (NELSAP) and the Eastern Nile Subsidiary Action Programme (ENSAP) (Mapedza *et al* 2011: 12). ENSAP was operationalised in 2002 with the setting up of the Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office (ENTRO) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The benefit-sharing adopted within the NBI coalesced with subsidiarity principles in order to formally elevate JMPs within sub-basins as proof that mutually beneficial projects for upstream and downstream riparians in the Basin could be a reality.

GERD initially started off a joint benefit-sharing project in the Eastern Nile. Joint Multipurpose Projects (JMP) were explored through ENTRO, with the expectation that they would be undertaken by Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt in order to use their shared water resources as an entry point for greater economic integration through development projects that go beyond the water sector (Awulachew *et al*. 2010: 241). JMPs, launched in 2005, were hoped to move riparians from situations of dispute to integration across the cooperation continuum by promoting joint action at the expense of unilateral approaches to hydraulic development in the Eastern Nile (Sadoff and Grey 2005). In 2006, the governments of the three Eastern Nile riparians were presented three potential JMPs in Ethiopia identified by ENTRO, namely the Beko-

Abo, Mandaya and Border dams (RO13). According to a representative of a regional organisation engaged with the JMPs at the time, "all three countries preferred the Border site" (RO13). Pre-feasibility studies of the Border Dam in 2008 revealed that it would have a storage capacity of 14.5 BCM and an installed power-generation capacity of 800 MW if pursued as a JMP under the umbrella of ENSAP. However, following the breakdown in negotiations over the CFA in 2010 and associated downstream frustration, Egypt and Sudan froze their memberships in the NBI and ENTRO thereby effectively putting an end to the JMP process. This was a crucial point in hydropolitical relations as only a year later, the Ethiopian government rebranded and upgraded the Border project to the Millennium Dam Hydroelectric Project [GERD], opting to pursue it unilaterally. As confirmed by an official at ENTRO, since the launch of GERD 'we are not involved at all with GERD… This [process] is bypassing us" (RO10). An Ethiopian technocrat justified the GERD's unilateral nature arguing, "we were not going to play to Egyptian strategy of waiting 100 years in endless negotiations…We moved forward" (GOV48). Thus, the GERD which started off a joint benefit-sharing project in the Eastern Nile was transformed into a unilateral project. Critically, however, the rationale and framing for its pursuit were not changed so as to legitimise the GERD internationally, in the hope that this would act to convince upstream riparians and to aid in the procurement of funding and technical support for the project from international partners.

Per Ethiopian government discourses, the project remains a win-win development. At the sub-basin level, the benefits of the GERD formed the 'first-line of defence' for the project in the international discourses deployed by the Ethiopian government since the launch of the project in 2011. For example, at the ground-breaking ceremony for the dam in April 2011, the late Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi, made it a point to frame the project as beneficial to downstream countries affirming that the benefits "will clearly extend to all neighboring states, and particularly to downstream Nile basin countries, Sudan and Egypt" (Zenawi, 2 April 2011). In fact, Zenawi dedicated a section of his speech that day to the specific elaboration of the *environmental* benefits offered by the dam to Sudan and Egypt explaining:

> "The Dam will greatly reduce the problems of silt and sediment that consistently affect dams in Egypt and Sudan. This has been a particularly acute problem at Sudan's Roseires dam which has experienced a reduction in output. When the Millennium Dam [GERD] becomes operational, communities all along the riverbanks and surrounding areas, particularly in Sudan, will be permanently relieved from centuries of flooding… The Millennium Dam [GERD] will increase the amount of water resources available, reducing the wastage from evaporation which has been a serious problem in these countries. It will, in fact, ensure a steady year-round flow of the Nile" (Zenawi, 2 April 2011).

The idea of a win-win development through the GERD has been supported by non-state actors such as the Ethiopian International Professional Support for Abay/Nile (EIPSA), a diaspora professional association of technical experts and academics interested in the Nile. An interviewee from the EIPSA explained that "the tripartite cooperative process over the GERD and subsequent signing of the DOP is testimony to Ethiopia's principled stance regarding the Nile waters which is based on a win-win approach

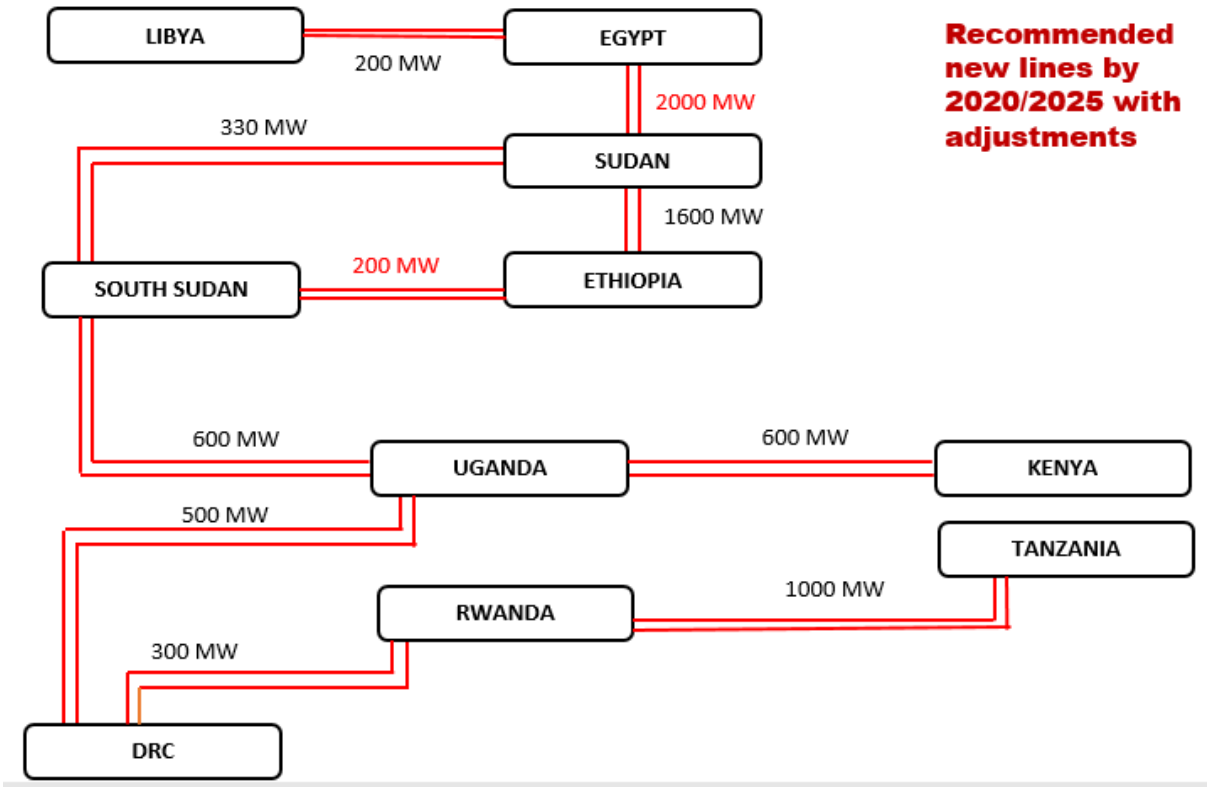
and equity to all riparian states" (ACA27). On the other hand, international advocacy organisations remain cold on the prospect of the project being beneficial to downstream countries, instead highlighting that "Ethiopia's decision to build the GERD threatens Egyptian water security by increasing the possibility of food and water shortages, as well as public health risks" (RO18).

The Ethiopian government, in its attempts to frame the GERD at the sub-basin level, has continued to promote narratives aimed at consistently portraying the image of the country as a responsible regional leader committed to cooperation and win-win outcomes on the Nile. For example, the Ethiopia Deputy Prime Minister Demeke Mekonnen on Nile cooperation writes "cooperation within the basin has always been and will remain a central pillar of our government's policy towards the Nile" (Cooperative Waters: 10). This tactic enables Ethiopia to actively contest Egyptian hegemonic tactics including securitisation and sanctioned discourse by presenting an alternative reality of the Basin, in which upstream hydraulic development is not perceived as a threat but embraced as an opportunity for downstream riparians. The GERD project general manager, Simegnew Bekele, further elaborates describing the GERD as "a practical application of win-win development based on mutual benefits and comparative advantage" (Cooperative Waters 2016: 47). This narrative has been entrenched within the Ethiopian position with successive officials repeating that it is a win-win for all Eastern Nile parties throughout the GERD project's lifecycle. For example, at the fifth anniversary of the beginning of construction of the GERD in 2016, Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn underlined that the dam would be "beneficial to the Nile riparian countries, particularly to Sudan and Egypt" (ENA 2016). Again, this acts to further undermine the legitimacy of the foundations of the hegemonic order on the Nile by reframing upstream development as of greater benefit to downstream states than the existing status quo.

