

INTERNATIONAL DEMOCRACY AND AUTOCRACY
SUPPORT AND THE AGENCY OF RECIPIENT STATES: THE
CASES OF KENYA AND ETHIOPIA, 1963-2018

by

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Abstract:

This thesis addresses the relationship between African authoritarian governments, and their agency-leveraging capacity with external actors; China, Russia, and Western donors. It focuses in on the phenomenon of autocratic support; the process of external actors supporting and stabilising authoritarian recipient governments by supplying material, political, and diplomatic support. More specifically, it asks how governments receiving autocratic assistance exercise agency and decision-making powers when negotiating for support from external actors. In this thesis, a framework of agency-leveraging strategies that recipient authoritarian governments use to capture autocratic support is developed, through case studies of Ethiopian and Kenyan governments from 1963 until 2018.

It is emphasised that in foreign policy negotiations, there exists significant scope for African authoritarian governments to negotiate and leverage their importance- and global dynamics between Western and non-Western supporters to make greater gains from external assistance. Utilising both the existing literature on this subject, and empirical data arising from interviews and archives, this thesis develops a framework of agency-leveraging strategies that African governments frequently use when in discussions with external actors.

This analysis reveals that these governments have consistently used strategies from the agency-leveraging framework to bolster and stabilise their rule and capture greater levels of assistance from external donors. These strategies include the development of narratives of authoritarian stability, the aligning of political aims and interests between recipient governments and supporters, and the use of historical legacies to endear supporters to gain greater benefits for recipients. The choice of strategies used by governments in both states has been motivated by the domestic politics in both states, including the level of domestic legitimacy the government has, alongside domestic, regional, and international crises and threats.

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Introduction

Recent academic and policy literature has focussed upon the development of a multipolar world, where competing actors and interests have converged upon the African continent (Alden & Large, 2019; Harman & Brown, 2013; Mohan & Power, 2007; Odoom & Andrews, 2017). Much again has been written about the presence of new actors on the continent, namely China – and its approach to economic and political engagement across the continent (Acker et al. 2020; Benabdallah, 2020a, 2020b, 2021; Hodzi, 2018a, 2020; Ziso, 2020) – and the emergence of Russia as a growing political and military actor within several states across Africa (Arkhangelskaya & Shubin, 2013; Besenyő, 2019; Daniel & Shubin, 2018; Gerőcs, 2019). As ever, however, ‘traditional’ donors, such as the US and UK have also continued to play a substantive role on the foreign policy and international relations of African states.

Considerations as to the nature of China and Russia’s involvement in the African continent – and as an extension to this, the concern as to whether their presence can affect the strength of democracy and potential for democratisation across the continent – has been documented within the academic literature. As will be noted throughout the thesis, there are a myriad of understandings and suggestions as to why these newer powers are engaging with states across the African continent, and what potential benefits such actors gain from their engagement. These include economic benefits, as well as political and diplomatic benefits that can both affect in a positive way their wider engagement with the African continent, as well as their presence in multilateral fora, such as the UN.

Whilst academic research on the nature of the engagement by China, Russia, and other external actors across the African continent has been extensive, such research has often been unduly focussed upon these external actors, rather than the African recipients of support and engagement (Bader, 2014; Ghiselli, 2018; Kneuer & Demmelhuber, 2021; Large, 2008). African recipients – as will be noted later in this introduction – not only gain significant benefits from engagement with traditional and newer actors, but can exercise agency to garner greater benefits within these

relationships. This is an important and overlooked area of research. With the increase in multipolar engagement across the African continent, it is more important than ever to consider the recipient side of this process.

Furthermore, whilst the study of agency has been developed within the research area of African politics, this thesis goes further by exploring not just the concept of agency as it exists within the relationship between African actors and their external counterparts, but the methods through which agency is exercised, which strategies African actors use to exercise agency, and the domestic and international contexts and constraints that can affect the methods used.

This thesis focuses upon the relationship between African authoritarian governments, and their agency-leveraging capacity with external actors. It develops and explores the phenomenon of autocratic support. Autocratic support is defined in this thesis as the process of external actors supplying material, political, and diplomatic support to non-Western recipient governments with the aim of supporting existing authoritarian rule, or encouraging authoritarian governance in democratic cases.

This thesis concerns itself with how governments receiving assistance within this process exercise agency and decision-making powers when negotiating for support from external actors. A framework of agency-leveraging strategies is developed in the forthcoming chapters that recipient authoritarian governments use to capture autocratic support is developed, through case studies of Ethiopian and Kenyan governments from 1963 until 2018.

The primary contribution and argument of this thesis is that in foreign policy negotiations, there exists significant scope for African governments to negotiate and leverage their importance, and to use global dynamics between Western and non-Western supporters to make greater gains from external assistance. Utilising both the existing literature on this subject, and empirical data arising from interviews and archives, this thesis develops and tests a framework of agency-leveraging strategies that African actors frequently use when in discussions with their external counterparts.

As such, this thesis presents three substantive research questions, each exploring the different strategies that African governments use to exercise agency, and how recipient agency is a significant yet overlooked component of autocratic support.

The three research questions are outlined as such:

1. What strategies are used by African governments to exercise agency with external actors?
2. What domestic and international factors shape how recipient governments deploy agency-leveraging strategies?
3. To what extent can the engagement of countries such as China and Russia be viewed as autocratic support, and how does recipient agency play out in this kind of relationship?

These research questions guide the thesis through an exploration of the convergence of African agency and the research area of autocratic support. Whilst the theoretical focus of the thesis in chapter 1 provides a broader overview of the African continent, and how governments across a wide variety of African states have responded to autocratic support, the bulk of this thesis – from chapters 2 to 5 – provide an in-depth examination of how governments in two recipient countries – Ethiopia and Kenya – have responded to autocratic support from several external countries, and have used several agency-leveraging strategies to further the assistance they have received from foreign actors.

Governments from the two case study countries of this thesis – Kenya and Ethiopia – are shown to have utilised several of the strategies from the agency-leveraging framework. Three strategies in particular – ‘demonstrating success’, ‘aligning aims and interests’ (between recipient governments and supporters), and ‘establishing government coherence and legitimacy’ – are identified as common approaches used in both the Ethiopian and Kenyan cases. These categories are further elaborated upon later in the thesis, in chapter 1.

Separately, the cases studies are distinctive in that they demonstrate the diversity of external actors that provide autocratic support. There are similarities in how the Western supporters – including the US – provided support to early authoritarian leaders in Kenya and Ethiopia, namely Jomo Kenyatta and Haile Selassie. However, the diversity of support from non-Western actors is revealed through governments in each case study, be it Soviet assistance on a significant scale for the Derg in Ethiopia, or substantial Chinese assistance in more contemporary circumstances for the Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) and the governments of Mwai Kibaki and Uhuru Kenyatta in Kenya.

Importantly, the inclusion of the later years of the Kenyan case study – within which the state was governed democratically – also demonstrates the further applicability of the agency-leveraging framework beyond strictly authoritarian settings. Indeed, the inclusion of the democratic period of Kenyan politics alongside the continuing authoritarian rule in Ethiopia demonstrates the broader applicability of the framework. This thesis also builds upon prior research on foreign policy such as the ‘two-level game’ analysis by Putnam (1988), that emphasises the connection between domestic and foreign policy, and the impact that domestic contexts and events can have upon the success of foreign policy outcomes. The thesis focuses on the role of domestic actions and challenges that governments in both Kenya and Ethiopia have faced, and how such challenges – such as maintaining strength and legitimacy and dealing with threats – have shaped how foreign policy is negotiated, and impact the capabilities governments have in exercising agency.

Furthermore, I argue that several prominent sources within the literature have failed to adequately make the connection between these two research areas. Prominent existing literature exploring autocratic support from Tansey (2016a; 2016b), Bryant and Chou (2016), Yakouchyk (2019), and Way (2015; 2016) has focussed upon the procedural nature of autocratic support, identifying trends and aspects of the phenomenon as a means of identifying it in case studies. Likewise, prominent scholarly work on African agency utilised in this thesis (Brown, 2012; Coffie & Tiky, 2021; Murray-

Evans, 2015) does not focus specifically upon authoritarian cases, nor connect their studies to specific instances of autocratic support. This thesis instead focuses on identifying and analysing the strategies that recipient African authoritarian governments utilise to exercise agency and garner greater benefits from a wide variety of external actors. Three key contributions are provided within the thesis to the research area of autocratic support and African authoritarian foreign policy. First, the thesis presents one of the most systematic studies of African agency, exploring this phenomenon in two case study countries, and within multiple governments in each. Previous studies on agency have provided valuable case study analysis (Beswick & Hammerstad, 2013; Fisher, 2013; Jaensch, 2021; Soulé, 2020; Whitfield & Fraser, 2010), yet such studies have not undertaken a systematic, multi-administration comparative analysis. This analysis allows for a detailed overview not just of the strategies that authoritarian recipients have used to leverage agency, but also provides a comprehensive domestic and international background that sheds light on what contexts, challenges, and opportunities permit and restrict the exercising of agency. Indeed, it is argued throughout this thesis that domestic politics shapes foreign policy in profound ways. Analysing the agency-leveraging strategies of multiple governments provides the opportunity to identify similarities and differences in the approaches taken between governments in both states.

Secondly, the thesis develops a novel typology of agency-leveraging strategies used by governments in both cases, which permits a greater level of nuance in understanding the strategies used across cases and over time. As mentioned earlier in the introduction, whilst the argument that African actors can exercise agency is not new, the focus and novel approach of this thesis is to develop the strategies African actors use to exercise agency, with a focus being on how this typology can describe both the approaches used in the Ethiopian and Kenyan cases, whilst being adaptable and useful in further testing of cases across Africa and beyond.

Thirdly, this thesis addresses the phenomenon of 'autocracy promotion' and how we can conceptualise ideological commitments to autocracy amongst newer external actors operating in

Africa, such as China and Russia. The discussion on autocracy promotion has – as will be explained in chapter 1 – faltered due to contestation over the ideological basis of Russia and China’s support.

It will be highlighted within the forthcoming chapters that the terminology of ‘autocratic support’ better encapsulates the phenomenon under examination throughout this thesis. As chapter 1 will elaborate, the autocracy promotion term has become less common within the literature to describe the process through which recipient governments receive support from external authoritarian states designed to bolster and embolden authoritarian governance. The promotion term has furthermore become unhelpful due to its association with democracy promotion, and the ideological motivations that underpin Western donor desires to see democracy flourish abroad. Within the literature, pragmatic interests have been identified as key motivating factors for Russia and China’s engagement with the African continent (Arkhangelskaya & Shubin, 2013; Besenyő, 2019; Borschevskaya, 2019; Tansey, 2016a; 2016b). I argue, however, that ideological connections also play a substantive role in more recent engagement by China and Russia, and are likewise utilised to some degree by authoritarian African recipients as an aspect of agency-leveraging. The less contentious autocratic support term is used throughout to describe the process through which external actors support and bolster authoritarian governance in recipient states, except when specific reference to autocracy promotion are made in cited literature. Finally, this thesis makes a contribution to the study of foreign policymaking by African governments, and focuses in particular on the actors involved in crafting and executing foreign policy. Throughout the thesis the emphasis lies on how domestic and international opportunities and constraints play a significant role in the scope of authoritarian African foreign policymaking, including the roles and responsibilities of actors beyond the executive. Such an approach emphasises how our understanding of foreign policymaking in the African context needs to be nuanced and developed beyond a simplistic assumption that a unitary actor makes such decisions. This thesis highlights that too often in analyses of authoritarian decision-making, the focus has been on the executive as a dominant and unitary actor pursuing a singular-minded policy; the Ethiopian and Kenyan case studies of this thesis – and their detailed

examination of policymaking – demonstrate that the reality is much more nuanced, and that foreign policymaking is frequently a contested process decided by several groups both within and beyond the government.

Introducing the agency-leveraging framework

The main contribution of this thesis is the development of a framework that highlights the different agency-leveraging strategies that African authoritarian governments utilise to garner further support from external actors. To provide greater clarity and analytical depth to these strategies, specific ‘constellations’ of agency-leveraging strategies are demonstrated to have been used by governments in both case studies. These constellations are driven by several factors; their desired benefits from external actors, the actors that they are engaging with, and the domestic, regional, and international context in which recipient governments are acting in. A summary of the strategies that are in use throughout the Ethiopian and Kenyan cases are reproduced in the table below, before being expanded upon with greater detail in chapter 1.

Table 1. Agency-leveraging strategies used by recipient African governments

Strategies of leveraging agency	How recipients deploy these strategies
Economic exchange	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Exchanging resources for infrastructure <i>e.g. Angola’s ‘oil for infrastructure’ programme (Corkin, 2013).</i> ▪ Utilising resources to alleviate existing debts. ▪ Resource wealth used to stabilise the government/ elite self-preservation.
Aligning aims and interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Positioning the government as central to strategic interests of autocratic and democratic supporters.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Centring the government as important to combat threats to supporters <i>e.g. the current government is important to resolve autocracy supporters' 'crisis of legitimacy' (Sarotte, 2012).</i> ▪ Positioning the government as capable of resolving stability and security issues relevant to supporter <i>e.g. providing a strategically important role in the Global War on Terror.</i> ▪ Highlighting the political importance of the government for foreign partners <i>e.g. the state's strategic location, the government's regional and political importance.</i>
Establishing government coherence and legitimacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Demonstrating the government can deal with internal and external unrest. ▪ Demonstrating the government is the sole legitimate power in charge of a state, and thus the legitimate recipient of support. ▪ Narrative of extraversion; governments are helpless and incapable of resolving security issues by themselves, justifying support from external actors.
Demonstrating success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Using economic growth record (where present) to induce further support. ▪ Occasional implementation of external development programmes to gain support and legitimacy amongst external actors.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Portraying development partners as crucial and positive elements of the state’s development and economic growth records.
Mobilising historical linkages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Utilising historical narratives espoused by supporters as a legitimising reason for historical support. ▪ Calling upon past actions and narratives of anti-colonialism/ non-intervention to request further assistance from supporters in times of crisis or reduced Western support.

The **stability constellation** of strategies encompasses the use of *aligning aims and interests*, *establishing government coherence and legitimacy*, and in limited instances largely absent from the Ethiopian and Kenyan cases, *economic exchange*. Governments that have used this set of strategies have often done so because of internal and external threats to the government that necessitate external assistance to resolve. The stability constellation furthermore became much more prominent during the Cold War, as recipient African authoritarian governments sought to align themselves with differing actors within the Cold War environment to gain support. Strategies within this constellation are frequently used by governments who may have institutional weaknesses or unrest that necessitates efforts to seek out further sources of support. In this way, such efforts at leveraging agency focus more upon working within structural constraints to seek out the best approach for gaining support, than fundamentally affecting the status quo of international relations.

The **reshaping the narrative constellation** focuses upon strategies and approaches that recipient governments can use to redefine the focus of the conversations they are having with external supporters. Strategies within this constellation include *demonstrating success*, the extraversion aspect of *establishing government coherence and legitimacy*, and *mobilising historical linkages*.

Whilst not as frequently employed as the stability constellation within the Ethiopian and Kenyan case studies, this collection of strategies emphasises more an approach to reshape existing narratives amongst external supporters as to why and how they should assist African authoritarian governments. In this way, such strategies are examples of a more forthright attempt to exercise agency and influence the ways in which supporters treat recipient governments.

The approaches that each government use to leverage agency are not static. The table below highlights the most frequent constellations of strategies, whilst mentioning more minor strategies that reoccur during the government’s lifetime. This thesis argues that when repression becomes more of a norm for governments to utilise to maintain power, a subsequent focus on demonstrating legitimacy through exemplifying the government’s capabilities at resolving stability and security issues both within the state and amongst its regional and continental neighbours.

Table 2. The predominant agency-leveraging constellations used by Ethiopian and Kenyan cases

Ethiopian cases	Predominant agency-leveraging constellations used by each government
Haile Selassie (1930-1974)	Stability
Mengistu Hailemariam/the Derg (1974-1991)	Stability
Meles Zenawi/the EPRDF (1991-2012)	Western donors: stability and reshaping the narrative constellations China: predominantly stability
Hailemariam Desalegn/the EPRDF (2012-2018)	Western donors: stability and reshaping the narrative constellations China: predominantly stability

Kenyan cases	
Jomo Kenyatta (1963-1978)	Reshaping the narrative
Daniel arap Moi (1978-2002)	Western donors: Reshaping the narrative, though transition to stability further in Moi's rule China: stability
Mwai Kibaki (2002-2013)	Western donors: Reshaping the narrative, transition to stability following electoral violence China: Stability
Uhuru Kenyatta (2013-2022)	Stability

Focussing on the agency-leveraging strategies that African authoritarian governments use – rather than simply highlighting the potential and capability for African governments to exercise agency versus structural constraints – demonstrates a more nuanced view on how agency is exercised. This thesis therefore focuses on the determinants of the strategies African authoritarian governments use to exercise agency, and develops an understanding of such strategies and determinants that allows for greater comparative analysis to be undertaken in other cases. As such, domestic politics play a vital role in determining which agency-leveraging strategies are used by governments. As the above table demonstrates, governments across both cases have used similar constellations of strategies, driven by changes in domestic and international contexts. As the following chapters will demonstrate, there are clear similarities in both cases in terms of strategies used and the instigating factors leading to the deployment of such strategies.

Case selection

The choice of cases focuses on Ethiopian and Kenyan governments from 1963 to 2018, together with external supporters including – most prominently – China and Russia, but also the US, and the UK.

These cases have been chosen as they reflect the greatest opportunity to examine the agency-leveraging strategies used by these actors.

The Ethiopian and Kenyan examples also represent appropriate cases to address several of the arguments this thesis makes. Both cases – states in East Africa, and the governments that have ruled in both states from 1963 to 2018 – encompass the wide variety of governance styles and levels of state stability that impact upon the range and type of agency-leveraging strategies used, as detailed in the table prior, and the four empirical chapters of the thesis, chapters 2 to 6.

The Ethiopian case demonstrates some wide variation in governance type and state structure. As chapter 2 will outline, the Ethiopian case in 1963 was initially under the imperial rule of Emperor Haile Selassie, which featured centralised government and the prioritisation of the Amharic ethnic group as the dominant ruling group. Due to the diverse ethnic makeup of Ethiopia however, the centralised Amharic dominance during the period of imperial rule meant that the Ethiopian state experienced persistent levels of instability, including insurrections and rebellions in disparate outer regions of the state. The subsequent Derg government – coming to power after a military takeover of Ethiopia and ruling from 1975 to 1991 – also attempted to govern Ethiopia in a dictatorial, centralised fashion, with power being exerted by a small elite based in the capital, Addis Ababa (Cloete & Abebe, 2011; Tareke, 2008; Wiebel & Admasie, 2019). Throughout their rule, continual issues of instability plagued the government, resulting in a prolonged conflict with several rebel groups and the eventual overthrow of the Derg through military action by the EPRDF in 1991.

The EPRDF pursued a different strategy of governance. Whilst the EPRDF government was authoritarian, dominated by the leadership of the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (TPLF), the EPRDF was developed as a federal system of ruling Ethiopia, with the leadership comprising of several ethnically based political parties who ostensibly governed in unison with each other. Such a system of governance was designed to counteract the disadvantages of the centralised form of government that had been pursued by the Derg and imperial governments prior. Whilst this process

resolved some of the underlying issues related to centralised rule in Ethiopia, and strengthened the political stability of the state, tensions remained due to the authoritarian nature of the EPRDF (and the dominance of the TPLF), alongside fighting within the leadership of the government that weakened the stability of the state.

The Kenyan case represents a different set of governance types than those of the Ethiopian case. Jomo Kenyatta ruled from 1963 to 1978, the leader of the Kenyan African National Union (KANU), an authoritarian government comprised of a small group of elites, predominantly drawn from the Kikuyu ethnic group from which Kenyatta belonged. The leadership governed in a centralised manner, with KANU the only permitted political party in the state. However, as chapters 1 and 4 highlight, legislative debate and parliamentary scrutiny continued to act as both an enabler and constraint of authoritarian rule (Anderson, 2005; Angelo, 2019).

A similar process of governance and authoritarian rule centred around an ethnically-dominant elite occurred under Daniel arap Moi, who ruled from 1978 to 2002 following Jomo Kenyatta's death (Anderson & Lochery, 2008: 329). However, Moi belonged to the Kalenjin ethnic group, and as such the political elite was reformulated to reflect this change, with Kalenjin KANU members and citizens offered preferable treatment and benefits (Lynch, 2006, 2011).

Finally, authoritarian Kenyan cases – and particular Ethiopian governments, such as the EPRDF – are categorised as 'competitive authoritarian regimes' (Levitsky & Way, 2010). In this manner, such regimes maintain authoritarian control, dominated by Jomo Kenyatta and Moi, yet elections remain a significant factor in the tenures of these leaders. Elections occurred regularly in each of these case studies, with periods of multiparty politics occurring in limited capacity in the latter period of Daniel arap Moi's rule in Kenya, whereby international pressure forced the regime to permit multiparty elections. Levitsky and Way's (2010) exploration of competitive authoritarianism aligns with the EPRDF and multiparty Moi-era case studies of this thesis. In particular, these governments demonstrated the key criteria of competitive authoritarianism, whereby they permitted multiparty

politics to occur, yet maintained authoritarian rule by rigging elections and making the system inherently 'unfair' (Ibid. 2010: 6-7). In the case of the EPRDF and Moi's multiparty era, elections were held by the ruling government and contested by opposition parties, but such elections were rigged, and ended regularly in victory for the ruling party (Ayele, 2018; Barkan, 2004). In chapters 3 and 5, it will be demonstrated that the key criteria of competitive authoritarianism highlighted – the existence of elections and the façade of democratic competition with significant rigging on the part of the regime – acted as a significant influential agency-leveraging strategy designed to endear these regimes to international democratic actors.

It should be noted that whilst the language of 'regimes' is used frequently in Levitsky and Way's (2010) work, alongside much of the literature of authoritarianism cited in this thesis, a conscious decision has been made during the writing of this thesis to refrain from using the 'regime' term. This is because the 'regime' term has popularly been used to describe strictly authoritarian periods of governance, and whilst most of the governments explored in this thesis are authoritarian, the inclusion of democratic governments from later Kenyan history means that the 'regime' term as a blanket label within this thesis is inappropriate. Therefore, throughout the thesis the 'government' term is used, with 'authoritarian governments' acting as an explanatory label when required. The regime term is used only as a direct quote from cited literature or archival records.

Indeed, the later governments in Kenya – those of Mwai Kibaki from 2002-2013, and Uhuru Kenyatta from 2013 until the end of this thesis time period in 2018 – are widely considered to be democratic states, operating through competitive multiparty elections. As discussed further in chapters 4 and 5, whilst these governments operated democratically, similar processes of agency-leveraging identified in the framework and used in the authoritarian cases prior also appear within these case study governments. The core reasoning behind why African recipient governments engage with external actors for support – to strengthen their rule and combat domestic and international instability – remains in these democratic case studies. Furthermore, it should be noted that whilst some of the

literature and discussion further in this thesis and particularly within chapter 1 pertains to authoritarian governments, aspects of how such governments operate – the discussions on stability, leadership management, and constraints on executive power – still retain relevance for the democratic Kenyan governments explored in this thesis. As chapter 4 elaborates, the democratic governments of Kenya faced challenges to their rule, such as threats from terrorism and insurgency.

The Ethiopian and Kenyan cases also challenge some of the conventional focus within the autocratic support literature. Prior studies of autocratic support are argued to have frequently focussed upon exploring what benefits autocratic supporters gain from the assistance they give to recipient governments (Burnell, 2010a; Tansey, 2016a, 2016b; Way, 2015, 2016). Furthermore, the motivations for autocratic supporters to engage in their actions abroad are often focussed upon the potential resources that they can extract from recipient states. However, the Ethiopian and Kenyan cases demonstrate that there are significant benefits to be derived by the recipients from autocratic support, and that the reasons behind autocratic supporters engaging with Ethiopian and Kenyan recipients are not predominantly resource-based.

Indeed, the Ethiopian and Kenyan cases demonstrate that there are several strategies employed in both states, driven by the political importance of both states beyond their resource wealth, as evidenced through the agency-leveraging framework in chapter 1. Secondly, whilst earlier academic focus on autocratic support focussed upon the desires for African resources by external actors (Alden & Large, 2019; Cheru, 2016: 594), alongside the resource potential of African states being used as a mechanism to leverage agency (Brown, 2012; Mohan & Power, 2008), this is not applicable in the Ethiopian and Kenyan cases, resulting in both case studies acting as valuable empirical examples that challenge the scholarly norm. Resource acquisition is not a major aspect of the relationship in Ethiopia and Kenya's cases, nor does this strategy represent a major opportunity for Ethiopian and Kenyan governments to exercise agency. Indeed, both states have few valuable

natural resources that would drive engagement and the development of greater ties with external actors (Mbaya, 2019).

Rather, the value of both states to the international community lies in their political and strategic importance (Adem, 2012a). Not only does this represent a break with prior dominant narratives surrounding external engagement with Africa – and particularly the driving motivations of China in Africa, such as its focus on resource acquisition (Alden, 2009; Corkin, 2013; Large, 2008; Phillips, 2019) - but it also permits a greater level of nuance as to what drives African foreign policy, and what additional mechanisms, narratives, and tools African authoritarian governments can use to exercise agency and gain autocratic support. However, to demonstrate the applicability of the economic exchange strategy of the framework, wider cases of resource-based agency-leveraging by recipient authoritarian states are developed in chapter 1, and the thesis conclusion.

In addition, both the Ethiopian and Kenyan cases demonstrate the value of re-evaluating how foreign policymaking is conducted in authoritarian African settings that this thesis argues. Within the empirical chapters of this thesis – namely chapters 2 to 5 – it will be demonstrated that case study governments in each state have experienced significant domestic and international contestation over the focus of foreign policymaking, not only surrounding the proposed agency-leveraging strategies that may be used, but who exactly decides on how foreign policymaking is constructed and executed in each government. Contestation between domestic groups in each government in Kenya and Ethiopia demonstrates that foreign policymaking is not a process undertaken by a unitary actor, but rather emerges from different actors and through processes of contestation.

Methodology

Before discussing the methodological choices this thesis, it is useful to first highlight some of the challenges and changes that had to be made to the research approach. These changes arose due to several international incidents and contexts, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, alongside civil war in Ethiopia, and elections in Kenya. The original research design of this project- produced before the emergence of the pandemic and its resultant curtailing of fieldwork- was based around in-depth interviews with key figures and stakeholders involved in infrastructural projects funded and supported by China and Russia in Ethiopia. Identifying such projects as key tenets of contemporary autocracy promotion, the original research design sought to assess how recipient regime figures could exercise agency in the planning and implementation of such projects.

This plan was changed for two main reasons. The COVID-19 pandemic made fieldwork and in-person interviews impossible to safely undertake. With the continual bans on international travel and the unequal rollout of vaccinations across the globe, in-country fieldwork has also proven to be impossible to achieve within the timeframe of this research project. In addition, in November 2020 a civil war erupted in Ethiopia between the ruling government of Abiy Ahmed, and the predecessor government of the TPLF. This protracted conflict, and the resultant political instability included a media and research blackout, with it proving impossible to gain access to officials for interview. Furthermore, many of the members of the TPLF who I wished to interview as part of this project were in hiding, persecuted by the ruling government, and inaccessible. Attempting to contact members of the TPLF for this project would not only be challenging but may also result in increased harm for both myself and TPLF participants.

Because of these issues, this project instead centres upon archival and documentary evidence, supplemented by qualitative interviews. Substantial online archives and resources were used, both because of the necessity of conducting research 'from afar' during the COVID-19 pandemic, but also because such resources are valuable in providing crucial primary evidence and substantiating claims

arising from interviews and other archival sources. Online data used for this thesis was gathered from the Kenya National Assembly Library (Hansard), the Gale Newspaper Archive, the Wilson Center Cold War Digital Archive, the US Office of the Historian, and individual newspaper archives from the UK, Kenya, and Ethiopia, including the UK Times, Telegraph, the Kenyan Standard, and the East African.

Beyond this, qualitative, semi-structured interviews were held during a month-long period of in-country research in Nairobi, followed by further online and telephone interviews conducted with Kenyan and Ethiopian officials, academics, journalists, and foreign policy advisors. This in-country research permitted me to access the Kenyan National Archives (KNA) and conduct in-person interviews which provided a substantive portion of the archival data used throughout this project.

The project involved 15 in-person interviews conducted in Kenya and the UK, alongside 5 further telephone interviews, and archival visits on multiple occasions to both the UK National Archives (TNA), and the KNA, alongside the wide use of online archives and resources. All participants were offered the option of choosing their preferred identifier (e.g. 'Kenyan foreign policy advisor') and are referred to by these identifiers throughout the thesis.

The aim of these interviews was to further explore the recipient side of foreign policy negotiations, alongside developing a deeper understanding of the domestic politics and political machinations in both Ethiopia and Kenya. Respondents were deliberately targeted for interviews prior to and during the in-country research in Kenya and when back in the UK, either because of their direct experience in foreign policy negotiations on the side of Kenya, Ethiopia, or donors, or because of their detailed knowledge of such negotiations. Academics were approached for interviews because they had been involved in research related to this project, such as the role of agency in African International Relations (IR), or the Cold War history of East Africa.

However, it must be acknowledged that not only is this number of interviews not ideal for the scope of this project, but that a significant majority of these interviews were conducted with Kenyan

participants. On the Ethiopian side, only one interview was held with an Ethiopian academic, although significant data gathering from online archives supplemented this case study with further empirical data.

Naturally, this wealth of empirical data from interviews and archival access on the Kenyan case creates an imbalance when compared to the Ethiopian case. In acknowledging this imbalance, I have accessed a wide range of archival material and newspaper records pertaining to the Ethiopian case to provide a rich and detailed account of recipient agency throughout the time period of this thesis, as noted earlier. Nevertheless, it is useful to state this discrepancy at this point, and future studies on this topic would benefit from further data gathering from interviews and archives, if such in-country research was possible in the future.

The interview process in Kenya was further hampered by the limitation of one month that was granted to undertake in-country research in Kenya by my funding body, and the lack of choice over when the in-country research could take place. As this data collection period was undertaken towards the latter half of the thesis (due to COVID-19), I was forced to undertake in-country research during the beginning of the Kenyan electoral period. This issue not only reduced the potential pool of participants I could talk to (as many of my desired interview participants were running for office and were unwilling to speak to me), but also naturally drew the conversation with participants away from historical instances of autocratic support and recipient agency, as the natural focus would be on contemporary political issues.

To mitigate such issues, I made clear that the focus of my research was historical, and that any issues arising from the ongoing election were not part of my scope and did not need to be discussed.

Furthermore, I undertook several interviews remotely after my in-country research, using my time in Kenya to establish links and undertake snowball sampling. When some participants said that they were not in Nairobi during my period of in-country research or were otherwise unable to meet with me, I offered them the alternative of a WhatsApp or Zoom meeting when I was back in the UK,

which resulted in several further interviews being carried out remotely that may not have otherwise happened.

There are several further methodological challenges to be addressed concerning both the interview and archival processes used in Kenya. Addressing first the interviewing process, purposive sampling was the approach taken for this project, driven by the need to contact participants who had direct knowledge of the process of African foreign policymaking, and the relations between Ethiopian and Kenyan governments, and their external counterparts. To glean the most useful information, conscious choices were made regarding interview participants, targeting key actors through document research, alongside snowball sampling during the interview process, identifying further important actors involved in negotiations from the testimony of those who were there and involved at the time (Farquharson, 2005).

These sampling techniques run the risk of sampling bias (Collier, 1993: 108), however, and indeed during some of the interviews for this thesis it was noted that some of the participants – particularly foreign policy advisors and those closer to the government – were eager to highlight and embolden their role and that of their respective government.

However, this issue was mitigated using two complementary approaches. First, by conducting interviews with additional academics both in Kenya and the UK who were not attached to any political party to capture more objective analysis of the role of different governments, and their use of agency-leveraging strategies (Tansey, 2007; Reny, 2016). Second, through the use of extensive archival material concerning both the Ethiopian and Kenyan cases and beyond them, as mentioned previously, which serves to provide another data point that allows for the triangulation of the data gathered from interviews, and the greater ability to ascertain how the processes of autocratic support and authoritarian African foreign policymaking operate. The inclusion of additional secondary data, such as newspapers and research reports, further strengthens this process.

Beyond this, there were some further methodological challenges within the archival evidence gathering for this thesis. Archival evidence again presents some issues surrounding bias, in particular the potential for archives to present selective narratives, whilst marginalising others. Online archives were a particular challenge to note; many of the resources such as the US Office of the Historian files frequently omit the dialogue of African officials, instead repackaging the demands (and therefore agency-leveraging strategies) as brief descriptive paragraphs and US responses to these demands, rather than directly transcribing the African recipient portion of such conversations. Similar issues appeared in Soviet, UK, and Chinese archival documents. As such, whilst the general idea of how authoritarian African governments have engaged with autocratic supporters and other external actors has been gleaned from these sources, direct quotes from the African side were rarely uncovered within these archival files, and so it was necessary to treat such sources as potentially biased and selective in their detail, and so to search for additional resources beyond Western narratives.

These approaches are supported by the literature on this subject; Gordon (2018) notes that archival research in an African context must account for not only the bias present in many archives originating within Western or former colonial powers – and their potential predisposition to archive documents and records that are of interest to the Western power, rather than those of the African recipient. Furthermore, it is important to note that the US archives used in this study have been edited prior to being released online to streamline the reading process, and as such it is important to highlight that this editing process may remove some of the smaller notes and memos that would shed additional light on the decision-making process of policymakers (Larson, 2017). Whilst it would be ideal to view these archives in-person to alleviate these issues, both a lack of resources and the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic made this impossible.

However, the literature does provide some processes through which to manage these challenges. Daly (2018) notes that much post-colonial archival research on African topics necessitates using a

wide scope of sources to triangulate and adjust for the potential bias in Western sources. Significant additional resources therefore came from Soviet and Chinese archives, alongside the aforementioned KNA to compare with the events described in Western archives, and provide a more objective point from which to analyse the development and use of agency-leveraging strategies by authoritarian African governments. Using a wide variety of archival sources – as this study does – also assists in triangulating data on how authoritarian African foreign policymaking is undertaken (Larson, 2017).

Finally, it is important to note that the research design and methodology of this project was affected both by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the civil conflict in Ethiopia that began in November 2020. This project was initially planned with substantial amounts of in-country research, centred around interviewing government officials, journalists and academics based in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa. These interviews would have been conducted with key officials involved in foreign policymaking within the Ethiopian government. Journalists and academics based in Ethiopia were also explored as potential participants for this research, due to their knowledge of the domestic politics of Ethiopia that constitute a critical aspect of this thesis, and prove vital in understanding the nature and development of this phenomenon, as highlighted in chapters 4 and 5.

The COVID-19 pandemic throughout 2020 and 2021 provided some challenges for the fieldwork and data collection aspects of this thesis. Travel to Ethiopia was delayed for many months, and due to the time-limited nature of undertaking a PhD, this necessitated some changes in the fieldwork process. Previous anticipated aspects of fieldwork – such as a scoping visit to investigate potential interview participants and pre-empt any challenges that may have disrupted the main fieldwork visit – were unable to be completed.

Beyond the challenges of the pandemic, the conflict in Ethiopia that began in November 2020 resulted in an impossible situation for any primary research to be undertaken that targeted TPLF or EPRDF members. Therefore, whilst the methodological approach taken in this project has

drawbacks, it reflects the challenges presented during the project lifetime, and the possibilities for primary research that were available following the loosening of COVID-19 restrictions. The number of interviews used is much lower than anticipated, due to these circumstances outside my control. Nevertheless, the multi-pronged approach of interviews, archival visits, and online resource use has proved to be an adequate replacement, providing primary research for both case studies in this thesis.

Before the first chapter commences, it is important to address some of the recurring themes and concepts that feature within the thesis, namely the concepts of agency and authoritarian foreign policymaking. These sections will both briefly define these concepts that are particularly important for the later aspects of the thesis, whilst also situating the argument of the thesis within them. Firstly, the phenomenon of agency – and how it is conceptualised and utilised throughout the argument and case studies.

The concept of agency

The agency-structure debate in IR stems from the divide between structuralist approaches to how the social world is ordered, and constructivist, agency-led views of the social order. Wight (2006: 127) designates the structuralist approach as one where structures are societal elements that govern behaviour of individuals within their systems. Structures act as a method of both constraining and directing social behaviour. Clark (1998: 247) asserts that preferences from individual actors under a structuralist assumption are constrained in favour of the needs and preferences of structural systems, such as the state (seen as an independent, autonomous institution devoid of influence from societal actors) and institutions. Wight (2004: 274-275) lists examples of structural constraints that affect states, such as the state's material worth, military capabilities and the inequalities that arise out of a lack of these capabilities for a state.

Structuralist arguments such as these have been used in empirical examples throughout IR where global structural constraints can constrain a state or individual's capacity to act in its own

preferences. Waltz (1979: 72) argued for a realist approach to IR that heavily incorporated a structuralist approach to global politics; in his view, studies focusing on less powerful regions of the world such as Africa were not needed, because no valuable insights relevant for a global study could be observed from an examination of Africa. As the following sections will demonstrate however, my study – and many others focussed on Africa – reject such an assumption, and the structuralist approach.

For one, structuralist approaches have been criticised as reductionist. Clark (1998: 248) highlights that the state as an actor results with the behaviour of actors reducible to the institutions which comprise the state itself. This has been critiqued as essentially putting the institutions and individuals below the state level into a ‘black box’ of analysis (Wendt, 1987: 342-343), with the state treated as if it is an agent itself navigating structural constraints. This then results in little need for an analysis of the sub-state level (Wight, 2004: 275).

The agency-led approach shifts this analysis away from a ‘black box’ reductionist approach. Rather than considering states as unitary actors and therefore the appropriate level of analysis, agency-led perspectives instead posit that actors below the institutional level are crucial to any policymaking process and are thus the point at which any analysis must be conducted. States – and the institutions within them – are constraints in themselves, imparting influence onto the behaviour of actors (Clark, 1998: 248-249).

However, the agency debate is also a source of confusion and vagueness. The concept of agency is equally fraught as to its meaning and how this develops in different circumstances. The agency side of the debate exemplifies the ability of individuals to act on their preferences and work to achieve what they wish to achieve through bargaining and negotiation (Brown & Harman, 2013). Wendt (1987: 359) conceptualises agents as having a set of characteristics that suggest they have agency and being are of exercising that agency in achieving their preferences and aims amongst structural constraints. Wendt’s list includes the agent having an understanding – even if crude and inaccurate –

of its activities, being capable of consciously altering these behaviours, and a capacity to make decisions.

However, this assumption is based upon a rational choice approach, that actors will always undertake actions to achieve their goals. Against this, Clark (1998: 249) highlights some inconsistencies with this approach, in that rational choice theorists often assume that these actors have a singular goal and are therefore single-minded in this approach. This thesis, alongside some of the critical literature it cites, takes issue with these assumptions. Further discussion surrounding the rationality of actors within this debate occurs when looking at the foreign policymaking of African authoritarian governments in the following section.

The idea that actors perform within a rational-choice model does not necessarily chime with the realities of the situation seen when considering autocratic support in authoritarian African states, such as the forthcoming Ethiopian and Kenyan cases. As later chapters of this thesis will demonstrate, issues of ideology and context matter greatly to the agency-leveraging capabilities of actors, and, more crucially for this discussion, reveal that some actors do not necessarily act rationally as perceived by external actors, and are crucially having to pursue a diverse set of goals (Carlsnaes, 1992). Discussion of this process is held within the Ethiopian case in chapters 2 and 3, whereby the 'Red Terror' period of violence committed by the Derg was undertaken due to a diverse set of competing aims and interests within this government, alongside contestation within the leadership. Such violence however appeared to external actors as irrational behaviour, with the Derg at times alienating even those foreign actors who had previously supported it, such as the Soviet Union.

Examples of this behaviour are less evident in the Kenyan case, however it is noted throughout the following empirical chapters that in each case study government, competing interests have remained a present factor in how foreign policy is conducted.

Africa-focussed research aligns with this more multifaceted approach advocated throughout this thesis. Murray-Evans (2015), Jaensch (2021), and Soulé (2020) emphasise the complexity of the decision-making process facing African policymakers, who are navigating structural constraints – as already noted – but also balancing domestic and foreign constraints, and pursuing several goals arising from a complex set of ideological ties, and pragmatic concerns. As such, it is too simplistic to assume that actors will always take a rational approach to decision-making, and so approaches to maximising agency are diverse, as evidenced through the framework in the following chapter.

The specifics of ‘African agency’

The literature on ‘African agency’ builds upon the constructivist approach. Several scholars have developed the concept of a distinct African approach to leveraging agency than the broad theoretical debates on agency (Beswick & Hammerstad, 2013; Brown & Harman, 2013; Harman & Brown, 2013; Murray-Evans, 2015; Shaw, 2015; Soulé, 2020).

African agency is a manifestation of agency that incorporates the specific challenges and structural constraints that African actors face. The diverse history of exploitation, marginalisation, and silencing of Africa in IR has resulted in an emphasis on Africa as a passive actor in international affairs (Anderson & Rolandsen, 2014; Coffie & Tiky, 2021: 245). The turn towards African agency not only acknowledges that African actors are capable of exercising agency in a variety of ways as already established, but also suggests that specific approaches to exercising agency and conceptualising Africa’s place in global affairs can be found within cases from across the continent (Odoom & Andrews, 2017: 43). Shaw (2015: 257) highlights that African agency should be considered as a ‘determined response by the continent’s developmental states to [demonstrate] the gains rather than costs of the discovery of Africa’s potential’. This approach centres African capabilities at shaping the narrative of their importance in the international system, and focussing upon the ability for African states to work around the structural constraints of the international system, rather than being beholden to such demands.

Recent literature on this topic has explored several cases whereby African actors have exercised agency both through ‘traditional’ means such as contestation with the structural constraints they may be facing, but also through what Odooom and Andrews (2017: 43-44) describe as more innovative and African specific approaches to exercising agency. For example, Jaensch (2021) highlights how Tanzanian authorities employed divergent conceptualisations of security norms such as non-intervention, and the use of domestic contexts and constraints to resist becoming involved in African Union missions in Somalia. Likewise, Soulé (2020) notes how the competition between external actors for resources and strategic partners within the African continent has been utilised by African actors to not only diversify potential partners in foreign policy, but also to recentre discussions on issues that African governments wish to discuss. International summits that African governments attend have become important arenas for leaders to highlight the systemic inequalities in global political and economic agreements that hamper African development and policymaking, alongside being valuable spaces for African governments to diversify their lists of donors and supporters (Ibid. 2020: 638-640).

Whilst the African agency narrative emphasises specific approaches to exercising agency taken by African actors, it is important to highlight that proponents of this research area do not dismiss traditional IR discussions on agency, or argue that they are not useful to the study of African agency. Odooom and Andrews (2017: 43) emphasise that the particular focus on African agency stems from Africa’s historical marginalisation in the study of agency, and the possibility for greater understandings of how agency can be exercised by examining this phenomenon from an African perspective. This thesis contributes towards this within the latter four chapters of the thesis, centring its focus upon African case studies and – akin to Jaensch’s (2021) work noted above – emphasising the importance of domestic politics as a marker of how agency can be exercised.

Finally, it should be noted that this project does not argue that African authoritarian governments can exercise agency with unlimited checks on power. Chapter 1 of the thesis will elaborate more

upon this point, with further empirical evidence from the Ethiopian and Kenyan cases in chapters 2 and 4 respectively. African agency can easily be overstated in some contexts to portray external supporters as simply doing the bidding of African recipients, or that external supporters consistently adjust their strategies, intentions, and levels of support because of the actions of African recipients (Walsh, 2022: 5). The stability constellation of the thesis framework demonstrates that in many cases, African agency is formulated through a recipient government further aligning themselves to the pragmatic concerns and desires of external supporters. In limited cases, recipients attempt to shift the narrative, argued in this project to be linked to the strength of the authoritarian government, and its ability to project its desires and aims through foreign policy. As such, African agency within this project is argued to be an ability for authoritarian governments to exert power to shift and align their own foreign policies with the intention of gaining further support; be that through alignment with external actors, or in limited cases where recipient governments can change the narrative with supporters.

Authoritarian foreign policymaking

The second concept to be explored is that of authoritarian foreign policymaking, and how such policymaking occurs in the African context. The argument here focuses upon how foreign policymaking in African authoritarian governments has been understudied, concurrent with some of the influential early IR literature that has marginalised Africa's role in global affairs. African foreign policymaking is argued to be guided not only by domestic factors, but additionally by the strength and origin of such governments. This is especially true of authoritarian states, where leaders are often assumed to operate without restraints, though this view is now being increasingly challenged. Authoritarian governments are frequently prone to constraint from domestic institutions, such as parliaments and judicial bodies, and wider domestic actors, such as insurrectionists and protest movements.

Putnam's (1988) analysis of state diplomacy as a two-level game, shaped by both foreign and domestic affairs, acts as an influential framework with which to base this discussion on. However, Putnam's framework is noted to have shortfalls which are highlighted here, such as its lack of incorporation of wider domestic pressures and additional actors into the policymaking environment. As such, later chapters of this thesis adopt Putnam's broader ideas of a domestic foreign policymaking connection, but further nuance these and seek to apply such a framework to the authoritarian African perspective.

The application of this framework – and the further nuancing of this approach to the interface between domestic issues and foreign policymaking – speaks to one of the arguments that this thesis makes. Indeed, the connection between domestic and foreign policy issues directly influences the agency-leveraging strategies – and agency constellations – that are used in the Ethiopian and Kenyan cases. As noted earlier, issues such as government stability, domestic unrest, and leadership have not only affected foreign policy, as Putnam suggests, but have also shaped the agency-leveraging framework. Further discussion of the effect of these factors is contained in the empirical chapters of this thesis; chapters 2 to 5.

Putnam's (1988) work incorporates an understanding of actor agency that had been missing from prior research on diplomacy in IR, and is valuable to the analysis in this thesis. Negotiations do not exist 'within a vacuum' (Bueno de Mesquita & Smith, 2012: 162). It is vital to understand to what level leaders can 'sell' their position both to domestic audiences, alongside international actors who leaders are negotiating with.

Under Putnam's model, those undertaking diplomacy must seek out and negotiate terms that are acceptable for both domestic and international audiences. Failing to find an acceptable foreign policy outcome that speaks to domestic concerns runs the risk of governments losing credibility, and potentially facing scenarios that could destabilise the leadership (Bueno de Mesquita & Smith, 2012). Failing to please international actors in turn risks losing international credibility and the

possibility for future negotiations (Putnam, 1988: 434). Policy is therefore negotiated at separate levels. Bargaining amongst domestic actors is undertaken prior to and after international terms have been agreed, both to clarify the demands and expectations of domestic actors, but also to ratify agreements made internationally.

The parameters of an acceptable agreement that suits both domestic and international actors is described as a 'win set' (Putnam, 1988: 437-438). Domestic parameters for a win set can differ and be easier to achieve than others, dependent upon the context in which negotiations are happening, and what domestic audiences are set to win or lose from negotiations. Win sets in situations where domestic forces are likely to see a reasonable alternative to the proposals made by international negotiators are going to be smaller. Greater resistance is likely to be levelled against unpopular proposals, and those where domestic actors see a reasonable chance of affecting the outcomes of negotiations.

Domestic factors and issues can also influence the likelihood of win sets amongst international actors becoming smaller (Putnam, 1988: 434). These include internal weaknesses that stem from an inability to project authority across rural or distant regions of the state, which result in a greater focus on issues of sovereignty and stability (Herbst, 2014).

The strength of a competitive authoritarian government is also strongly dictated by the extent to which processes of repression and co-optation can be undertaken (Cheeseman & Fisher, 2019: 16-17; Gerschewski, 2013), an area in which external relations and adept foreign policy manoeuvres play a vital role. Authoritarian governments that can command a stronger position in projecting their domestic concerns to coincide with the interests and concerns of external partners can stabilise their leadership more effectively and achieve greater successes in diplomacy.

As noted earlier, this framework is a useful basis for understanding how agency-leveraging strategies are crafted and utilised by authoritarian African recipients. This is not to say however that this framework completely defines the process of how agency-leveraging strategies come to be, or how

authoritarian African governments conduct foreign policy. Indeed, there are limitations to Putnam's approach that mean that the framework – whilst useful – must be adapted for this thesis.

For one, foreign policy needs to be understood as a process informed by a variety of pressures, factors, and additional actors. This is an assessment of foreign policymaking that moves beyond Putnam's framework. Noone (2019: 169-170) identifies an implicit assumption in Putnam's work that decision-makers in diplomatic and foreign policy processes are acting primarily alone, with little contestation within the government. Such an assumption arises because of the tendency to utilise Putnam's framework to explore short periods of diplomacy over a single issue, rather than over a long period of time in foreign policymaking. A period of contestation and disagreement over foreign policy is therefore likely to not be captured in an analysis using Putnam's framework, as key actors have already formulated firm policy positions and registered the support – or disagreement – of domestic forces.

Putnam's approach also inadequately incorporates non-rational explanations for foreign policy decisions, implicitly centring foreign policymakers as entirely knowledgeable and devoid of ideology or belief-based choices. Putnam (1988: 434) acknowledges that some domestic pressures on foreign policy may be perceived as irrational to international audiences. However, Putnam's analysis also regularly assumes that foreign policy is driven by rational interests (Noone, 2019: 176).

As such, in an African context, it is important to acknowledge other ideological, historical, and contextual factors that can affect foreign policymaking (Serrão & Bischoff, 2009). Fernández-Molina (2019) provides the case of Tunisian foreign policy since the 2011 revolution, emphasising the inclusion of ideological and contextual factors. The Tunisian government and its citizens viewed Tunisia as a historically valuable and potentially easily exploitable state by more powerful states in the Mediterranean and beyond. Viewing the state in this way led policymakers to pursue a unique approach to foreign policy. Foreign policy approaches were adapted dependent upon citizen demands and interpretations of the role Tunisia should take in foreign affairs.

The Tunisian leadership reflected domestic pressures in their foreign policymaking, aligning their international negotiations with the parameters of the win set that would be acceptable for domestic actors. As this was based on historical legacies and conceptualisations of the state however, the process of diplomacy was at times irrational to external actors.

International creditors focussed on efforts to reduce Tunisia's debt, with such debt the subject of extensive negotiations with the government. The Tunisian government were resistant to engage with former colonial states, even if their proposed benefits and support packages for the government matched those of international creditors. Domestic conceptualisations of how the state should be perceived by citizens and other elites – as a resister of neo-colonial encroachment from Western powers – affected the outcome of foreign policymaking, whilst also constraining the capabilities government officials had in designing and implementing foreign policy (Fernández-Molina, 2019: 390-392).

Fernández-Molina's study uses a similar nuanced framing that this thesis takes when developing the agency-leveraging framework. Whilst the connection between domestic issues and challenges and foreign policymaking is important as a basis, Putnam's analysis does not sufficiently account for additional factors, such as historical legacies, and the potential contestation between actors within governments as to who directs foreign policymaking.

Indeed, the historical background of many African governments serves to constrain and redirect the foreign policy manoeuvres of leaders (Clapham, 1996: 45; Khadiagala & Lyons, 2001: 3). Kenyan sources corroborate this; the first instance of a Kenyan codified foreign policy immediately refers to the intricate connection between domestic pressures and needs, alongside a historical understanding of Kenya's position as a politically astute and stable state (Republic of Kenya, 2014: 14-15).

These experiences, and how they are conceived and understood by African foreign policy makers, are as important as more pragmatic concerns in Putnam's two-level game analysis, and should be

incorporated into a wider understanding of this process (Quinn, 2010: 2-3). Therefore, whilst Putnam's analysis is important and will contribute to the analysis in later chapters, the complexities of foreign policymaking in African authoritarian contexts needs to be incorporated, nuancing the analysis further than Putnam's initial two-level approach.

Framing authoritarian policymaking and domestic constraints

This section provides greater detail on authoritarian policymaking and how domestic constraints again shape the capabilities and specifics of authoritarian foreign policy in an African context. The basis for this argument lies in the notion that competitive autocracies are striving for a level of stability and that domestic opposition, be it from citizens, other elites, or institutions within the state, is an ongoing issue that affects government stability. Whilst broadly speaking in democratic states a peaceful change in leadership is common, authoritarian governments are often characterised by instability, with frequent fractures in united leadership (Opalo & Smith, 2021), alongside the threat of elite infighting (Williamson & Magaloni, 2020: 1526-1527).

This situation requires effort to be expended by leaders to resolve instability. Government stability can be achieved through several means, including through repression of dissent both within the government itself and the wider state, alongside legitimisation of the government, and the co-optation of political dissenters and powerful figures (Gerschewski, 2013). Legitimation and co-optation can be powerful tools to maintain government stability, as explored in subsequent chapters of the thesis. Importantly for this discussion, foreign policymaking can be used as a powerful tool to co-opt domestic elites to buy into the ruling government, alongside acting as a tool to legitimise the government (Phillips, 2019; Weeks & Crunkilton, 2017).

To avoid such issues, policymaking powers are delegated by authoritarian leaders for several reasons. Policymaking is a valuable tool to concede if the government is in a precarious position with regards to its leadership (Williamson & Magaloni, 2020: 1528-1529). Granting substantive influence over policy – such as granting a group of elites or a government ministry the ability to shape and

debate the policy direction of the authoritarian government – can be a useful approach to coerce potentially unruly elites to remain loyal to the government (Bueno de Mesquita & Smith, 2012; Magaloni, 2008). Authoritarian leaders have occasionally granted policymaking powers to state institutions to broaden the process of elite co-optation, whilst also better reflecting the demands brought about from domestic sources (Schuler, 2020).

However, this comes at a cost and must be balanced with the general stability of the authoritarian government. Providing rival elites with policymaking power can lead to further issues of infighting and potentially the toppling of the government's leadership (Williamson & Magaloni, 2020: 1529). Policy sharing with other elites is therefore a carefully managed process; elites may be granted capacity to conduct policymaking on issues that would not bring about too much upheaval to the ruling government, whilst policymaking on more important issues would be undertaken by government leaders (Magaloni, 2008: 720-722).

Within the Kenyan case, policymaking was delegated to a small number of members of the elite. These included Tom Mboya, a proponent of aligning Kenya with the US and other Western states for material and diplomatic support, and Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, an avowed Communist and anti-colonialist who – early in the lifetime of the government before he was shut out – supported and negotiated assistance treaties with the Soviet Union and China (Branch, 2011; Yuzhou Sun, 2020: 45). This delegation of policymaking influence was driven by a variety of domestic factors and instability within Jomo Kenyatta's government after independence, much of which is discussed in chapters 4 and 5.

Of relevance for this discussion is the fact that foreign policymaking was not defined singularly by Kenyatta; Kenyan foreign policy was a process of contestation amongst warring factions within the government, particularly between Odinga and radical members of KANU, and more conservative elements of the party (Yuzhou Sun, 2020: 45-47).

The Derg in Ethiopia similarly experienced elite contestation over policymaking. Upon assuming power in 1974, the Derg were divided over their proposed foreign policy direction, particularly in terms of alignment with external actors during the Cold War. The Derg were predominantly apolitical, comprised primarily of military figures who held grievances concerning poor pay and equipment (Bahru, 2001: 229). Yet the ideologically charged nature of the revolution, and the rapid spread of Marxist political thought in the wake of Selassie's downfall, led to the Derg's foreign policy becoming ideologically muddled (Haile, 2018).

This issue became further problematic as during the first few months of the revolution domestic groups were permitted to debate and discuss policy relatively freely. This resulted in a foreign policy divide between domestic figures who supported socialism and engagement with the Soviet Union, versus those who wished to maintain ties with the US (Cloete & Abebe, 2011).

Policymaking became increasingly incoherent as different groups within the Derg clashed with each other and competed for political dominance (Wiebel, 2015: 13). Campaigns against private land ownership were waged against the Derg by students, alongside criticism that its policies did not go far enough in reforming the state. Nationalist groups also aimed to capitalise upon a weak government to try and form breakaway states (Westad, 2005: 258). It is through this pressure from below that led to the formulation of foreign policy that was incoherent and responsive to a variety of domestic factors and internal government fractures, rather than a process of centralised control over the foreign policy narrative (Tareke, 2008: 189). The ideological incoherence of the Derg government resulted in US politicians being courted by more centrist elements of the Derg, such as their first leader, Anam Andom. Meanwhile, Mengistu – the subsequent leader of the Derg – took a socialist approach and engaged with the Soviet Union (Westad, 2005: 264-265).

As will be expanded upon in subsequent chapters, the formulation of policy as a process of contestation and responsiveness to domestic constraints is a key argument this thesis seeks to make,

and – as will be seen in subsequent chapters – is a common theme across the case study governments in Ethiopia and Kenya.

Legislatures also act as important conduits for resolving political infighting in the government; policy that is particularly contested is occasionally moved through authoritarian legislatures to gauge the views of legislators and the wider public. Policies that pick up significant support from legislators can then be adopted against the views of the government leadership (Williamson & Magaloni, 2020: 1530-1532).

Again, the Kenyan case during Jomo Kenyatta's tenure demonstrates how legislatures can both constrain authoritarian policymaking, alongside providing opportunities for reflection on how policy affects the domestic stability of the state. In post-independence Kenya, important organs of decision-making, such as the civil service, and provincial appointments were brought under the auspices of the President's Office, resulting in a constrained authoritarian government. However, the Kenyan parliament continued to operate, albeit with little oversight or control of the legislative process. However, Kenyan MPs frequently complained that the growing one-party system in Kenya led to them being seen either as hindrances to the whims of Kenyatta and his close group of elites, or as a threat to the power of such elites (Arnold, 1974: 191). Members of the parliament became important sounding boards for Kenyatta and other authoritarian elites as to how enthusiastic parliament would be to proposed changes, and whether their policies would be well-received domestically.

Kenyan Hansard records during the 1973 Oil Crisis detail how Kenyan legislators were vocally opposed to Kenyatta's support of Israel. Kenyan MPs and Ministers within Kenyatta's cabinet argued that Israel should be diplomatically cut off to avoid jeopardising relations with Arab oil-producing states (Kenya National Assembly Library, HAN/328/6/7). This contrasts with Kenyatta's personal view of Israel, whom he supported prior to and following Kenya independence (Gidron, 2020: 20).

The Kenyan parliament is an example of how foreign affairs are carried out in authoritarian governments to respond to domestic opinion, given the limited alternative options for citizens to air their grievances with the leadership. Legislative bodies have an important role, used by the government to both assess popular opinion (thus imparting a pressurising role on the leadership when public opinion is against the government) and as a co-optation tool for the government to use to placate opposition figures (Noble, 2020; Reuter & Robertson, 2015). Even if they have their power hampered by a strong one-party system, legislatures provide stability by ensuring some level of transparency between elites, MPs, and in turn citizens (Boix & Svobik, 2013: 301). Kenyan Hansard records demonstrate that a weak legislature can nonetheless exert some influence over government policy. Some concessions, acknowledgement of these domestic forces, and the use of parliament as a tool of oversight became necessary to maintain government stability and conduct foreign policy (Opalo, 2019: 134-135).

Finally, the military can be a major obstacle in how a government can decide its own foreign policy (Svobik, 2013). If a government has relied substantively on military force to gain power and provide repressive force, then military figures may feel emboldened to exercise policymaking powers. The patterns of violent conquest that preceded the rule of the Derg in Ethiopia privileged the military, thus allowing them a substantive role in policymaking (Westad, 2005: 258; Wiebel, 2015). The weakness of the Derg and its need to resolve ideological clashes and domestic threats meant that Mengistu undertook a purge of rival groups who had sought to control policy and the direction of the revolution, including student groups (Tareke, 2008: 189-190).

Authoritarian foreign policymaking is therefore more nuanced than the initial two-level game analysis suggested by Putnam (1988), which Putnam himself recognizes can only ever be a simplified depiction of the real world. Within the later discussion of the case studies, it will be demonstrated how domestic concerns for stability, alongside the opportunities and constraints emerging from the

role of domestic policymaking bodies all serve to influence and shape the strategies through which agency is exercised.

Thesis Outline

Having briefly explored the issues of agency and authoritarian foreign policymaking, subsequent chapters of this thesis will proceed as follows.

Chapter 1 expands upon the theoretical foundations already highlighted by the earlier agency discussion, by addressing the phenomenon of autocratic support. This chapter will first explore how autocratic support has been conceptualised in the literature through a variety of titles and forms, including the deliberate and ideologically-driven support of authoritarianism abroad, classified as ‘autocracy promotion’. This chapter will provide three critiques of the current thinking around autocratic support. Firstly, that the prominent literature on autocratic support has – due to its age – not accounted for the development of authoritarian models of development by Russia and China in recent years that demonstrate an ideological connection to authoritarianism. Secondly, that existing literature on autocratic support has unnecessarily focussed upon the role and motivations of supporters themselves, such as China and Russia, whilst neglecting the agency and capabilities of recipient authoritarian governments to capture such support. Thirdly, it will argue that recipient government agency – and the capability of recipients to exercise agency through differing strategies – has been underappreciated. This chapter also further develops the agency-leveraging strategies and constellations introduced earlier.

Chapters 2 and 3 apply the agency-leveraging framework to the Ethiopian case study. These chapters explore how Ethiopian governments from 1963 to 2018 have exercised agency, through which strategies, and how they have been affected by domestic and regional challenges and opportunities that have resulted in changes to their agency-leveraging approach. The first chapter of this case study introduces key domestic incidents and challenges that have affected each government, alongside the nature of their authoritarian rule. The latter chapter contrasts these developments

both with the foreign policymaking and the agency-leveraging strategies and constellations used by each government in response to domestic and international challenges and opportunities.

The Kenyan chapters, 4 and 5, will do likewise. The central arguments these chapters make are that contextual factors matter in how agency is exercised and in what forms. When a government is threatened with destabilising factors, or increased international pressure, strategies aimed at aligning the recipient government with existing narratives and concerns of external supporters become more prevalent; the converse approach of reshaping narratives and supporter interests occurs amongst stronger governments with the capability to enact such agency-leveraging strategies.

The conclusion of the thesis draws together these major points, highlighting further the similarities and differences between the Ethiopian and Kenyan cases. It will be argued that the framework of agency-leveraging strategies developed within this thesis can be applied to additional cases, and a brief exploration of the agency-leveraging framework in action in Myanmar and Venezuela is undertaken. As noted throughout the thesis, there is an element of generalisability that is drawn from what contexts, challenges, and opportunities drive the application of different agency-leveraging strategies and constellations across authoritarian cases.

It will be theorised that such constellations of strategies can be applied to additional aid-dependent authoritarian cases, whilst other strategies not found to be as relevant in Kenya and Ethiopia – such as utilising resource wealth to exercise agency – are shown to be applicable in other cases, such as Venezuela. The agency-leveraging framework within this thesis, therefore, acts as an important framing device for understanding which strategies are used across non-Western aid-dependent authoritarian cases, and for focussing upon what opportunities and constraints drive the exercising of agency and the choice of strategies.

Chapter 1: Autocratic support and the agency-leveraging framework

The concept of autocratic support is central to this thesis, and more widely in the field of African foreign policy and IR. This chapter critically examines the concept of autocratic support and the literature in this field. In doing so, this chapter contributes to the four major arguments of this thesis as follows.

Firstly, this chapter makes a substantive contribution towards conceptualising and critiquing the concepts of autocratic support and agency when applied to authoritarian African cases, and so begins to provide a comprehensive exploration of these concepts that is later developed in the Ethiopian and Kenyan case studies.

This chapter argues that the existing research on the autocratic support phenomenon is insufficient in two ways. Firstly, in how it marries this concept with the notion of recipient agency, and secondly, how ideology is conceptualised within the research area of autocratic support. Addressing the former, this chapter argues that much of the current literature concerning autocratic support and government maintenance has failed to acknowledge the ability for recipients of autocratic support to impact upon the design and implementation of that support. Current literature is dominated by the aims and interests of autocratic promoters, rather than viewing the phenomenon through the lens of recipient agency. It will be argued that viewing this process through the capabilities of recipients demonstrates that autocratic support is frequently a mutually constructed phenomenon.

Secondly, this chapter develops the core thesis argument that ideological commitments are present and have an important role in contemporary autocratic support. It is argued that ideological commitments by autocratic supporters have occurred after developments in 2017 and beyond, much of which has not been captured by the literature on this subject. The assertions made in this earlier literature that saw little evidence of ideological 'models' of authoritarianism being promoted abroad are argued to be no longer valid. Rather, the post-2017 landscape demonstrates the

beginnings of the promotion of authoritarian models by Russia and China, with ostensibly ideological tenets.

It will be acknowledged that utilising the 'autocracy promotion' term is unhelpful and generates suggestions that this process is comparable in scope and intention to democracy promotion. Rather, the remainder of this thesis uses the 'autocratic support' term as a less provocative term that accurately encompasses the several processes used by China and Russia in their engagement with African recipients.

The final connection to the wider thesis arguments that this chapter makes is the development of the agency-leveraging strategy framework introduced in the thesis introduction and applied later in this thesis to the Ethiopian and Kenyan cases. The autocratic assemblage phenomenon is expanded on- including how government maintenance empirically operates- through the creation of a typology of methods through which autocratic supporters and recipients converge to benefit from this process of support. The typology – which was introduced briefly in the thesis introduction – is developed in greater detail within this chapter. This process re-centres the discussion around the impact of recipients, rather than focussing this phenomenon on what supporters receive from their actions across the non-Western world.

This portion of the chapter develops the typology of conscious efforts and pre-existing factors that African authoritarian governments use to exercise agency when in discussions with external actors providing government maintenance and support. African authoritarian governments have utilised several tools, processes, and pre-existing factors to leverage agency, again demonstrating the key fact that government maintenance is a mutually constructed phenomenon between recipient and supporter. Whilst this chapter represents an introduction into how to reconsider autocratic support and widen the framework of ideology within this phenomenon, further clarification, and the deployment of primary evidence will follow in subsequent chapters.

Introducing autocratic support

The following sections of this chapter will firstly outline some of the main debates and discussions surrounding autocratic support. Such discussions at this stage of the thesis are both relevant and important to firstly delineate how existing literature has referred to the phenomenon of autocratic support and 'autocracy promotion', and secondly how the argument in this thesis concerning the inclusion of agency relates to this research area.

As noted in the thesis introduction, the focus of the argument within this thesis centres upon the foreign policy actions of African authoritarian governments, and specifically how they seek to use agency-leveraging strategies to further achieve their aims. However, the additional research questions of this thesis seek to highlight the connection between African authoritarian agency in this process, and how it connects to autocratic support provided by several external actors. As such, an investigation into the definition of autocratic support, the diverse set of forms that autocratic support takes, and critiques of this process centred around its lack of focus on agency is warranted at this early stage.

Broadly defined, autocratic support is noted as assistance provided by external actors to bolster and stabilise the political strength of authoritarian recipients across the non-Western world. Autocratic support is a concept covering a variety of deliberate attempts by Russia, China, and others at influencing states to become more authoritarian. This outcome is encouraged through the adaptation of models of authoritarian governance, alongside the provision of diplomatic, technical, economic, and military support to authoritarian governments abroad (Burnell, 2010a). These measures seek to bolster, stabilise, and support existing authoritarian governments who may be susceptible to instability, through such processes as the external pressures of democratisation, or domestic rebellions and threats of government collapse (Tansey, 2016a: 9-12).

Forms of autocratic support

With such a broad definition, the autocratic support phenomenon is noted within the literature to exist in a diverse set of forms. Tansey's (2016a: 23-55) work seeks to highlight how autocratic support has not been singularly identified under one term. One prominent form is the concept of autocracy promotion; the promoting of autocratic rule across the non-Western world to bolster and stabilise non-Western authoritarian rule.

Burnell (2010) conceptualised autocracy promotion to clarify the actions of contemporary Russia, China, and others following the reaction to the 'Colour Revolutions' across former Soviet states throughout the past two decades (Kästner, 2019: 411). Further literature on autocracy promotion emerged because of the resistance towards democratisation in post-Soviet states (Babayan, 2015; Bader et al. 2010; Jackson, 2010; Melnykovska et al. 2012), although such research has now extended to Latin America, Southeast Asia, and Africa (Kneuer, 2022; Tansey, 2016a; Vanderhill, 2012; 2013; Yakouchyk, 2019). Early research on autocracy promotion prior to the literature defining its characteristics frequently centred upon the sometimes-weak impact of Western liberal democracy promotion, and on authoritarian resilience in the early to mid 2000s (Bader, 2014: 10-11; Levitsky & Way, 2005; Marples, 2009; Way, 2004).

Mechanisms and processes of autocratic support

The wider phenomenon of autocracy support encompasses several mechanisms and processes. Further literature beyond Burnell's initial definitions identified different strands of autocracy promotion, ranging from the diffusion of norms and values that prove favourable to autocratic governments, to the use of soft and hard power to induce or convert governments towards a more favourable model of authoritarianism that emulates the government's supporters (Jackson, 2010; Melnykovska et al. 2012).

The 'diffusion' of autocratic norms is a further angle of autocratic support (Ambrosio, 2010; Kneuer & Demmelhuber, 2016; 2021; Weyland, 2017). Autocratic diffusion is a phenomenon distinct from the promotion of autocratic norms, instead focussing on what Tansey (2016a: 39) terms 'passive influences'. Diffusion centres upon the transfer of norms and best practices from authoritarian states to others. As Ambrosio (2010: 378) notes, the diffusion concept does not refer to outcomes, but rather centres upon the processes through which authoritarian states operate, and that external forces and contexts constrain the options authoritarian states have in dealing with issues, thereby leading to them using similar practices to other authoritarian governments facing comparable challenges. Diffusion requires a high level of communication and influence between states to be effective, hence instances of this phenomenon appearing in situations both where prominent authoritarian supporters are neighbours of the states affected by authoritarian diffusion, such as Russia and former Soviet states, and South American states in geographical proximity to Venezuela (Kneuer, 2022; Weyland, 2017: 1236).