At the regional and continental levels, the GERD's e*conomic* and *political benefits* have formed the lynchpin of the Ethiopian government's international discourses. Since the launch of GERD construction, the government has redoubled its efforts to promote Ethiopia as a regional energy hub able to provide cheap hydropower to the region thereby contributing to economic development. The discourse of 'Ethiopia as an energy hub' represents a shift in the framing of Ethiopia's water resources which previously focused on the country as a 'the water tower of East Africa'. Instead, energy discourses have now taken on greater importance at a time when hydraulic infrastructure has been high on the government's agenda. As a foreign investor engaged in water infrastructure projects in Ethiopia put it: "Ethiopia has always been the water tower of East Africa, but the real difference now is [that] there is real commitment to exploit its hydropower potential" (BIS49). This view was corroborated by Ethiopia's former Minister of Water and Electricity at the AFRICA 2013 conference when he concluded his opening remarks by emphasising the government's commitment to "exploiting its vast hydroelectric potential as a national priority, and to becoming an energy hub" (Hydropower and Dams 2013). According to the International Hydropower Association, and as confirmed by a number of interviewees, Ethiopia's total exploitable hydropower potential currently stands at an estimated 45,000MW with an installed capacity of only 4,180MW (International Hydropower Association 2017: 56).

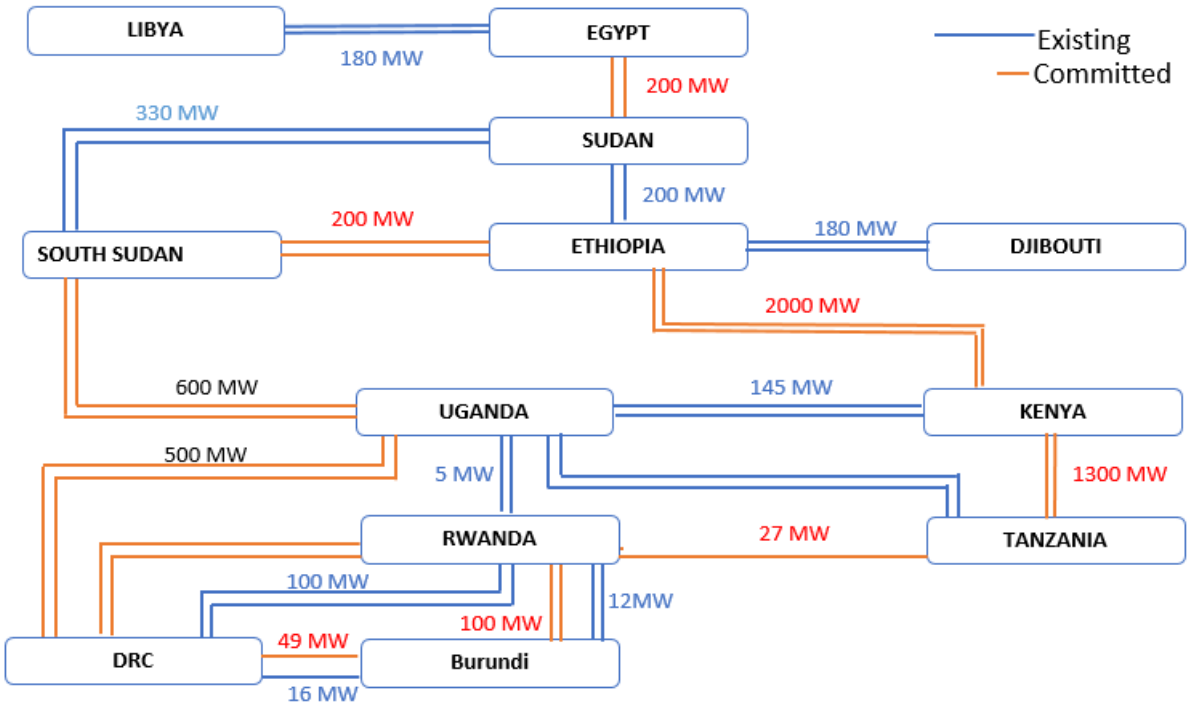
Subsequently, it can be argued that the Ethiopian government has attempted to establish an *alternative discourse* which posits Ethiopian hydropower as the *only* source of affordable energy in the region. This tactic has centred on two global narratives currently driving hydropower development – the first, related to the lack of electricity in Africa and its negative implications on development while the second, portrays cheap hydropower as a source of energy for African economies desperate to develop. Examples of these narratives include a report from UNEP entitled *The Future We Want* which stated that more than 1.4 billion people, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, remain disconnected from electricity supply (UN 2012). The report continued that to meet these growing energy demands; the Rio+20 targets require countries to make use of Kyoto-compliant energy resources, including hydropower (UN 2012). Furthermore, the seventh Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) which targets "affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all", especially the 620 million Africans without it, has widely been acknowledged to be critical to the success of global efforts to eradicate poverty (World Economic Forum 2016). In Africa, the International Commission on Large Dams reported that out of the technically feasible hydropower potential of 1.5 million GWh per year less than 8% are currently exploited. These

Figure 23 - [Regional Master Plan] Existing and committed cross-border transmission capacity (EAPP 2015)



narratives have all contributed their share to a global boom in hydropower construction which, tellingly, has been primarily concentrated in developing countries.

Figure 24 - [Regional Master Plan - Recommended growth in transmission capacity 2020-2025 (EAPP 2015)



This discourse was quickly attached to the GERD at an early stage when Meles Zenawi talked up the project's *economic benefits*, proclaiming it would "not only raise our own power-generating capacity to meet our domestic needs [but] will also allow us to export [electricity] to neighbouring countries" (Zenawi, 2 April 2011). Ethiopian government representatives have deployed this GERD discourse alongside discourses related to regional energy security to firmly establish and justify the project as a necessity for the region. As an Ethiopian diplomat put it "the entire [Nile] basin except for Egypt is energy insecure" (GOV24). Similarly, a former Ethiopian water official touched on existing energy inefficiency in the Basin when he remarked that the "Aswan High Dam [HAD] produced 2,100 MW out of a total 30,000 MW produced in Egypt [which] only accounts for 7% of the energy mix in the country. Necessity for HAD is minimal, and the country could purchase cheaper electricity from Ethiopia" (RO13). This is refuted by an interviewee representing an international advocacy group who argues that "the GERD's projected electricity generation capacity has been exaggerated, so the feasibility and benefit of power exports to neighbouring countries is by no means a certainty" (RO18). Conversely, interviewees within business are enthusiastic supporters of this discourse highlighting that "the Government's plans to expand hydropower and export energy to neighbouring countries in return for foreign currency is, not only reasonable, but will transform the country and region" (BIS46). This is further supported by another interviewee in the construction sector who highlights that "in Djibouti, Juba and other cities in the region

you hear the sound of diesel generators throughout the day as there is no electricity! By generating cheap electricity and selling it to these countries, Ethiopia would be doing the region a great service" (BIS50).

By combining these global narratives with GHDs related to benefit-sharing, the Ethiopian government has successfully promoted an alternative discourse of GERD hydropower as the prime realistic solution to problems of energy insecurity and underdevelopment in the region. By widening the scope of this analysis, it becomes clear how the interplay between hegemonies at multiple levels is working to inspire and legitimise greater hydraulic development within the Eastern Nile. In particular, the GERD has been framed as a transformative national and international project offering multi-fold benefits through the strategic discursive alignment of the project with potent GHDs surrounding water and development.

However, these GERD discourses have not only been propagated by state officials and representatives. Investors in the country's electricity and infrastructure sectors have repeated these views which portray Ethiopia, through its exploitation of its hydropower potential, as an energy hub for the region. For example, a Chinese investor explained that "in the region, there is a deficit in power and for countries outside Ethiopia it has proven expensive to generate… We believe that the Ethiopian government is the power hub of the East Africa region" (BIS46). A representative of an international construction firm mimicked these views stating that "Ethiopia has a hydropower potential of about 48,000 MW which we are committed to helping it exploit for the sake of its development" (BIS50). Significantly, these discourses when adopted beyond the state can act as strong contributors to decision-making at the domestic level - driving government planning and budget decisions. As explained by Bakker "hydropower development almost always requires the involvement of foreign capital and expertise… The public transcript of hydro-development is thus heavily weighted towards international discourses of development" (Bakker 1999: 211).

Another facet of the Sadoff and Grey (2002) benefit-based framing of the GERD relates to the Ethiopian government's solicitation of support from Sudan for the legitimisation of the project at the regional level. In their framing of the GERD's regional benefits, Ethiopian officials made it a focus early on to promote discourses about the benefits of the GERD to Sudan, in their efforts to convince the Sudanese government of the merits of the project. As explained by an Ethiopian diplomat "at first there was Egyptian and Sudanese opposition to the GERD, but Sudan later shifted [their position] having understood its benefits… Sudan has now turned its face upstream of the Nile where its future lies!" (GOV16). The divergence in the GERD positions of the two downstream countries discussed previously, has served to aid Ethiopian government attempts to assure the international community of the necessity of the project while corroborating this benefit-sharing discourse on the GERD. In the case of Sudan, the GERD, with its origins as a JMP, was always envisaged to especially engage Sudan, both in terms of its proximity to the Sudanese border and its cross-border benefits to the Sudanese economy. As an Ethiopian diplomat described "Sudanese support for [the] GERD serves their own national interests in facilitating large-scale farming through more regulated water and minimizing flooding (GOV33). A member of the

Ethiopian media who reports on Nile issues further confirmed "[Ethiopian] Government knows GERD is needed more by Sudan… It offers them a lifetime of business, and they are full beneficiaries" (MED21). By obtaining Sudanese support for the project, partly through the deployment of these discourses, the Ethiopian government has won a critical partner in its wider attempts to secure greater access to and utilisation of these shared resources.

The Ethiopian government's alternative discourses, adopted beyond the state, have also combined the GERD's *economic benefits* with regional integration which have been used to further legitimise the project internationally. An Ethiopian diplomat elaborated on this stating that

> "the GERD will make the country the power hub of East Africa and assist regional integration and development efforts in the region… Ethiopia is at the forefront of pushing for regional integration, even with gloomy situations in South Sudan and Somalia, [we are] pursuing road, rail and energy transmission projects with neighbouring countries… Regional integration is in [Ethiopia's] best interests – in a globalised world expanding [trade] markets is critical. It is central to our foreign policy" (GOV33).

By framing the GERD within Ethiopia's wider commitments to the AU regional integration initiatives, the Ethiopian government has attempted to provide the project with continental legitimacy. As highlighted by the Deputy Prime Minister Demeke Mekonnen, "it is also our belief that the GERD can offer wider benefits to the process of continental integration envisaged by the AU at the sub-regional level" (Cooperative Waters 2016: 9). Thus, these efforts can have the effect of discursively couching the GERD as an endeavour with multilateral buy-in as opposed to the view of it as a controversial project initiated unilaterally. The construction of the GERD is viewed as the beginning of Ethiopia's confirmation as Africa's renewable energy hub with greater energy trade and interconnectivity within neighbouring countries seen as a contributor to sub-regional and continental economic integration. As highlighted in Aspiration 2 of the AU's vision for Agenda 2063, "Africa shall be integrated… [and] shall have world class, integrative infrastructure that criss-crosses the continent" (African Union Commission 2015).

At the global level, the GERD has also been framed as a green project, part of the third pillar of Ethiopia's CRGE strategy which aims to expand electricity generation from renewable energy for domestic and regional markets (FDRE 2011). The CRGE policy has been lauded globally as an example of a developing country taking the lead in the fight against the effects of climate change. This is not lost on the current Ethiopian government, who have strategically positioned the country as a leading advocate of industrialisation through green development. As explained by a senior government advisor "we are the only ones to have mainstreamed our [CRGE] policy in Africa, and are one of few globally to have done so" (GOV36). The government has been especially adept in promoting its green discourses at international forums and conferences. For example, "At Paris [COP 21 Climate negotiations], the main model everyone was talking about was Ethiopia's… the Prime Minister, Foreign Minister and other officials are using international forums to consistently lead on climate change. We have built trust with

global community as we are not just talking about climate change but are working actively on it" (GOV36). As part of this strategy, the government has maintained the view that hydraulic infrastructure currently in development in the country is geared towards the generation of renewable energy to support development but not at the expense of the environment. For instance, in 2013, Dr Seleshi Bekele, prior to his appointment as the current Minister of Water and Electricity, discussed the importance for Africa of improving adaptive capacity to climate change, stressing that this should be a major priority for survival. He went on to highlight that "water infrastructure was key to this issue, because of the climate extremes and hydrological disasters which [have] occurred on the African continent" (Hydropower and Dams 2013). These discourses have lent themselves to the government's benefits-based framing of the GERD by describing the project as a part of the country's climate mitigation strategies. The GERD's generation of renewable energy has especially been a point of emphasis for the government in this regard, as explained by an Ethiopian diplomat who stated that "the completion of the GERD will see Ethiopia become a leading centre for renewable energy in Africa" (GOV33). This discourse, however, has not been received enthusiastically amongst non-state actors, such as regional organisations, due largely to the controversy and politicisation of the project. As explained by an interviewee working in the region "though we support and endorse the CRGE strategy, we have avoided any explicit references to the GERD in this regard. The project is just too sensitive." (RO37). This view was shared by a number of interviewees within regional organisations and financial institutions, who stated that the international controversy surrounding the project has meant they have had to exercise extreme caution in publicly discussing it.

This section has shown how the Ethiopian government is framing the GERD as a benefit-sharing project offering the region, continent and world a variety of direct and indirect benefits. By creating and maintaining the image of a responsible regional and global leader the Ethiopian hydrocracy, including Ethiopian cabinet officials, have worked to contest the existing hegemonic order in the Eastern Nile through the discursive framing of the GERD. By promoting the project at international fora, the Ethiopian government discourse has presented the project not merely as a bilateral issue with Egypt or Sudan, but one that the international community can also get behind considering its multi-spatial developmental, environmental, economic and political benefits. By aligning the project with the GHD surrounding transboundary benefit-sharing projects, the government has attempted to legitimise its construction by promoting its role in regional economic development, continental integration and global climate change mitigation. The tapping of this GHD as part of the government's use of *international diplomacy* has served to bolster its ideational power, allowing it to craft *alternative discourses* based on the GERD's multiple benefits. These discursive approaches exemplify Ethiopia's deployment of *proactive diplomacy* as part of its counter-hegemonic leverage and liberating strategies in the Eastern Nile.

7.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter has illustrated how the Ethiopian government has attempted to use 'soft' power to advance the construction of the GERD and in its wider contestation of the hydro-hegemonic status quo in the Eastern Nile. The analysis lends further support to Warner's (2008) characterisation of hydro-hegemony as a multi-layered phenomenon. Through an examination of the discursive mechanisms deployed by Ethiopia both at the domestic and international levels, it shows how support for its construction of hydraulic infrastructure and attempts at greater control of Nile water resources is achieved. In addition, this analysis reveals the ways in which GHDs justify hydraulic development in the Eastern Nile. These discourses have twin compliance-encouraging aims of justifying the GERD at the international level as a distributive project whilst framing it domestically in support of the formation of national identity, state-building and economic transformation. The first part of the chapter detailed the multi-level hydropolitics of the GERD including how the process surrounding its construction since 2011 has been exemplified by the coexistence of conflict and cooperation.

The second section of the chapter examined the relationship between the framework of counter-hegemony and Global Hydro-hegemonic Discourses (GHDs), by analysing Ethiopia's deployment of discursive power in its framing of the GERD. This demonstrated the discursive resources that non-hegemonic basin states have at their disposal in order to challenge the asymmetric control of transboundary water resources. In the third section of the chapter, there is an analysis of the role played by GHDs in the framing of the GERD project by Ethiopian government officials. Firstly, GHDs surrounding the relationship between dam-building and economic development have been used in an effort to amplify and support the framing of the GERD as an economically transformational project. Secondly, the GERD has also been portrayed alongside GHDs related to benefit-sharing so as to sell the project to other riparians and Ethiopia's international partners as a win-win project across multiple spatial scales.

In this analytical chapter, it has been possible to illustrate how the interaction of hegemonies at multiple spatial scales has been at play throughout the process of the construction of the GERD. The conceptualisation of power as a multi-dimensional and relational concept has been demonstrated through Ethiopia's deployment of discursive power in its attempts to contest Egyptian hegemony and advance the GERD project. Furthermore, the chapter shows how discursive forms of 'soft' power can be amplified by complementary GHDs which can act to support a country's leadership role in a given basin or region.

8 CONCLUSION

8.1 INTRODUCTION

The chapter presents the conceptual contributions and empirical findings of the study. In particular, this conclusion draws on analytical chapters 5, 6 and 7, to address the overall research objective of this thesis: to understand how Ethiopia, a non-hegemonic riparian, has attempted to counter Egypt's hegemonic control of transboundary water resources in the Eastern Nile Basin, and what its goals are in challenging this status quo.