Diffusion in practice can encompass governments learning of best practices from other similar authoritarian governments (Weyland, 2017: 1236-1237), and autocratic emulation of processes and ways to challenge democratisation that have worked effectively elsewhere (Morgenbesser, 2020: 1067). Diffusion should also be considered separate from the active influencing that some autocratic supporters undertaken. Indeed, the adoption of best practices is done without active collaboration, imposition, or coercion (Ambrosio, 2010: 378).

Diffusion of norms and values has become an increasingly useful approach for authoritarian recipients as states such as China and Singapore have experienced strong economic growth despite their authoritarian forms of governance, with both demonstrating that the phenomenon of economic wellbeing and autocratic governance is possible (Chou et al. 2017; Cooley, 2015; Fourie, 2014).

Similar approaches of using soft power and demonstrating the value of authoritarian norms to highlight a credible alternative to liberal democracy have been identified as being employed by several autocratic states, including Russia, China, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela (Ambrosio, 2010; Hodzi, 2018; Kolstø, 2020; Weyland, 2010; 2017). Importantly in some cases, there are passive influences such as economic stability that arises from continued trade between autocracies, and the legitimacy an autocratic supporter may bestow upon a recipient government through continuing to utilise official diplomatic channels (Kneuer & Demmelhuber, 2016; Tansey, 2016a: 39-40; Yakouchyk, 2016: 217).

Soft power autocratic support processes include the use of authoritarian-dominated international organisations, such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) to bolster the legitimacy of recipient governments and provide diplomatic support to shield them from external criticism of their human rights records and rigged elections (Jackson, 2010: 112). Further support mechanisms include the use of foreign aid and trade to economically support recipients (Bader, 2014; Bader et al. 2010), and the impact local linkage has on constructing authoritarian neighbourhoods of states that can support each other (Bryant & Chou, 2016; Hall & Ambrosio, 2017; Tansey et al. 2017).

The development of infrastructural projects and development programmes have also been identified as key to autocratic support. Such infrastructure projects have been seen to improve a recipient government's 'performance legitimacy', by providing the authoritarian leadership with increased capacity to demonstrate their legitimacy as an effective government to its citizens (Clapham, 2018: 1155; Mietzner, 2018). Increased legitimacy through state capacity both weakens the opposition and embolden the ruling government in recipient states (Cassani, 2017; Flores & Nooruddin, 2016). Other approaches that an autocratic supporter can assist with – such as rigging elections – have been utilised to further embolden governments and reduce the threat of unrest (Ambrosio, 2008: 1333-1334; Seeberg, 2021).

These actions are therefore undertaken with the aim to stabilise, bolster, and support recipient states, by providing legitimacy and the equipment and means to resolve domestic and regional threats to government stability. On the supporter side, autocratic support can be a powerful tool to gain favourable relations with recipient governments, who can in turn assist supporter governments in maintaining stability themselves, minimising the threat of protests and demands for democracy by citizens transferring from weak autocracies to their own states (Bader et al. 2010; Sarotte, 2012; Weyland, 2017; Whitehead, 2014). Autocratic supporters can also gain financially from recipients, by extracting resources and receiving payment for infrastructural projects and political support through oil and rare materials. Much more will be said on this aspect of autocratic support in the latter half of this chapter.

Autocratic support and ideology

Whilst this discussion has focussed almost exclusively on the contemporary period, this is not to say that the Cold War period does not feature similar activities and processes of support. Research on autocratic support has however drawn clear distinctions between the Cold War-era and contemporary actions by Russia, China, and others. As will be noted shortly, Tansey (2016a) argues that Cold War-era autocratic support differs from contemporary instances of this phenomenon because of a lack of ideological motivation amongst supporters in the present day. Burnell (2010a: 3) notes that more overt efforts at supporting autocracy seen in the Cold War are not present in the contemporary era, such as the imposition of autocratic rule using military force. He classifies contemporary autocratic support as a more tempered, implicit process of recipient stabilisation. Writing over a decade ago, Burnell (2010a: 6) also argued that an ideological alignment of states – as seen in the two sides of the Cold War – is not likely to occur again.

This thesis aligns itself with some more contemporary analyses of autocratic support that considers current instances of this phenomenon as a re-occurrence of the actions of Cold War participants. Kästner (2019) argues that contemporary autocratic support bears some resemblance to the

ideologically-motivated Cold War-era aims of global powers. They seek to affect the political standing of recipient states and maintain the stability of governments favourable to their interests and ideological alignment, utilising many of the same techniques and mechanisms. In a similar light, many of the actions, mechanisms, and processes used to promote autocracy in the Cold War-era are replicated in contemporary instances of this phenomenon.

Finally, ideological models of autocracy similar to the Cold War-era are a re-emerging factor in autocratic support since 2017, leading to a further similarity between the Cold War period and contemporary circumstances. This section has outlined some of the key aspects of autocratic support as seen in the literature. Whilst more could be said on this subject, for the sake of brevity this section has highlighted some of the core elements of this concept; the focus on maintaining stability amongst autocratic governments through the provision of material and diplomatic support by Russia, China, and others. The second half of this chapter, where a typology of factors constituting autocratic assemblages is constructed will expand upon the mechanisms of autocratic support, whilst making clear the mutually constructed nature of this process.

This section forms the basis for one of the key arguments of the thesis; engaging with the topic of ideological commitment and whether it is appropriate to speak of 'autocracy promotion' as an ideologically-driven concept. Contrary to the critical literature on this subject that seeks to emphasise a break between the Cold War and contemporary instances of autocratic support, it is argued and indeed reinforced in the following section how contemporary autocratic support is not only ideologically-driven, but retains some familiar features of Cold War-era autocratic support. Nevertheless, this should be caveated that much of this discussion focuses on literature and research that has emerged after the principal critiques of ideologically-driven autocratic support by Tansey and Way.

Critiques of autocratic support

Having established the general concept of autocratic support, this next section expands upon the critiques of aspects of this process that have been developed in recent years. A key critique concerns the sub-section of autocratic support, namely the 'autocracy promotion' phenomenon. Scholars have questioned whether the contemporary instances of this phenomenon can be accurately classed as 'promotion' (Tansey, 2016a; Way, 2015, 2016). The discussion surrounding whether all these activities constitute autocracy promotion is centred around the motivations and desires of autocratic supporters. Promotion, as Burnell (2010a: 6-7) defines it, should be considered as a comparable phenomenon to that of democracy promotion; there is a clear and concerted effort on the part of authoritarian supporters to promote or export authoritarian norms, practices and tools to democracies or weak autocratic states facing the pressures of democratisation.

In a similar fashion, Vanderhill (2013: 9) designates the act of promotion as exclusively supporting the elites of or groups within an illiberal government, thus excluding general support to states through foreign aid, for example, which may end up supporting liberal opposition groups. This crucially does not entirely exclude Western democracies; states such as the US and UK do routinely support authoritarian governments in a similar fashion to autocratic supporters like Russia and China (Brownlee, 2012; Tansey, 2016a: 2), as noted throughout this thesis.

Importantly, much of this work focuses on existing authoritarian governments, with Russia, China, and other authoritarian states bolstering autocrats and their elites in states at risk of democratisation. This leads to a pool of literature that seeks to clarify what the promotion aspect of this phenomenon is, and whether alternative terminologies are more useful. Nodia (2014: 145) argues that because authoritarianism is supported in states that did not widely adhere to democratic principles in the first place, highlighting it as 'promotion' is misleading. Russian and Chinese influence is argued as more of an example of authoritarian resistance to European and US norms, values, and identity, rather than autocracy export or promotion. Walker (2014) posits that Russia

and China pursue these policies primarily to oppose democratisation attempts in recipient states and thus their actions should be termed as policies of ‘democracy containment’. Whitehead (2014), Brownlee (2012) and Von Soest (2015) adopt similar positions, framing this phenomenon as a reactive response to Western democracy promotion, rather than a proactive move designed to develop an authoritarian government where there had not been one before.

There are also critiques related to the ideology behind autocracy promotion. The terminology of autocracy promotion has often been implicitly connected to democracy promotion, generating discussion about how the two processes may be comparable. Nodia (2014: 142) argues that authoritarianism as supported by Russia, China, and others does not have the same universalist, values-based commitments as Western-promoted liberal democracy. Therefore, equating autocracy promotion to democracy promotion is inappropriate. Carothers and Samet-Marram (2015) argue that Russia’s commitment to supporting authoritarianism in its immediate neighbourhood is not because of an ideological commitment. Rather, Russian actions are underpinned by self-interests, with neighbouring authoritarian recipients of support likely to be more receptive and supportive of Russia’s actions.

Others focus on whether the idea of Russia and China promoting authoritarianism beyond their immediate neighbourhoods is possible (Brownlee, 2017; Noesselt, 2021; Weyland, 2017). The effects beyond the immediate sphere of influence of autocracy promoters is negligible, with quantitative analysis suggesting that resilient democracies are rarely affected by external authoritarian destabilisation (Bader et al. 2010; Davidsson, 2020: 877-878). Nevertheless, there is scope for other effects, such as authoritarian learning and diffusion amongst states beyond the immediate neighbourhood of autocracy promoters (Ambrosio, 2010; Ambrosio & Tolstrup, 2019; Hall & Ambrosio, 2017; Kolstø, 2020), thus opening the potential for recipient government agency and capabilities to play a significant role in how autocratic support may operate. This avenue of research is discussed in more depth later in this chapter.

Beyond these critiques, there have been substantive efforts to define autocracy promotion more stringently. Tansey (2016b: 143-144) argues that there has been little conceptual clarity in this research area. Tansey sees little evidence of a normative promotion of authoritarianism, instead noting that what has been described as autocracy promotion is simply undertaken to stabilise existing authoritarian governments.

Western-led democracy promotion comes with its own ideological message that is unrepeated by these authoritarian powers (Way, 2015; 2016). Democracy is encouraged by Western powers because it is considered an inherently positive model of governance for recipient states to employ, alongside the pragmatic advantages that democracy can bring, such as the increased diplomatic and economic links that can be gained from democratised participants (Grimm, 2015; Whitehead, 2014).

Tansey (2016a: 51) has defined autocracy promotion as a phenomenon that only concerns instances where the promoting actor has an ideological and normative commitment to promote authoritarianism as a model of government. Acknowledging that this strict definition eliminates much of what previous sources have listed as promotion, such as the self-interested support of governments through material and diplomatic means, Tansey argues that actual 'autocracy promotion' has not been seen in a significant way in the post-Cold War world.

Instead, instances of autocracy promotion with ideological tenets, such as the Comintern's support for international Communist revolutions prior to the Second World War, alongside Cold War-era promotion of specific models of autocratic governance in Eastern Europe are notable examples of autocracy promotion. These are classified as autocracy promotion in Tansey's view as they display an ideological commitment to authoritarianism, and the development of external states moulded around the model of the promoter (Tansey, 2016a: 52-53).

Tansey (2016a) provides a substantial typology of external authoritarian forces, describing much of the field as autocratic support, where the result is often decided by the self-interest of the supporting state. In situations where ideology is involved, then this is because the promoter state is

ideologically driven to promote authoritarianism itself, rather than because of any other ideological desire.

However, this leads to the first critique of the current autocracy promotion literature; that this new definition is too narrow. The motivation on the part of autocracy promoters to undertake the promotion of autocracy has often been described as being driven by an innate belief that authoritarianism is a better form of governance than alternatives; primarily democracy. In this scenario, autocracy is seen to provide a greater level of political stability, with leaders in place for longer, and the likelihood of destabilising protests or clamour for reform being lower under an authoritarian government.

However, Tansey (2016a) highlights that in his view, empirical examples of this scenario – including a belief in this that autocracy is an inherently better than democracy – is rare, and so ascribing instances of pragmatic autocratic support as promotion creates an exclusionary definition.

Alternative ideological desires by promoters have not been considered, and it is proposed here that the process of autocratic support can be regarded as ideologically underpinned if it is reconsidered what ideology means in practice.

Whilst this past section has explored the main critiques of autocracy promotion, the next section of this chapter reconsiders ideology as a working definition to encompass some of the past and contemporary instances of autocratic support. In doing so, the next section establishes that ideologies in a practical sense are often changing and attached to self-interests. In the case of this project, it is argued that recipients of autocratic support are capable of elevating some of their self-interests to reflect ideological tenets of promoter states. This leads to external actors promoting aspects of authoritarian governance that connect to the desires of recipient governments, in a manner akin to what has been discussed earlier in this chapter. Therefore, in response to Tansey and Way's arguments, ideologically led autocracy promotion is argued to be present in both the Cold War-era and contemporary circumstances.

Reconsidering ideology and autocratic support

This renewed understanding of ideology explores the impact of recipient self-interest on the construction of ideology. Self-interests and ideology are frequently deployed to complement each other in achieving aims and outcomes favourable to each actor. Fisher (2020: 13) notes how practical threats and the contextual situation a group of actors can find themselves in can be understood and explained using ideological content. Freedon (2003) argues that ideology should not be just considered as an abstract concept that has little bearing on the day-to-day events and practices of actors. An ideology demonstrates a recurring pattern of ideas, held by a significant group capable of enacting upon these ideas, that are deployed with the aim of justifying, contesting, or changing political arrangements (Ibid. 2003: 32).

It is argued that autocratic recipient governments deploy discourses with Western and non-Western supporters based upon a combination of ideologies that reflect their self-interests. Elites frequently utilise and repeat ideological content espoused by China, Russia, and Western states to derive support, switching and adapting their professed ideology between each major external actor when needed to maximise their benefits. Whilst on the surface these elites and governments may correspond to ideological tenets held by external actors, these ideologies are not necessarily internalised by African governments (Hodzi, 2020: 897).

The pragmatic challenges that recipient governments face emerge through a combination of historical legacies emanating from their unique histories of colonisation, decolonisation, and imperialism, alongside the domestic and international context each authoritarian governments finds itself in. In contemporary circumstances, issues of terrorism, regional conflict, and the international context governments operate in impacts upon the discourse that recipients use. It will be argued that the direction of autocratic support reflects both the desires of supporters – as has already been noted in the autocracy promotion literature – but also crucially the needs and pressing concerns of

recipients, packaged in discourses that speak to the interests of supporters, and ideological tenets that align with those of supporters (Clapham, 1996: 138-139).

These key concepts that speak to this renewed definition of autocratic support include government stability, territorial integrity, independence, modernisation, political and economic moderation, and commitments to tenets of democracy, freedom, and the rule of law. Whilst simply listing these concepts is not greatly beneficial, later chapters will expand upon how these concepts have been deployed and packaged in ideological terms to capture external support, and additionally, make supporting authoritarian governments more justifiable for external actors.

Crucially this process does not discount self-interests as an instigating factor for autocratic support to take place. Indeed, self-interests and ideology do not need to be seen as contradictory factors. As Fisher (2020: 12-13) notes, ideological concepts such as those mentioned earlier are often used as legitimising factors to capture external support for recipients' regional concerns. Corkin (2013: 3) highlights how African post-liberation elites construct narratives that 'emulate the ideologies of their patrons to coax out material support'. Autocratic supporters are presented with ideological discourse that may speak to their aspirations, but critically also reflect self-interests and practical considerations of recipients (Clapham, 1996: 139; Hodzi, 2020; Verhoeven, 2020a).

This approach develops the autocratic support literature by critiquing Tansey and Way's conceptualisation of ideology as simply a factor that induces autocratic support. Rather, it centres the actual ideological component of autocratic support upon concepts decided upon by recipients; a crucial aspect of this thesis (Ziso, 2020: 911). The process of autocratic support is not centred around an understanding amongst promoters that they are supporting authoritarianism, but rather that they are providing support to governments that on the surface ideologically align with their commitments. By engaging with this line of thinking, the autocratic support concept becomes more utilisable and better reflects contemporary circumstances. As will be seen, both Kenya and Ethiopia's

continual support from both Western and non-Western actors can be framed through this diversified approach to the ideological component of autocratic support.

Having argued for this approach to ideology, the second argument of this chapter concerns a broader approach to considering recipient actions and agency within autocratic support, and how this develops into a mutually constructed process.

Factoring in recipient actions within autocratic support

The second argument surrounding the process of autocratic support in this chapter concerns the focus in the literature on the actions and motivations of promoters rather than the agency and capabilities of recipients (Bader, 2014: 11). The previous section has already introduced the notion that external actors are guided in part by the self-interests of recipients, and this second argument reinforces the idea that autocratic support is a mutually constructed process.

The nature of inquiry that sparked the study of post-Cold War autocratic support means that the abilities of recipients to shape this process has been underappreciated. A focus on how democracies should respond to the self-interested endeavours of Russia, China, and other autocracies has resulted in recipient governments becoming blank slates, merely impacted by the actions of autocracy promoters. Within the empirical actions of autocracy promoters, recipient agency too has been side-lined or argued to have little actual impact. As has been mentioned, the undertaking of infrastructural projects and development programmes have been considered as an opportunity not just to bolster the stability of recipient autocratic governments, but also as a crucial avenue for financial gain for autocratic supporters.

However, recipient governments have had commanding positions in how infrastructure projects are designed and implemented, resulting in projects that support the stability of recipients, rather than fulfilling supporter interests. Goodfellow and Huang (2020) highlight that in Ethiopia and Uganda, Chinese loans have been utilised in a manner different to their original intention, to fulfil the

government's rhetorical commitments to its citizens and better adapt to the realities of each state's infrastructure needs. Biruk (2020) demonstrates that government commitments to its citizens, and demonstrations of modernity have overtaken any demands and procedures the autocratic supporter – in this case China – desired from its loans and financing.

Thus far, these emerging arguments have not directly interacted with the autocratic support literature, and this is an area where this project makes an impact. This project focusses on the capabilities and actions recipient authoritarian governments make in directing the processes autocratic support, alongside also focussing upon the discourse and use of ideology by these governments in capturing further autocratic assistance. These approaches further develop this research area and bring together disparate aspects of the relationship between African authoritarian governments and their external counterparts.

Authoritarian models of development

The third argument this chapter makes concerns a re-evaluation of the autocratic support process, centring on the bolder approach Russia and China have taken to promoting authoritarian models. These developments directly impact the argument Tansey and Way amongst others have made; that much of the actions undertaken by Russia, China, and others cannot constitute autocracy promotion as they do not specifically promote models of authoritarian governance. This section refutes this, arguing instead that these developments represent a clear move by China and other autocratic supporters to articulate a model of authoritarian development for recipient governments in the non-Western world.

In addition, these developments add to the argument that contemporary autocratic support features continuities from the Cold War-era. With the re-introduction of authoritarian models of governance for recipient governments to emulate, there are increased similarities between these two eras of autocratic support (Kästner, 2019). I argue that the points made in much of the existing literature surrounding contemporary autocracy promotion as devoid of ideological content and distinct from

Cold War support are increasingly inadequate. A re-examination of how ideology is deployed by recipients - and how they play an important role in the process of autocratic support - alongside these recent developments by China and Russia demonstrate that autocratic support features some key continuities between the patterns of support between contemporary periods and the Cold War era.

Academic discussion surrounding authoritarian models of development that African recipients can emulate has grown in recent years. A more overt discussion surrounding the adoption of key elements of Chinese authoritarianism has been had between President Xi Jinping and others in the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) since 2017. A speech given by Xi at the 19th Party Congress in October 2017 extolled the virtues of China's development pathway, and importantly highlighted how a more confident and outward-looking China offered an opportunity for other developing states to emulate China and preserve their independence, rather than face exploitation and the need to democratise (Xi, 2020: 12, 62-65). Public declarations in arenas such as the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) have talked about the development of a 'Chinese peace', as opposed to a 'liberal peace'. This entails the development of an international order of norms that focus on principles of non-intervention and permitting African recipients to explore their own development pathways that do not necessarily conform to standards of democracy and liberal human rights (Carrozza, 2021: 15).

There has also been a concurrent rise in knowledge exchanges with African governments. China has sponsored political training for African government elites, generating opportunities for governments to learn and emulate China's path to economic growth patterns, whilst maintaining authoritarian models of governance (Bader & Hackenesch, 2020; Barnett, 2020; Benabdallah, 2020a, 2020b; Regilme Jr & Hodzi, 2021: 119; Walsh, 2022: 44-47).

Whilst African government elites have previously attempted to emulate aspects of authoritarianism or centralised approaches to economic management (Alden, 2009: 130; Fourie, 2014: 542-543), past

CCP officials, such as former Chairman Deng Xiaoping chastised African government heads for attempting to copy or emulate China's models of governance and economics (Alden, 2019: 279; Regilme Jr & Hodzi, 2021: 119). This change in rhetoric from Xi, and a general bolder posturing in Chinese foreign policy has generated concern amongst Western governments and scholars (Chen Weiss & Wallace, 2021; Economy, 2020). As such, this should be considered a significant development in how autocratic support is undertaken.

Russian activities in support of authoritarian recipients have also escalated in recent years. Putin and other senior Russian figures have made overtures to recipients, providing levels of investment and support not seen since the Cold War (Stronski, 2019; Titeca, 2023). The Wagner group of mercenaries now operates on behalf of the Russian government across Africa, including in Libya, Mali, Sudan, and the Central African Republic (CAR) (Gerócs, 2019: 325; Stronski, 2019: 17). The group has provided material and military support to African authoritarians on behalf of the Russian state (Marten, 2019b; Rizzotti, 2019).

Finally, Russia and China have been emboldened in supporting recipient authoritarians by the 'retreat' of US foreign policy across the continent. The Trump presidency saw the withdrawal of democracy support programmes Africa, and little proactiveness in combatting authoritarianism across Africa (Carothers, 2019). It is not accurate to say that the US has unequivocally advocated democracy in the past; as demonstrated in subsequent chapters, successive US administrations have taken a selective and self-interest led approach to promoting democracy (Adebajo, 2018). However, during Trump's tenure as president even nominal overtures to democracy and other liberal norms and values were not made to African authoritarian governments (Westcott, 2019: 739). Trump's domestic actions also provided greater legitimacy for African authoritarian governments to engage in undemocratic processes. Trump publicly deriding and arguing against core tenets of US democracy and then encouraging efforts to overturn the 2020 US election result became

opportunities for China and Russia to embolden their efforts in Africa, and for African authoritarian governments to legitimise their crackdowns on democracy in their own states (Chen Weiss, 2019).

I therefore argue that there is a changing landscape in autocratic support that moves away from the self-interest focussed phenomenon examined by earlier scholars. The public proclamations of authoritarian models that states can emulate – as Xi (2020: 64-65) has indicated – have the goal of creating a community of like-minded authoritarian governments. This has resulted in much discussion around authoritarian models being developed for recipient governments, in a way that scholars such as Tansey (2016a; 2016b) and Way (2015; 2016) had argued the process of autocracy promotion was not.

There are questions surrounding how far particular models of authoritarianism exist in this emerging form of autocratic support. These questions are compounded by the emerging and developing nature of China and Russia's actions across the non-Western world. China's foreign policy under President Xi has been increasingly multidimensional in its aims, bolstering authoritarianism through capacity building but also crucially through the attempted transformation of Chinese norms and values into internationally adopted concepts (Breslin, 2021: 24; Economy, 2018, 2020). China has 'rewarded' recipient authoritarian governments with political training and greater access to equipment and support if they adhere to China's norms and values, and sever ties with China's antagonists, such as Taiwan (Bader & Hackenesch, 2020: 729; Chen Weiss & Wallace, 2021).

Countries that criticise China and Russia's norms and values have come under increasing public pressure to relent through propaganda, disinformation, and manipulation (Brady, 2015, 2018; Walker, 2018: 11-12). China and Russia have also facilitated the transfer and adoption of surveillance systems, military equipment, and training to further embolden recipient authoritarians and increase their capacity to resolve domestic threats (Economy, 2018: 68-69; Polyakova & Meserole, 2019; Walsh, 2022: 46).

This renewed approach to autocratic support by Russia and China also includes the shaping of international institutions to better facilitate models of authoritarianism and prevent overbearing criticism of their norms and values (Brady, 2018: 69-70). The CCP has utilised its ties with recipient states to gain votes in key institutions such as the UN, thereby legitimising its development of alternative norms and values to the Western liberal order (Economy, 2020: 6-7). Russia has collaborated with and supported China's efforts to reform norms and values at the UN. Both Russia and China have utilised their influence to gain seats on the UN's Human Rights Council, for instance (Duggan, 2020: 846-847; Wintour, 2020). By making authoritarian norms and values more acceptable internationally, a particular model of development aligning with Xi's intentions is promoted amongst recipients, bolstered by Xi's public claims to provide an alternative to Western liberal values (Duggan, 2020: 849).

Authoritarian models and recipient governments

With this emergence of a bolder form of autocratic support, focus again needs to be made towards the role of recipients in this process. Amongst recipient states, the claim that a particular model of authoritarianism is being exported by autocratic supporters is more tempered. Xi's proclamations of China as an exporter of authoritarianism has not manifested into a fully formed model for export, but rather remains underdeveloped and poorly articulated (Carrozza, 2021; Hodzi, 2020: 897). This has led to divergent assumptions amongst recipients surrounding what exactly China and others are exporting.

African elites often do not subscribe to a particular model of development as promoted by China or other external actors, but rather pick and choose elements that align to their pre-existing plans for the state (Fourie, 2014). Such an approach has been replicated here due to the vague articulation of China's model (Hodzi, 2020). In Ethiopia, the discussion around a China model and vague articulation of the concept by Xi allowed EPRDF recipients to model their development on China's plans, but only to the extent that this emulation gave greater legitimacy to their existing governance approaches

(Ziso, 2020: 913). Emulating the 'China model' gained the government diplomatic leverage with China. Whilst some scholars see the development of authoritarian models as an ideological resurgence that is definite in its aims to reshape the Western liberal order, understandings of what this means amongst recipient governments is vague.

There also remains an element of recipient capability which is overlooked by the literature on authoritarian models. Much of the EPRDF's emulation of aspects of the China model- such as the focus on a centralised system of governance, and the use of infrastructural projects to drive the economy- were adopted because of the usefulness of these concepts for the recipient government at the time, rather than through any active promotion by China (Hodzi, 2020; Ziso, 2020: 919-920). Whilst emulation may be more openly encouraged, it is not through a cohesive model. What has been seen in this bolder approach is a more vocal offer of norms, values, and processes to emulate, and the subsequent adoption of some of these aspects when it suits recipient governments to do so (Verhoeven, 2020b; Walsh, 2022).

A final point concerning authoritarian models is that there is an important balancing act that Russia, China, and others are making that restrict more overt promotion of authoritarian norms amongst recipient governments. Russia (and its predecessor the USSR) and China have ostensibly focussed upon values of non-intervention, sovereignty, and respect for domestic issues in recipient states (Bader, 2014: 12). These values make it difficult for authoritarian supporters to guide recipients to follow a certain model. Xi's approach of offering authoritarian models to recipients- but not explicitly exporting them- legitimises Chinese claims to not be an imposing, dominant power, whilst also crucially delineating Chinese approaches to development amongst recipients versus the exporting of democracy undertaken by Western states (Hodzi, 2020: 894).

Xi's (2020: 63-64) rhetoric of providing governance solutions abroad and positioning China at the head of this new approach to international politics is not an explicit promotion of a model, but neither is it a continuation of self-interests devoid of ideology. This emergence of a different type of

autocratic support is represented by bolder autocratic supporters who actively promote their models of development and governance, but crucially function through the capabilities and desires of recipients to employ supporters' models in their own states.

These bolder approaches demonstrate some continuities with the Cold War era. The previous mantra seen in much of the literature – that Chinese leaders have been explicit in deterring African recipients not to emulate their models of governance – has become increasingly inadequate in reflecting the autocratic support seen today. Rather, some of the Cold War mechanisms of emulation and encouragement by autocratic supporters to adopt forms of authoritarianism is seen more frequently. Whilst this should not be considered as a direct continuation of the Cold War forms of autocracy promotion, it needs to be understood that these bolder approaches, coupled with the factoring in of recipient agency and use of ideology represents a closer connection to some of the actions seen in the Cold War.

Arguments that pointed to a lack of ideological intent and little evidence of an export of authoritarian models of governance have been re-evaluated in the past few sections. The discussion within this chapter demonstrates that autocratic support is a mutually constructed phenomenon, with clear ideological tenets jointly produced by supporters and recipients. In addition, authoritarian models of development are emerging and encouraged by supporters, but crucially are adopted only to the extent that they align with and support the aims and interests of recipients.

Outlining the agency-leveraging framework

Having now made the argument that ideologically-driven autocratic support is an important recent development, the remainder of this chapter highlights how the mutually constructed nature of autocratic support is manifested through several agency-leveraging strategies by recipient African authoritarian governments.

This section of the chapter will establish a typology of actions that recipient governments use to exercise agency within an autocratic assemblage. This typology reaffirms that autocratic support is impacted by supporter self-interests, but that agency-leveraging approaches utilised by recipients are crucial to how support is designed and implemented. Whilst the thesis introduction briefly outlined the typology of agency-leveraging strategies – and the further constellations of strategies that governments in Ethiopia and Kenya have used – this discussion goes into further detail on each strategy, including wider examples from across the African continent. A broader discussion of the constellations of strategies is contained in the forthcoming case study chapters.

Whilst this typology will focus on Russia and China as case studies on the supporter side – as this is where much of the literature centres itself – it should be made clear that these agency-leveraging processes are equally applicable in situations where authoritarian African governments seek to gain support from Western donors, and indeed examples of this are contained in the case study chapters. Many authoritarian governments have used strategies from this typology and discourses emphasising values that speak to democratic donors to elicit support, even as blatant non-democratic violations are taking place within their states. It is also important to highlight that these strategies are not deployed equally amongst governments. Some aspects of economic exchange, for example, are not determined by the government itself, but rather by pre-existing factors such as state resource wealth. In some cases – such as the Kenyan and Ethiopian examples – economic exchange is not a major agency-leveraging strategy, but has been included in this typology to emphasise the applicability of the typology to other cases across the non-Western world.

Finally, these strategies are not deployed in isolation. Governments frequently utilise several strategies in tandem, and that such strategies and their usage varies amongst governments across Africa both geographically and throughout the time period of this thesis. The deployment of these strategies will be more clearly illustrated in further chapters, but the establishment of this typology here provides clarity of the variety of strategies recipient governments use.

Table detailing strategies that recipients use to leverage agency

Strategies of leveraging agency	How recipients deploy these strategies
Economic exchange	<p>Exchanging resources for infrastructure <i>e.g.</i> Angola’s ‘oil for infrastructure’ programme (Corkin, 2013).</p> <p>Utilising resources to alleviate existing debts.</p> <p>Resource wealth used to stabilise the government/ elite self-preservation.</p>
Aligning aims and interests	<p>Positioning the governments as central to strategic interests of autocratic and democratic supporters.</p> <p>Centring the government as important to combat threats to supporters <i>e.g.</i> the current government is important to resolve autocracy supporters’ ‘crisis of legitimacy’ (Sarotte, 2012).</p> <p>Positioning the government as capable of resolving stability and security issues relevant to supporter <i>e.g.</i> providing a strategically important role in the Global War on Terror.</p> <p>Highlighting the political importance of the government for supporters <i>e.g.</i> the state’s strategic location, the government’s regional and political importance.</p>

<p>Establishing government coherence and legitimacy</p>	<p>Governments demonstrate that they can deal with internal and external unrest.</p> <p>Demonstration that they are the sole legitimate power in charge of a state, and so are legitimate recipients of support.</p> <p>Narrative of extraversion; governments are helpless and incapable of resolving security issues by themselves, justifying support from external actors.</p>
<p>Demonstrating success</p>	<p>Governments with impressive economic growth records use this history to induce further support.</p> <p>Occasional implementation of external development programmes to gain support and legitimacy amongst external actors.</p> <p>Portraying development partners as crucial and positive elements of the state's development and economic growth records.</p>
<p>Mobilising historical linkages</p>	<p>Utilising historical narratives espoused by supporters as a legitimising reason for historical support.</p> <p>Calling upon past actions and narratives of anti-colonialism/ non-intervention to request</p>

	further assistance from supporters in times of crisis or reduced Western support.
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Strategy 1: Economic exchange The first strategy through which recipient governments exercise agency is through the utilisation of pre-existing resource wealth within the state to pay for infrastructure or relieve external debts. This strategy capitalises upon the economic focus China and other external actors have had when engaging with the African continent.

Alden (2009) prefaces his book on China’s insatiable demand to extract natural resources from the African continent, such as oil and rare metals, to fuel its industries. Taylor (2006) focuses on oil as a substantial reason for China’s interest in Africa, pointing to the state’s focus on supporting Angolan and Nigerian recipients as evidence that China’s support hinged upon the value of the resources contained within recipient countries. Russia’s increased investment in the African continent also reflects a desire to access rare metals and other resources, alongside mining rights (Arkhangelskaya & Shubin, 2013; Harding & Burke, 2019; Marten, 2019a).

However, African governments have utilised their resource wealth to capture further assistance. The Angolan government managed much of their repayment to China through the supply of oil (Corkin, 2013; Jackson, 1995), though is often misleadingly seen as a predatory pattern of Chinese debt entrapment (Brautigam, 2009: 276-279). Rather, the Angolan government used oil wealth to buy further extractive equipment, giving the government greater capacity to extract more oil and pay off Western creditors. This demonstrates that the process was not purely focussed on potential benefits for China (Corkin, 2013: 5-6).

Authoritarian governments can also use resource wealth to resolve structural issues, such as external debts. This gives them the manoeuvrability to engage with external actors on their own terms (Fraser & Whitfield, 2009; Vickers, 2013). The infrastructural support that Russia, China, and

others provide in exchange for resources has provided governments with an alternative development pathway, especially following the widely regarded failure of the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) that were encouraged by Western donors (Tan-Mullins et al. 2010).

Finally, authoritarian recipients are often focussed on maximising their own wealth, and that this relationship of exporting raw materials provides benefits to this elite group, often to the detriment of citizens and beneficial development of their states (Hodzi, 2018a: 199-200). Therefore, whilst this relationship is still based on an export of raw materials to China, Russia, and others, it is done with the exchange of benefits, be these techniques and approaches to maintain authoritarian rule, or simply as a self-interested endeavour designed to maximise benefits for a government's elite. This process provides substantial benefits for both sides, demonstrating the mutually constructed process of an autocratic assemblage.

Whilst resource and commodity ownership are important, there are multiple other avenues for a government to leverage agency, particularly amongst those who do not have significant resources. Vickers (2013: 677) notes that the unequal distribution of resources across the continent necessitates the deployment of a variety of other mechanisms to exercise agency by less resource endowed governments.