The analysis of power relations in the Eastern Nile, conducted as part of this research, has corroborated the decisive, and determining, role power plays in the processes of competition over transboundary water resources. Through the deployment of a power-analytical method, the study has analysed Ethiopia's counter-hegemonic attempts to secure greater access to and utilisation of Nile water resources. It is hoped that the two-level analysis of the Ethiopian government's contestation of power asymmetry in the Eastern Nile, will make an original and unique contribution to the existing body of literature on Nile hydropolitics and water resources development in Ethiopia.

The starting point of the study was to examine the positions of the three riparians – particularly Ethiopia - in the enduring competition over water resources that has characterised Eastern Nile hydropolitics. In rejecting the dichotomous analysis of hydropolitics, as either in a state of conflict or cooperation, the study adopted a critical approach based on their coexistence in the competition for transboundary water resources. By locating the analysis of power relations along the conflict-cooperation continuum, the research has shown that the existence of power asymmetries perpetuates the existence of hegemonic processes within the Basin. Thus, the study has confirmed the presence of upstream Ethiopian counter-hegemony in the Nile Basin in response to historical Egyptian hegemonic control over these water resources.

In establishing the existence of counter-hegemony within the Basin, the study examined the changing nature of power relations reflected in challenges to the hydro-hegemonic order. The findings of the study lend further credence to the view that power relations are perpetually in a state of flux, with actors contributing to a process whereby hegemonic power is continually challenged, reproduced or relinquished. This study of power dynamics centred on the analysis of the resistive and counter-hegemonic processes omnipresent in Eastern Nile hydropolitics through an original investigation of the domestic and international factors driving the Ethiopian government's strategies to secure greater access to Nile water resources since 1991. It was also shown how the Government's contestation of hydro-hegemony on the Nile is currently taking place at the domestic, basin and international levels, contrary to previous studies which exclusively focused on the inter-state nature of Nile hydropolitics. The case of Ethiopia, examined in this study, has especially highlighted how research must move 'beyond the state' to attain more comprehensive insights on the factors driving transboundary water interactions between states.

This chapter will begin, in Section 8.2, by highlighting the research's theoretical contributions and key findings in relation to the research questions outlined in Chapter 1. It will also be shown how the examination of the case of Ethiopia helps support and improve the theoretical framework of counter-hegemony. Following on from this, Section 8.3 will evaluate the limitations of the research while identifying gaps for future research opportunities.

8.2 CONCEPTUAL CONTRIBUTIONS AND KEY FINDINGS

As articulated in Chapter 1 of this study, the principal research question guiding the thesis was: "How has Ethiopia, a non-hegemonic riparian, attempted to counter Egypt's hegemonic control of transboundary water resources in the Eastern Nile Basin, and what are its goals in challenging this status quo?" In attempting to address this research question, the analytical chapters of this thesis have provided evidence that: The Ethiopian government has deployed several counter-hegemonic strategies and tactics influenced by domestic and international factors to exert greater control over the water resources of the Eastern Nile Basin; Level II: Ethiopia's long-emerging hydraulic mission on the Nile is currently being advanced by an EPRDF-led government which associates the development of hydraulic infrastructure with its wider state-building activities aimed at: the socio-economic transformation of the country and; the restoration of historic 'Ethiopian greatness'; Level I and II: The Ethiopian state's increasing capacity for material, bargaining and ideational power has contributed to changes in the regional balance of power, thus undermining Egyptian hydro-hegemony on the Nile; and Level I: Ethiopian officials have appropriated and deployed global water discourses and ideas related to dam-building to justify and legitimise its hydraulic mission on the Nile to domestic, regional and international audiences.

By incorporating the logic of the two-level game as conceptualised by Putnam (1988), this research was able to bring greater nuance to the existing debates surrounding counter-hegemony - adequately accounting for the domestic determinants of foreign policy decisions on transboundary water development. This thesis highlighted that Ethiopia, although a non-hegemonic riparian on the Nile, has effectively deployed a variety of strategies influenced by Level I and II factors in its attempts to challenge the asymmetric control of water resources in the Basin. The types of strategies and tactics Ethiopia has deployed, and their influence on the changing hydropolitics in the Eastern Nile have been addressed in the key findings associated with the subsidiary research questions below.

Sub-question A – What domestic hegemonic strategies is the Ethiopian government pursuing in its attempts to access and utilise a greater share of Eastern Nile water resources?

> Sub-question A1 – To what extent do domestic hegemonic strategies and tactics contribute to the control of transboundary water resources?

Sub-question B – What basin-wide counter-hegemonic strategies and tactics are Ethiopian officials employing in their attempts to challenge Egyptian hegemonic control within the Eastern Nile Basin?

> Sub-question B1 – How has Ethiopia been historically impacted by Egyptian hydro-hegemony in the Nile Basin?
>
> Sub-question B2 – To what extent do basin-wide counter-hegemonic strategies and tactics contest Egyptian asymmetric control of Nile water resources within the Basin?

Sub-question C – How has the Ethiopian government deployed discursive power regionally in support of its construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam along the Blue Nile?

> Sub-question C1 – How have Ethiopian officials amplified and promoted alternative discourses, within the Basin, in support of upstream hydraulic development?
>
> Sub-question C2 - To what extent does the discursive power legitimise the unilateral construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam by the Ethiopian Government?

In relation to sub-question A and A1, Section 5.3 discussed the failure of historical hegemonic *resource capture* strategy pursued by Ethiopian Governments before 1991 and its implications for counter-hegemony in the Eastern Nile. Through an examination of the origins of this hydraulic mission, the study was able to demonstrate the evolution of the water sector and hydraulic planning in Ethiopia over time (Section 5.3.1), particularly the growth of domestic scientific and technical capacity. The study has also examined the current pursuit of the country's hydraulic mission under the EPRDF, revealing the relationship between the Government's dam programme and the centralisation of the water sector (Section 5.3.2). Finally, through an examination of the domestic politics of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam project (Section 5.3.2.2), the study established how the Government's pursuit of hydraulic control at the domestic level is contributing to its contestation of Egyptian hydro-hegemony within the Basin.

Though Ethiopia has historically exercised limited technical control over Nile waters, in recent decades, it has made significant strides in its attempts to exercise greater technical control. As discussed in Section 5.3.1, owing to a lack of internal political stability and limited financial and technical capacity in its institutions, governments in Ethiopia have been unable to construct hydraulic projects on Ethiopian Nile tributaries. The completion of the *Tekeze* dam in 2009 and Beles Hydroelectric Power Plant in 2010, noted in 6.3.2.2, are indicative of the increasing utilisation of Nile water resources by Ethiopia. As noted in Section 6.3.2.1, Ethiopia has consistently rejected the 1959 Nile Agreement between Egypt and Sudan and is not a party to any allocative legal agreement on the Nile. As demonstrated throughout this research, Ethiopia's domestic hegemonic strategies and tactics are having decisive impacts on the degree of control it exercises over Nile water resources. As discussed in Section 5.3.2, the Ethiopian government's long-planned hydraulic mission on the Nile, currently exemplified by the unilateral construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, centres on the development of a series of cascading large-scale dams on the *Abbay* river. Upon completion, these dams will drastically alter the level of control Ethiopia exercises over its Nile water resources, further illustrating the transformational impact that domestic *resource capture* strategies on the Nile can have on hegemonic control.

In relation to sub-questions B, B1 and B2, the theoretical framework discussed in Section 3.4 established that though Ethiopia, a non-hegemonic riparian on the Nile, has a scarcity of hydropolitical power this does not preclude it from challenging the Basin's hegemonic order. Thus, the study showed how the Ethiopian government has challenged the asymmetric control of Nile water resources through the deployment of a variety of counter-hegemonic strategies and tactics influenced by domestic and international factors. Section 6.2 demonstrated that Ethiopian governments before 1991, had historically been sidelined and neglected in Nile hydropolitics due to the hydro-hegemonic strategies and tactics of successive Egyptian governments pursuing consolidated control over Nile water resources. The principal strategies that Egypt has deployed to these ends include *resource capture* (Section 6.2.1.1) and *containment* and *integration* (Section 6.2.1.2). These strategies and their associated tactical outputs have contributed to historical Ethiopian resistance on the Nile, which was largely reactionary and ineffectual in helping it to secure and utilise its Nile water resources. Conversely, the Egyptian attainment and consolidation of technical control along the Nile, firmly established its position as a hydro-hegemon in the Basin during this period.