Strategy 2: Aligning aims and interests

A second strategy that governments employ concerns aligning government aims and interests with those of supporters. Recipient authoritarian governments exploit these convergent aims and interests to shape their relationship with external actors and gain greater benefits. Political self-interests are frequently cited as an important driver of autocratic support on the side of external actors. Authoritarian African recipients have played an important role in international affairs throughout the Cold War-era and in contemporary international relations. Authoritarian governments in the Horn of Africa became important sites of confrontation during the 1970s and 1980s because of their proximity to strategic areas of the world such as the Middle East (Clapham,

1996: 135-136) and because of Soviet and Chinese ambitions to capture support from across the 'Third World' (Westad, 2005: 111).

In contemporary circumstances, governments have become important strategic allies for democratic and authoritarian actors. Gaining the diplomatic support of recipient governments has become a crucial component of Russia and China's ambitions in defending their own governments from criticism and gaining the political will in international institutions to challenge the liberal international order (Adem, 2012a; Brautigam, 2009: 278-279; Olivier & Suchkov, 2015; Sarotte, 2012). Recipient authoritarian governments have also become critical partners for global efforts to tackle terrorism and security threats (Verhoeven, 2014: 56).

Authoritarian African governments have capitalised upon these interests and threats when negotiating with external actors to receive support. Authoritarian governments including the EPRDF and successive governments in Kenya have frequently highlighted their ability to bring regional and domestic stability and resolve security issues (Barkan, 2004; Cheru, 2016; Mabera, 2016; Prestholdt, 2011). As noted in the thesis introduction, 'stability' as a constellation of agency-leveraging strategies has been frequently used by governments in both case study countries, reflecting the importance of this strategy.

Authoritarian governments also leverage their political importance and sway amongst other African states to garner support. Kenyan and Ethiopian governments have emphasised their importance to key concepts related to the Cold War conflict between East and West. Government heads including Haile Selassie and Jomo Kenyatta presented their governments as capable of influencing the Pan-African movement to support the Soviet Union, China, or to maintain African neutrality between East and West (Branch, 2011: 37; Selassie, 1963; Vestal, 2011).

In the contemporary era, Adem (2012a) and Ziso (2020) argue that Ethiopia has maintained significant levels of authoritarian funding because of its political importance to external supporters. The Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, is the site of the AU headquarters and hosts representatives

from many African states alongside international observers such as the EU (Hackenesch, 2013: 21-22; Ziso, 2020: 913). Ethiopia is therefore a uniquely situated political ally for China, Russia, and other external actors; investment and support for the Ethiopian government allows greater access to the AU and its associated members in a single state, rather than spreading an autocratic supporter's efforts across the entire continent. For Kenya, successive governments have emphasised their position as regional leaders, capable of influencing politics in neighbouring states (Mohan & Power, 2008: 34).

Again, this is not an option for all authoritarian governments; Adem (2012a) and Feyissa (2011) highlight Ethiopia as an outlying case, with its political importance substantial enough to be used as a mechanism to exercise agency. Nevertheless, recipient governments are important strategic and political allies, and the ability such governments have in capitalising upon these connections demonstrates that they exercise substantial agency when negotiating with autocratic supporters.

Strategy 3: Establishing government coherence and legitimacy

The third strategy of this framework concerns how African governments demonstrate their legitimacy and coherence to an international audience, to garner increased support.

Government coherence and the notion of sovereignty is fundamental in maximising the capabilities for African governments to negotiate with external actors (Brown, 2012: 1898). Stable and legitimate governments who can deal with opponents and unrest are capable of exercising agency to a greater extent than governments plagued with poor levels of legitimacy and domestic and regional violence and instability. Governments that demonstrate their strength and legitimacy to external actors and portray their governments as moderate, reliable actors versus alternative leaders or other neighbouring states are in turn endowed with a greater sense of legitimacy amongst external partners and can utilise this to gain an increased level of benefits (Beswick & Hammerstad, 2013: 479).

Empirical examples of this strategy include Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, who gained funding from Western and non-Western external partners by highlighting his government's capabilities in resolving the fractured nature of Ethiopia that had hindered previous governments.

Meles argued that the EPRDF was a strong government capable of bringing order to Ethiopia and the wider Horn of Africa region (Feyissa, 2011; Hackenesch, 2013). If external partners did not support the EPRDF in the manner the government desired, then chaos and instability would ensue (Cheru, 2016: 605-606). Such an approach worked in tandem with other factors highlighted in this chapter, such as the recipient government exploiting the focus on security and anti-terrorism objectives of external actors to garner greater support. Whilst this is a simplified version of events, the use of ethnic federalism and the relative stability of EPRDF rule gave credence to Meles' narrative. Further detail on this is contained in chapters 2 and 3.

African authoritarian governments also use the inverse of this approach, situating themselves within a common narrative of African helplessness to gain benefits and increased support from external actors. Through the process of 'extraversion' (Bayart, 2000: 255), African government elites utilise historical narratives and assumptions amongst external actors that they have little to no agency to garner benefits (Beswick & Hammerstad, 2013: 479-480). Extraversion appears in multiple forms, including coercion, trickery, flight, mediation, appropriation, and rejection (Bayart, 2000: 254-255). Whilst individual tenets may be employed by African authoritarians, these approaches are often utilised in conjunction with each other. This in turn speaks to the agency of African states by arguing that the situations recipient governments find themselves in are often through their own design, rather than imposed by external actors or international structures of inequality. African governments have rarely if ever been entirely under the control or influence of external actors to the extent of being unable to exercise agency (Bayart, 1996: 26-27). Despite the connections to certain external actors, African recipients are regularly capable of forging their own path, experiencing successes and detriments independent of the influence of other actors.

Empirical examples of extraversion often centre on governments highlighting existential threats to their stability from both within and beyond the borders of the state. External support is argued as necessary to safeguard these governments. Governments have also described the threats they face in securitised terms or emphasised the role of donors in resolving threats and development issues, encasing their concerns in pre-existing notions of African powerlessness. Somali elites have utilised the six tenets of extraversion to engage with and deceive external partners, eliciting support and gaining greater benefits. This has been achieved through projecting a certain image of the state to garner support, or through the adoption and rejection of external practices and forms of support (Hagmann, 2016).

Strategy 4: Demonstrating success

Another strategy which recipient states use to exercise agency is through the projection of an aspirational development model. This approach has been buoyed by the development of successful economic models and high levels of growth seen amongst certain authoritarian governments, including Ethiopia and Rwanda. Leaders in both states, including Meles and Paul Kagame of Rwanda have provided impressive economic growth records throughout their respective tenures, despite not adhering to democratic norms and standards (Feyissa, 2011; Whitfield & Fraser, 2010: 352).

Nevertheless, both countries adhered to some aspects of poverty reduction agendas championed by Western donors (Fourie, 2015), and marketed their governments as attractive examples of development and poverty reduction for donors to attach themselves to (Feyissa, 2011; Vickers, 2013). This is despite many authoritarian African recipients gravitating towards the use of Chinese and other non-Western infrastructural development projects and centralised approaches to state development in recent years, and the attractiveness of 'condition-less' aid (Cheru, 2016; Fourie, 2015). African recipient governments still wish to balance their approaches, and not face overbearing reliance upon one external actor or another, and therefore they aim to pick and choose

what policies they implement from donors to provide the best benefits whilst also maintaining authoritarian rule (Whitfield & Fraser, 2010: 358).

Maintaining the focus on aid strategies and poverty reduction – and how Western donors are positive, supportive elements of this programme – crucially deflects criticism of the poor human rights records of these recipient states, and their resistance to democratisation. This often results in donors having to make pragmatic decisions on whether to pressure a government to democratise, or to continue supporting it. Donors often regard authoritarian governments as a necessary evil to maintain their foothold in states, and benefit from the ‘success story’ of impressive economic growth and state development (Brown, 2001, 2011; Brown & Fisher, 2020).

Strategy 5: Mobilising historical linkages

Finally, there is the strategy of mobilising historical connections with supporters to gain greater levels of support. Whilst Western donors have had deep, impactful relations with African governments that are leveraged by elites to gain support, the literature cited here focuses in on ‘traditional’ autocratic supporters such as China, Russia, and the USSR.

Regarding China, official discourses have drawn upon centuries of historical engagement between themselves and states in Africa. The earliest historical period that CCP rhetoric has focussed upon is the Imperial Chinese voyages of trade and exploration to East Africa in the fifteenth century (Alden & Alves, 2008; Benabdallah, 2020b: 27, 2021). Manufacturing a nostalgic version of Chinese influence on the continent based upon trade and peaceful exploration, rather than violence and subjugation has been a key aspect of the rhetoric used to distinguish between China’s contemporary aims, and that of Western powers with a legacy of colonial or exploitative practices on the continent (Duggan, 2020: 842; Shinn & Eisenman, 2012).

China has also invoked its past record and connections to the post-independence Pan-African movement. The Bandung Conference of 1955 established a framework for Chinese relations with

non-Western counterparts (Benabdallah, 2020b: 28-29; Duggan, 2020: 840; El-Khawas, 1973; Ziso, 2020: 911-912), which has since become a cornerstone of the rhetoric invoked between Chinese and African actors. These principles include a mutual respect for each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-interference in internal affairs, and non-aggression pacts (Shinn & Eisenman, 2012: 33-37). However, China's adherence to these principles has been 'elastic' (Ibid. 2020: 275-276), with territorial integrity and non-interference often violated. Similarly, China's recent bolder approach to global affairs has seen President Xi proclaim that China will be a global leader in international influence and national strength (Xi, 2020: 30), despite in the same speech claiming not to seek global hegemony, or to conduct expansionist foreign policies (Ibid. 2020: 63). China has clouded its hegemonic aspirations through declarations of antihegemony, and the construction of narratives claiming solidarity and mutual benefit with African recipients (Hodzi, 2020: 893).

Russia has also emphasised historical connections to African partners to generate greater links with African recipients. The USSR embarked on a substantial campaign of supporting African governments throughout the Cold War, basing its support on a mixture of an ideological belief in world socialist revolution, and the pragmatic necessities of combatting US interests in Africa (Westad, 2005: 68-69).

The post-Soviet government however faced internal strife and economic instability, that led to a withdrawal of support across Africa during the 1990s. Russia's foreign policy under President Boris Yeltsin retreated, with nine embassies closed across Africa, and assistance programmes terminated (Besenyő, 2019: 134; Carmody, 2013: 96).

Yeltsin claimed that Soviet support to African states had contributed to Russia's financial woes (Shubin, 2004: 103), and so sought to recuperate debts that African governments had accumulated throughout the Soviet era, worth sixteen billion dollars (Besenyő, 2019: 134). Yeltsin's demand, and the blame laid upon former African allies for Russia's debts, led to a breakdown in relations between Russia and many African governments (Arkhangelskaya & Shubin, 2013: 7).

Under President Putin, the collapse of the USSR is regarded as a calamitous event. The political direction of Russia was undefined, and thus vulnerable to the whims of dominant Western states (Tsygankov, 2007). An independent and proactive foreign policy – encompassing the redevelopment of ties with African states – was required to rectify this loss of direction and Russian power (Palmer, 2011).

Russian figures have positioned their development approach for Africa as an alternative to Western strategies, alongside emphasising solidarity with post-liberation movements and the historical struggle against colonialism. Russian action at the UN has focussed on maintaining territorial integrity and sovereignty in recipient states, arguing that foreign intervention or criticism of the domestic practices of governments is unjustified (Risse & Babayan, 2015: 382; Tansey, 2016a: 117-119). Adherence to this principle has led to the use of semi-state forces such as the mercenary Wagner group. Mercenaries are deployed to support recipient authoritarians and execute Russian orders without exposing Russia for its hypocrisy when deriding similar attempts at Western-led interventions, such as in Libya and Syria (Marten, 2019b: 181-182).

These narratives are frequently co-opted by recipient governments to further their own aims. Historical narratives are deployed as justification for autocratic support alongside the requests governments make for assistance. At critical times, such as the global economic slowdown in 2008 and in periods of reduced support from Western donors, African leaders, such as Kenya's Mwai Kibaki and Ethiopia's Meles Zenawi employed rhetoric previously used by the Chinese to argue for continued support (Mabera, 2016; Mthembu & Mabera, 2020; Soulé, 2020).

Speeches made by government leaders in public forums, such as FOCAC frequently feature rhetoric and arguments based on past historical engagement with external actors. Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni spoke at length about the colonial history of Africa, before framing China and other authoritarian supporters as liberators of the continent, granting states like Uganda the ability to develop and prosper (Museveni, 2019). Similarly, Somalian President Mohamed Farmaajo's speech

at a FOCAC summit in 2018 framed China's commitment to security, stability, and territorial integrity as aspirational, requesting development assistance from China as Somalia's aims aligned with these past rhetorical commitments China had made (Farmaajo, 2018).

In private discussions, the historical connection between supporters and recipients is also emphasised. Authoritarian elites in the Central African Republic (CAR) capitalised upon Cold War ties with the USSR to gain Russian support in combatting rebels, though this must be tempered with the fact that Russia itself has been eager to cultivate ties with African governments as part of its return to Africa (Stronski, 2019: 16-17). During the Cold War, Kenyan officials consistently drew upon ties with Britain to address issues of instability, arguing that British support would be justified because of the colonial past between Britain and Kenya (Cullen, 2017).

Whilst it cannot be claimed that the historical connection between supporter and recipient is a strong aspect of why supporters engage with governments, it is often deployed as a strategy alongside others already listed in this section. A historical connection may at times be used as leverage to increase support beyond what may otherwise be supplied, or to diversify the list of potential external supporters.

This portion of the chapter has highlighted some of the strategies employed by African authoritarian governments to exercise agency when negotiating with external actors. It has further solidified the need for this process to be considered as an autocratic assemblage; each of these strategies has demonstrated that despite the desire and interests of supporters, recipients can shape the process and dimensions of support for the stability of their governments. This typology will be employed in subsequent chapters, where the cases of governments throughout the past fifty years in Kenya and Ethiopia will be explored. It will also be highlighted how instances of domestic unrest or instability for the government result in a heightened level of support, and concurrently greater use of these tools through the foreign policies of governments in both states.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided an overview of the primary arguments surrounding autocratic support in this thesis, alongside demonstrating how agency is exercised by authoritarian African governments in negotiations with external actors. This chapter does not claim to present an exhaustive analysis of the ways through which African governments exercise agency, nor does it highlight the extent and nuances behind each African government's negotiating strategies and foreign policy. More development of these themes will emerge in later chapters. However, this chapter has made substantial developments in addressing two key arguments within this thesis. This chapter focussed upon the existing autocratic support literature, highlighting the development of this research area and its subsequent critiques. This chapter highlighted the diminished role of recipients in much of this literature, and how a failure to adequately explore the process of autocratic support as mutually constructed results in little knowledge around how and why autocratic support is deployed, beyond the oft-mentioned self-interests of supporters like Russia and China. As such, recipient agency is a clear focus of this argument, a point emphasised throughout the remainder of the thesis.

In addition, this chapter argued that ideological intent on the part of autocratic supporters is a substantive motivating factor within this process of autocratic support. This is acknowledged to be a more recent phenomenon, and as such is not captured in the predominant critiques this chapter has covered by Tansey and Way.

Despite this, the chapter argued that ideological intent can be characterised differently, whereby recipient interests and needs are framed as ideological concepts to garner support. By accommodating recipient governments into the research area of autocratic support, governments frequently conflate interests such as stability and moderate governance as aligning with supporters' ideological tenets.

Contemporary autocratic support has emerging themes of authoritarian models, particularly in China's case, representing a change towards a focus on encouraging autocratic emulation and the

development of an international system accommodating of authoritarian norms and values. These developments represent a continuity of some of the Cold War approaches to autocracy promotion, where models of authoritarianism and the proactive development of an authoritarian international system were present. Furthermore, these models are again shaped and adapted by recipients, demonstrating throughout this process that agency and recipient capability needs to be held central to the study of autocratic assemblages.

Finally, this chapter elaborated upon the typology of agency-leveraging strategies that are in play in several case studies across Africa. Whilst the later Ethiopian and Kenyan case studies will provide detailed analysis of which strategies were used by differing governments – and in what domestic and international contexts – this initial exploration of the agency-leveraging framework has provided a substantive overview of the applicability of this framework to the wider African continent. Whilst this is not the precise purpose of this thesis, one of the key arguments this thesis makes in developing the novel approach of an agency-leveraging framework is to demonstrate that these key strategies can be applied to a wide variety of cases across Africa and authoritarian governments across the non-Western world.

The following chapters provide two substantive empirical cases of Kenyan and Ethiopian governments to illustrate how autocratic support functions in both cases, and under what circumstances and through what strategies agency is exercised by governments in both states. In doing so, these subsequent chapters provide a detailed and systematic study of how agency is exercised, as both a within-case and comparative analysis over a substantial time period.

Furthermore, they elaborate upon the domestic and international opportunities and constraints that impact upon the exercising of agency by authoritarian African governments, exploring the issues that affect how foreign policy is crafted and executed.

Chapter 2: Ethiopia 1963-2018, its domestic politics, and challenges

Having explored in the previous chapter the broader themes of autocratic support and the agency-leveraging strategies utilised by African authoritarian governments, this chapter commences the case study analysis by exploring the domestic setting and themes present in Ethiopia during the time period of the thesis, from 1963 to 2018.

Within this analysis, particular focus is given to the history of statebuilding and authoritarian rule in Ethiopia. Such themes – including the legacies of violent conquest and subjugation of ethnic groups during the founding of the modern state – are argued to be highly significant in shaping both the stability of authoritarian governments within Ethiopia throughout the twentieth century, alongside the foreign policies of each government, the extent to which they can exercise agency, and which strategies can be used by respective authoritarian governments within Ethiopia.

The focus on domestic politics, constraints, and challenges to authoritarian rule by domestic forces speaks to the framework of analysis introduced earlier in the thesis. As mentioned in the thesis introduction, it is important to consider the broader connections between domestic constraints and opportunities, and the resultant foreign policy crafted by African authoritarian governments, as advocated by Putnam (1988) and others (Fernández-Molina, 2019; Hentz, 2008). As such, it is a logical approach to first analyse the various domestic factors that affected government stability within Ethiopia in this chapter, before exploring how such factors both enabled and constrained foreign policy and the exercising of strategies from the agency-leveraging framework.

Akin to the Kenyan case in chapters 4 and 5, this chapter demonstrates the domestic challenges and issues underlying the need by Ethiopian governments to seek out autocratic support from external actors.

Whilst this chapter covers the domestic and institutional developments of Ethiopia from 1963 until 2018, chapter 3 continues this analysis by exploring how each Ethiopian government sought to

achieve their aims and preferences through external support. Whilst there is overlap between the points discussed in both this chapter and the following one, there will be a distinction between the domestic side of Ethiopia's development in this chapter, and how the events highlighted here impacted upon the mechanisms and levels of support given by external actors towards each government, as discussed in chapter 3. This layout of these two chapters will be emulated within the Kenyan case in chapters 4 and 5.

Referring to the broader thesis arguments, this chapter provides a nuanced and substantive overview of how agency has been exercised across different governments both within the Ethiopian case study, and in comparison with the Kenyan case. Furthermore, the approaches taken to exercising agency by Ethiopian governments within these two chapters demonstrate broader points of analysis. It is not just that the choice of agency-leveraging strategies is motivated by domestic politics and contexts, but that a common approach by African authoritarian governments to focus more concisely upon stability-based strategies and alignment with Russia and China as predominant autocratic supporters is motivated by increased constraints upon the respective recipient government. This situation therefore results in the stability constellation of strategies being more frequently invoked; a process seen in the Ethiopian and Kenyan examples of this thesis.

This chapter proceeds as follows. Firstly, the chapter contains some background information surrounding the case study country of Ethiopia, including its ethnic diversity, population, and the contemporary makeup of the state.

The chapter highlights the process of statebuilding that Ethiopia has undergone since the late nineteenth century, beginning with the reign of Emperor Menelik II. Although the focus of the chapter will be to explore the ramifications of modern Ethiopia's construction and founding upon the multiple authoritarian governments in the latter half of the twentieth century, a brief understanding of how the state came to be constructed is a necessary precursor.

This is due to the importance of historical legacies upon the current makeup and political stability of the state. Emperor Menelik's defeat of potential European colonisers and the imperial subjugation of outlying Ethiopian regions, rather than European conquest led to Ethiopia emerging from a unique historical background compared to other African states. And yet, issues of centralised power and the poor transmission of authority and stable governance across the territory of the Ethiopian state, experienced acutely under the imperial and Derg governments have replicated experiences seen across many authoritarian African states, as described by Herbst (2014: 58-60), thus necessitating the use of repression and force to maintain the rule of each government in Ethiopia.

As the later chapters of this thesis demonstrate, governments in Ethiopia have faced similar issues of legitimacy and government strength to their Kenyan counterparts, which have impacted upon the formulation of foreign policy. The ramifications of the challenges facing governments in Ethiopia impact upon their foreign policy processes, and the agency-leveraging strategies that such governments use. The culmination of this argument in the Ethiopian context is featured in chapter 3.

As with the Kenyan case, this chapter proceeds chronologically, examining the development of the Ethiopian state during the rule of Emperor Haile Selassie until 1974, followed by the Derg and Mengistu Hailemariam from 1974 to 1991, and concluding with the EPRDF, from 1991 to 2018.

An overview of Ethiopian statebuilding and political history

It is worthwhile first providing a concise overview of Ethiopia, including its location and demographics before exploring the political history of the state. Ethiopia is a country comprised of a large collection of varied ethnicities and religions. Variation between religion, economic prospects, and the legacies of domination by the Amhara-dominated imperial government – as will be seen – have each played an important part in determining the state of contemporary Ethiopia, and the nature of each authoritarian government's politics throughout the twentieth century. Ethiopia is a landlocked state located in northeast Africa, in a region commonly known as the Horn of Africa. Ethiopia is bordered by several states; Eritrea to the north and northeast, Djibouti in the east,

Somalia to the southeast, Kenya to the south, and Sudan in the west. Ethiopia's demographic makeup consists of dozens of ethnic groups, arranged into broad regions that correspond with these groupings. Officially, the Ethiopian government recognises 74 ethnic groups, as stipulated in the modern constitution, and as represented within the House of Federation, the legislative chamber of Ethiopia (Abbink, 2011: 601).

The northern and central highlands regions, where the Amhara and Tigrinya people, amongst others, originate from, is one of the most densely populated regions in Africa, with major cities such as Addis Ababa, the modern capital, and Mekelle, the regional capital of Tigray situated there. In contrast, the periphery regions of the south and east are rural, and sparsely populated. These regions include the Ogaden and Kaffa, with their economies dominated by agriculture and cash crops, such as coffee (Binns, 2016: 9-10).

Finally, Ethiopia also represents a country of divergent religions. Reflecting the history of an Orthodox Christian kingdom frequently facing Islamic incursions throughout the Middle Ages (Van der Beken, 2007: 17), the northern and western regions of Ethiopia – the traditional lands of the Amharic government – retain ties to the Orthodox Christian faith (Binns, 2016: 8), whilst in eastern Ethiopia Islam is the dominant religion. The south-west of the state retains a mixture of these two religions, alongside areas where Pentecostalism is significant (Clapham, 2017: 17-18).

The Ethiopian state and the imperial government

Having briefly ascertained the demographics of the Ethiopian state, this next section explores the history behind one of the most significant governments within the timeline of the Ethiopian case study – that of the imperial government. What is highlighted within this discussion is the historical legacy left behind from the reign of earlier imperial rulers, such as Menelik that affected not only the ethnic demographics of the state, but also established a focus for future rulers on how to maintain a strong authoritarian state through centralised control. Furthermore, this form of centralised control used by imperial rulers and their authoritarian successors the Derg also resulted in persistent

political instability and violence within the periphery regions of the state, giving way to substantial government challengers such as the TPLF. This instability resulted in a focus on stability-based narratives and agency-leveraging strategies used by both Haile Selassie's government and the Derg, as seen in later sections of both this and the following chapter.

Monarchies within the imperial period ruled portions of Ethiopia for nearly a millennium, beginning with the Aksum Empire, located in modern day Tigray, and followed by the Abyssinian Empire, comprised of rulers from what is now called the Amhara region, who continued to rule until Haile Selassie in 1974. The lands of what would emerge as Ethiopia were continually ruled by figures from this Amharic ethnic group, who subsequently marginalised many other ethnic groups (Kebede, 2011: 5; Vaughan & Tronvoll, 2003: 82-83).

The imperial government extended its power to encompass much of the land of the modern Ethiopian state in the Middle Ages, though repeatedly faced challenges and invasion from Islamic aggressors from the north, alongside rival claims to the throne from feudal lords (Keller, 1988b: 6). This left the once expansive empire in administrative collapse in the early nineteenth century, and ruling over little territory that comprises the modern Ethiopian state (Clapham, 1988: 20-21).

The development of a strong administration and internationally respected boundaries in Ethiopia can be traced back to the reign of Emperor Menelik II in the late nineteenth century. The modernisation efforts of Menelik's rule have led to his reign being regarded as the beginning of 'modern' Ethiopia (Van der Beken, 2007: 18-19). Through Menelik's efforts – alongside those of prior imperial rulers – Ethiopia developed into a state with a strong administrative capacity. The periphery regions of the state were subjugated, and the state's borders agreed with international actors. This time also represented the completion of the process to centralise the state's power within the imperial government, rather than delegating power to local lords (Keller, 1988b: 9; Bahru, 1991: 60).

Menelik embarked upon several military excursions that captured periphery regions and incorporated a variety of ethnic groups into the Ethiopian state (Abbay, 2004: 594). Menelik

expanded into the Oromo region, the area south of Addis Ababa, alongside taking much of the Ogaden in the east, territory bordering modern Somalia (Regassa & Krof, 2018: 615; Bahru, 1991: 61-62).

Menelik legitimised his claim to territory predominantly through force. An attempted Italian invasion in 1896 was defeated by Menelik's forces, thus solidifying Ethiopia's independence (Tibebu, 2008). This defeat of would-be European colonisers was used as a demonstration of power and legitimacy for Menelik and his Amharic government (Tibebu, 2008). It also became an important sense of pride amongst Amharic people, who saw it as affirmation that their ancient state was equal to those who had colonised much of the rest of Africa, and that its strength lay in the cohesiveness and decisiveness of its rulers (Clapham, 2006a: 19). Menelik was revered as a strong, authoritative ruler, who successive imperial rulers should seek to emulate (Tibebu, 1996: 423; Vestal, 2011). Similarly, Menelik's territorial conquests were a vital aspect of the Ethiopian Empire; subsequent rulers such as Haile Selassie saw it as necessary to maintain the territorial claims that Menelik established during this period to maintain government legitimacy (Keller, 1988b: 90), thus necessitating a continual reliance upon suppression and violence to prevent rebellions within the periphery regions from threatening Ethiopia's territorial integrity.

In addition, Menelik aimed to develop Ethiopia into a centralised nation-state akin to those in Europe. Rather than Ethiopian citizens viewing themselves through the lens of individual ethnicity, they should be unified through the notion of a singular Ethiopian identity and nationality (Clapham, 2017: 33). This however clashed with the reality that Menelik's process of conquest had forcibly subjugated many previously independent regions and different ethnic groups. The notion of a singular Ethiopian state was an alien concept, not agreed to but rather applied to these regions (Abbay, 2004).

Successive imperial governments attempted to transform the identity of what it meant to be Ethiopian – whether a citizen be from the dominant Amhara region of the imperial government or

having originated in a conquered periphery region – into a singular ideal (Baye, 2018: 748; Clapham, 2009: 181). This process could be considered as a form of ethnic assimilation, key to maintaining control as an absolutist ruler (Abbay, 2004: 594-595). Menelik and subsequent imperial rulers undertook a process of ethnic homogenisation, called ‘Amharisation’ (Abir, 1970; Lefort, 2007; Van der Beken, 2007). This process projected the ethnic identity of the imperial government as inherently superior versus those it had conquered (Bulcha, 1997: 326-327). Amharic versions of history – that portrayed the imperial government as superior and highlighted its claim to Solomonic ancestry – were taught in schools (Abbay, 2004: 596-597). Amharic traditions, symbols, food, and dress were co-opted as symbols of Ethiopia (Clapham, 2017: 24-25). Orthodox Christianity and Amharic were also projected as the religion and language of Ethiopia respectively, to the detriment of the different religions and languages practiced and spoken across the conquered regions (Abbay, 2004: 594-598; Binns, 2016; Bulcha, 1997).

Attainment and absorption into the Amharic culture was necessary to progress and advance in the Ethiopian state (Abir, 1970: 46). Subjugated ethnic groups were presented with the possibility of integration through the adoption of the Amharic language, conversion to Orthodox Christianity, and the use of customs and dress associated with the Amhara identity (Bulcha, 1997: 327).

Despite this policy of integration, positions of power amongst the conquered territories were still primarily held by Amharic elites (Clapham, 1988: 30-31). Those who integrated into the Amharic culture were permitted to become small landowners in rural regions like Kaffa, thus positioning themselves above non-Amharic classes in the hierarchy of Ethiopia. Local people from different ethnic backgrounds were in turn dispossessed of their land or became labourers working under these new arrivals (Abbink, 2006b: 398).

The process of ethnic homogenisation sought to divide potential opposition, removing any sense of ethnic unity from groups such as the Oromo (Abbay, 2004; Bulcha, 1997). This was a natural culmination of the need to maintain imperial dominance over Ethiopia (Clapham, 2009: 181).

Maintaining a physical Ethiopian 'nation' despite the multitude of ethnic groups required some form of coercion or force, and the process of Amharisation – ethnic integration into the Amharic culture – proved necessary to prevent uprisings or the potential destabilisation of Amharic dominance. The modern state of Ethiopia was therefore created through successive periods of conquest, and subjugation of minority ethnicities.

Repression became a more frequent strategy for control for governments in Ethiopia, more common than other strategies of legitimation, such as co-optation of opposing ethnic factions. As will be seen in the Kenyan case, repression had been a common strategy of control once other forms of legitimation had been exhausted or unable to be used. Repression became a much more common strategy of control than in the Kenyan case, driven both by the immediate need for successive Ethiopian governments to solidify their control, and continue the historical approach of centralising the ethnically diverse Ethiopian state that itself had been artificially manufactured by Menelik's government.

Latter sections of this chapter demonstrate how different approaches have been undertaken to attempt to maintain the Ethiopian state, such as modernisation programmes and ethnic federalisation. However, the reoccurring features of each authoritarian government have been the use of conflict, violence, and repression in maintaining order and stability. The next section will highlight how these origins of the modern state and the authoritarian attempts at maintaining its unity were undertaken during the reign of the last Ethiopian Emperor, Haile Selassie.

The Ethiopian state and Haile Selassie's government

Emperor Haile Selassie and his imperial government ruled Ethiopia from 1930 to 1974, minus the brief period of Italian occupation between 1936-1941. However, the discussion of Selassie's rule within this thesis centres upon the period from 1963 onwards. 1963 in this instance has been chosen to align the Ethiopian case with the Kenyan case, with the start date of the Ethiopian case in this thesis coinciding with the year of Kenyan independence. Focussing on Selassie's rule after 1963 also

makes the study more manageable by limiting the time period. As noted earlier in this thesis, the time period of 1963 until 2018 is significant and requires significant space to research adequately. Further extension of this period to encompass Selassie's rule in its entirety from 1930 would present significant analytical challenges.

It is acknowledged however that limiting the time period in this way does neglect some 30 years of Selassie's rule, including notable historical events, such as Selassie's period in exile following the Italian invasion of Ethiopia in 1935, and Selassie's foreign policy efforts at gaining Allied support to combat Mussolini's forces in 1936.

However, Selassie's rule after 1963 encompasses a majority of the foreign policy actions of the government. As Woldemariam (2019) notes, Selassie's engagement with the US and other Western external actors, alongside the Soviet Union and China occurred after 1963. After this date, Selassie embarked on multiple visits to the US, including meeting with President Kennedy, which, as this and the next chapter will note, form the empirical basis of several agency-leveraging strategies. The post-1963 era of Selassie's rule also coincides with the heightened political tensions of the Cold War, whereby evidence of Selassie's government engaging in Cold War politics and utilising this scenario to further secure benefits and exercise agency.

Selassie's government sought to maintain the cohesiveness of the Ethiopian state – and its authoritarian rule over Ethiopia – through several mechanisms, centred upon repression and ethnic homogenisation. Such mechanisms – as already discussed – were drawn from the experiences and efforts of past rulers such as Menelik, thus predisposing Selassie's government to continue to utilise repressive approaches to maintain their rule.

However, it is also argued that the unstable nature of the state and the propensity for periphery regions to rebel against Amharic dominance and ethnic subjugation led to this necessity for violence and authoritarian rule. This section demonstrates how Selassie's government was reliant upon the use of force as a frequent measure to maintain control, with additional legitimisation measures,

such as modernisation of the state and economic development used both to provide greater cohesiveness towards the state-building project of Ethiopia, and to project Selassie's rule as benevolent to external actors.

Selassie's aims throughout this time period were to cement his position as the autocratic head of the empire, whilst also ensuring its continued cohesiveness as a state, as this intertwined with Selassie's position (Bahru, 1991: 201). The apparatus of the state, and the hierarchy of power surrounding the position of the emperor assisted in these goals. The functioning of the Ethiopian state was centred around the decision-making powers of Selassie. Ultimate authority over the military, judiciary and civil service centred upon the emperor (Clapham, 1969: 115). Although during Selassie's era some modernisation of how the state bureaucracy was undertaken – such as the delegation of power to ministers and a House of Representatives – scholars such as Levine (1961: 12) argue that this was merely a façade of democracy, and did very little to divest decision-making power beyond the emperor.

Bahru (1991: 202-203) argues that the token creation of a cabinet with ministers was undertaken because of Selassie's lack of interest in domestic affairs. Foreign affairs were a more interesting endeavour for Selassie to oversee, whilst ministers could monitor the day-to-day activities within Ethiopia. This did not mean that these ministers had any real decision-making power, however. Much of the constitution was centred around maximising the powers of Selassie as emperor, permitting him to have final decision-making powers on any legislation, and overruling any decision by cabinet ministers. Selassie's government was modelled as a pyramid structure, with power on any matters of the Ethiopian state ultimately directed by the emperor (Selassie, 1966: 80).

Ministers were appointed by Selassie – often from low-class backgrounds to ensure their loyalty to the leadership – and frequently shuffled and demoted to ensure their position of power remained stable enough to prevent them from challenging imperial authority. This lack of actual political power for ministers continued throughout the government; due to the centralisation of power upon

Selassie, even the position of prime minister was 'a glorified conduit for the flow of appointments and decisions' (Bahru, 1991: 203-204).

It is through examples like this – of domestic reforms that beneath the surface provided little in the way of actual change – that Selassie's rule could be typified.

Selassie also sought to modernise the state to further legitimise the rule of the imperial government. Domestic policies on education, industrial growth and military development were focussed upon to increase imperial legitimacy as providing a strong, modern state capable of matching the prestige and modernity of European states (Bahru, 1991: 213). Education was an important aspect of modernisation as there was great disparity in the provision and attainment of basic education across the state – rural regions lacked basic education in many areas (Clapham, 1988: 33-34) – but also because a modern bureaucracy depended upon a substantial educated staff (Keller, 1988b: 72).