Section 6.3 illustrated how Ethiopia has deployed several mechanisms of resistance and counter-hegemony in its attempts to contest the hegemonic control of water resources in the Eastern Nile Basin. The study has shown how Ethiopia has challenged Egyptian hydro-hegemony on the Nile through tactics including: *coercive resistance* such as threats of hydraulic development in the 1980s (Section 6.3.1.1) and covert support for the SPLA in the eventual sabotage of the *Jonglei* Canal (Section 6.3.1.2); *leverage* tactics such as reactive diplomacy in rejecting and protesting the 1959 Agreement (Section 6.3.2.1), the mobilisation of alternative funding and unilateral construction of infrastructure as witnessed in the cases of the *Tekeze* Dam and GERD (Section 6.3.2.2), proactive diplomacy through the incentivisation of Sudan (Section 6.3.2.3.1) and tripartite cooperation over the GERD (Section 6.3.2.3.2); *liberating* strategies such as enhanced knowledge and expertise through participation in the NBI (Section 6.3.3.1) and discourse alternatives promoted in regional and international fora (Section 6.3.3.2).

These basin-wide strategies and tactics, in concert with complementary domestic hegemonic strategies, have been demonstrated to be effective in contesting Egyptian hydro-hegemony in the Basin. In the last two decades, the Ethiopian government's contestation of Egyptian hydro-hegemony has been more clearly organised and articulated. Through a slew of resistive strategies and tactics, Ethiopian officials have: (1) contested the hegemonic legitimacy of Egypt in the Basin through the unilateral construction of the GERD; (2) challenged the downstream hegemonic *status quo* by actively working to decouple the historic alliance between Egypt and Sudan; and (3) proposed alternatives to this status quo in the form of shared control of the Nile through a basin-wide cooperative regime governed by a new multilateral legal water agreement. These consequences exemplify greater proactiveness on the part of Ethiopian officials currently pursuing hydraulic development in Ethiopia and have made significant contributions to the eventual transformation of the Basin's hydropolitics.

In relation to sub-questions C, C1 and C2, the study has also shown how the Ethiopian Government has deployed global hydro-hegemonic discourses linking dams and economic development (Section 7.4.1) and benefit-sharing (Section 7.4.2) in a bid to justify its unilateral construction of the GERD. These discourse alternatives surrounding dam development upstream have illustrated how the contestation of hydro-hegemony through material forms of power, such as infrastructure, have been complemented by 'softer' discursive forms of power. The research findings have shown that, contrary to public discourses in the international media, Ethiopia's goals in challenging the hydro-hegemonic status quo on the Nile are not to make Egypt 'thirsty'. Instead, the study has shown that Ethiopia's goals in pursuing hydraulic development on the Nile are more about the domestic political economy than international politics. In the current pursuit of the hydraulic mission, the Ethiopian Government has closely related the development of water infrastructure to its developmental state-building activities which aim to achieve the socio-economic renaissance of Ethiopia and the restoration of 'Ethiopian greatness'. This further justifies the importance of adopting a two-level analysis in this study as without accounting for the domestic determinants of the Government's foreign policy, it would be virtually impossible to identify what is currently driving counter-hegemonic processes within the Basin. This is an important theoretical contribution of the research and would enrich any future research on hegemonic process within transboundary river basins.

As demonstrated in these findings, what has been taking place in the Basin since 1991 represents a significant departure from previous eras. In particular, the changes to the strategies and tactics of the Ethiopian government away from the reactive contestation and resistance of previous decades towards more pro-active counter-hegemony when viewed in totality can be considered to represent the start of a counter-hegemonic strategy. As discussed by Persaud (2001:7) resistance and counter hegemony can be viewed as two sides of the same coin in that the former is "more reactive in its motivation and refractory in consequence" while the other "is more deliberate in actions and comprehensive in terms of its transformative potential". The case of Ethiopian counter-hegemony is no different as the reactive and refractory resistance of the past has laid the foundations for the more deliberate and comprehensive strategies and tactics of the present day. In particular, though the cooperative process surrounding the GERD has put in doubt the legitimacy of the 1959 Agreement, the lack of agreement over the CFA has meant that Ethiopia's vision of reasonable and equitable utilisation of Nile water resources has yet to be realised. The trends in the Basin, however, are increasingly pointing towards an end to Egyptian hydro-hegemony on the River – an end which will find its origins in the counter-hegemonic strategies Ethiopia has been pursuing over the last two decades.

8.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH AND AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The following section aims to highlight the main limitations of the research and how it could be further refined.

The study focused primarily on the Eastern Nile Basin and the hegemonic processes which have engaged its three main riparian states – Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan. Firstly, as explained in the introduction (Section 1.3) the scope was narrowed to this sub-Basin due to its hydrological significance as the source of the majority of Nile flows and its geopolitical importance as home to the three most influential countries in the Basin. However, the Nile Basin is shared by eleven countries with related hegemonic processes also taking place in the Equatorial sub-basin. This scope was narrowed with the understanding that an examination of Eastern Nile hegemonic processes, though not comprehensive, would be reflective of the changing nature of hegemonic processes within the Basin as a whole. The geographical scope was also limited for more pragmatic reasons – it would have been both temporally and financially unfeasible to attempt to conduct qualitative multi-spatial research in eleven countries considering the circumstances of a Ph.D. Nonetheless, future research in this area could focus on an examination of the hydro-hegemonic and counter-hegemonic processes currently affecting the hydropolitics of the Equatorial sub-basin. By widening the scope to encompass the strategies and tactics of riparian actors in this sub-basin, research would more comprehensively capture the role of power relations in the Nile Basin as a whole.

Within the Eastern Nile Basin, a two-level counter-hegemonic analysis accounting for the domestic and international factors influencing the strategies and tactics deployed by riparians was only carried out from an Ethiopian perspective. Though, Ethiopia is currently the country most obviously contesting hydro-hegemony in the Basin, the influence of Sudanese strategy to the same ends and the evolution of Egyptian hydro-hegemony in response demand further investigation. The analysis of the state in this depth in both Sudan and Egypt and the widening of the scope to incorporate the role of non-state actors would serve to enrich the existing literature on the influence of power relations on transboundary water outcomes. Particularly, further research should be conducted into the influence of intra-state developments on the national political economy priorities of Sudan in relation to the development of water resources. Possible areas of future research could focus on:

- The impact of the independence of South Sudan on the current hydro-agricultural mission in Sudan;
- Sudanese-Egyptian relations following the Arab Spring and their influence on the decoupling of the historic Egyptian-Sudanese joint position on the Nile;
- The increasing role of external actors in the Sudanese water sector including Gulf investments in agriculture and Chinese involvement in dam-building;
- *Silentised* Sudanese counter-hegemony in the Eastern Nile

The two-level framework for counter-hegemony employed in this study would have been more effective in capturing hegemonic dynamics at all scales within the Ethiopian state had the spatial scope of this

study been expanded to the regional, zonal and district levels within Ethiopia and the focus of analysis widened to include the roles of non-state actors. This would mitigate the risk of future studies in the area suffering from state-centricism. Furthermore, through an examination of the water sector institutions, businesses, NGOs and civil society groups outside the Federal System, the research would have been better able to demonstrate the various influences impacting decision-making within the water sector.

Research into the policy-making process in the Ethiopian water and energy sectors and the influence of international organisations (including international financial institutions, UN organisations and NGOs) and non-state actors on these processes should also be an area of future research. This would serve to expand the limited literature on this area.

8.4 CONCLUSION

The study, which was primarily motivated by the controversy and national obsession with the construction of the GERD in 2012, comes to an end with the project nearing completion. It was also during this period that long-time Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Meles Zenawi, passed away. As the architect of the EPRDF's hydraulic state-building project in Ethiopia, his disappearance from the political landscape has left a tremendous hole. The Federal System he helped establish and carefully managed over the last two decades is experiencing what could conservatively be described as growing pains. It has been argued that the post-Meles transition which seemed to have taken place in 2013-15 is actually taking place today. Frustration in the peripheries is driving antagonism and chauvinism whilst political lethargy at the centre is failing to address challenges to the System as a whole. Ethiopian state-formation seems to be a process with no beginning and no end.

Yet even with these challenges to the system, the hydraulic mission ploughs on. Seemingly on auto-pilot. Alongside the GERD, the Ethiopian government has recently commissioned the fourth of five cascade dams on the Omo River Basin. More dams are in the pipeline within the Eastern Nile Basin and, inevitably, announcements of irrigation in the Ethiopian Nile will soon follow. But as has been examined in this study, hydraulic development in Ethiopia is intrinsically tied to state-formation. The impacts of turmoil in the state system will inevitably begin to influence the water and energy sectors. The GERD, in particular, as a flagship project and a rare symbol for national unity occupies an even more critical space in today's national consciousness.