The education system constructed by imperial rulers was used to further solidify Amharic dominance. The programme was subsequently expanded into rebellious rural regions to further subjugate potential rebels, and legitimise imperial rule (Kebede, 2006). Industrial development also sought to project both the power of the dominant Amharic class and give them a 'civilising' mission to enact in the rural periphery. The perceived superiority of the Amharic elite led to the need for these 'civilising' missions of development across the periphery, where industrial development would create a more cohesive and advanced Ethiopian state (Regassa & Korf, 2018). Military modernisation was seen in a similar light, though with the obvious desire to have the capacity to enact repressive measures if required (Lefebvre, 1987; 1998).

Educational reform was a vital tool for modernising Ethiopia and creating a suitably advanced state, with the curriculum reformed, and students sent abroad to study in the US and Europe. Ethiopia's first university was established in one of Selassie's palaces in Addis Ababa (Clapham, 1988: 33). A basic level of education for all children was prioritised by the government, a significant step from the situation at the beginning of Selassie's rule, when education provision in the rural areas was non-

existent (Bahru, 1991: 220-221). Whilst these policies demonstrate a willingness to embrace development, they also betray desires to strengthen authoritarian rule, and develop a more cohesive state under Amharic cultural and political dominance.

The development of industry was also characterised as a major advance in demonstrating modern Ethiopia's capabilities and acting as an important propaganda point for Selassie's benevolence as a leader. However, its value in demonstrating the equality and cohesiveness of modern Ethiopia was undone; much of the industrialisation occurred in the capital (Bahru, 1991: 200), whilst the periphery regions were exploited for their resources (Keller, 1987: 138). Developments in agriculture were also undertaken, but again focussed on serving best government elites and natural Amhara citizens, over those in the periphery. Agricultural land was appropriated from citizens and given over to elites and foreign companies, ostensibly to induce development, though as seen, development was not equal across all regions.

Finally, the military modernisation is where Selassie's consolidation of power and authoritarian rule was most apparent. Although much of this will be discussed in chapter 3 – as external support from the US proved vital in modernising Ethiopia's military – it is important to highlight how demonstrations of coercive power and repression were utilised by Selassie's government to maintain his authoritarian rule and the cohesiveness of the modern Ethiopian state.

The violent conquest of Ethiopia's periphery states resulted in decades of rebellion, insurrection, and secessionist movements. In the Ogaden region, violence against the ruling government was a frequent occurrence throughout the time period of this thesis (Yihun, 2014). The Ogaden was considered a backwards area of the state that required civilising, yet it was also seen as a vital part of greater Ethiopia; a region central to the claims that the Ethiopia under Selassie's rule was advanced and powerful (Hagmann & Korf, 2012: 206-207).

Similarly, Eritrea – which had been incorporated into a federation with Ethiopia in 1952, and then absorbed into Ethiopian a decade later (Clapham, 1988: 91) – was the site of insurrection against the

imperial government throughout this period (Diamond & Fouquet, 1972; Keller, 1987: 91-92; Bahru, 1991: 219).

Military modernisation therefore sought to both demonstrate the strength of imperial rule to both Ethiopian citizens and secessionists in the periphery regions. Military equipment provided by the US was deployed in the periphery regions to suppress secessionist and rebellious movements, whilst also being demonstrated as an example of the imperial government's capabilities to maintain their rule (Lefebvre, 1987). Selassie also modernised the police force with external assistance, deploying them and the armed forces to quell dissent (Bahru, 1991: 208).

The next section will highlight how these dual processes of modernisation and authoritarian repression continued under the Derg. It will show how despite the development of a new government based upon Marxist principles and a rejection of the monarchy of Haile Selassie, tensions surrounding the cohesiveness of the state, its modernisation and processes of subjugation continued.

The Ethiopian state and the Derg

The Derg ascended to power during the Ethiopian Revolution of 1974. Comprising of a group of former Ethiopian military officers, the government started life as a rebellious group concerned with the worsening conditions of poverty and famine faced by the largely rural population across Ethiopia, and the lack of provisions for the military (Henze, 1985: 69; Ottaway, 1976).

This section will demonstrate that there was both continuity and change between the authoritarian rule of the imperial government, and that of the Derg. The Derg approached the rule of Ethiopia through a different ideology to that of the imperial rulers; the Derg advocated collectivisation policies in agriculture, rather than the feudal system of Selassie. The Derg became more radical over time, engaging with Marxist policies of rural development, whilst also becoming more violent and repressive, particularly towards rebel groups and secessionist movements across Ethiopia. It is

through these latter approaches to their rule that the Derg continued some policies reminiscent of the imperial governments.

The outbreak of the Ethiopian Revolution that brought the Derg to power was driven in part by the processes of legitimisation that Selassie's government had undertaken. Selassie's modernisation plans had created unrest in urban areas amongst many citizens who believed that the state should provide better pay, and a more open society than the government permitted (Bahru, 1991: 230-231). Students who travelled abroad for education were influenced by Marxist ideals, and protested against Selassie's government upon their return to Ethiopia (Ibid. 1991: 222-223). Similarly, the military that Selassie's government had modernised through external support was well equipped to support the protests as the imperial government came under increasing pressure from dissatisfied citizens. The military began the mutiny, with the revolution soon escalating to encompass multiple armed units across the country (Ottaway, 1976).

Because of this military strength, Selassie's government did not outright try to counter the revolution using loyal military units such as the Imperial Guard. Donham (1999: 20) also notes that a blasé attitude permeated the aristocracy and the Emperor; they believed that the coup would collapse within a few weeks, and so was not a serious concern.

The Derg performed what Bahru (1991: 233) describes as a 'creeping coup'. They did not seek to actively overthrow Selassie at first, instead focussing on fulfilling their demands for better pay, conditions, and greater freedoms by targeting certain political figures within the cabinet, and institutions which they felt perpetuated the poor conditions and freedoms they faced.

However, Selassie was deposed within a few months of this takeover. The Derg, who had repeatedly pledged loyalty to the imperial government as they dismantled its institutions instead turned upon the Emperor and the royal family, portraying him as a greedy tyrant who had treated the Ethiopian people with a callous disregard as famine and poverty swept across the nation (Bahru, 1991: 234-235).

Whilst this undoubtedly represented a significant change in the political design of the Ethiopian state, this section demonstrates how aspects of the Ethiopian nation building project continued beyond the rule of the imperial government. Upon gaining power in 1974, the Derg had few ideological motivations. Although other protest groups such as the student movement were inspired by Marxism, the Derg's grievances had been based on material issues, such as poor pay, food, and water (Brind, 1984: 90). Its adopted mantra of 'Ethiopia First' initially contained policies of ostensibly pledging loyalty to Selassie – who remained under house arrest, acting as a figurehead whilst the Derg maintained true control (Bahru, 1991: 235) – to maintain legitimacy for their revolution alongside vowing to root out bureaucratic corruption and improve living conditions (Westad, 2005: 256).

The internal make-up of the Derg during this time was split between those who wished to simply act upon the various grievances that the revolutionaries had with the imperial government whilst maintaining a civilian government, and those that wished to go further and use their military strength to gain outright power (Ottaway, 1978). The reformists initially held sway amongst the Derg (Donham, 1999: 20-21). They removed aristocratic leaders and worked with replacement politicians to enact reforms related to pay for the military, provide amnesty for political prisoners, and pursue reforms in education, backed by student protestors within urban areas (Wiebel, 2015: 13).

However, with the eventual overthrow of Selassie a few months following the ascension of the Derg (Bahru, 1991: 235-236), the government quickly became more radical in its aims and outputs.

Marxist influences caused the Derg to escalate their aims, from simply resolving material grievances to enacting a policy of Ethiopian socialism, alongside collectivised land reform and the proliferation of socialist education amongst the populace (Westad, 2005: 256-257). Harsher measures that demonstrated the Derg's intentions for forming an autocratic military government soon emerged. The chairman, Aman Andom was killed by radical members of the Derg, alongside dozens of former imperial government members (Bahru, 1991: 238). The new leader of the Derg, Mengistu

Hailemariam, proclaimed that the Derg was enacting a similar revolution to that of other leftist leaders internationally, such as Mao and Stalin (Wiebel & Admasie, 2019). Donham (1999: 26-27) questions whether initially the government was truly Marxist in nature, arguing that it wanted to be progressive to appease student movements and other protesting groups. Issues like land reform, although surrounded by Marxist rhetoric, were not inherently leftist, but rather represented the quelling of Ethiopian demands; the collectivisation of land rather than the feudal imperial-era system was initially designed under Selassie's government as a branch of his modernising ideology (Yemane-ab, 2016). The Derg simply adapted the process, acceding to further demands from protesting groups to further alter existing plans (Clapham, 1988: 49-50; Donham, 1999: 28).

Nevertheless, by 1975-1976, the Derg under Mengistu had become increasingly radicalised, utilising Marxist rhetoric to solidify their power and authoritarian control of the state. The Derg considered themselves guardians of the revolution, determined to maintain control at any cost, resulting in widespread violence against groups who themselves had protested for the revolution, such as the student movement (Bahru, 1991: 238). Alternative parties who claimed to represent the Ethiopian people, such as the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP) were attacked and massacred once they had reached a level of power in the state that was considered threatening to the Derg's control (Clapham, 1988: 52).

Thus, the Derg had evolved to become another authoritarian government in control of Ethiopia, concerned with maintaining power, as Selassie's government had done before them. In this regard, their aims towards nation building and the cohesiveness of the Ethiopian state also grew closer to those of Selassie. In attempting to maintain authoritarian control, power was once again centralised with the elite based in Addis Ababa. The Derg actively worked to diminish power for any other competing groups based in the periphery regions of Ethiopia, as seen with the EPRP (Clapham, 2009: 181).

This was not as simple as when the same processes were undertaken during Selassie's rule. The nature of the revolution and the end of the imperial government's repression of ethnic groups as the Derg came to power resulted in a fracturing of the control over the Ethiopian periphery, and the emboldening of many secessionist groups. Rebellions against the Derg emerged in Oromia, to the south of Addis Ababa, alongside violence and unrest in Eritrea, and the Ogaden. Figures associated with the former imperial government also incited revolts within the military against the Derg, leading to portions of the state near the Sudanese border slipping from the Derg's control (Puddu, 2017: 242). Violence in the Ogaden – although stemming from the issues of subjugation and desired independence – was assisted by the government of Siad Barre in Somalia, thus creating a situation of regional instability (Lockyer, 2018; Tareke, 2000). This is discussed further in chapter 3.

Despite this growth in secessionist groups, the Derg continued the centralised control policies of Selassie. Domestic policies followed similar aims and processes as those of Selassie; a mixture of development of the periphery to induce cooperation and unification, alongside repressive tactics to maintain the Derg's dominance (Henze, 1985: 69; Ottaway, 1978: 6). However, because of the nature and prevalence of secessionist groups under the Derg, repressive tactics were used more frequently and openly.

As Herbst (2000: 109-110) notes in other situations across Africa, the centralisation of power and poor ability to transmit authority across the state results in authoritarian governments relying upon violence and repressive measures to maintain control. The Derg were no different in this instance, regularly using violence, armed assaults, and repression to maintain control and crucially the cohesiveness of the Ethiopian state. The increased use of repression as an authoritarian control tactic – over other forms of legitimation such as co-optation – led to a restricting of the potential foreign policy and agency-leveraging strategies of the Derg. Repressive tactics – including the increased use of violence – led to a further isolation of the Derg from other external actors, and a

failure to be able to utilise other agency-leveraging strategies, such as aligning government interests with other actors.

The Derg also continued Selassie's approach to state modernisation. Even though they sought to break with the imperial government before them, the rhetoric from the government emphasised how the Derg's domestic policies were civilising the periphery regions of the state, and bringing modernity to Ethiopia to regain the glory of Ethiopia under Menelik in the nineteenth century (Regassa & Korf, 2018). As seen, this was essentially the same rhetoric that the imperial government had used earlier when pursuing modernisation policies.

What this section has demonstrated is that beyond the ideology and contextual situation the government found itself in, the core aims and processes of maintaining power for the Derg were similar to those undertaken by the imperial government. Despite the evident desire to break away from the grievances that the imperial government had brought upon Ethiopia, the policies and rhetoric of modernisation that had been frequently invoked by the imperial government were reutilised by the Derg. Importantly, the Derg also sought to maintain the cohesive, singular state of Ethiopia, despite rising unrest and the explosion in growth of secessionist movements across the periphery regions. The need to maintain a cohesive Ethiopian state was key to the Derg maintaining power. Repression and the centralisation of power was necessary to maintain this rule.

This final section of this chapter explores how these themes continued to develop under the EPRDF. The EPRDF's process of gaining power and their rule differed markedly from that of the imperial government and the Derg, in that a system of federalisation based upon ethnic groups was introduced as a way of reflecting the varied makeup of the state, and those that had fought against the Derg during the civil conflict in the 1980s and early 1990s. However, this section will also highlight how policies enacted by the EPRDF reproduced ideas and processes initially brought about during the Imperial era. Again, the focus on domestic politics and policies in this forthcoming section prefaces the discussion in the following chapter concerning the impact domestic politics had on the

foreign policy of the EPRDF with major external actors, and their capability in leveraging agency to bolster autocratic support.

The Ethiopian state and the EPRDF

The transition from the Derg to the EPRDF in 1991 was the culmination of years of violence from conflict undertaken between the ruling government, and a variety of separatist groups across Ethiopia. This coalition of Marxist groups and independence movements from regions such as Tigray increasingly gained ground from the Derg from the late 1980s onwards (Tareke, 2009: 291-292). Despite military assistance and equipment from the Soviet Union and other socialist states, separatist groups such as the TPLF, alongside the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) had managed to survive the attempted destruction of their movements by the Derg in the 1970s. As such, they remained a threat.

In addition, Mengistu's government had been continually weakened during this time. The withdrawal of Soviet support and the lack of a viable alternative supporter willing to continue to supply military equipment to the Derg caused significant financial issues. The modernisation policies that the Derg had adopted to legitimise their government – such as agricultural collectivisation – had been poorly planned and mismanaged, resulting in widespread famines throughout the 1980s (Vestal, 1985). Mengistu had become increasingly detached from the reality of the military situation facing the Derg. He became convinced that only a 'people's war' involving hundreds of thousands of citizens opposed to opposition groups would resolve the conflict, rather than any diplomatic resolution (Tareke, 2009: 299-300).

As the government faltered, rival groups who had previously been suppressed by the Derg were able to directly assault the government, culminating in the attack upon Addis Ababa in 1991. Whilst the EPRDF as a coalition was in existence at this stage, having been established in 1990 (Tareke, 2009: 298), the strongest contingent party of the coalition was the TPLF (Mehretu, 2012: 116). It was the

TPLF who led the military campaign, alongside Eritrean assistance, to depose Mengistu. Tigrayan generals led soldiers into Addis under the EPRDF banner (De Waal, 2013: 150).

The leadership structure of the TPLF during this early period was established around a group of former student activists who grew to become a group of insurgents taking charge of the conflict in Tigray against the Derg (Berhe, 2009: 292-293). Meles Zenawi, who would later rule singularly over the EPRDF, was at this time part of this group of leaders. Although Meles was instrumental in establishing the political wing of the group in the 1970s and 1980s (Gebregziabher, 2019: 472), he was not the sole leader of the TPLF until after the party split in 2001 (Clapham, 2009: 183-184), which is examined later in this section.

Nevertheless, TPLF leaders dominated the EPRDF throughout this period and beyond, until Abiy Ahmed's premiership in 2018 (Chanie, 2007: 363). The dominance of the TPLF within the wider coalition has led some literature to refer to this group as the 'TPLF/EPRDF' (Gadzala, 2015). However, for the sake of clarity within this discussion, the group will simply be referred to as the EPRDF.

The aims of the EPRDF, and their methods of rule, were both new and familiar. For one, the TPLF dedicated itself to the self-determination of oppressed regions. The Derg, they argued, had still operated on a system littered with relics of feudalism and imperialism, whereby the government was authoritarian and focussed upon the oppression of marginalised groups (Milkias, 2003: 14-15). The EPRDF would introduce a system of ethnic federalism, whereby each major ethnic group would have a hand in the governance of their region, rather than power being centralised under a single ethnic leadership.

The EPRDF also had a several aims brought about because of the influence of other significant parties within the coalition. Eritrean independence, for example, was a goal, because the EPLF had assisted and trained TPLF fighters throughout the 1970s and 1980s and militarily supported the overthrow of the Derg and occupation of Addis (Young, 1996: 106-108). The Ethiopian People's

Democratic Movement (EPDM) encouraged the TPLF to commit to a democratic form of governance in Ethiopia following the Derg's downfall (Abbink, 2015: 340; Mehretu, 2012: 115; Milkias, 2003: 14).

However, the dominance of the TPLF permitted them to shape the direction of the EPRDF soon after the EPRDF came to power in 1991. The government side-lined the EPDM's desire for democracy and pursued similar aims of stability and one-party rule as seen within previous governments. Tareke (2009: 298-299) argues that the TPLF had long desired to gain power alongside the narrative of regional liberalisation, with its alliance to democratic movements acting as merely a pragmatic move to increase its military strength versus the Derg. Regarding Eritrea, the region was granted a referendum on independence soon after the defeat of the Derg. This was seen as a key aspect of resolving long-running conflicts in that area (Vaughan & Tronvoll, 2003: 21). More pragmatically, the EPLF were a powerful military force who could challenge the TPLF if they did not agree to their demands. EPRDF control of the state beyond Tigray was limited, and the EPLF was an important group in supporting the EPRDF militarily in maintaining control of Addis Ababa after its liberation from the Derg (Fisher, 2020: 114-115).

The next major obstacle to the EPRDF's authority was the capturing of Oromo support through the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), an additional rebel movement that had been fighting against Mengistu's government (Fisher, 2020: 116). The OLF had received support from the EPLF in their struggle and continued to be endorsed as part of the power-sharing agreement after the Derg's downfall, with the EPLF hoping to create a democratic system through the influence of the OLF (Plaut, 2006: 591).

The OLF leadership believed that the EPRDF were keen to side-line the OLF as part of the post-Derg power-sharing agreement, and so were mistrustful of the coalition (Clapham, 2009: 183). As seen throughout this chapter, the oppression of the Oromo people within the modern Ethiopian state has been a common occurrence, and so this worry was understandable. Although this chapter cannot go into detail on the various disputes and mistrust that characterised the relationship between these

groups, it is important to note that the resolution to this situation demonstrated the efforts by the EPRDF to establish itself as the dominant political and military power in the state; the OLF were forcibly disarmed, arrested, and forced through a process of 're-education' after an attempt at mediation between the two armed groups collapsed in 1992 (Fisher, 2020: 118).

This situation – and the later absorption and control of another Oromo group, the Oromo People's Democratic Organisation (OPDO), into the EPRDF (Milkias, 2003: 16) – left the EPRDF 'as the de facto sole political and military force in the country' (Fisher, 2020: 118). Whilst these other ethnic parties existed within the coalition, as explained earlier, the TPLF were the dominant power in this group, occupying the positions of power within its hierarchy (Tadesse & Young, 2003: 389).

With this power, the government made efforts to modify the way Ethiopia had been ruled and run under previous governments. The country was split into various ethnic regions called *kilils* (Mehretu, 2012: 114-115). Regions such as Oromo, the Ogaden, Amhara, and Afar were grouped into these administrative units, in turn governed by 'People's Democratic Organisations' (PDOs), local parliamentary bodies responsible for the design and implementation of law within each region (Clapham, 2009: 185). Through these organisations, individual ethnic groups were seen to have greater representation on a local level, with the ultimate option of region secession from Ethiopia if seen as necessary (Gebregziabher, 2019: 473).

This seemed to resolve some major issues that have been seen under the previous two governments. Centralisation of power had consistently disadvantaged citizens in the periphery regions. By focussing the administrative rule of the state upon ethnic federalism, it could be concluded that this was an effort to provide a more equal form of governance than had been seen before.

Importantly, this renewed form of ethnic federalism also served to improve foreign policy relations with major external actors, and became a powerful strategy both to support government legitimacy and demonstrate a clean break with the centralised control of the Derg and Selassie beforehand. As

noted in the following chapter, the promise of a break from the past and the EPRDF's efforts to stabilise the Ethiopian state were used as a key aspect of the 'aligning government aims and interests' strategy from the agency-leveraging framework to endear the government to autocratic supporters.

Despite this, these developments created opportunities for the EPRDF to develop their authoritarian rule over the state. Indeed, an important use of the EPRDF coalition for the TPLF was the ability to project their power and legitimacy as a ruling government throughout the state. The TPLF could co-opt ethnic groups into a unified coalition with the TPLF in charge (Mehretu, 2012: 116). This became a form of divide and rule for the TPLF; the party was able to project its power beyond the far north region of Tigray and control the state through the careful management of the EPRDF parties (Clapham, 2009). Opposition groups were typecast as 'Amhara chauvinists'; figures who wished to return to a united Ethiopia model and Amharic dominance (Aalen & Tronvoll, 2009: 195; Mehretu, 2012).

This meant that the system of federalised government acted as a façade for the true authoritarian control of the TPLF within the EPRDF. The creation of PDOs, whilst initially looking like a move towards more equitable governance in Ethiopia, was carefully managed. PDO heads were selected by the TPLF based upon their loyalty, and generally had little education or ability to bargain with party elites. Alongside this, the dominant parties in these regions were either part of the EPRDF, or affiliated with the government (Clapham, 2009: 185).

Clapham (2009) highlights how despite this development in governance, and a general re-evaluation of how the state should be run, the same elements of control and repression characterise how the EPRDF manages its relationship with the periphery regions, and Ethiopian citizens. Protests opposing the EPRDF and its system of *kilils* were countered with violence (Mehretu, 2012: 124), with peaceful protestors shot by the military (Clapham, 2009: 188). Further issues related to the implementation of these regions abounded; Mehretu (2012) argues that the *kilils* did not reflect the boundaries of

ethnic groups, but were developed to prevent individual ethnic groups from challenging the dominance of the EPRDF. A tight system of control was also implemented by the EPRDF in conjunction with the violence and use of repressive force. Labzaé and Planel (2021: 15-16) note how the rural regions of Ethiopia were placed under increasingly repressive systems of surveillance by party cadres, with prominent business owners in regions required to submit regular reports to *kebeles*, local administrative offices of the party.

Despite these systems of surveillance and repression, the EPRDF struggled with issues that had plagued previous governments. Although there were moves to change the centralisation of power and periphery region subjugation, these efforts were often utilised to instead reinforce authoritarian rule by a Tigrayan elite, acting through the coalition system of the EPRDF.

Before concluding this chapter, it is necessary to highlight how the EPRDF's rule developed throughout the 1990s, and during the 2005 election. Three important events are highlighted in this final section; the split within the TPLF that happened between 2000 and 2001, the conflict with Eritrea, and the authoritarian crackdown after the 2005 election.

The 2000-2001 TPLF split, the Eritrean conflict, and the 2005 elections

The political split within the TPLF that occurred between 2000-2001 was precipitated by several factors. Firstly, a conflict with Eritrea that had occurred from 1998-2000, following several years of tensions. Zegeye and Tegegn (2008: 250-254) highlight how animosity grew between the post-independence government of Eritrea and the EPRDF prior to the conflict. Although the origins of the conflict are too substantial to include here (instead see Lyons, 2021; Reid, 2003; and Young, 1996 for further information), what is important to highlight are the assumptions that prior Ethiopian governments had felt regarding Eritrea as a territory of the state.

Since the imperial era, Eritrea had been considered as a culturally and historically important region for Ethiopia that provided sea access for the state, and was economically dependent upon Ethiopia

for its long-term future (Young, 1996). Eritrea was seen as an extension of the greater Ethiopia that the imperial government had created. The UN-mandated federation of Eritrea to Ethiopia in 1952 was seen as international legitimisation of this belief (Zegeye & Tegegn, 2008: 253).

The military assistance that the EPLF had given to the TPLF throughout the conflict with the Derg – and the TPLF's support of Eritrean independence following the downfall of Mengistu's government – had given rise to the idea amongst Eritrean government figures that the EPLF had been the dominant actor in this relationship (Fisher, 2020: 199-201). There was a hope that this ideological notion of Eritrea as merely an extension of Ethiopia would be dismissed. However, following independence, TPLF members were split upon how to address and react to Eritrean actions throughout the 1990s.

Figures such as Meles Zenawi – the interim President of Ethiopia until 1995, and Prime Minister thereafter – had taken a more lenient view towards Eritrea. Meles was considered a close ally of the EPLF leader, Isaias Afewerki, and that in previously he had been supportive of Isaias' actions, including during Eritrea's conflict with Yemen in 1995 (Abbink, 2003: 221).

However, others in the TPLF were not so supportive. Some TPLF figures had suggested that the post-independence border issues with Eritrea were not major priorities, as they expected Eritrea to collapse through internal conflicts following independence (Abbink, 2003: 227; Zegeye & Tegegn, 2008: 253-254). Ethiopia could then incorporate Eritrea into Ethiopia's federalist system, demonstrating Ethiopia's stabilising and modernising ability to resolve issues in its periphery regions (Regassa & Korf, 2018). This was not without some ideological reasoning; Fisher (2020: 205-206) highlights how the ascendancy to Ethiopian statehood – and the legacy that this brought with it – had caused the TPLF leadership to consider themselves as above their former partners in Eritrea. This was despite the limited resources and military of Ethiopia at the time (Abbink, 2003). The belligerence and arrogance of Eritrean officials – as TPLF elites perceived it – was increasingly

incompatible with the small stature of Eritrea, and the legacy and power (real or otherwise) of Ethiopia as a state (Fisher, 2020: 206).

These tensions culminated in Eritrean forces invading the Badme region, an area near Tigray in 1998. As fighting continued and Eritrean forces were repelled over the next couple of years, bigger splits emerged within the TPLF on how to resolve the fighting. A deal brokered by the OAU to resolve the conflict and pursue a diplomatic end to the conflict was favoured by Meles and a minority of TPLF members (Fisher, 2020: 205), whilst a majority of the elite argued for continued aggression in the conflict. Meles' position in the party during this time was not strong; other TPLF members managed to vote down Meles' diplomatic approach (Tadesse & Young, 2003: 390), and attempted to oust Meles entirely as Prime Minister in 2001 (Fisher, 2020: 205). The split within the TPLF became increasingly acrimonious as the conflict with Eritrea was resolved militarily; TPLF elites who had voted against Meles accused him and his group of abandoning Tigray and the principles of Tigrayan nationalism, and having been blinded by the former friendship between him and Isaias as to assessing the likelihood of Eritrean invasion (Milkias, 2003: 18-19).

The rivalry in TPLF leadership had ramifications on the state's foreign policy, as noted in the following chapter. Leadership – and domestic strength and legitimacy – is highlighted throughout this thesis as an important component of government strength that affects the foreign policy and agency-leveraging capabilities of authoritarian African governments. In the case of the TPLF split, the foreign policy aspect of this issue was demonstrated in the strengthening of Meles' position as leader, and his improved legitimacy in the eyes of foreign states. The split between Meles and other TPLF members permitted Meles to further entrench his vision for Ethiopia, and endear him as a leader to external actors. Tadesse and Young (2003: 399-400) highlight that Meles was able to project himself as a moderate force open to integrating the state into capitalist economics and the benefits towards peace that ethnic federalism would bring. Meanwhile, Meles' opponents within the TPLF were portrayed as nationalist hardliners, with their plans for overt Tigrayan dominance

compared to the Amharic dominance of prior governments. Importantly for the foreign policy aspect of this, Tadesse and Young (2003: 400) note that Meles' approach in these terms had been endorsed by Western leaders, further legitimising Meles as leader, and discrediting his opponents.

Domestically, this split progressed beyond the cessation of hostilities with Eritrea. The group who attempted to remove Meles, which included figures such as the TPLF defence minister, and high-level bureaucrats in the party, were soon engulfed in a domestic crisis surrounding the future of the party, and that of Ethiopia.

Debates about the future of the TPLF, and the direction of the revolution going forward had been ongoing for some time prior to the end of the Eritrean conflict (Fisher, 2020: 254). The conflict, aside from assisting in the growing split between Meles' faction and those mentioned previously, had altered the perception of Ethiopia within the TPLF and EPRDF from its assemblage of ethnic groups that had characterised the first decade of EPRDF rule, into a stronger, singular image (Clapham, 2018: 1155). The conflict with Eritrea had been a unifying event for the party and the state. This led to a re-evaluation of what national project would solidify Ethiopian nationalism, and in turn bring the EPRDF greater legitimacy whilst maintaining TPLF dominance (Gebregziabher, 2019: 478).

In 2000, Meles proposed a discussion on a substantive document he had authored. Entitled 'Bonapartism is the Main Danger', Meles argued that the TPLF's revolutionary discourse and actions had stagnated during their rule since 1991, and that there was need for 'renewal' in the party (Fisher, 2020: 254). Obstacles that the party had faced early in its rule had been resolved; rivals that had opposed the TPLF's ambitions such as the OLF had been dealt with, and the Eritrean issue had been addressed (Milkias, 2003: 16). This process of renewal sought to redirect the TPLF towards a more cohesive idea of the revolution, developing a stronger development strategy for Ethiopia (Addis Tribune, 2001). Developing connections to the global economy and pursuing Western development strategies were prioritised (Tadesse & Young, 2003: 392), moving the party further from its Marxist origins (Fisher, 2020: 257). Clapham (2018: 1155) highlights how redirecting the

strategy of rule and development would also allow Meles to side-line those who opposed him within the TPLF, positioning him as the unrivalled head of the party. Meles' proposed thesis was narrowly passed in a vote, allowing Meles to implement changes, and cement his position as sole ruler.

Under the renewal policy, major figures who had sought to remove Meles were purged. Despite appealing to the internal TPLF audit committee arguing that their expulsion was unjustified, Meles secured the support of other EPRDF parties to allow the removal of subversive TPLF figures from both the regional party, and the wider EPRDF coalition (Fisher, 2020: 255-256). The scale of Meles' purges was vast; TPLF figures that were designated as sympathetic to the dissident faction of the party, and those who still adhered to notions of ethnic nationalism without embracing the wider development of Ethiopia as a singular nation were targeted. The military was cleared of potential challengers, and congresses were held with other parties within the EPRDF coalition to unanimously approve Meles' changes, his leadership of the EPRDF, and the purging of dissidents (Tadesse & Young, 2003: 391-392).

Meles solidified his position as authoritarian leader of Ethiopia following this process. The EPRDF maintained a commanding majority across Ethiopia throughout subsequent elections. The 2000 election was dominated by the EPRDF, with opposition candidates either co-opted into the EPRDF's coalition model, or prevented from campaigning on an equal playing field to EPRDF candidates (Aalen & Tronvoll, 2009: 194). Opposition groups were corralled into manageable coalitions such as the Coalition for Unity and Democracy (CUD), with election rigging undertaken to prevent them making significant gains (Clapham, 2017: 87-88).

The 2005 elections further sealed Meles' authority and the policies of authoritarianism pursued by the EPRDF. Whilst the elections themselves were a shock for the authoritarian EPRDF – as they provided the opposition CUD with a considerable number of votes from the urban Addis area – they also demonstrated the capacity for the government to rig the vote. Clapham (2017: 90) highlights how the EPRDF claimed that whilst the urban populace may have voted for the opposition, support

for the EPRDF was still strong in rural areas, where vote counts were still underway. More repressive measures to control the election included the arrest of tens of thousands of protestors, the suppression of civil society organisations, and the killing of dozens during anti-government demonstrations (Hagmann & Abbink, 2011: 585). Those who had gained seats in the CUD were either imprisoned, or protested the imprisonment of others by not taking their seats in parliament (Abbink, 2006a: 176).

The 2010 and 2015 elections were tightly managed, reflecting the strong authoritarian grip the EPRDF now maintained over the electoral process (Ayele, 2018). In the 2015 election, the EPRDF and its allied parties claimed every seat within the new parliament, demonstrating a return to one-party rule in Ethiopia (Arriola & Lyons, 2016: 76).

What these events demonstrate is that the EPRDF undertook a dramatic shift from its initial efforts at pursuing ethnic federalism and a coalition model in 1991. Whilst the EPRDF still maintained its strategy of ethnic federalism by 2005, this had not dramatically changed the policies of the EPRDF compared to past governments. As seen, the TPLF were still an authoritarian party who were dominant behind the scenes. Meles' power after the TPLF split was unrivalled by other figures within the EPRDF; a position that he maintained until his death in 2012.

Electoral manipulation and authoritarian control are continual themes throughout Ethiopia's modern governments. Lefort (2015) highlights how the use of force is a frequent necessity in Ethiopia; a relic of the forcible nature in which the modern state was created. Whilst the EPRDF has attempted to resolve this, the nature of control of the government and the periphery regions that the TPLF and Meles have desired has necessitated the use of repression and electoral manipulation in a manner akin to previous governments.

Regarding the EPRDF's ethnic federalism, there are again similarities with prior governments. Meles' renewal policies led to national efforts to combat poverty and achieve modernisation in Ethiopia; a remarkably similar agenda to that of the Derg and imperial governments beforehand

(Gebregziabher, 2019). To unite the populace behind the EPRDF and placate them regarding the idea of authoritarian rule, modernisation plans were pursued on a massive scale across Ethiopia, buoyed by the support of external actors (De Waal, 2013; Lefort, 2015; Regassa & Korf, 2018).

This policy of modernisation – apart from reflecting the mechanisms of legitimacy that the imperial and Derg governments had used before them – also reflected the continued process of top-down control of the country by Meles and the TPLF, and the dictation of policy from the central party to the peripheries.

Whilst this reflects the Leninist approach of centralised power that the EPRDF continued to adopt (Baye, 2018: 758-760; Clapham, 2009: 183), it can also be seen as a re-application of ideas of the ‘civilised’ party of the EPRDF spreading development to the ‘uncivilised’ periphery regions (Hagmann & Abbink, 2011: 584). Regions such as the Ogaden faced brutal crackdowns between 2005 and 2007, with the propaganda narrative of the EPRDF portraying the Somali borderland as devoid of civilisation or culture, something that the EPRDF could ‘fix’ (Lewis et al. 2018: 494). Citizens of rural regions were locked out of positions of power and influence, with modernisation policies in their regions instead dictated by EPRDF associates, who often did not represent these marginalised groups (Baye, 2018; Regassa & Korf, 2018).

Importantly, authoritarian rule and control was regarded as a necessity for the EPRDF to maintain the cohesiveness of the Ethiopian state, reflecting the similarities between EPRDF rule and that of past governments. The process of nation building in Ethiopia necessitated the subjugation and repressive control of the periphery regions, and subsequent governments from Selassie until the EPRDF have featured authoritarian tendencies and control as part of their package of maintaining control. As seen, the ethnic federalisation of the state may have ostensibly provided some form of solution to the policies of ethnic exclusion that had typified the imperial and Derg governments, but it crucially operated with the full control of the TPLF behind the scenes. Instances where genuine opposition to the EPRDF – be it the CUD, or separatist groups in the Ogaden – were still dealt with

through familiar tools of repression, violence, and electoral manipulation. The divisive rhetoric of modern, civilised Ethiopia under the EPRDF versus the violent, uncivilised separatist groups was continued under the EPRDF and Meles' rule, re-hashing old approaches used by Selassie and the Derg.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided a detailed analysis of how each modern government has dealt with the process of nation-building in Ethiopia, and how their approaches to authoritarianism have been reflected in their domestic actions. As mentioned in the chapter introduction, this has covered only part of the contextual analysis for this thesis. Chapter 3 continues by exploring how the support of external actors has impacted upon the policies and actions of each government. The key themes emerging from this chapter – the necessity of modernising development strategies to maintain the stability of each government and the cohesiveness of the Ethiopian state – have been reflected in the support that external actors have given.

This chapter has furthermore developed elements of the main thesis argument. Firstly, it has begun to develop the nuanced empirical overview of how agency is exercised by different governments within Ethiopia. Although the development of these agency-leveraging strategies will be further elaborated upon in chapter 3, this chapter has introduced the basic concepts underlining agency-leveraging that this thesis argues. For one, this chapter has highlighted that domestic politics, and the challenges to government legitimacy that Ethiopian governments have faced have a substantive impact upon foreign policy. To ameliorate such challenges, successive Ethiopian governments have employed strategies from the agency-leveraging framework introduced in chapter 1. Furthermore – and as the following chapter will elaborate – the choice of agency-leveraging strategies that Ethiopian governments have used is to a substantive degree shaped by domestic challenges and opportunities. This chapter has highlighted several domestic political crises that Ethiopian governments have faced, be it threats of conflict with Somalia during the Cold War for Selassie, the

international ramifications of the EPRDF's crackdown on protestors in 2005, or the legacy of violence and conquest that permeates each authoritarian government covered in this time period. What this indicates is that certain strategies based upon stability narratives become more pervasive during times of crisis or political pressure upon each government. These issues of crisis will be mapped to specific agency-leveraging strategies within the next chapter.

Chapter 3: The history of autocratic support for Ethiopia, 1963-2018

This chapter will explore the history and context of Ethiopia's involvement with the Soviet Union, (post-1991) Russia, China, and Western powers from 1963 until 2018. The previous chapter detailed how each Ethiopian government throughout this period has contended with the challenges of maintaining a cohesive Ethiopian state despite ethnic divisions and the legacies of ethnic subjugation under Amharic dominance. Policies of modernisation and authoritarian repression have frequently been invoked by each government in different ways to achieve these aims. This chapter argues that each Ethiopian government has had substantive influence over how external support impacts the country, rather than assistance being solely directed by the foreign partner. The preferences of each government, such as their desire for internal and external legitimacy, political stability, and their policies of modernisation have been fulfilled through specific forms of autocratic support pursued by each government, rather than prescribed to them by external actors. In instances where external support has been prescribed in ways that have not aligned with each Ethiopian government's preferences, officials have either resisted such measures, or adapted them to fit better with their needs.

The chapter makes several contributions to the wider arguments of this thesis. Firstly, this chapter makes the first contribution towards attaching the agency-leveraging framework developed in chapter 1 to a case study. It provides a novel approach to exploring agency in an African authoritarian setting, systematically demonstrating how in each Ethiopian government within the timeframe of this thesis, there has been significant scope for agency to be exercised in several ways. Furthermore, this chapter describes the specific agency constellation pursued by each government, connecting the dominant agency-leveraging strategies used to the domestic context of each government, and the individual challenges and opportunities faced by them throughout time. Connections will be made, for example, between periods of acute crisis affecting Ethiopian governments – particularly domestic crises affecting their ability to legitimise and maintain stability –

and changes to their approach in securing autocratic support, identified here both as an increased focus on stability narratives, and strengthened engagement with Russia and China.

The chapter will proceed chronologically. Haile Selassie's government will first be analysed, followed by the Derg, and then finally the EPRDF. The final part of each section will call back to the agency-leveraging framework and its constellations as explored within chapter 1, showing how key strategies from that framework were employed by each Ethiopian government.

This chapter argues that Haile Selassie's government repeatedly focussed on aligning their aims and interests with external actors, in particular the US. Selassie's government focussed upon gaining support from Western powers because of domestic issues, a desire to solidify power, discredit internal challengers, and build upon existing ties. Whilst there was limited engagement between Selassie's government, the Soviet Union, and China, limited ties with such states were fostered based on Selassie demonstrating the strength of his government, and the usefulness of Ethiopia under Selassie in resolving regional disputes and contributing to the narrative surrounding decolonisation.

Furthermore, it will be shown that the capabilities for exercising agency were restricted under the Derg. As noted in chapter 2, the Derg faced several severe domestic challenges to their legitimacy. Internationally, this chapter demonstrates that their political sway towards Marxism alienated the government from Western support during the Cold War, although there were early efforts to balance out support from Eastern and Western sources. Nevertheless, it will be demonstrated that the Derg failed to meaningfully execute some strategies, such as demonstrating legitimacy, importance, and aligning recipient and supporter aims and interests, as evidenced by the political distancing that the Soviet Union took due to the rampant violence the Derg committed during the 'Red Terror' period.

Finally, the discussion surrounding the EPRDF will first demonstrate that their coming to power in the 1990s featured a re-alignment of aims and interests with Western actors, who believed (and

were repeatedly told by Meles) that Ethiopia would pursue a pro-Western foreign policy, alongside restoring a more stable domestic situation without significant domestic opposition. However, once again domestic challenges to legitimacy, and a more overt turn towards authoritarianism, drew consternation from Western actors, and led to an engagement with China. It is argued again that in the Ethiopian case engagement with China occurs at a point of relative weakness in domestic government stability; the EPRDF suffered government weakness and isolation after support from Western actors was withdrawn following government-led electoral violence in 2005. Comparisons will be drawn between the EPRDF's situation, and the similar issues faced by Kibaki's government in Kenya in 2007 following electoral violence. In both cases, the capabilities of recipient governments to exercise agency were constrained, though engagement with China alleviated this situation for governments in need of support.

The Ethiopian imperial government and external engagement

The Ethiopian imperial government sought out external support to achieve two significant aims. Firstly, the government aimed to receive material support to maintain the repressive authoritarian rule of the monarchy and its Amharic elite. Secondly, the government sought to pursue a policy of modernisation to expand the government's legitimacy and acceptance amongst its citizens, and external actors. Support from international actors was used to expand upon this modernisation programme.

The previous chapter highlighted how the Ethiopian state was built upon a legacy of Amharic subjugation of the Ethiopian periphery regions under successive imperial rulers. The maintenance of this subjugation and authoritarian rule was therefore a key aim of Selassie's government. Repression was frequently used against secessionist groups, and those that sought to break the dominance of the Amharic elite. Unrest and insurrection in Eritrea and the Ogaden represented threats to the rule of Selassie, and the cohesiveness of Ethiopia. In addition, the wider regional situation threatened Ethiopian stability. In Somalia, the post-independence government sought to regain the Ogaden

region from Ethiopia, supporting separatist guerrillas in the region and sparking a limited conflict with Ethiopia in return (Tareke, 2000: 638). External material support and diplomatic assistance to combat these incursions was therefore a priority (Lefebvre, 1998). Selassie's modernisation programme focussed on expanding the domination of the Amharic elite in Ethiopia, but also aimed to project Ethiopia as a developed, sophisticated state, and provide equitable development to all regions of Ethiopia as a way of legitimising imperial rule (Bahru, 1991: 213). Key actors, such as the US and Soviet Union assisted in diverse areas such as agriculture, industrial development, and educational reform (Keller, 1988b: 138; Levine, 1961: 11-12).

These actors also provided diplomatic support and government legitimacy through their actions, with the US additionally bolstering the imperial government's military capabilities to maintain stability against internal and external threats. Much of this support was gained through the proactiveness of Selassie's government, and their ability to leverage their importance in receiving assistance, as the following sections demonstrate.

Selassie's government and the US

US support for Selassie's government was crucial in maintaining domestic Imperial dominance. What needs to be understood first is how Selassie's government gained US support for its endeavours, given the imperial government's authoritarian form of governance.

US support was leveraged by the imperial government utilising the importance of military installations based in Ethiopia, which became vital for the US to maintain as the Cold War escalated. Since the Second World War, the US had operated the 'Kagnew' listening station, leased from the Ethiopian state (Henze, 1985: 67; Westad, 2005: 260). With the advent of the Cold War the station became an important communications post for the Horn of Africa and Middle East regions. The station was described by the then US ambassador to Ethiopia as 'one of the most important installations America had within Africa' (Lefebvre, 1987: 473).

Continuing relations with Ethiopia was also a critically important mission to maintain a presence in the Horn of Africa; the Soviets were already supporting the Somali government, which had concerned Selassie. Indeed, the imperial government believed that any Soviet support for Somalia was enabling Somali President Siad Barre's plans to invade and occupy parts of Ethiopia to create a 'Greater Somalia', and so this represented an existential threat to Ethiopia under Selassie (Makinda, 1982). As such, the imperial government were compelled to pressure the US for military support (Diamond & Fouquet, 1972: 40; Westad, 2005: 260). The importance of the Kagnew station for the US was utilised by Selassie's government as a form of 'diplomatic blackmail' (Lefebvre, 1998: 615) to garner US support and weapons. Partially, this support was for real military concerns, such as the Somalia situation, but also crucially played into the imperial government's modernisation narrative and further legitimised and stabilised the government.

Whilst the Kagnew station acted as an important source of leverage for Selassie's government, I argue that this represented but a fraction of the agency-leveraging capacity that the government could utilise. Indeed, it is noted that much of the literature on these initial discussions between Selassie and US counterparts relies heavily upon the Kagnew station as a central pillar of Ethiopian leverage (Lefebvre, 1987, 1998; Makinda, 1982). Whilst it was undoubtedly important, this discussion seeks to further nuance the engagement between Selassie and US actors, and demonstrate that this relationship was built upon the deployment of several agency-leveraging strategies.

Selassie focussed heavily on the 'aligning government aims and interests' strategy, demonstrating his government's alignment with the US in several dimensions. He portrayed himself as a key arbiter in regional peacekeeping affairs, and the imperial government as a stable and trustworthy political ally for the US. Stemming from this, threats to the government – such as the possibility of invasion from Somalia – were highlighted as existential crises that required external assistance to resolve.

Finally, Selassie utilised his focus on economic and military modernisation as an advantageous interest that the US could support.

Selassie involved his government in several regional peacekeeping efforts that the US was interested in, further positioning Ethiopia alongside the US in pursuing mutual aims and interests. Selassie's vocal declaration that Ethiopia would play a leading role in conflict resolution in the Congo and elsewhere also further endeared the government towards the US. Selassie took a leading role in peacekeeping and conflict resolution efforts in Korea (following a large-scale deployment of Ethiopian soldiers during the conflict in the 1950s) (Choe, 2020), alongside playing a substantive role in addressing the Congo crisis (Selassie, 1963).

Selassie further diversified his approach to aligning aims and interests with US counterparts, presenting his government not just as aligned with the US due to pragmatic concerns around the Cold War, but also through connections to ideological tenets such as freedom, peace, and modernity. The emperor undertook multiple 'charm offensive' tours of the US in the 1950s and 60s, portraying himself as the African monarch who stood up to Italian fascism during the Second World War and presided over one of the oldest Christian countries in the world (Vestal, 2011: x-xi).

Discussions between Selassie and US presidents Kennedy and Johnson centred not just on pragmatic concerns that the US had surrounding the Kagnew station and stability, but also on Selassie's ideological opposition to Communism and the continued support it gave to the US in the region (Kennedy 1963, in Peters and Woolley, 2022). Selassie talked of himself as holding several of the ideals the US wished to see in non-Western leaders, such as focussing on how Selassie's desire to support freedom for African states, oppose colonialism, and champion Ethiopia as a modern, forward-looking state (Ibid. 2022). These aspects of Selassie's rule were championed by Selassie as aspirational points for other African states supported by the US, whilst also being well-received by American counterparts. President Kennedy himself noted that actions by Selassie, such as his forthright intervention into African political issues and conflicts through the OAU demonstrated that

Selassie's goals aligned with those of the US (FRUS, XXI/297). Yet crucially, whilst Selassie connected with the values of the US, including committing to the spread of values like democracy and freedom across the African continent (FRUS, XXIV/231; Selassie, 1963), the discussion in the previous chapter demonstrates that such values were not internalised by the imperial government. Selassie utilised these values as a key strategy to further endear his government to the US, and receive autocratic support in return.

During these discussions, Kennedy and Selassie agreed that 'there was no conflict between U.S. and Ethiopian objectives' and that 'Ethiopia was a key country [with regards to security and regional affairs] in that part of the world' for the US (FRUS, XXI/302). Privately, US officials noted that Selassie had placed himself as an arbiter of regional affairs due to his association with the OAU, and his documented desire to promote African solutions to conflict resolution and continental affairs (Selassie, 1963). Officials noted that although Selassie was a 'very vain' person, he deserved respect as 'a predominant leader in the Organization for African Unity, on African affairs' (FRUS, XXI/301). Consequently, US officials were advised to seek out Selassie's views on international affairs (Ibid.).

The Kennedy administration's policy plans for Ethiopia focussed on maintaining Selassie as the government head, due to his supportiveness of US aims and interests in the region, alongside his commanding role in regional affairs, and his capability at maintaining moderate and stable rule in East Africa. Whilst the US rightly highlighted the complexities of Ethiopian rule – as noted in the previous chapter, Amharic domination and subjugation of fragmented ethnic groups remained a key challenge to stability – Selassie's government was crucially identified as key to maintaining stability for US aims and interests (FRUS, XXI/309).

Archival data also demonstrates a further key strategy that Selassie's government utilised with US counterparts, focussing not on political strength, but rather weaknesses. Support from external actors became critically important for Selassie during high-level meetings and official visits to the US (FRUS, XXIV/278), with domestic and regional instability amplified by Selassie and other government

ministers and diplomats to represent an existential threat to his government and wider regional stability (FRUS, XXI/309). As mentioned earlier, the presence of an irredentist Somalia seeking to occupy portions of Ethiopian territory became a key point used to leverage assistance from US officials. In his discussions with Kennedy, Selassie emphasised that Somali violence and the threat to Ethiopian stability and prosperity had been raised several times with the US Ambassador as a matter of urgency, and that US military and economic support would not only stabilise Ethiopia, but also permit the imperial government to respond to destabilising internal challenges, such as rebellions (FRUS, XXI/300). Connected to earlier discussions in this chapter, Selassie concurrently portrayed his government as stable, legitimate, and desiring to not further destabilise the Horn of Africa region through aggression, but rather only to respond to Somali threats and rebel groups operating in border regions.

Selassie argued that rather than applying punitive measures such as completely isolating Somalia from aid, he urged the US to instead focus on supporting Ethiopia militarily. US sources note that Selassie had, in prior discussions and memoranda, focussed on leveraging the Kagnew station and prior support for Ethiopia when sending requests for military support, whilst also crucially noting that such assistance would primarily be focussed on domestic issues; self-defence, and the military and economic modernisation of the state (FRUS, Vol. XXI, No. 300). As such, this approach focuses not just on the 'aligning government aims and interests' agency-leveraging strategy, but also on 'establishing government coherence and legitimacy', bolstered by Selassie's actions in aligning interests with the US, emphasising his role in African affairs, and contrasting his approach to maintaining Ethiopian stability and moderacy as opposed to Somali irredentism and instability.

Having noted the use of these strategies, the results of these agency-leveraging strategies need to be discussed. Of crucial importance is that Selassie's full requests for support from the Kennedy and Johnson administrations were denied, with a significantly smaller amount of support provided. Selassie's government had requested \$60 million in military assistance (incorporating training,

weapons, fighter jets and vehicles), alongside \$70 million in development support to assist with the construction of infrastructure and modernisation policies. Whilst neither of these targets were met by US officials, the US did provide substantial military and development support, including \$20 million of military assistance, centred upon specific requests from Selassie and prominent government members. One such aspect of military modernisation was that of the air force; Selassie had long focussed on modernising the air force and introducing more powerful aircraft both as a way of demonstrating the power of the Ethiopian military to rebels and potential regional opponents (such as Somalia), alongside providing increased military capabilities to tackle unrest (Lefebvre, 1987). US support was directed towards training and the provision of new aircraft for Selassie's government in response to requests from the emperor (FRUS, XXI/300). Such support extended beyond the Kennedy administration, with military and economic assistance provided by the Johnson and Nixon administrations, respectively, directed towards projects decided upon by Selassie and high-level officials in his government (FRUS, XXIII/231; Vestal, 2011).

Development assistance played a less significant role in bolstering Selassie's rule and maintaining government stability. The imperial government suggested a list of potential projects that could benefit from US support, totalling between \$50- 70 million, yet received little firm commitment beyond initial infrastructural support to build roads and bridges across the country (FRUS, XXIII/231).

Whilst this limited support did further support the government – and allowed Selassie to legitimise his rule across the disparate rural regions of Ethiopia – it should be noted that Selassie's efforts at leveraging agency in this manner were less successful. I argue that this occurred for several reasons. For one, as noted throughout this section, Selassie's agency- leveraging strategies centred on stability, and managing conflict and unrest – elements of his rule in which military support would prove more useful. Secondly, in focussing on the 'aligning aims and interests' strategy, the pragmatic focus of the US was on maintaining stability in the Horn of Africa.

By drawing Ethiopian concerns closer towards those of the US, military assistance designed to maintain stability became a much more pressing option. As the archival evidence presented here has demonstrated, the former two strategies have been most frequently utilised with the US; a commonality seen amongst other governments in both Ethiopia and Kenya. The next sections of this discussion centre upon autocratic support provided to Selassie's government from the Soviet Union and China before a wider assessment of the dominating agency-leveraging strategies and constellations is made.

Selassie's government and the Soviet Union

The following sections of this chapter consider the provision of autocratic support to Selassie's government from the Soviet Union. As noted earlier in this thesis, the connection between the Ethiopian imperial government, the Soviet Union, and China were not as extensive as that of the US. Therefore, these sections cover a much shorter time period than that examined in the previous section. Despite this, relations between Selassie's government, the Soviets, and China reinforce the argument that 'aligning aims and interests' was a key strategy used not only with the US, but with other prominent external actors to garner government support.

Selassie leveraged his government's importance in multiple ways with the Soviets. His government centred their importance upon the geopolitical value of the Soviets engaging with Ethiopia, the familiar strategy of aligning aims and interests. Selassie's projection of himself as a key figure within the post-colonial African movement meant that Selassie could depict his government as central to Soviet interests, acting as a gatekeeper for the Soviet Union to engage other African states (Yakobson, 1963: 332-333).

Subsequently, the Ethiopian imperial government received technical assistance and military equipment from the Soviet Union. The government received a credit line of \$102 million during Selassie's first visit to the Soviet Union in 1959 (Brind, 1984: 93), representing the largest amount of credit given in a single instance by that time to an African government (Yakobson, 1963: 335).

The government also received agricultural equipment and support from the USSR to foster industrial development in Ethiopia (Yordanov, 2021: 115), whilst also receiving weapons through 'middle-men' socialist states such as Czechoslovakia (Lefebvre, 1987: 474). The Soviets also began a large-scale programme to educate the children of Amharic elites, replicating programmes seen in many post-independence African states, including Kenya (Westad, 2005: 263).

Despite Soviet efforts to engage with Selassie's government, regional geopolitics quickly soured relations (Yordanov, 2021). The Soviets were also funding post-independence Somalia (Yakobson, 1963: 334) and were indirectly supporting Eritrean separatists by providing weapons via Syria (Yordanov, 2021: 116). Both these instances legitimised Selassie's fear of instability from hostile regional powers. Whilst Soviet technical support assisted Selassie's government (Yakobson, 1963: 333), their continued support of Somalia also destabilised Ethiopia's regional position by bolstering its hostile neighbour (Brind, 1984: 84).

Selassie's government and China

The final actor to discuss is China. China's involvement with Africa and Ethiopia, although pre-dating the 1949 ascendancy of the CCP, only became significant during the Bandung Conference of 1955, and did not see the same level of significance as the Soviet-Ethiopian relationship (Cheru, 2016: 595). Adem (2012a: 144-145) highlights that Selassie's modernisation policies had focussed on emulating Japan, whilst China was regarded as a backwater state that mattered little to the imperial government.

China's ideological motivation in supporting African states also represented a threat to Selassie's government. The rhetoric of Mao Zedong, the first leader of Communist China focused on opposing imperialism and colonialism, alongside inciting revolutions amongst the lower classes across Africa in a manner emulating the Chinese Communist revolution (Eisenman, 2018). Such rhetoric directly opposed Selassie's rule, and his personalisation of power.

China nevertheless attempted to make some headway in Ethiopia, with Chinese Foreign Minister Zhou Enlai visiting in 1964, and Selassie visiting China in 1971 (Adem, 2012a: 143). However, China's impact was limited; the imperial government were reluctant to fully commit to supporting one side in the global competition between East and West (Adem, 2012b). China also began to lose interest in supporting African authoritarian states; as its own domestic situation experienced upheaval from increasingly radical socialist projects such as the Great Leap Forward, China's foreign policy ambitions were scaled back (Alden, 2007: 10; Mohan & Power, 2008: 29; Radchenko, 2009). Finally, Selassie considered that China did not have the capabilities or connection to the Ethiopian imperial government as the US did. China also did not provide any tangible benefits for Selassie's government; Selassie considered China to be less developed than Ethiopia, and doubted that it could provide any assistance to fulfil his aims (Adem, 2012a).

Assessing Selassie's agency-leveraging strategies

Having briefly explored the external relations of Selassie's government with the US, Soviet Union, and China, it has been demonstrated that two key agency-leveraging strategies were in consistent use throughout the lifetime of Selassie's government. 'Aligning aims and interests' and 'establishing government coherence and legitimacy' were strategies both utilised repeatedly by Selassie's government, focussed upon highlighting the challenges to stability wrought by regional and domestic challenges, alongside the simultaneous demonstration that the imperial government was the legitimate government capable of maintaining stability, and thus requiring external support.

It is through this discussion that the dominant agency-leveraging strategies used by Selassie's government have been characterised as falling under the 'stability' constellation, as highlighted in the thesis introduction. This categorisation has been made for two reasons. Primarily, Selassie's available agency-leveraging strategies centred around the necessary provision of aligning with dominant geopolitical concerns held by other external actors. As mentioned earlier, Selassie's attempts at aligning his government's aims and interests with those of the US, Soviet Union, and

China were based on the predominant fears and concerns surrounding geopolitical stability, and the threat of Somalia as a destabilising entity in the region.

Secondly, Selassie's government did not attempt to reshape the narrative of the circumstances through which agency can be exercised, and so the alternative 'reshaping the narrative' constellation of strategies is not an accurate categorisation for Selassie's government. Again, the inability of the imperial government to reshape the narrative of discussions with external actors is partially a product of the context with which the government found itself within the Cold War (and the need for stability), alongside the fact that aligning aims and interests with external supporters – most prominently, the US – served Selassie's government well. As noted, the government received substantial levels of support designed to support, stabilise, and legitimise Selassie's rule.

The Derg and the Soviet Union

The next Ethiopian government under examination is the Derg. In contrast to Selassie's government, the radical ideology of the Derg caused it to align with the Soviet Union, with US support diminishing. The Derg's support from the Soviet Union and other socialist actors is seen as a similar instance of autocratic support to contemporary understandings of the phenomenon. In particular, the Derg period reflects some similarities and differences to the prior imperial government. Whilst the Derg's target for external support – the Soviet Union – was markedly different from Selassie's focus on the US, the narratives and strategies used by the Derg to elicit autocratic support remained largely the same. Again, two key strategies from the agency-leveraging framework emerge during this time, centred upon aligning government aims and interests with supporters, and projecting government strength to develop a narrative of government coherence for external supporters.

Whilst the Derg did demonstrate an effort to align their ideology with the Soviet Union to better accrue autocratic support, the latter approach faced increasing challenges from the domestic situation. As such, attempts to project political strength increasingly clashed with the domestic realities the Derg faced, resulting in a long-term reduction in their agency-leveraging capabilities.

Nevertheless, the Derg demonstrates some of the key aspects and strategies used by authoritarian governments to induce further autocratic support.

During the early years of the Derg's rule, the government continued to receive some US support. Deliveries of military equipment that had been agreed with Selassie before his downfall were honoured (Henze, 1985: 70). This support was not provided because of ideological concerns, but instead because of pragmatism. The Soviets continued to support Somalia throughout this time, seeing the Somali government as worthwhile to support due to their socialist tendencies (Lefebvre, 1996: 396), and especially given the support the US had given Ethiopia. As the Soviets supported Somalia, it seemed logical for the US to maintain their presence in the Horn of Africa region by supporting the Derg (Brind, 1984: 92).

Despite this US support, the Derg also sought out Soviet assistance for two reasons. Firstly, the development of satellite technology meant that the US need for the Kagnev station was lessening, thus undermining the leverage that could be used by the Derg to capture US support (Brind, 1984: 91).

The Derg also needed Soviet support to achieve their domestic aims; solidifying government control, legitimacy, and maintaining its modernising discourse. The government sought to halt Soviet support to Somalia, regarding the military build-up in the neighbouring state as an existential threat.

Similarly, they wished to halt Soviet support for Eritrean separatists, especially as they had continued assaulting the Derg whilst the new government was struggling to gain legitimacy throughout Ethiopia. Since the Derg's ascendancy, Ethiopia had faced dozens of uprisings and separatist movements, ranging from rival Marxist groups claiming legitimacy over the revolution, to ethno-nationalist groups demanding autonomy (Tareke, 2009: 177). The Derg saw Soviet recognition and support as a twofold approach to securing their rule. Soviet assistance would gain them the legitimacy as the one true Marxist party to defend the gains of the revolution, alongside equipping

the Derg with weaponry capable of defeating both internal and external aggressors (Westad, 2005: 267).

The Derg also continued policies of modernisation and Ethiopian development that the imperial government had used, to maintain the cohesiveness of the Ethiopian state and government legitimacy. Utilising the mantra of 'Ethiopia First' (Westad, 2005: 256), the Derg argued that post-revolutionary Ethiopia should pursue a process of modernisation and poverty alleviation of Ethiopian citizens, alongside safeguarding the revolution (Brind, 1984: 93). Soviet support would give the government the tools to achieve these aims.

A show of military power by the Derg was also believed to instil a sense of national pride and cohesiveness, demonstrating that Ethiopia was a modern, civilised state. The Derg argued that a modernised Ethiopian army would act as a demonstration to other socialist governments across Africa, espousing the benefits of Soviet support (Westad, 2005: 266).

The Soviets were at first unconvinced. They questioned the Marxist ideology of the Derg, and whether they truly were capable of ruling Ethiopia without being toppled by Eritrean forces (Henze, 1985: 70-71). Similarly, US intelligence claimed that Mengistu himself felt that the Soviets were only supporting the Derg up until the point that they found a more amenable potential leader in Ethiopia (FRUS, XVII/102). However, as the violence and ruthlessness of the Derg increased, Soviet support also increased. The Soviets saw the diplomatic and strategic benefits of supporting the Derg, especially as their ideological alignment with Marxism increased, and US support waned. The Soviets ceased supplying arms to Somalia as conflict broke out between Ethiopia and Somalia in the Ogaden in 1977 (Brind, 1984: 93). The US, in turn, began supporting Somalia, in a reversal of the situation from a few years prior (Westad, 2005: 272).

Soviet support for the Derg reflected the precipitous situation the government found itself in.

Although the radicalisation of the government had weakened many potential rivals through widespread violence and arrests (Wiebel, 2015), this crucially had not eliminated some separatist

groups from Eritrea and Tigray (Tareke, 2009: 178; Weldemichael, 2009). Furthermore, the Derg was embroiled in an ideological divide between those desired to elicit Soviet support – and align ideologically with the Soviets – and those who sought to take an independent path. Mengistu – whilst initially not displaying a desire to emulate Soviet ideology – gradually became more aligned with the Soviet Union, and was motivated to seek out support from socialist external actors. Domestically, this resulted in the removal of many more ideologically-moderate members of the Derg through the ‘Red Terror’ period of violence, and the withdrawal of US and other Western support.

The Soviets stabilised the Derg through various support mechanisms, similar to that seen with contemporary Russian and Chinese autocratic support. Chiefly amongst these was the supply of military equipment to bolster the regional power of Ethiopia (FRUS, XVII/103), and to resolve internal strife. During the conflict with Somalia and into the 1980s, the Soviet Union supplied military equipment and weapons worth \$1.5 billion at the time (Brind, 1984: 93). Soviet and Cuban military advisors who were based in Somalia were transferred to Ethiopia to train the military (Tareke, 2009: 202).

Military assistance was a priority for the Derg, and only grew in need as the Derg’s multiple conflicts developed and the government attempted to maintain the Ethiopian state amongst growing ethnic fractures (Clapham, 2017: 47). The massive airlift of equipment, alongside the support of Cuban and Yemeni forces, turned the Derg’s military into an ‘international colossus’ against Somalia (Tareke, 2009: 203-204). Victory against Somalia was declared in 1978, following the successful repelling of Somali forces. This victory solidified the Derg’s legitimacy, demonstrating that they were able to defend Ethiopia’s borders from external aggressors, and that their military strength could crush any opponents to their rule (Yihun, 2014: 680).

In Eritrea, too, the Derg were soon able to militarily defeat separatist opposition. The EPLF went into full retreat as the weight of the Soviet-assisted Derg military was primed against them

(Weldemichael, 2009), leading to the Derg declaring victory against the group in 1978 (Tareke, 2009: 179). Whilst this was a short-lived victory, as seen in chapter 2, Soviet assistance in the short-term secured domestic and regional legitimacy for the Derg.

Soviet military supplies were also complemented by technical assistance for domestic policy and diplomatic support. The Soviets did not condemn the programme of assassinations and executions of domestic opposition undertaken by Mengistu (Henze, 1985: 64; Wiebel, 2015), but they also sought to advise Mengistu on how to socially reform the Ethiopian state to truly account for the range of opportunities presented by the revolution. The Soviets believed that whilst the Derg could safeguard the revolution as a sole authoritarian party, the excesses of the revolution such as the violent treatment of opponents was not conducive to reducing violent factionalism in Ethiopia. Mengistu had executed or exiled most of the other Marxist parties who could – in their eyes – work together to provide a beneficial path towards socialist development for Ethiopia (Westad, 2005: 277-278).

In this regard, Mengistu and the Derg operated on different terms. Despite the Soviet Union sending the largest number of advisors it had ever provided for an African state to Ethiopia (Westad, 2005: 280), Mengistu steadfastly refused to co-operate, focussing instead on the elimination of opponents to solidify his rule. As highlighted in chapter 2, this was a core issue associated with Mengistu's Derg; the centralisation and personalisation of power had resulted in the Derg steadfastly refusing to allow opposition parties to exist, for fear of destabilising the government's hold on power over a divided society.

The Derg and other actors

Whilst the provision of Soviet assistance to the Derg was far greater than that given to Haile Selassie, it is wrong to assume that the Derg were entirely isolated from alternative support. Various socialist states had been courted by the Derg, including Cuba, the German Democratic Republic (GDR), and Bulgaria (Westad, 2005: 272). Mengistu highlighted the solidarity between Ethiopian revolutionaries

and these socialist states (Unfried, 2016: 17). Bulgarian technical advisors were sought out to assist in land reform (Vestal, 1985: 127). Whilst this support was unwavering during the later years of the Derg's rule, it was not immediate.

These socialist states had initially supported several other revolutionary movements in the Horn, attaching themselves to the Derg once the legitimacy of the government – and Soviet support – had been developed. In some cases, the Soviets instructed other socialist states to engage with the Derg. After the Derg were considered worthy of socialist support, Mengistu's government received assistance from the East German and Czech governments (Westad, 2005). Other socialist states however operated independently of the Soviets; Fidel Castro's government in Cuba, for instance, separately met with Mengistu after his overthrow of Selassie, and provided independent military support later in the Derg's lifetime (Kibreab, 2022: 30-31; Westad, 2005: 259).

These additional supporters aided the Derg in a similar fashion to the Soviet Union, akin to that of contemporary autocratic support. Cuba provided an estimated eighteen thousand soldiers, who participated in the 1977 conflict with Somalia (Dunér, 1987: 37; Tareke, 2009: 204). Cuban, GDR, and Bulgarian advisors were also stationed in Ethiopia, providing support on agricultural development, and stationed within various government ministries in advisory roles (Unfried, 2016: 22). During famines, these countries provided relief packages worth seven million dollars, though this amount was dwarfed by that of Western aid agencies (Vestal, 1985: 27).

These states also attempted to mould the Derg into a government that would engage with other Marxist factions in Ethiopia and develop a more inclusive approach to leadership. However, this model clashed with the violent authoritarian approach the Derg took, whereby other Marxist groups in the state were eliminated (Valenta, 1980: 362-363). Cuban, East German and Bulgarian support that had been received by Mengistu was described by the government as part of an international effort to defeat imperialism and induce further socialist revolutions across Africa. Mengistu's approach to eliminating Marxist rivals, rather than co-opting them into the revolution, betrayed this

rhetoric and alienated these supporting states (Unfried, 2016: 17). Cuba's involvement in Ethiopia was interrupted when Castro refused to help Mengistu in dealing with the Marxist EPLF and Tigrayan separatists in 1978. Mengistu in turn expelled the Cuban ambassador, with thousands of Cuban soldiers withdrawn until the issue was resolved months later (Valenta, 1980: 365).

Mengistu was determined to rule Ethiopia in his own style, reflecting the fact that support from socialist states was never overbearing. Unfried (2016) highlights how the Derg persisted in demanding advanced agricultural equipment from the GDR, despite not having the capabilities in Ethiopia to repair or maintain this machinery. Such a reaction is similar to what Selassie endeavoured to achieve through the provision of US equipment, utilising technology as a mechanism to show strength and demonstrate Ethiopia's advanced status.

The Derg was also willing to seek out US support during this time, utilising Ethiopia's strategic importance as leverage, alongside the willingness of Western NGOs to support the government in more altruistic pursuits, such as providing food for Ethiopian citizens (Berhe, 2009: 266). For instance, when the GDR was not willing to provide financing to renovate the Assab Harbour, US assistance was secured to finish the job (Unfried, 2016: 24).

A final additional supporter was China. China's involvement with the Derg was limited before the late 1980s, with only minimal infrastructural support being received at Mengistu's request (Shinn, 2014: 152; Westad, 2005: 268). However, China was again courted following the waning of Soviet support in the late 1980s.

The Soviet Union was facing its own internal economic crises (Tikhomirov, 2001), and archival records detail that Mengistu's refusal to peacefully resolve the conflict with Eritrean separatists led to the Soviets denying further assistance (Kibreab, 2021: 104-105). Soviet dignitaries were fearful of being dragged into further protracted, expensive conflict in the Horn (Ibid, 2021; Wilson Center, 1988b).