In the Eastern Nile, the CFA remains unresolved. With rising Sudanese water withdrawals and Ethiopian utilisation, Egyptian hydro-hegemony on the Nile may never recover. Now more than ever, a basin-wide agreement to govern Nile water resources for the benefit of all riparians is a necessity.

It is hoped that the findings of this study can contribute to more comprehensive scholarship on this subject with further research in the area ultimately contributing to evidence-based reform in the water sector in Ethiopia. More widely, the findings of this research provide important insights on the practices and strategies for transnational actors currently consulting and operating within the Eastern Nile Basin.

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APPENDICES

A: [1959] UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC AND SUDAN AGREEMENT (WITH ANNEXES) FOR THE FULL UTILIZATION OF THE NILE WATERS.

Signed at Cairo, on 8 November 1959; in force 12 December 1959

As the River Nile needs projects, for its full control and for increasing its yield for the full utilization of its waters by the Republic of the Sudan and the United Arab Republic on technical working arrangements other than those now applied: And as these works require for their execution and administration, full agreement and co-operation between the two Republics in order to regulate their benefits and utilize the Nile waters in a manner which secures the present and future requirements of the two countries: And as the Nile waters Agreement concluded in 1929 provided only for the partial use of the Nile waters and did not extend to include a complete control of the River waters, the two Republics have agreed on the following:

First - The Present Acquired Rights

1. That the amount of the Nile waters used by the United Arab Republic until this Agreement is signed shall be her acquired right before obtaining the benefits of the Nile Control Projects and the projects which will increase its yield and which projects are referred to in this Agreement; The total of this acquired right is 48 Milliards of cubic meters per year as measured at Aswan.

2. That the amount of the waters used at present by the Republic of Sudan shall be her acquired right before obtaining the benefits of the projects referred to above. The total amount of this acquired right is 4 Milliards of cubic meters per measured at Aswan.

Second - The Nile Control Projects And The Division Of Their Benefits Between The Two Republics

1. In order to regulate the River waters and control their flow into the sea, the two Republics agree that the United Arab Republic constructs the Sudd el Aali at Aswan as the first link of a series of projects on the Nile for over-year storage.

2. In order to enable the Sudan to utilize its share of the water, the two Republics agree that the Republic of Sudan shall construct the Roseires Darn on the Blue Nile and any other works which the Republic of the Sudan considers essential for the utilization of its share.

3. The net benefit from the Sudd el Aali Reservoir shall be calculated on the basis of the average natural River yield of water at Aswan in the years of this century, which is estimated at about 84 Milliards of cubic meters per year. The acquired rights of the two Republics referred to in Article "First" as measured at Aswan, and the average of losses of over-year storage of the Sudd El Aali Reservoir shall be deducted from this yield, and the balance shall be the net benefit which shall be divided between the two Republics.

4. The net benefit from the Sudd el Aali Reservoir mentioned in the previous item, shall be divided between the two Republics at the ratio of 14½ for the Sudan and 7½ for the United Arab Republic so long as the average river yield remains in future within the limits of the average yield referred to in the previous paragraph. This means that, if the average yield remains the same as the average of the previous years of this century which is estimated at 84 Milliards, and if the losses of over-year storage remain equal to the present estimate of 10 milliards, the net benefit of the Sudd el Aali Reservoir shall be 22 Milliards of which the share of the Republic of the Sudan shall be 14½ Milliards and the share of the United Arab Republic shall be 7½ Milliards. By adding these shares to their acquired rights, the total share from the net yield of the Nile after the full operation of the Sudd el Aali Reservoir shall be 18½ Milliards for the Republic of the Sudan and 55½ Milliards for the United Arab Republic.

But if the average yield increases, the resulting net benefit from this increase shall be divided between the two Republics, in equal shares.

5. As the net benefit from the Sudd el Aali (referred to in item 3 Article Second) is calculated on the basis of the average natural yield of the river at Aswan in the years of this century after the deduction therefrom of the acquired rights of the two Republics and the average losses of over-year storage at the Sudd el Aali Reservoir, it is agreed that this net benefit shall be the subject of revision by the two parties at reasonable intervals to be agreed upon after starting the full operation of the Sudd el Aali Reservoir.

6. The United Arab Republic agrees to pay to the Sudan Republic 15 Million Egyptian Pounds as full compensation for the damage resulting to the Sudanese existing properties as a result of the storage in the Sudd el Aali Reservoir up to a reduced level of 182 meters (survey datum). The payment of this compensation shall be affected in accordance with the annexed agreement between the two parties.

7. The Republic of the Sudan undertakes to arrange before July 1963, the final transfer of the population of Halfa and all other Sudanese inhabitants whose lands shall be submerged by the stored water.

8. It is understood that when the Sudd el Aali is fully operated for over-year storage, the United Arab Republic will not require storing any water at Gebel Aulia Dam. And the two contracting parties will in due course, discuss all matters related to this renunciation.

Third - Projects For The Utilization Of Lost Waters Ix The Nile Basin

In view of the fact that at present, considerable volumes of the Nile Basin Waters are lost in the swamps of Bahr El Jebel, Bahr El Zeraf, Balir el Ghazal and the Sobat River, and as it is essential that efforts should be exerted in order to prevent these losses and to increase the yield of the River for use in agricultural expansion in the two Republics, the two Republics agree to the following:

1. The Republic of the Sudan in agreement with the United Arab Republic shall construct projects for the increase of the River yield by preventing losses of waters of the Nile Basin in the swamps of Bahr El

Jebel, Bahr el Zeraf, Bahr el Ghazal and its tributaries, the Sobat River and its tributaries and the White Nile Basin. The net yield of these projects shall be divided equally between the two Republics and each of them shall also contribute equally to the costs.

The Republic of the Sudan shall finance the above-mentioned projects out of its own funds and the United Arab Republic shall pay its share in the costs in the same ratio of 50% allotted for her in the yield of these projects.

2. If the United Arab Republic, on account of the progress in its planned agricultural expansion should find it necessary to start on any of the increase of the Nile yield projects, referred to in the previous paragraph, after its approval by the two Governments and at a time when the Sudan Republic does not need such project, the United Arab Republic shall notify the Sudan Republic of the time convenient for the former to start the execution of the project. And each of the two Republics shall, within two years after such notification, present a date-phased programme for the utilization of its share of the waters saved by the project, and each of the said programmes shall bind the two parties. The United Arab Republic shall at the expiry of the two years, start the execution of the projects, at its own expense. And when the Republic of Sudan is ready to utilize its share according to the agreed programme, it shall pay to the United Arab Republic a share of all the expenses in the same ratio as the Sudan's share in benefit is to the total benefit of the project; provided that the share of either Republic shall not exceed one half of the total benefit of the project.

Fourth - Technical Co-Operation Between The Two Republics

1. In order to ensure the technical co-operation between the Governments of the two Republics, to continue the research and study necessary for the Nile control projects and the increase of its yield and to continue the hydrological survey of its upper reaches, the two Republics agree that immediately after the signing of this Agreement a Permanent joint Technical Commission shall be formed of an equal number of members from both parties; and its functions shall be:

a. The drawing of the basic outlines of projects for the increase of the Nile yield, and for the supervision of the studies necessary for the finalising of projects, before presentation of the same to the Governments of the two Republics for approval.

b. The supervision of the execution of the projects approved by the two Governments.

c. The drawing up of the working arrangements for any works to be constructed on the Nile, within the boundaries of the Sudan, and also for those to be constructed outside the boundaries of the Sudan, by agreement with the authorities concerned in the countries in which such works are constructed.

d. The supervision of the application of all the working arrangements mentioned in (c) above in connection with works constructed within the boundaries of Sudan and also in connection with the

Sudd el Aali Reservoir and Aswan Dam, through official engineers delegated for the purpose by the two Republics; and the supervision of the working of the upper Nile projects, as provided in the agreements concluded with the countries in which such projects are constructed.

e. As it is probable that a series of low years may occur, and a succession of low levels in the Sudd el Aali Reservoir may result to such an extent as not to permit in any one year the drawing of the full requirements of the two Republics, the Technical Commission is charged with the task of devising a fair arrangement for the two Republics to follow. And the recommendations of the Commission shall be presented to the two Governments for approval.

2. In order to enable the Commission to exercise the functions enumerated in the above item, and in order to ensure the continuation of the Nile gauging and to keep observations on all its upper reaches, these duties shall be carried out under the technical supervision of the Commission by the engineers of the Sudan Republic, and the engineers of the United Arab Republic in the Sudan and in the United Arab Republic and in Uganda.