Mengistu therefore became desperate to gain support from China to continue his military operations, and resolve recurring famines that plagued Ethiopia (Clapham, 2018; Vestal, 1985). Visits to China by Mengistu resulted in limited domestic support, such as the provision of medical teams and equipment (Shinn, 2014: 152). Medical assistance reflected the bulk of Chinese support to Ethiopia at this time, with some minimal agricultural equipment provided also. China was itself limited in what substantive economic or military assistance it could provide due to its own precarious economic situation at this time (Morgan & Zheng, 2019: 1289-1290). An increase in China's prosperity, coupled with an increase in assistance to African governments occurred a few years after the Derg's downfall (Ibid. 2019: 1291; Benabdallah, 2020b: 31). Therefore, Chinese support had little long-term effect on the stability of the government. The Derg were suffering a rapidly worse security situation, as separatist groups gained ground against the government in Eritrea and Tigray (Tareke, 2004).

Tareke (2009) argues that without Cuban and Soviet military support, the Derg would have struggled against the well-equipped Somali army, alongside collapsing much earlier against Eritrean and Tigrayan separatists. External military support transformed the Derg's army into one capable of tackling these threats to the government. Although separatist movements eventually were able to overturn their early military defeats by the Derg, the correlation between the withdrawal of Soviet and Cuban support, and the ability for separatist groups to mount assaults against the Derg demonstrates the importance of external assistance to government stability.

In addition, these socialist supporters had ideological motivations. As noted in chapter 1, an ideological motivation in supporting recipients is a defining factor of a contemporary autocratic assemblage. The support from the Soviet Union and other actors was based upon a blend of ideological motivations and pragmatic concerns.

Soviet support was dependent upon their belief that the Derg could maintain power by themselves before Soviet intervention. Support for the Derg only reached its peak following the expulsion of

Soviet staff from Somalia in 1976-1977. In addition, Ethiopia represented a vital strategic link for any actor within the Cold War environment. With the expulsion of US forces by the Derg, it was a natural pragmatic move for the Soviet Union to provide support.

Assessing the Derg's agency-leveraging strategies

The support received by the Derg reflected an ideological alignment to socialism, but when viewing this situation in terms of the agency-leveraging framework and associated constellations of strategies, key aspects of the framework emerge. Primarily, the Derg leadership sought to align their aims and interests with supporters, and archival evidence has demonstrated that the Derg leadership sought out and gained autocratic support by aligning their government aims and interests with external actors. As discussed, the Derg demonstrated their socialist credentials to firstly distance themselves from the US to gain Soviet support, and then to leverage their support from other sources when socialist assistance was not forthcoming. Government coherence also acted as an important strategy for the Derg; the Marxist credentials of the Derg, espoused by Mengistu and reinforced by the actions of the government demonstrated to the Soviet Union that the Derg were the sole legitimate power in charge in Ethiopia, and thus worthy of support.

'Aligning aims and interests' acted as a major strategy for the Derg with other socialist actors.

Support from the GDR and Cuba was prompted by the commitment the Soviets had already given to the Derg, but also out of an ideological commitment to support socialist revolutions abroad (Unfried, 2016: 16-17). Castro supported several Marxist governments abroad, including all sides of the revolutionary struggle in Ethiopia out of an ideological commitment to socialist revolution, before committing to the Derg once they represented the most successful iteration of a Marxist power in the state (Dunér, 1987: 36-37).

To this end, it is argued that Mengistu developed an ideological approach to aligning the interests of the Derg with those of the Soviet Union and other socialist states. Whilst the socialist credentials of Mengistu's government were questioned by autocratic supporters, public declarations towards

socialism and a pro-Soviet foreign outlook for Ethiopia convinced socialist actors of the need to support the Derg. Responding to assistance from the East Germans, for example, Mengistu claimed that his vision of the Derg was one of ensuring the culmination of a socialist revolution, and Soviet and socialist actors supported this (Wilson Center, 1977a, 1988a). Violent actions as part of the Red Terror furthermore were met with approval by socialist actors abroad, and a sense that such a process was necessary to secure a socialist revolution. Mengistu's willingness to enact such violent and dramatic policies demonstrated not only that Mengistu was aligned in terms of aims and interests with socialist states, but that he was willing to further demonstrate his commitment through revolutionary acts (Wilson Center, 1977b).

Interviews for this case highlight that whilst Mengistu and the Derg demonstrated key socialist ideological tendencies, the Derg was far from unique as a potential Marxist revolutionary movement that could feasibly rule Ethiopia. Eritrean separatist groups, such as the EPLF were understood by the Soviets to represent a more genuine Marxist movement than the Derg, because of their long-term commitment to revolution, and their desire to liberate Eritrea; a goal that chimed ideologically with the aims of liberation and self-rule that the Soviets focussed upon¹. Indeed, the Soviets, Cuba, East Germany, and other Communist states had all supplied the EPLF with substantial military support during their struggle against Selassie's government (Kibreab, 2021: 97-98). However, following the Derg's ascendancy, Soviet and other socialist support switched to the Ethiopian government, rather than the EPLF (Donham, 199: 136-137). As mentioned earlier, a motivation for this was pragmatic; the Soviets had also sought to combat US influence, and Selassie represented a key US ally in the region. But whilst some of the archival evidence at the time, especially from the US focusses upon how Soviet intervention in Derg-era Ethiopia was guided by a change in strategy (FRUS, XVII/8), primary and secondary evidence details that Mengistu employed similar stability strategies to emphasise the need for socialist support, alongside the focus on ideological connections.

¹ Interview with Ethiopian historian, 14th December 2022.

However, when referring to the constellations of agency-leveraging strategies, there are further points that need to be made concerning the level of agency-leveraging capabilities the Derg had, particularly when examining the domestic position of the government throughout its lifetime. As noted in the thesis introduction, the Derg's use of agency-leveraging strategies has been characterised under the 'stability' constellation; the discussion contained within this chapter has already demonstrated that much of the efforts to gain autocratic support from the Soviet Union and other external actors centred on emphasising their socialist credentials, and need for support to maintain stability. Yet domestic actions – such as the Red Terror – and precarious domestic situation such as facing rebellions also restricted the agency of the government. As noted earlier, despite Mengistu maintaining a forthright and independent foreign policy, the Derg faced a withdrawal of support at different times from the US and other socialist actors. The increasingly tumultuous domestic situation – including rebellions and ever-increasing levels of violence against Ethiopian citizens – resulted in a limited capacity for the Derg to utilise other agency-leveraging strategies. As such, the stability narrative became the dominant constellation of strategies at the Derg's disposal, in a similar vein to the discussion on Selassie's government earlier in the chapter. However, whilst Selassie's use of the stability narrative was judged to be driven primarily by the international context his government faced, in the Derg's case it should be noted that the government was unable to utilise additional leveraging strategies; further strategies, such as establishing government coherence and legitimacy became increasingly untenable due to the government's reliance upon violence to maintain its rule.

The EPRDF and Western donors

The period of the EPRDF's ascendancy represented a significant change in the landscape of external relations. As mentioned in chapter 1, Russian support for African governments retreated following the collapse of the USSR in the 1990s, although in Ethiopia's case Soviet support had already begun to wane during the 1980s as the USSR experienced severe economic crises. This fall in support

coincided with famines in Ethiopia (Vestal, 1985), and increased government instability for the Derg as opposition forces grew and mounted attacks on the government (Tareke, 2009).

This retraction in Russian foreign policy was accompanied by the scapegoating of African governments; extensive funding for governments across Africa was blamed in part for Russia's economic woes (Shubin, 2004: 103). The resultant breakdown in relations between Russia and African governments extended to the EPRDF. Russia could not afford to support the new government in Ethiopia. Across Africa, no major trade deals or development partnerships were agreed to until 2006 (Gerócs, 2019: 320). The legacy of Soviet support for the Derg and its non-interference approach towards Mengistu's eradication of opposition groups resulted in a hostile reception towards Russia in the 1990s by the EPRDF (Hagmann & Abbink, 2011: 581-582). Beyond this however, a lack of Russian support also meant that the EPRDF had to engage with Western sources of funding, who used the collapse of the Derg as another example of the end of Communism and the triumph of liberal democracy (The Telegraph, 1991a).

What is argued in this section is that again, two key strategies from the agency-leveraging framework were utilised by the EPRDF throughout their time in power. Akin to the prior governments of Ethiopia, these were 'aligning aims and interests' and 'demonstrating government coherence and legitimacy'. However, it is further argued that contrary to the prior Ethiopian governments that utilised stability narratives to engage with external supporters, the EPRDF were able to reshape the narrative by focussing on democracy as an aligned interest between the government and Western donors.

The EPRDF approached their external relations in a nuanced manner, distancing themselves from the socialist foreign policy of the Derg. Recognising that the Ethiopian state that they had inherited was financially ruined and without support from Western donors, or Russia, the EPRDF sought to facilitate re-engagement with a variety of external actors (Bach, 2011: 642). The EPRDF deliberately took no strong ideological stance in its early engagement with potential supporters (Clapham, 2009:

185-186; Feyissa, 2011: 791; Fourie, 2011: 5). Whilst component parties of the EPRDF, such as the TPLF had been based in Marxist ideology, this connection was not openly discussed when dealing with external actors, thus severing the EPRDF from the ideological issues that had limited the potential for external engagement for past governments such as the Derg (Adem, 2012a: 145; Labzaé & Planel, 2021: 2).

Rather, the EPRDF were keen to support – and reinforce the hopes of donors – the notion that Ethiopia would democratise. The EPRDF began by immediately disbanding some of the collectivised state structures that had been in place during the Derg era. Because of this, US donors were:

‘Prepared to give [the EPRDF leadership] the benefit of the doubt, forget what they've said over the years and look at what they've done on the ground. They've dismantled the villagisation [President Mengistu's Soviet-inspired forced collectivisation of the peasantry]. They've got off the farmers' backs. They've let the shopkeepers have their shops. They practise market economics.’ (The Telegraph, 1991a)

In further conversations with donors and international media, Meles repeatedly emphasised that the EPRDF would focus on democracy, market economics, and good governance; all aspects of rule that Western donors wished to promote. Conferences were held by Meles and other TPLF leaders that emphasised their move away from Derg-era economic and political policies, and avowed a transition towards democracy and ethnic federalism (The Telegraph, 1991b). Whilst as seen in the previous chapter, the transition to democracy faltered throughout the EPRDF's rule – and indeed it is questionable whether there was any true desire to democratise from the TPLF leadership in the 1990s – what matters here is that, as part of an agency-leveraging strategy for support, democracy and the narrative around the TPLF and later EPRDF installing a democratic and politically stable government proved to be a powerful tool to gain support.

Western diplomats focussed on how despite the slow transition to democracy that included violent setbacks – such as the repression of student protests in 1993 (The Telegraph, 1993) – it was

important to continue supporting the EPRDF throughout their early rule to provide a stable process of democratisation. However, this confidence that donors had in the potential for democratisation resulted in little manifestation of democracy within the EPRDF, whilst simultaneously providing a powerful narrative for the government to engage with to gather support. In a manner akin to the late rule of Kenyan President Daniel arap Moi during the multiparty process, allowances were given by diplomats for the slow process and violent setbacks; Meles and the Ethiopian leadership were acknowledged to be undertaking a challenging process of transition from a violent revolutionary government, towards (what diplomats hoped) would be a stable democratic government (Ibid. 1991b; 1993).

Violent episodes of repression, such as the aforementioned incident in 1993, were highlighted as an issue caused by the domestic instability of the EPRDF; according to one unnamed diplomat, the EPRDF 'genuinely feel insecure and beleaguered by hostile forces – as if they were still fighting in the bush. It is hard for them to realise that now they are big and strong and can afford to loosen up' (The Telegraph, 1993). As such, the EPRDF were seen as a legitimate and needed government for Ethiopia early on, because of their democratic credentials, the absence of clear links to Marxism, and the contrast to the violence of the Derg. In turn, the EPRDF had to emulate this desired model of governance that Western donors sought, because alternative options for support were not forthcoming, and, as seen in the past chapter, the domestic situation was unstable for the government.

Consequently, programmes aimed at securing the EPRDF's domestic stability were executed by Western donors. More material assistance, such as food aid and supplying finance to the government was undertaken, to immediately remedy domestic issues caused by the protracted conflict between the Derg and the TPLF (Gelan, 2006: 604). In exchange for the development of market economics in Ethiopia – and the need to stabilise the EPRDF in the tumultuous post-conflict period – debt cancellations totalling \$1.9 billion (IMF, 2001) were carried out by the World Bank and

International Monetary Fund (IMF), alongside providing further assistance to commence capital expenditure on rebuilding and the construction of new infrastructure projects (Geda, 2001: 171-172). Whilst the bulk of these debt cancellations were undertaken by Western donors, this period also saw the cancellation of former Soviet debt by Russia and other post-Communist states that had accrued during the Derg era (Besenyö, 2019: 134).

Whilst this process continued throughout the 1990s, Brown and Fisher (2020: 188) note that the overall levels of aid from Western partners remained low. This did however change towards the turn of the century, as the authority of Meles Zenawi over the EPRDF increased following the 2001 TPLF split (Ibid. 2020: 191). Following this split and Meles' ascendancy as the unchallenged head of the EPRDF, the government pivoted away from Marxist development strategies, and instead posited that Ethiopia should explore an adapted version of the East Asian model of development (Clapham, 2018: 1153-1154). Meles had previously eschewed the 'Washington Consensus' model of development, arguing that following its neoliberal approach would simply leave Ethiopia dependent upon Western aid and prescribed development approaches and outcomes (De Waal, 2013; Fourie, 2015).

The EPRDF pursued a 'developmental state' model of development and governance (Brown & Fisher, 2020; Clapham, 2018; Feyissa, 2011). Whilst an understanding of what the 'developmental state' means for Ethiopian government policy has been poorly articulated by Ethiopian government officials, including Meles himself (Brown & Fisher, 2020: 192), Clapham (2018) notes that some of the key constituent elements of the policy include a state-driven approach to industrial development, the focus on poverty reduction and the expansion of education in order to foster a population capable of participating in a developed economy. This approach emulates the economic growth and state-driven development model of East Asian economies (Hauge & Chang, 2019). This model of development is seen as being best applied through non-liberal means (Fourie, 2015), with TPLF elites at times claiming that economic development, rather than democratisation was best

needed in the short term to stabilise the state (Labzaé & Planel, 2021: 80). The developmental state model can therefore be understood as the development of a strong state with a clear vision and the political apparatus that permits the ruling government to enact radical development policies (Feyissa, 2011: 797; Gebregziabher, 2019: 475). Although Meles and his successor Hailemariam Desalegn made public their belief that the developmental state could operate democratically (Brown & Fisher, 2020: 191), this did not occur.

The developmental state narrative reflects a desire to emulate East Asian development without the perceived hindrances of Western neoliberalism, alongside resolving some of the fundamental issues in place with Ethiopian statehood (Clapham, 2018: 1153-1154; Mkandiwire, 2001). Lavers (2019: 652) highlights how the EPRDF leadership, in being comprised of Tigrayan figures, sought to provide state-wide development prospects to legitimise its leadership over the entirety of Ethiopia.

Pervasive poverty in the rural regions was a principal threat to the stability of the EPRDF and was regarded as a key instigating factor for rebellions against the government. This fear had precedent; pervasive poverty and famines triggered discontent against Selassie's government in the 1970s (Keller, 1988b: 166), and further famines in the mid-1980s acted as a catalyst for unrest against the Derg, as much of the famine's devastation occurred in Tigray (Lavers, 2019: 654-655; Vestal, 1985).

The latter series of famines had additionally occurred through poorly-applied collectivisation policies; the failure of these development approaches caused the EPRDF to focus on the developmental state model and how it could bring about Ethiopian development in a more equitable way than what had been achieved through the exclusionary policies of Selassie, and the centralised planning policies of the Derg.

It is through the initial achievements of the developmental state model that the EPRDF received increasing amounts of support from Western partners, despite the deepening authoritarian rule in the state. Ethiopia rapidly approached key development targets within the Millennium Development Goals (Feyissa, 2011: 793), and thus became an important success story that Western NGOs could

attach themselves to (Clapham, 2018: 1157). High levels of economic growth not only legitimised the EPRDF – thus fulfilling the key ‘government coherence and legitimacy’ strategy from the agency-leveraging framework – but such growth and prosperity led to further attachments with Western donors who were keen to support an African success story (Cheeseman & Fisher, 2019; The Telegraph, 2010). The lack of clarity over the developmental state narrative further endeared Western partners to Ethiopia’s development policies; Brown and Fisher (2020: 193) highlight that the developmental state policy had been described in various ways, such as the EPRDF’s clear vision of development for Ethiopia, its pro-poor development policies, or its focus on industrial growth. In each case, the benefits of what the developmental state narrative provided were used to offset the unpalatable continued authoritarian governance within Ethiopia (Feyissa, 2011: 802-803).

Whilst the narratives of democracy and the developmental state proved important as agency-leveraging strategies for the EPRDF, a familiar focus on stability and security issues also served to reinforce the alignment of aims and interests that the government used as an agency-leveraging strategy. Primarily, this centred upon Ethiopia’s political and strategic importance. Whilst the Derg utilised the strategic importance of Ethiopia to garner increased Soviet support, the EPRDF built upon this with Western partners, utilising both the precarious position of Ethiopia in regional affairs, alongside aligning the government’s strategic aims with those of donors.

The start of the US’ War on Terror acted as a crucial event through which the EPRDF leadership could engage with Western donors. For one, the EPRDF repeatedly referred to the fact that Somalia was a potential source of terrorism and a continual threat to political stability in the region, and that Ethiopian-led counter-terrorism operations could provide some stability to the region, provided the EPRDF were to receive assistance from the US and other Western donors focussed on counter-terrorism operations. Ethiopia’s participation in AU military operations in Somalia further legitimised the EPRDF’s commitment to the aims of donors in the War on Terror. Importantly, archival documents demonstrate that even though the US tried to focus upon democracy and human rights

issues as a matter of priority for discussions with Meles and other prominent EPRDF members, issues surrounding security, and the EPRDF's role in resolving instability in Somalia is instead brought to the fore (Rice, 2009). Concerns raised about democracy were countered by Meles. He immediately changed the narrative of the conversation to highlight the threat of political instability in Ethiopia if the Somali threat was not dealt with, alongside the need for Ethiopia to receive military and logistical support from donors (Durbin & Meeks, 2010). A critical element of this narrative was the idea that democratisation was a root cause of instability across the Horn of Africa; that whilst democracy was a work in progress in Ethiopia, multiparty competition would embolden actors who would seek to gain power and subvert the democratic process, changing the constitution at will to suit themselves (Ibid. 2010).

These discussions – and the EPRDF's role in maintaining stability and countering terrorist threats – led to democratisation becoming a less pressing issue for external donors. The EPRDF leveraged their regional strategic importance and the need for stability within the state for the sake of regional security to deflect stronger Western demands for democratisation (Furtado & Smith, 2009). In addition, Ethiopia and its military capabilities had become increasingly important for the US regarding its ongoing anti-terrorism operations in Somalia. Ethiopia was supported by the US as they deployed peacekeepers to support the Somali Transitional National Government, and – in 2006 – deployed the military to occupy Mogadishu and counter the rising threat of Islamist militia groups (Allo, 2010; Menkhaus, 2007). There was an ongoing concern that even if the authoritarian EPRDF was morally intolerable for Western donors, a withdrawal of aid would likely harm impoverished Ethiopians, rather than affecting government elites, alongside creating security issues by endangering the stability of the EPRDF and threatening regional security (Hagmann & Abbink, 2011: 589-590).

Finally, Ethiopia's capital was a site of diplomatic and regional importance in Africa, being the headquarters of the AU and the site of several diplomatic missions for the Horn of Africa region

(Adem, 2012a; Cheru, 2016; Shinn, 2014). Therefore, engagement with the EPRDF was necessary for donors to retain influence and contacts with a variety of regional organisations and diplomatic missions.

Western support for the EPRDF has been characterised as focussed more on development, regional stability, and terrorism issues, rather than democratisation. On close inspection, differences emerge between US approaches to support for the EPRDF and those of European development agencies. As discussed, the US was focussed upon issues surrounding security, whilst European agencies focussed on stabilising the EPRDF through additional measures, such as providing agricultural assistance and aid, in exchange for governance reforms such as the expansion of and increased freedoms for civil society groups (Hackenesch, 2013: 11).

The EPRDF thus leveraged several positive aspects of its government and the Ethiopian state to garner assistance. The developmental state narrative was popular amongst Western external supporters because of its ability to generate significant growth, whilst more pragmatic factors, such as the importance of the Ethiopian state for donors such as the US and the security situation meant that the EPRDF were able to capture significant support that stabilised the state and the government's rule, whilst not impinging upon its authoritarian model of governance (Del Biondo & Orbie, 2014). Whilst there were similarities in the 'aligning aims and interests' approach that the EPRDF took – most notably, centring their discussions with Western donors around stability and security concerns – the language of democratisation and the developmental state model used by the EPRDF demonstrated that the government was capable of changing the narrative to further their agency-leveraging strategies, in a manner not seen as clearly in the prior imperial and Derg governments.

The EPRDF, China, and Russia

Despite this engagement with Western donors, Meles also diversified the international support base of the government, engaging with both China and Russia. China's receptiveness to re-engaging with

Ethiopia was driven by political, economic, and resource-based motivations. China crafted its engagement in terms that would deliberately endear itself to authoritarian leaders who were seeking to emulate China's approach to development, and its maintenance of authoritarian rule. China's loans provided 'win-win' outcomes (as China described them) for recipient governments, with investment increased, development assistance provided, and the ability for African goods to be sold in China (Alden, 2007; Brautigam, 2009; Taylor, 2008). As mentioned in earlier chapters, the Ethiopian government furthermore engaged with Russia in a limited capacity, guided by its desire to become an 'emerging donor', akin to China, and increase their political clout in Africa.

China's support of the EPRDF grew exponentially. Bilateral trade grew from US \$32 million at the beginning of the EPRDF's rule in 1991-1992, to over US \$1 billion by 2009 (Adem, 2012a: 147). China proposed to provide loans for infrastructural development in Ethiopia alongside the development of industrial zones to stimulate production capacity in Ethiopia and emulate the growth of similar industrial zones in China (Geda & Meskel, 2010: 6). China also invested in greater telecommunications coverage across Ethiopia (Brautigam, 2009: 160), alongside manufacturing, mining, and building work (Gadzala, 2015: 85).

Existing tenets of government legitimacy and importance for China were utilised by the EPRDF to endear China to Ethiopia. As already mentioned, Ethiopia was – under Meles – a diplomatic hub not just for East Africa, but for the continent when considering the headquarters of the AU were sited in Addis Ababa. Addis – and the Chinese-supported infrastructure projects there – therefore became a showcase of what Chinese support could provide for African governments, to endear China to other prospective African leaders when they visited the AU headquarters.

Subsequently, Chinese infrastructure projects agreed upon with the EPRDF were framed around supporting the economic prowess of Ethiopia, whilst demonstrating the development prowess of China. Large-scale infrastructural projects such as the Addis-Djibouti railway, and support for the construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) demonstrated China's capabilities at

providing substantial development support for recipient African states to demonstrate to the wider region the benefits of engaging with China (Adem, 2012).

The areas of foreign policy assistance from China corresponded with the aims of the EPRDF in maintaining their rule; expanding telecommunications technology across Ethiopia provided definitive evidence that the EPRDF was investing in all of Ethiopia's regions equitably (Feyissa, 2011: 800). China's support in infrastructural development allowed the EPRDF to achieve a level of 'performance legitimacy' (Clapham, 2018: 1155; Dagher, 2018: 91), justifying the continual authoritarian rule of the government, and demonstrating that it could provide development for all the state, rather than favouring those at the top.

Alongside this, such projects legitimised the EPRDF as an economically strong, politically astute government, further demonstrating its strength and legitimacy. A similar framing was used when the EPRDF addressed Russia. Whilst Russian support was framed around demonstrating Russia's development potential for Africa, Ethiopia was chosen for a substantive deal to construct nuclear power plants due to Ethiopia's economic prowess and influence across the African continent (Penney, 2019), both legitimising the EPRDF, but also working in Russia's favour by showing the potential benefits for African governments through engaging with Russia.

Beyond these demonstrations of legitimacy, Meles also argued that the EPRDF was a strong government capable of bringing order to Ethiopia and the wider Horn of Africa region, subject to the support gained by Russia and China (Feyissa, 2011; Hackenesch, 2013). If external partners did not support the EPRDF in the manner the government desired, then – according to Meles – chaos and instability would ensue (Cheru, 2016: 605-606). This approach became more pertinent following the impact of the War on Terror; Ethiopia became an important partner for international forces seeking to contain the threat of terrorism in the region, and the destabilising situation in Somalia (Allo, 2010; Menkhaus, 2007). This approach as mentioned elsewhere in the thesis became increasingly important as China and Russia began to have a more developed role across the continent, becoming

invested in security issues and resolving to protect their investments across Africa (Ghiselli, 2021).

Overtures were made to Russia and China, demonstrating that continued support of Ethiopia, either economically or militarily would enable the government to continue providing stability (Mulugeta, 2014).

Such an approach has – as this chapter has demonstrated – been a common strategy utilised by each Ethiopian government, and is a further common strategy used with China by the EPRDF. The effectiveness of this strategy however has been magnified by China’s growing security role in Africa and across the non-Western world. Whilst as mentioned in earlier chapters China had been focussed on resource acquisition and ostensibly apolitical objectives, research from Benabdallah (2020b), Ghiselli (2018; 2021) and Verhoeven (2014) all demonstrate that China – through its substantive activities abroad – has necessitated that Chinese leaders have to place a greater focus on security interests, and protecting Chinese industries abroad. As such, China has focussed on maintaining stability abroad, and crucially required China to focus on stabilising African governments abroad. Whilst this is an emerging area of research, some limited literature highlights that China has focussed on improving party discipline in recipient authoritarian governments, and developing party-to-party training for authoritarian African governments such as the EPRDF (Bader & Hackenesch, 2020; Hodzi, 2020; Walsh, 2022; Ziso, 2020). Importantly for the focus on recipient agency in this thesis, this change towards stability for China provides a crucial opportunity for the ‘government coherence and legitimacy’ strategy; that the EPRDF could focus on stability and their ability to provide China with political and military stability as an agency-leveraging strategy.

The final aspect of the framework used between the EPRDF, China, and Russia is the historical linkages the EPRDF invoked to maintain support. With little precedent of engagement with China amongst prior governments to draw upon, Ethiopia and China both reached back to pre-colonial instances of shared history. Admiral Zheng He’s voyages from China to East Africa during the twelfth century has been invoked as a demonstration of China’s peaceful intentions in the twenty-first

century, whereby China is only seeking peaceful trade and mutually beneficial relations with African states (Benabdallah, 2021). EPRDF officials similarly harkened back to these images and stories of Ethiopia's history with Zheng He by emphasising Ethiopia's peaceful history with China (Cheru, 2016; Hodzi, 2020; Shinn, 2014; Ziso, 2020).

For Russia, historical legacies relating to the Soviet Union were frequently employed with the EPRDF, and in turn were used by the EPRDF to facilitate greater support for their government. Russia long operated a policy of 'debt relief for development' with the EPRDF, cancelling Soviet-era debts incurred by the Derg to have a reason to engage diplomatically with the EPRDF. In Ethiopia's case, \$163 million of Soviet-era debt was wiped during the EPRDF's tenure (The Moscow Times, 2019). President Putin acknowledged this programme as 'not only an act of generosity, but also a manifestation of pragmatism', noting that many of these debts were unpayable due to their high interest rates, and that cancelling debts would enable African states to further engage with Russia for future development programmes (Ibid. 2019). Soviet-era debts were symbolically wiped alongside the proposal for further infrastructure, such as the planned construction of nuclear power plants in Ethiopia (TASS, 2019). Alongside this, Meles invoked the previous connection between Ethiopia and the Soviet Union as a reason to seek out further support (Besenyő, 2019). These narratives were still popular amongst Meles and other African leaders despite the retreat of Russian diplomatic activity across Africa during the 1990s, and in Ethiopia's case even though the Soviets had supported the Derg, who the EPRDF had fought and overthrown.

Assessing the EPRDF's agency-leveraging strategies

This discussion has demonstrated that the EPRDF's agency-leveraging strategies have been both familiar and more nuanced than those of prior Ethiopian governments. 'Aligning aims and interests' has been the primary strategy used by the EPRDF with several autocratic supporters and donors. As with the imperial and Derg governments, the alignment of interests has been based primarily upon stability and regional security issues; when the EPRDF came to power, the leadership centred their

strategy to gain support upon the need for the stabilisation of Ethiopia after conflict. Later, counter-terrorism concerns and EPRDF military action in Somalia dominated discussions.

What differentiates the EPRDF from prior governments in Ethiopia in terms of agency-leveraging strategies is the focus on switching narratives with foreign partners, rather than merely emulating the dominant points of discussion espoused by external actors. Evidently, security and stability concerns remained as primary issues between the EPRDF and its external supporters, but importantly the EPRDF began engaging with narratives around democracy and the developmental state.

Beyond this however, the EPRDF used historical linkages to engage with autocratic supporters who had either retreated from the continent – such as Russia – or like China, who had thus far had little engagement with governments in Ethiopia. What this variety of agency-leveraging strategies had demonstrated is that the EPRDF were able to use key geopolitical and domestic developments to shape their approach to autocratic supporters and donors. As seen with Selassie’s government and the Derg, Cold War geopolitics had meant that security and stability became priority issues for both governments in engaging with external actors. Yet the EPRDF were able to capitalise upon the growth in democratic language and leadership change across the continent, their history in conquering the Derg, and the growing War on Terror to demonstrate that they were a government willing to engage with multiple actors, alongside having a legitimate right to rule and a keen desire to respond to issues of terrorism and instability in the region.

Through this variety of agency-leveraging strategies, it is argued here – as in the Introduction – that the EPRDF were capable of not just engaging in the stability constellation of strategies with external actors, but were crucially involved in reshaping the narrative, particularly with Russia and China, as historical linkages were introduced as key strategies to renew engagement.

As noted earlier in the thesis, it is argued that governments engaging in reshaping the narrative constellations of strategies are considered to have a greater capacity to exercise agency. In the

EPRDF's case, this has been demonstrated through two main points. Firstly – and as mentioned earlier – through the opportunistic regional and international context for the government to operate within. Secondly, the EPRDF managed to successfully engage with a wider variety of external actors through a diversification of agency-leveraging strategies, particularly the use of historical linkages.

Conclusion

The past two chapters have expanded upon the history of Ethiopia's three authoritarian governments from 1963 until 2018. Whilst chapter 2 elaborated upon the domestic motivations of each government, this chapter has highlighted their foreign policy aims, and focussed upon the usage of agency-leveraging strategies by each government.

This chapter has highlighted several themes. For one, the focus on Ethiopia's strategic and diplomatic importance has driven international interest in each government. Both chapters have emphasised how there is an intertwined connection between the domestic pressures on each authoritarian government, and the actions and outcomes of external support.

The discourse of modernisation and the drive to maintain government stability have been constant motivating factors in engaging with external actors for each Ethiopian government. Whilst Selassie and the Derg pursued modernisation in military terms by using their links with external supporters to gain more modern and powerful military equipment, the EPRDF have pursued modernisation in economic terms, striving for Ethiopia to become a middle-income country, and for Ethiopian citizens to experience prosperity.

At the heart of these modernisation efforts has been the ongoing need for legitimacy and stability. Modernisation has been used as tool to legitimise each government in turn, be it through the demonstration of military force by Selassie's government and Mengistu's Derg, or the development of infrastructure by the ERPDF. It is not purely the personal preference of each government as to how they have used external support to legitimise their authoritarian rule, but also the contextual

factors at hand, including the type of support that each external supporter is willing to provide, and what each recipient wanted out of their relationship.

As seen in chapter 2, Selassie's government faced external and internal threats, necessitating both domestic responses of repression, and as seen in this chapter, a focus on military provisions from the US. Soviet and Chinese support was also directed towards specific areas that the imperial government designated as imperative for modernisation and government legitimisation, such as agricultural development.

The Derg faced an even more militarily unstable situation, again directing the type of engagement they had with the US and the Soviet Union. Military support was crucial for their survival against internal and external threats. Whilst as seen this constituted much of the support the government received, other areas in which autocratic supporters assisted were hindered by the persistence of the Derg in pursuing their own domestic policies. Whilst Soviet and Chinese support was offered in areas beyond military assistance, this was often underutilised as the Derg refused to adhere to domestic policy changes prescribed to them. This is yet another example of the intertwined relationship between domestic issues and the nature of external support, demonstrating that the issues facing each government in maintaining their authoritarian rule and the cohesiveness of the Ethiopian state were paramount in how the government engaged with external actors.

The early period of the EPRDF's rule demonstrates a different approach to external support. The government pursued financial assistance to enhance its internal legitimacy as the EPRDF leadership sought to stabilise its rule over Ethiopia and expand its authoritarian control. Support from external actors reflected this, focussed on financing and infrastructure as opposed to military support.

Key agency-leveraging strategies have been utilised by each government to gain support from a variety of external autocratic supporters. Each Ethiopian government has focussed on aligning its aims and interests with external supporters, not just surrounding pragmatic interests – such as the strategic importance of Ethiopia for external supporters – but also in ideological terms, such as the

Marxist alignment that occurred under the Derg, and was used to highlight the similarities between that government and the Soviets. Secondly, a focus on stability – government coherence and legitimacy – has been a key strategy promoted by each government, providing a useful and effective tool to leverage agency for all governments examined in this chapter. As seen between both this and the previous chapter, a focus on stability – emphasising the strength of each government – has occurred despite the domestic challenges and instability that governments have faced from insurgency and regional issues.

The purpose of the Ethiopian case study has been to provide a nuanced and detailed overview of how agency is exercised by governments over a long time period. Common themes – such as the focus on aligning aims and interests – have been demonstrated as being used within each Ethiopian government, with further demonstration of the commonality of this approach appearing in the Kenyan case study over the next two chapters. In addition, the argument has been made throughout this chapter that it is a combination of domestic and international factors, opportunities, and challenges, that motivate and channel governments to utilise the agency-leveraging strategies that they do.

The next two chapters will apply the agency-leveraging framework to the Kenyan case. Similar key strategies have been used frequently by governments in Kenya to leverage agency with autocratic supporters, thus demonstrating the importance of such strategies and the framework that this thesis advocates in discussing and analysing how authoritarian African governments leverage agency.

Chapter 4: Kenya 1963-2018, its domestic politics, and challenges

This chapter focuses upon the domestic aspect of the Kenyan case. One function of this case is to highlight some similarities with the Ethiopian case, alongside continuing to develop a detailed, nuanced appreciation of how agency is exercised by multiple governments across a substantial time period and different cases. Several aspects of this chapter contribute to the wider arguments of this thesis. These include the similarities between the rationale of Ethiopian and Kenyan governments in seeking out autocratic support, including their need to further strengthen the legitimacy of each government, the select use of repression at times of crisis such as during and following coups and when other options, such as government legitimacy, are less effective at maintaining rule.