3. The two Governments shall form the Joint Technical Commission, by a joint decree, and shall provide it with its necessary funds from their budgets. The Commission may, according to the requirements of work, hold its meetings in Cairo or in Khartoum. The Commission shall, subject to the approval of the two Governments, lay down regulations for the organisation of its meetings and its technical, administrative and financial activities.

Fifth - General Provisions

1. If it becomes necessary to hold any negotiations concerning the Nile waters, with any riparian state, outside the boundaries of the two Republics, the Governments of the Sudan Republic and the United Arab Republic shall agree on a unified view after the subject is studied by the said Technical Commission. The said unified view shall be the basis of any negotiations by the Commission with the said states.

If the negotiations result in an agreement to construct any works on the river, outside the boundaries of the two Republics, the joint Technical Commission shall after consulting the authorities in the Governments of the States concerned, draw all the technical execution details and the working and maintenance arrangements. And the Commission shall, after the sanction of the same by the Governments concerned, supervise the carrying out of the said technical agreements.

2. As the riparian states, other than the two Republics, claim a share in the Nile waters, the two Republics have agreed that they shall jointlv consider and reach one unified view regarding the said claims. And if the said consideration results in the acceptance of allotting an amount of the Nile water to one or the other of the said states, the accepted amount shall be deducted from the shares of the two Republics in equal parts, as calculated at Aswan.

The Technical Commission mentioned in this agreement shall make the necessary arrangements with the states concerned, in order to ensure that their water consumption shall not exceed the amounts agreed upon.

Sixth - Transitional Period Before Benefiting From The Complete Sudd El Aali Reservoir

As the benefiting of the two Republics from their appointed shares in the net benefit of the Sudd el Aali Reservoir shall not start before the construction and the full utilization of the Reservoir, the two parties shall agree on their agricultural expansion programmes in the transitional period from now up to the completion of the Sudd el Aali without prejudice to their present water requirements.

Seventh

This Agreement shall come into force after its sanction by the two contracting parties, provided that either party shall notify the other party of the date of its sanction, through the diplomatic channels.

Eighth

Annex (1) and Annex (2, A and B) attached to this Agreement shall be considered as an integral part of this Agreement.

Written in Cairo in two Arabic original copies this 7th day of Gumada El Oula 1379, the 8th day of November 1959.

For the Republic of Sudan:

(*signed*) Lewa Mohammed Talaat Farid

For the United Arab Republic:

(*signed*) Zakaria Mohie El Din

ANNEX 1 - A Special Provision For The Water Loan Required By The United Arab Republic

The Republic of the Sudan agrees in principle to give a water loan from the Sudan's share in the Sudd el Aali waters, to the United Arab Republic, in order to enable the latter to proceed with her planned programmes for Agricultural Expansion.

The request of the United Arab Republic for this loan shall be made after it revises its programmes within five years from the date of the signing of this agreement. And if the revision by United Arab Republic reveals her need for this loan, the Republic of the Sudan shall give it out of its own share a loan not exceeding one and a half Milliards, provided that the utilisation of this loan shall cease in November, 1977.

ANNEX 2 - A

To the Head of the Delegation of the Republic of Sudan

With reference to Article (Second) paragraph 6 of the Agreement signed this day, concerning the full utilization of the River Nile Waters, compensation amounting to 15 Million Egyptian Pounds in sterling or in a third currency agreed upon by the two parties and calculated on the basis of a fixed rate of$2.87156 to the Egyptian Pound, shall be paid by the Government of the United Arab Republic, as agreed upon, in instalments in the following manner:

£ 3 million on the first of January, 1960

£ 4 million on the first of January, 1961

£ 4 million on the first of January, 1962

£ 4 million on the first of January, 1963

I shall be grateful if you confirm your agreement to the above.

With highest consideration.

Head of the United Arab Republic Delegation:

(*signed*) Zakaria Mohie El Din

ANNEX 2 - B

To the Head of United Arab Republic Delegation

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated today and stipulating the following:

[*See Annex 2, A*]

I have the honour to confirm the agreement of the Government of the Republic of the Sudan to the contents of the said letter.

With highest consideration.

Head of the Delegation of the Republic of Sudan:

(*signed*) Lewa Mohamed Talaat Farid

1. Translation by the Government of the United Arab Republic.

2. League of Nations, *Treaty Series,* Vol. XCIII, p.43.

B: [1993] FRAMEWORK FOR GENERAL COOPERATION BETWEEN THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT AND ETHIOPIA

FRAMEWORK FOR GENERAL CO-OPERATION
BETWEEN
THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT
AND
ETHIOPIA

THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT AND ETHIOPIA,

DETERMINED TO CONSOLIDATE THE TIES OF FRIENDSHIP, TO ENHANCE COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES AND TO ESTABLISH A BROAD BASE OF COMMON INTERESTS,

DESIROUS OH THE REALIZATION OF THEIR FULL ECONOMIC AND RESOURCE POTENTIALS,

RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE TRADITIONAL TIES EXISTING BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES THAT HAVE BEEN CONSOLIDATED DURING THEIR LONG HISTORY OF CLOSE RELATIONS AND LINKED BY THE NILE RIVER WITH ITS BASIN AS A CENTER OF MUTUAL INTEREST,

REAFFIRMING THEIR COMMITMENT TO THE UN AND OAU CHARTERS, PRINCIPLES OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, AS WELL AS THE LAGOS PLAN OF ACTION,

HEREBY AGREE ON THE FOLLOWING FRAMEWORK FOR COOPERATION:

ARTICLE 1

THE TWO PARTIES REAFFIRM THEIR COMMITMENT TO THE PRINCIPLES OF GOOD NEIGHBOURLINESS, PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES, AND NON-INTERFERENCE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF STATES.

ARTICLE 2

THE TWO PARTIES ARE COMMITTED TO THE CONSOLIDATION OF MUTUAL TRUST AND UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

ARTICLE 3

THE TWO PARTIES RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF THEIR COOPERATION AS AN ESSENTIAL MEANS TO PROMOTE THEIR ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL INTERESTS AS WELL AS STABILITY OF THE REGION.

ARTICLE 4

THE TWO PARTIES AGREE THAT THE ISSUE OF THE USE OF THE NILE WATERS SHALL BE WORKED OUT IN DETAIL THROUGH DISCUSSIONS BY EXPERTS FROM BOTH SIDES, ON THE BASIS OF THE RULES AND PRINCIPLES OF INTERNATIONAL LAW.

ARTICLE 5

EACH PARTY SHALL REFRAIN FROM ENGAGING IN ANY ACTIVITY RELATED TO THE NILE WATERS THAT MAY CAUSE APPRECIABLE HARM TO THE INTERESTS OF THE OTHER PARTY.

ARTICLE 6

THE TWO PARTIES AGREE ON THE NECESSITY OF THE CONSERVATION AND PROTECTION OF THE NILE WATERS. IN THIS REGARD, THEY UNDERTAKE TO CONSULT AND COOPERATE IN PROJECTS THAT ARE MUTUALLY ADVANTAGEOUS, SUCH AS PROJECTS THAT WOULD ENHANCE THE VOLUME OF FLOW AND REDUCE THE LOSS OF NILE WATERS THROUGH COMPREHENSIVE AND INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES.

ARTICLE 7

THE TWO PARTIES WILL CREATE APPROPRIATE MECHANISM FOR PERIODIC CONSULTATIONS ON MATTERS OF MUTUAL CONCERN, INCLUDING THE NILE WATERS, IN A MANNER THAT WOULD ENABLE THEM TO WORK TOGETHER FOR PEACE AND STABILITY IN THE REGION.

ARTICLE 8

THE TWO PARTIES SHALL ENDEAVOUR TOWARDS A FRAMEWORK FOR EFFECTIVE COOPERATION AMONG COUNTRIES OF THE NILE BASIN FOR THE PROMOTION OF COMMON INTEREST IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BASIN.

THIS FRAMEWORK FOR COOPERATION IS MADE IN TWO ORIGINALS IN THE ARABIC AND ENGLISH LANGUAGES, BOTH TEXTS BEING EQUALLY AUTHENTIC.

DONE AT CAIRO THIS 1st DAY OF THE MONTH OF JULY 1993.

FOR THE
ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT

HOSNI MOUBARAK
PRESIDENT OF THE
REPUBLIC

FOR
ETHIOPIA

MELES ZENAWI
PRESIDENT OF THE
TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT

C: [2010] ARTICLE 14B ATTACHMENT OF THE AGREEMENT ON THE NILE RIVER BASIN COOPERATIVE FRAMEWORK

At the end of the negotiations, no consensus was reached on Article 14(b) which reads as follows: "*not to significantly affect the water security of any other Nile Basin States*".

All countries [Burundi, DR Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda] agreed to this proposal except Egypt and Sudan. To this effect, Egypt proposed that Article 14(b) should be replaced by the following wording:

"*not to adversely affect the water security and current uses and rights of any other Nile Basin State*".

The Extraordinary Meeting of the Nile Council of Ministers held in Kinshasa, the Democratic Republic of Congo, on 22 May 2009 resolved that the issue on the Article 14(b) be annexed and resolved by the Nile River Basin Commission within six months of its establishment.

D: [2015] AGREEMENT ON DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES BETWEEN THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT, THE FEDERAL DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA AND THE REPUBLIC OF THE SUDAN ON THE GRAND ETHIOPIAN RENAISSANCE DAM PROJECT (GERDP)

Introduction

Mindful of the rising demand of the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Republic of Sudan on their transboundary water resources, and cognizant of the significance of the River Nile as the source of livelihood and the significant resource to the development of the people of Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan, the three countries have committed to the following principles on the GERD.

1. Principle of Cooperation:

- Cooperation based on mutual understanding, common interest, good intentions, benefits for all, and the principles of international law.

- Cooperation in understanding the water needs of upstream and downstream countries across all their lands.

2. Principle of Development, Regional Integration and Sustainability:

- The purpose of the Renaissance Dam is to generate power, contribute to economic development, promote cooperation beyond borders, and regional integration through generating clean sustainable energy that can be relied on.

3. Principle of Not Causing Significant Damage:

- The three countries will take all the necessary procedures to avoid causing significant damage while using the Blue Nile (the Nile's main river).

- In spite of that, in case significant damage is caused to one of these countries, the country causing the damage [...], in the absence of an agreement over that [damaging] action, [is to take] all the necessary procedures to alleviate this damage, and discuss compensation whenever convenient.

4. Principle of Fair and Appropriate Use:

- The three countries will use their common water sources in their provinces in a fair and appropriate manner.

- To ensure fair and appropriate use, the three countries will take into consideration all guiding elements mentioned below:

a. The geographic, the geographic aquatic, the aquatic, the climatical, environmental elements, and the rest of all natural elements.

b. Social and economic needs for the concerned Nile Basin countries.

c. The residents who depend on water sources in each of the Nile Basin countries.

d. The effects of using or the uses of water sources in one of the Nile Basin countries on another Nile Basin country.

e. The current and possible uses of water sources.

f. Elements of preserving, protecting, [and] developing [water sources] and the economics of water sources, and the cost of the procedures taken in this regard.

g. The extent of the availability of alternatives with a comparable value for a planned or a specific use.

h. The extent of contribution from each of the Nile Basin countries in the Nile River system.

i. The extent of the percentage of the Nile Basin's space within the territories of each Nile Basin country.

5. The Principle of the Dam's Storage Reservoir First Filling, and Dam Operation Policies:

- To apply the recommendations of the international technical experts committee and the results of the final report of the Tripartite National Technical Committee during different stages of the dam project.

- The three countries should cooperate to use the final findings in the studies recommended by the Tripartite National Technical Committee and international technical experts in order to reach:

a. An agreement on the guidelines for different scenarios of the first filling of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam reservoir in parallel with the construction of the dam.

b. An agreement on the guidelines and annual operation policies of the Renaissance Dam, which the owners can adjust from time to time.

c. To inform downstream countries, Egypt and Sudan, on any urgent circumstances that would call for a change in the operations of the dam, in order to ensure coordination with downstream countries' water reservoirs.

- Accordingly the three countries are to establish a proper mechanism through their ministries of water and irrigation.

- The timeframe for such points mentioned above is 15 months from the start of preparing two studies about the dam by the international technical committee.

6. The Principle of Building Trust:

- Downstream countries will be given priority to purchase energy generated by the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam.

7. The Principle of Exchange of Information and Data:

- Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan will provide the information and data required to conduct the studies of the national experts committees from the three countries in the proper time.

8. The Principle of Dam Security:

- The three countries appreciate all efforts made by Ethiopia up until now to implement the recommendations of the international experts committee regarding the safety of the dam.

- Ethiopia will continue in good will to implement all recommendations related to the dam's security in the reports of the international technical experts.

9. The Principle of The Sovereignty, Unity and Territorial Integrity of the State:

The three countries cooperate on the basis of equal sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of the state, mutual benefit and good will, in order to reach the better use and protection of the River Nile.

10. The Principle of the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes:

The three countries commit to settle any dispute resulting from the interpretation or application of the declaration of principles through talks or negotiations based on the good will principle. If the parties involved do not succeed in solving the dispute through talks or negotiations, they can ask for mediation or refer the matter to their heads of states or prime minister.

This agreement on Declaration of Principles is signed in Khartoum, Sudan, on the 23 of March, 2015, by the Arab Republic of Egypt, The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, and the Republic of Sudan.

E: INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

You are invited to take part in research on the changing role of Ethiopia in Eastern Nile Basin hydropolitics. You have been identified as a potential participant because of your contributions to water-related issues in Ethiopia. The research is being conducted by Mr. Frezer Getachew Haile. I ask that you read this form before agreeing to be in the research.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the research is to find out more information about Ethiopia's changing role in the hydropolitics of the Eastern Nile Basin. I am interested in learning more about the sub-national and transboundary water policies being adopted by Ethiopia. I also want to learn about the strategies and tactics being pursued by the state in its attempts to implement these policies and utilize its water resources.

PROCEDURES

If you agree to be in this research, and sign this consent form, I ask that you participate in a semi-structured interview. The interview should take only 60 minutes of your time.

RISKS AND BENEFITS

You will be asked to answer questions that directly ask about your position and role in the water sector. Some of the questions may be personal, but the information will not be shared with anyone else. You may refuse to answer any questions. I will not share with anyone, including King's College London, the specific details you tell me. There are no direct benefits of the study.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The records of this study will be kept in private by the researcher alone. Anything you say within this interviews will also remain confidential. In any sort of report of the study, we will not include any personal information that will make it possible to identify you. We are not asking for your name, address, or phone number. The interview data will be kept under encryption; only the researcher for this study will have access to this data.

VOLUNTARY NATURE OF STUDY

Your decision whether or not to participate in this research will not affect your current or future relations with the researcher or King's College London, University of London. Even if you sign the consent form, you are free to stop the interview at any time. You do not need to complete it if you feel uncomfortable participating in or proceeding with it.

CONTACT

The researcher conducting this study is Mr. Frezer Getachew Haile, a PhD Candidate in the Department of Geography at King's College London, University of London. If you have any questions or concerns you may contact the researcher by email at frezer.haile@kcl.ac.uk or by phone at: +251 938923261 (Ethiopia) or +44 7565298626 (United Kingdom).

I have read the above information and understand that this interview is voluntary and I may stop at any time. I consent to participate in the study.

_____

Signature of participant

_____

Date

_____

Signature of researcher

_____

Date

☐ Participant received a copy.

Research Ethics Office

King's College London

Rm 5.12 FWB (Waterloo Bridge Wing)

Stamford Street
London
SE1 9NH

16 February 2015

TO: Frezer Haile

SUBJECT: Confirmation of Approval

Dear Frezer,

Thank you for submitting your Research Ethics Minimal Risk Checklist. This letter acknowledges the receipt of your checklist; your Research Ethics Number is **MR/14/15-24**. Be sure to keep a record of this number and include it in any materials associated with this research.

Record Keeping:
In addition, you are expected to keep records of your process of informed consent and the dates and relevant details of research covered by this application. For example, depending on the type of research that you are doing, you might keep:

- A record of the relevant details for public talks that you attend, the websites that visit, the interviews that you conduct
- The 'script' that you use to inform possible participants about what your research involves. This may include written information sheets, or the generic information you include in the emails you write to possible participants, or what you say to people when you approach them on the street for a survey, or the introductory material stated at the top of your on-line survey.
- Where appropriate, records of consent, e.g. copies of signed consent forms or emails where participants agree to be interviewed.

Audit:
You may be selected for an audit, to see how researchers are implementing this process. If audited, you will be expected to explain how your research abides by the general principles of ethical research. In particular, you will be expected to provide a general summary of your review of the possible risks involved in your research, as well as to provide basic research records (as above in Record Keeping) and to describe the process by which participants agreed to participate in your research.

Remember that if you have any questions about the ethical conduct of your research at any point, you should contact your supervisor, the Research Ethics office, or a member of your Department's Research Ethics Panel for advice.

Feedback:
As KCL is currently trialling the Minimal Risk Process, you may be selected to provide feedback on the Minimal Risk guidance, form and process. You can also provide feedback on the process by emailing rec@kcl.ac.uk .

We wish you every success with this work.

With best wishes,

Research Ethics Office