Furthermore, this chapter demonstrates the similarity in Ethiopian and Kenyan governments have faced challenges of territorial integrity which have fed into their approaches to negotiation with autocratic supporters. It is also important to note how ethnic identity has been used by Kenyan and Ethiopian governments to shore up support amongst a loyal core of the state to maintain rule.

Despite these similarities, this chapter will also make it clear that the forms of authoritarianism that developed in Kenya and Ethiopia are different in the ways in which they operate. Special attention will be paid to the differences between the dominating leadership of governments like Haile Selassie's in Ethiopia, where the leader held significant amounts of power, to the governments in Kenya, where the legislature has at times been capable of influencing the policy direction of the government, alongside constraining the ability of leaders like Kenyatta and Moi. Indeed, one key aspect of this chapter centres upon the constraints placed upon the movements of the government due to the weakness of KANU as a party, and the resultant opportunities for legislators to impact upon the government's domestic and foreign policies. Furthermore, Kenya has not experienced territorial challenges on the scale of Ethiopia – the territorial integrity of Kenya has remained consistent throughout its post-independence life, and civil wars have not occurred.

Chapter 5 will further explore these issues and the impact upon the foreign policy direction of Kenyan governments with external actors. As with the Ethiopian case, the next two chapters provide an overview of which strategies and constellations from the agency-leveraging framework have been used by governments throughout post-independence Kenya, demonstrating that certain strategies and constellations – such as stability related agency-leveraging strategies – are frequently employed by governments, driven by domestic and international constraints and opportunities. This chapter will first introduce a brief overview of Kenya, including important geographical and demographic information. The chapter will then focus on the political aspect of Kenya, exploring how the development of the state's post-liberation authoritarian governments have experienced recurring and continual domestic issues that have led to the need for external support. Subsequent governments have battled issues of legitimacy, the threats of coups, and domestic and regional unrest. As will be seen in chapter 5, autocratic support from across authoritarian and democratic external actors has been used to resolve some of these domestic threats, increase repression, and project Kenyan power within its regional neighbourhood to stave off external threats.

As noted in the thesis introduction, many scholars and analysts would not identify the governments of Mwai Kibaki and Uhuru Kenyatta as authoritarian, and I do not intend to depict them within this thesis as being wholly undemocratic. However, it is also highlighted here that legacy issues from the authoritarian era of Kenya remained and presented challenges to the democratic credentials of Kibaki and Uhuru Kenyatta's governments. Although Jomo Kenyatta and Moi maintained diverse ethnic cabinets during their respective rule, ethnic favouritism and divisions were employed to bestow enhanced benefits upon ethnic groups close to the government, particularly members of the Kikuyu group under Jomo Kenyatta. The ramifications of this ethnic favouritism – as seen further in the chapter – were seen in the electoral violence that has occurred periodically under Kibaki and Uhuru Kenyatta's tenures. Alongside these divisions, the continued issues of corruption and dominance of certain figures in elite politics, present issues regarding the democratic credentials of both governments. Some of the issues that Uhuru Kenyatta faced, such as the charges brought

against him by the International Criminal Court (ICC) have pushed his government to seek out support from China and other authoritarian external actors. As chapter 5 will elaborate, measures to shore up the support and legitimacy of these governments was sought out from external autocratic supporters, who have provided support and materials to increase legitimacy and provide more effective repressive measures to both governments.

As with the previous two chapters, this chapter proceeds chronologically through Kenyan governments from independence in 1963, until 2018. Firstly, a brief overview of Kenyan political history will be presented before the chapter examines the independence of Kenya under Jomo Kenyatta and the Kenyan African National Union (KANU) until 1978. This is followed by the rule of Daniel arap Moi until the emergence of competitive elections in Kenya in 2002. The democratic governments of Mwai Kibaki and Uhuru Kenyatta follow, to bring the history of Kenya up until the timeframe of this thesis ends, in 2018.

As with the Ethiopia chapters, there is not the space or time to comprehensively examine every political challenge that each government faced in detail. Rather, these chapters will address significant domestic and international events or challenges that affect the foreign policy and agency-leveraging capabilities of Kenyan governments. This chapter also focuses on recurring themes that have served to shape the strategies each government has used to seek out additional support and assistance from external actors. Furthermore, connections made earlier in the thesis between domestic challenges faced by governments and their corresponding foreign policies are emphasised in each Kenyan case. These challenges and constraints have led to the use of certain aspects of the agency-leveraging strategy framework, as chapter 5 will elaborate upon. Themes that have already been mentioned in this introduction, such as the legislature restraints upon the governments of Kenya since independence, and the use of ethnicity as a concept used to strengthen governments are significant issues that will guide this discussion and be reflected in the exploration of autocratic support in the Kenyan case in chapter 5.

A brief overview of Kenya

Kenya is a populous and diverse country in eastern Africa. It is bordered by Ethiopia and South Sudan to the north, Somalia to the east, Tanzania to the south, and Uganda to the west. Kenya, like Ethiopia, is a country comprised of a variety of ethnic groups. Yet unlike Ethiopia, Kenya was colonised by European powers in the nineteenth century, becoming a colony of the British Empire in 1895, with colonial rule continuing until independence was granted in 1963.

Colonial Kenya was, according to Ochieng' and Atieno-Odhiambo (1995: xiv-xv), a work of violent subjugation to transform the land of what would become Kenya from a disparate land of ethnic groups of 'strangers' without a singular identity into a strongly centralised state. The Kenyan colonial state was instituted with a strong class structure, placing European colonisers at the top of a social hierarchy that also left native Africans at the bottom in terms of employment, and ability to benefit from the extractive policies of the colonial state (Lonsdale & Berman, 1979: 492-493). The Kenyan state itself was pivoted towards the production of cash crops and extractive policies designed not to develop the Kenyan state, but instead to primarily enrich the British Empire (Herbst, 2014: 68-69; Maloba, 1995: 12-13).

British colonial authorities developed and consolidated the use of ethnic identities as markers of status and to designate who should be given preferential benefits, jobs, and opportunities. Ethnic identities were made much more rigid, and used by British colonial authorities to decide which Kenyan subjects would be tasked with running the colony alongside British bureaucrats (Maloba, 1995: 10). Despite this, Lonsdale and Berman (1979: 494) highlight that ethnic identities in pre-colonial Kenya were porous. There was a broad understanding that ethnic identities could be adopted or abandoned through social activities such as adoption, marriage, or clientship. It is not the purpose of this analysis to present pre-colonial Kenya as an idyllic and peaceful environment; rather, pre-colonial ethnic conflicts did occur throughout Kenya. However, as noted earlier colonialism made ethnicity more rigid as a concept in Kenya, driven by the desire for colonial authorities to use

ethnicity as a mechanism of control (Angelo, 2019: 239-240; Lynch, 2006: 49-50; Spear, 2003: 4-5). British colonisers utilised the existence of ethnic identities in Kenya to order and rank native citizens and further instil a sense of hierarchy into their rule over the state (Herbst, 2014: 173).

Ranger (1983) highlights the invention of hierarchies and traditions placed by Europeans upon colonial subjects across Africa to justify their continued rule, and to legitimise the subjugation of Africans. Colonial Africa was understood by Europeans as a continent of 'tribes', whereby Africans were attached to tribes in a similar manner to how European citizens all belonged to nations (Lynch, 2011: 14; Ranger, 1983). The ethnic identities of African subjects in colonies – despite their salience prior to colonisation – were therefore treated as political and economic signifiers to be utilised in how the state's citizens should be ordered (Herbst, 2014: 174-175; Ranger, 1983). Existing identities, despite their salience, were adopted into more rigid categories, alongside traditions and beliefs (Spear, 2003: 5-7). Leaders of ethnic groups who were regarded as more likely to be compliant and to have some social influence amongst their ethnic group were co-opted into this system of control and hierarchy, to influence and convince others to partake and accept the realities of British rule (Blanton et al. 2001: 476-477).

The inclusion of more rigid ethnic groupings, and in some cases the construction of new ethnic identities that better suited the needs of colonial authorities in maintaining rule (Lynch, 2011: 14), led to ethnicity being used as a political tool designed to capture power and maintain authority over the state. A view of ethnicity in this manner continued long beyond decolonisation, characterising political dynamics in post-colonial Kenya. Whilst ethnicity cannot be clearly defined and delineated in practice as to who is and is not a member of an ethnic group, it is important to understand that certain groups of people in Kenya – sharing common histories, narratives, language, and geography – have dominated politics in the immediate pre- and post-independence political landscape of the state (Lynch, 2006).

The process of institutionalising ethnic identities in Kenya, derived from the period of colonial rule is similar to the Ethiopian case of previous chapters, despite Ethiopia's lack of colonial history. As seen in chapter 2, the imperial government of Ethiopia sought to promote the ideals of the Amharic ethnic group – from which the imperial government originated from – and mould this ethnicity as the basis for 'Ethiopian' nationality. Amharic identity was equated to a level of culture, civilisation, and superiority over other ethnic identities in the state, and other ethnic groups were forcibly assimilated into this identity through the expansion of Amharic language use and education throughout Ethiopia (Lefort, 2007).

This process of ethnic assimilation was very different to that seen in Kenya. Kenya experienced a process of ethnic delineation and the establishment of rigid definitions of ethnicity amongst native populations, resulting in the development of hierarchies and benefits for certain portions of the Kenyan population. However, the similarities between Ethiopia and Kenya focus on the use of ethnicity as a tool to suppress democratic desires amongst ethnic groups left out of the central core of decision-making in each state. In both cases, governments have attempted to strengthen their autocratic hold on power by centralising power amongst certain ethnic groups; as already mentioned, this was undertaken by the imperial government in Ethiopia, and as will be seen in this chapter, Kenyatta attempted similar processes of shoring up support amongst his Kiambu Kikuyu ethnic group. The largest ethnic group in Kenya – the Kikuyu – dominated post-independence politics until Jomo Kenyatta's death in 1978. KANU at this time was the ruling party dominated by Kikuyus, and as such, ethnic divisions and violence have been driven by the process of prioritising Kikuyu elites for the ownership of resources and land throughout Kenya (Branch, 2011: 21-22; Omolo, 2002: 214). Kenyatta portrayed himself as an 'elder' or 'father' of the nation and spoke of Kenya as a community of different ethnic groups. Kenyans at independence were not to be subsumed under a label of Kenyan nationality, but that being Kenyan was complimentary to ethnic identities (Berman et al. 2009: 473). Nevertheless, as will be seen Kikuyu dominance in politics and a

tendency by Kenyatta's government to characterise politics in ethnic terms has resulted in a legacy of ethnic-based division and at times violence (Anderson & Lochery, 2008; Branch, 2011: 63).

The ascendancy of Daniel arap Moi in 1978 – himself a member of the Kalenjin ethnic group – similarly was framed through ethnic dimensions. The legacy of Kikuyu dominance amongst the elite in Kenyan politics and the civil service led to a concerted effort by Moi's group to reshape the upper echelons of Kenyan politics through a Kalenjin dimension (Brosché et al. 2020: 116). Kikuyu elites were over time marginalised from government, replaced by Kalenjin elites as a stabilising approach to authoritarian rule (N'Diaye, 2002). Subsequent policies of land distribution were based around this ethnic grouping, with resultant levels of violence perpetrated between Kalenjin, Kikuyu, and other groups throughout Moi's rule (Boone, 2012; Brosché et al. 2020: 117; Lynch, 2011).

The Kenyan state, decolonisation, and Kenyatta's KANU

Taking a step backward to review Kenya in greater depth on a chronological basis, it is important to understand the political conditions during Kenyan decolonisation through to the emergence of single-party rule under Kenyatta and KANU. This section highlights the main aspects of this time period and emphasises the aspects of single-party rule and threats to Kenyatta's rule that were used not only as leverage to gain external assistance, but positive aspects that were used to reinforce pre-existing notions external actors had regarding the government. As will be noted, Kenya's colonial system of control and centralised power within the executive was capitalised upon by KANU, who used this to dismantle the regional system of power desired by British authorities and KADU. What needs to be emphasised in examining colonial Kenya and the decolonisation period is that there is no clear distinction between the colonial and postcolonial politics of Kenya. Whilst the context of colonial rule is undoubtedly different, the post-independence politics of Kenya under Kenyatta and subsequent governments have benefitted from the experiences and practices that colonial rulers exercised over Kenya in the years leading up to decolonisation (Branch, 2009: 130-132). Dividing this discussion into sequences of 'colonial' and 'postcolonial' invites some assumptions that irrationality,

instability, and disorder are products of the postcolonial state, and are subsequently absent in framings of the colonial state (Branch & Cheeseman, 2006: 12; Werbner, 1996: 5-6). Colonial rule was a much more complex and contested time, with continuities between the political developments and rule of colonial powers, and that of post-independence governments (Abrahamsen, 2003: 193; Branch, 2006: 31).

A discussion of Kenyan independence furthermore cannot ignore the impact that the Mau Mau rebellion had both on British rule in Kenya, and the legacies that the struggle left on post-independence politics. The rebellion grew in strength throughout the years following the Second World War amongst predominantly – but not exclusively (Brosché et al. 2020: 116) – Kikuyu tenants on farms owned by white settlers (Lonsdale, 1990: 394-395). The movement grew to encompass more widespread grievances amongst Mau Mau insurgents across Kenya and in cities; issues such as the lack of political representation led to a large-scale uprising (Branch, 2009; 2011: 11; Throup, 1985: 403), followed by a British declaration of emergency, violent suppression, and the widespread arrest of Mau Mau insurgents, including future KANU leader and president, Jomo Kenyatta (Cheeseman, 2006: 13; Lonsdale, 1990: 417).

The brutality of the British crackdown shaped Kenyan politics in several ways. During the ‘Mau Mau Emergency’, Kenyan participation in politics was limited, with the native population banned from forming political parties. Whilst this was relaxed during the late 1950s, electoral outcomes were carefully monitored by British colonial forces, and rigged if necessary to support British interests (Anderson, 2005: 549; Cheeseman & Branch, 2006: 17).

The right to vote was geographically restricted to distort results, and favour those who had remained loyal to British rule (Branch, 2011: 11; Gertzel, 1970: 8-9). For some time, colony-wide parties were banned, with only district-wide political parties permitted. As Branch (2006) notes, this suppression of democracy through bureaucratic means- such as the extensive use of the provincial

administration to control the voting process- provided the inspiration and road-tested the approach to election rigging that post-independence governments utilised.

Despite colonial control over the politics of decolonising Kenya, Kenyan politicians were at times able to subvert British controls (Ibid. 2004: 159). Kenyan elected officials utilised loopholes to avoid the ban on country-wide parties, and instead created colony-wide 'voting blocs' that largely performed the functions of national political parties. This development led to the formation of two political parties who operated across Kenya unofficially; the Kenya National Party (KNP), formed by Moi and a host of political figures who were in favour of adopting a regional approach to politics, and the Kenya Independence Movement (KIM), headed by a core group of politicians who would come to dominate the immediate post-independence political scene, including Tom Mboya and Oginga Odinga. Jomo Kenyatta, who was still imprisoned at the time of KIM's founding, would become president of the party at its redevelopment into KANU in 1961 (Anderson, 2005: 551-552).

British interests in Kenyan politics at the time of independence favoured destabilising KANU in favour of the successor party to the KNP, the Kenyan African Democratic Union (KADU). KADU favoured a federal system and greater regional powers for a post-independence Kenya, whilst KANU pursued a policy of centralisation of power (Kanyinga, 2016: 156-157).

Regardless of these desires by the British colonial administration, KANU had a numerical advantage in the 1963 elections, and gained power. However, the colonial authorities believed that Kikuyus were particularly likely to act independently and reject political ties with the British, and should not be trusted as partners in post-independence Kenya (Branch, 2011: 4-5). As a concession to the British desire for federal rule across post-independence Kenya and the wishes of KADU, KANU adopted the 'Majimboism' approach to governance. Majimboism roughly translates as a form of regional governance, whereby regions of Kenya would be governed through a devolved system of power. This approach was initially proposed by KADU members to protect the rights and freedoms of minority ethnic groups in the state (Anderson, 2005: 547). Regions of Kenya would be governed in a

semi-autonomous manner, with regional parliaments given significant power as opposed to the central government (Branch, 2011: 13-14).

KANU's position at this early point reflects many of the diverse challenges the party – and Kenyatta as a leader – would face during Kenya's later authoritarian years. Initially, KANU sought to co-operate with the development and implementation of the majimbo approach to governance in post-colonial Kenya, portraying itself as representative of the many ethnic groups of Kenya. However, KANU itself was a political vehicle used to protect the interests of Kikuyus in government – with many of the leading politicians at independence belonging to the Kikuyu ethnic group – whilst also seeking to disenfranchise minority groups who had attached themselves to KADU (Cheeseman & Fisher, 2019: 38-39; Gertzel, 1970: 43). KANU's idealised form of governance was centralised control of the state, and this approach served to resolve some key issues. For one, centralised control would serve to allow Kenyatta and KANU to grant land to the Kikuyu base of supporters, and those who had fought in the Mau Mau rebellion (Hassan, 2020: 118-120; Maberu, 2016: 375).

As such, whilst majimboism was initially supported by KANU to appease the British colonial authorities and remain a legitimate party during the decolonisation talks, this form of governance was unsustainable for KANU's goals of centralised state control, and the desire to solidify authoritarian rule. KANU had proved itself as the more popular political party for Kenyans at independence, driven by Kenyatta's popularity as a nationalist leader who had fought British colonial authorities during the Mau Mau rebellion (Branch & Cheeseman, 2006: 16; Meng, 2020: 142) and by co-opting the regional governance aspect of KADU, it sought to delegitimise the KADU opposition.

Despite the majimbo approach being unworkable for KANU's goals, its dismantling was not done immediately. KANU's path to single-party rule was undertaken through legal and constitutional changes, though was escalated by the removal of KADU as an opposing party in the mid-1960s (Anderson, 2005; Ochieng' 1995).

This approach highlights two points central to the operation of authoritarian rule in Kenya. As Branch and Cheeseman (2006: 22-23) note, Kenyatta inherited a colonial system of governance that retained power within the executive and sought to protect commercial interests. Bureaucratic apparatus, such as the provincial administration and the parliamentary system in place in Kenya served to strengthen the government. As such, retaining such a form of governance became a key goal of KANU when seeking to dismantle the regional approach to governance, and threats from KADU. Furthermore, enacting change through legislative bodies and official mechanisms operates as an important measure through which to stabilise autocratic rule without the potential destabilising effects that other approaches, such as repression or violence may bring (Meng, 2020: 9; Williamson & Magaloni, 2020).

The actions of Kenyatta and KANU in dismantling the majimbo power-sharing agreement and solidifying single-party rule therefore demonstrate some of the key hallmarks of how autocratic politics would come to operate in Kenya during the 20th century.

To this end, KANU leaders set about discrediting and ultimately dismantling the majimbo power-sharing agreement. KANU politicians spoke of majimboism as ‘anti-nationalist’ and ‘tribalist’ (Anderson, 2005: 557); an agreement that threatened the social cohesion of Kenya (KNA/GEN/254/11). In British papers Kenyatta is reported to have said that Kenyans should focus on ‘hard work, [going] back to the land, [and] the evils of tribalism’ whilst decrying political movements that sought to focus on power-sharing agreements such as KANU (TNA, FCO 31/209). Similarly, Kenyatta called the agreed constitution unworkable and a hindrance to KANU’s approach to governance (Anderson, 2005: 557). Having already decried the majimbo agreement as unworkable and likely to incite tribalist politics, KANU MPs failed to support power-sharing agreements with regional institutions set up as part of the majimboism process, instead providing excuses as to why the regional parliaments should not have decision-making powers. These included concerns regarding a supposed lack of consultation between the regional parliaments and the citizens they

represent) or blocking efforts to pass laws in such regional institutions. Malcolm MacDonald, the former governor, withdrew from attempting to arbitrate such disputes, whilst KADU members such as Ngala and Moi recognised that continuing to pursue a majimboism constitutional arrangement would prove impossible in the face of KANU opposition (Anderson, 2005: 562-563). Kenyatta also promised patronage and benefits to those KADU members who defected to KANU (Barkan, 1993: 86-87). As many KADU members crossed the floor to join KANU and the attempt at regionalism crumbled, the strength of KANU and its proposed centralising of power increased, resulting in the development of an essentially single-party state in Kenya (Ibid. 1993: 87; Branch, 2011: 15).

Further measures to solidify authoritarian rule centred upon how to deal with economic, social, and international issues. Prominent KANU members – such as Tom Mboya, who became Minister of Economic Planning and Development – advocated that Kenya needed to adopt its own approach to social and economic development. In 1965 Mboya announced that Kenya would adopt the ‘Sessional Paper No. 10’, which formulated the approach Kenya should take in domestic and foreign affairs. Kenya would not, economically, be attached to either the West or East. Rather, Mboya articulated in the paper that rigid models of development or economic progress were unsuited to the unique position Kenya and its citizens found itself in (Ochieng’ 1995: 96). Whilst figures such as President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania had clearly articulated a socialist approach to society and economics in his state post-independence (Tiruneh, 2021), Kenyatta did not (Arnold, 1974: 155-157). Rather, Kenyatta extolled the virtues of hard work, a maintenance of the economic and social systems of class and wealth accumulation in the state, and continued links with the British administration and systems of governance put in place during colonialism (Angelo, 2019: 181-182). Within speeches, Kenyatta emphasised that Kenyans could not merely rely upon the notion of Communism to provide equality and prosperity to citizens; in Kenyatta’s view, the provision of social services, state welfare and goods and services could not be achieved through Communism, and indeed that this approach to state development would jeopardise Kenya’s stability (Ochieng’, 1995: 97).

The continuation of British assistance and the maintenance of British administrators in positions of public office was also an approach pursued by KANU that differed from other post-independence states. Whilst other African states in the region pursued a strategy of detaching themselves from their respective colonial administrations, the KANU leadership instead incorporated the bureaucracy, procedures, and many of the former British administrators into the state apparatus in the 1960s. Kenyatta argued that such an approach would maintain stability in Kenya during the initial post-independence years (KNA/GEN/254/3). Adopting the bureaucratic instruments and processes of colonialism had a profound effect on the ways in which KANU politicians could maintain their centralised control over the state, without the problems of regional fragmentation that had afflicted other similar post-colonial states in Africa (Branch & Cheeseman, 2006; Herbst, 2014). However, KANU also provided continuity in the running of the state by keeping British officials in positions of power, and elevating others into cabinet positions. Not only did this provide stability and a continuation of the expertise that some British officials provided, but it also demonstrated that KANU was willing to work with its former colonial power (Arnold, 1974: 158; Ochieng' 1995: 93). Furthermore, these actions demonstrated to white settlers in Kenya – who had been concerned about the future of their life in Kenya beyond independence – that the new government would be amenable to the continued habitation of settlers across Kenya (Angelo, 2019: 141; Ochieng' 1995: 93-94). Indeed, Kenyatta's approach to land resettlement for Kenyans upon independence did not involve forcible acquisition of land, but rather a complex and long-running process of purchasing agricultural land from settlers to be distributed to those supportive of the government in large settlement schemes (Boone et al. 2021: 6).

Many of these early movements by Kenyatta's KANU sought to reassure external actors that Kenya was not to become a radical – and potentially dangerous or insecure – state under the post-independence leadership, whilst also seeking to consolidate domestic power. Furthermore, it had become clear to many in KANU and amongst the leadership that the entrenchment of the colonial administration – and the potential for wealth acquisition – would be best achieved through a

maintenance of the current state apparatus and its connections to Britain and foreign investors (Branch & Cheeseman, 2006: 21).

As such, Mboya and Kenyatta both made public overtures on these points towards external actors and Kenyan citizens. Mboya decried those who would bring about change for its own sake, thus bringing about instability and chaos in newly independent Kenya (Ochieng' 1995: 93). Kenyatta's speeches at public events meanwhile consistently emphasised how a balanced approach to decolonisation and international affairs. Kenyatta refused to take explicit sides in the Cold War atmosphere of East and West, instead maintaining a policy of neutrality in speeches aimed at the Kenyan public and foreign diplomats, alongside in party manifestos (KANU, 1969: 27-31; KNA/GEN/254/1). Whilst more on this will be discussed in the following chapter, it is important to note that this neutrality, although strongly maintained in public as previously maintained, did not translate to cordial private relations between Kenya and Eastern actors, particularly China. Whilst China had been one of the first states to formally engage in diplomatic relations with Kenya following independence, relations soon cooled, driven by several factors. For one, China's socialist ambitions abroad clashed with the desired aims of Kenyatta and the Kenyan leadership. Chege (2008: 20) notes that Kenyan capitalist interests, and the desire by Kenyan leadership to maintain ties to foreign investment and support from Western powers meant that developing meaningful ties with China was impossible.

In a manner similar to how ties between Ethiopia's Haile Selassie and China diminished, Maoist China's calls for revolution across the African continent towards socialism also alienated Kenyatta, who as noted had pressed forward with a Western outlook and rejected socialist politics in Kenya. Engagement with China was seen as a threat to Kenyatta's stability, a fear which was realised as Chinese agents allegedly began distributing subversive material across East Africa calling for Kenyatta's overthrow, during the early years of Kenyatta's rule. As will be noted later in the chapter, China was also caught in the domestic strife occurring in Kenya at the time; a challenger to

Kenyatta's leadership, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, was driven by socialist ideals and sought out Chinese and Soviet weapons and support to challenge for the Kenyan leadership (Attwood, 1967: 245-247; Chege, 2008: 20-21). As such, the potential of a threat to Kenyan stability by China was legitimised in the eyes of Kenyatta, and relations between the two were frosty throughout Kenyatta's tenure, and well into Moi's leadership.

Indeed, Kenyatta sought to instead maintain and develop ties to the West, particularly Britain. As a sign of this overture, at independence, Kenyatta made little reference to the bloody struggle that had occurred against the British colonial forces less than a decade earlier, instead choosing to emphasise the process of consensus-building with Kenya's former colonial power and other external actors that should occur in the following years (Angelo, 2019: 142-143, 179-181; Ochieng' 1995: 92). Similar focus was made throughout subsequent speeches; Kenyatta utilised his history of nationalism and the hardships he endured during the colonial period as a rallying point (KNA/GEN/254/5).

This level of continuity from colonialism to independence – at least in terms of a continuation of leadership and administration – was further useful in the scale of some of the challenges that KANU faced in its early years.

Legislative development and challenges in authoritarian Kenya

This next section of this chapter refers to the discussion begun in the thesis introduction concerning the constraints that legislatures and political parties can have upon authoritarian governments. These institutions represented a significant challenge to Kenyatta and Moi's hegemony, which is discussed in this section.

Thus far, I have explained how KANU under Kenyatta were capable – through popular domestic support and an international unwillingness to intervene in Kenyan politics – of consolidating power and developing the beginnings of a single-party state in Kenya. Indeed, soon after the removal of

KADU as a potential challenger in domestic politics, KANU further solidified power through a changing of the constitution in 1964. The agreed constitution between Kenya and Britain was reformed to turn Kenya into a republic, with Kenyatta as president. These constitutional changes further solidified the rule of KANU by removing powers from other leadership positions, and centralising decision-making powers with the president. Kenyatta was also given sole authority in deciding who would succeed him, thus ensuring that any possible successor must retain loyalty to Kenyatta. The republic constitution removed the automatic succession of the vice-president as leader, thereby problematising the accession of former KADU member – later turned vice-president – Daniel arap Moi (Branch, 2011: 44). This served to provide a process and assurance of how the government was likely to continue beyond Kenyatta's passing, through a personalised choice of who was to succeed him.

Yet it is important to highlight how Kenyatta's authority in the first few years following independence was not guaranteed, and indeed Kenyatta required the support of – and had to occasionally address disquiet in – the lower-level members of KANU, such as backbench MPs (Opalo, 2020: 1342). Because of the limited ability of the KANU leadership and Kenyatta to govern without the acceptance and support of backbench members of the party, change towards a one-party system was incremental, and often reliant upon deliberation amongst party members and constitutional changes pushed through by prominent KANU members, such as Attorney General Charles Njonjo and Tom Mboya (Angelo, 2019: 242-243; Ochieng', 1995: 104).

The thesis introduction provided some detailed discussion of the constraints that bodies such as the legislature can place upon authoritarian governments. It is worthwhile exploring this issue and its relevance in the Kenyan case, particularly during the rule of Kenyatta, and as a precursor to the intra-elite competitiveness and threats to Kenyatta's rule that are discussed later in this chapter. The discussion here is twofold, concerning both the power of the legislature as a constraint on Kenyatta's power, and the issues surrounding intra-elite fighting in KANU, and the ability for lesser

party members to contest and influence the direction of the authoritarian leadership in Kenyatta's Kenya.

An assumption that legislatures in single-party states are merely rubber stamp institutions to legitimise the desires of autocratic leaders is misleading, and betrays the intricacies of how such institutions operate, alongside their capabilities (Opalo, 2014: 65). In Kenya's case, the legislature retained a significant amount of power and capabilities in influencing the direction of Kenyatta's government; a level of power that remained until reforms and further empowerment of the executive occurred under Moi's tenure (Opalo, 2020; Throup, 1993). Whilst Kenyatta attempted to utilise the bureaucracy and an increase in executive power to weaken parliament (Branch & Cheeseman, 2006; Gertzel, 1970: 125-127), this never resulted in a complete loss of authority for the legislature (Opalo, 2014: 68).

This discussion provides some important points for the wider thesis. For one, this discussion seeks to incorporate much of the nuance on authoritarian stability that has emerged in the wider literature. Whilst initial research has elaborated upon the three sources of authoritarian stability of legitimisation, co-optation, and repression (Gerschewski, 2013), this discussion on constraints and challenges that affect the domestic operation of authoritarian governments needs to include discussions surrounding the role of legislatures and other bodies in how each autocratic government operates (Magaloni & Kricheli, 2010; Meng, 2020; Williamson & Magaloni, 2020). These other bodies demonstrate that governments do not only experience constraints and threats from issues like domestic insurrection or violence in borderlands, but other elements, such as the constraints legislatures and internal party politics can provide upon the desired aims of governments need to be considered.

In both the Kenyan and Ethiopian cases, it is shown that authoritarian governments do not operate solely without domestic constraints. Chapter 2 of the thesis demonstrated similarly nuanced

explorations of the constraints placed upon governments, including violent insurrections but also challenging party dynamics in the Derg and TPLF.

The power and capabilities of Kenya's parliament during Kenyatta's era is seen as a particular outlying case amongst authoritarian governments, beyond the capabilities of other similar legislatures in autocratic states (Opalo & Smith, 2021; Williamson & Magaloni, 2020). During the era of Kenyatta, elections to the legislature remained competitive, whilst prominent KANU members of parliament who had been supportive of Kenyatta were voted out (Throup, 1993: 375-376). Whilst local KANU branches vetted which politicians could run for parliament, beyond this check KANU politicians vied with each other for power in a competitive environment (Opalo, 2014: 68). Different reasons behind this reality in Kenya are suggested by scholars. Throup (1993: 375-376) argues that it is because of the banning of KADU and other opposition parties in the mid-1960s – as discussed further in this chapter – led to elections amongst KANU members being one of the few ways through which the public could display their dissatisfaction with the direction KANU took, and whether they were satisfied with the performance of their local representatives. Whilst prominent members of KANU were often unchallenged by other party figures in elections – thus ensuring their continued authority in parliament – many other members were regularly faced with elections and so it became necessary for MPs to pay attention to the needs of their constituencies, despite the authoritarian nature of Kenya (Good, 1968; Throup, 1993: 376). Legislatures acting in this way – as a fundamental tool to allow citizens to broadcast their displeasure and unhappiness with policies or actions an authoritarian government takes – are seen in additional contemporary examples, and broadly correspond to wider literature concerning authoritarian legislatures (Noble, 2020; Weeks & Crunkilton, 2017).

Barkan (1979: 66-67) argues that the Kenyan system of continued competitive elections despite the authoritarian leadership of Kenyatta altered the role of MPs. Their role moved away from legislating as part of the Kenyan parliament, and instead became one of direct citizen representation, whereby

MPs would lobby on behalf of the Kenyans they represented directly to the authoritarian leadership. Previously mentioned practices, such as the selective attribution of land to those who were favoured by Kenyatta, became an issue over which citizens would lobby their MP to in turn appeal to Kenyatta for favourable benefits. Legislators became linkages through which the government maintained power and better responded to citizen demands and needs. MPs who failed to adapt to this process in turn were removed through elections (Ibid. 1979: 69-70).

There is also the issue of the colonial origins of political parties in Kenya and the nature of how KANU operated at this time as a reason behind the strength of the Kenyan legislature and in addition, why backbench members of KANU were able to vocally disagree on policy and the direction of Kenyatta's government. Opalo (2019: 124-127) describes KANU as not a tightly organised political party, but instead a loose collaboration of ethnic groups and political activists in the immediate post-independence years. This makeup of the party presented challenges, with KANU members arising from a variety of ethnic groups and class backgrounds, thus having their own views and beliefs on the direction the party and the government should take (Barkan, 1979: 69; Hassan, 2020: 122; Throup, 1993: 376-377). This was a particular issue when considering radical, socialist elements of the party under Oginga Odinga, who organised much of their activity from the KANU backbenches, and vocally criticised Kenyatta's conservative ideology during parliamentary sessions (Ochieng' 1995: 103).

The loose organisation of KANU – and the difficulty in controlling the party – was further compounded by Kenyatta's belief in KANU's role in an authoritarian Kenya. Kenyatta had not been a founding member of KANU, and instead preferred to delegate party matters to other members, such as Tom Mboya (Opalo, 2014: 67). In Kenyatta's view, other legacy tools at the disposal of the executive were more effective at maintaining power. These included the use of the provincial administration and tools of repression dating back from the colonial era, and the use of legal measures to maintain power and enact changes (Angelo, 2019: 180; Branch & Cheeseman, 2006: 14;

Hassan, 2020: 116-120; Opalo, 2014: 68). Mboya articulated further the view that Kenyatta had on the role of KANU, describing its position now that Kenya was independent as one of simply reinforcing the will of Kenyatta and fulfilling any legislative orders directed by the executive (Good, 1968: 119).

Whilst parliament and KANU did support Kenyatta in passing constitutional amendments, many of these amendments were fiercely contested, both within and beyond KANU. Hansard records demonstrate that many parliamentarians were unhappy with the rushed manner through which constitutional amendments were presented, and the short timeframe in which legislators had to view and discuss proposed amendments (Kenya National Assembly Library, HAN/328/4). Legislative mechanisms such as the constitution were frequently invoked by parliamentary members to criticise the excesses of the leadership, including budgets proposed by Mboya (Kenyan National Assembly Library, HAN/328/4: 398) and the frequent use of amendments to push through unpopular policy changes to the detriment of the legislature (Kenya National Assembly Library, HAN/328/67: 175; 418).

A disregard for KANU's independence, and its role in independent Kenya also created rifts for Kenyatta. Members of KANU such as its secretary, John Keen, alongside KANU treasurer and future vice-president Joseph Murumbi both argued that KANU should be reorganised, having a role beyond rubber stamping Kenyatta's wishes, and in turn better representing Kenyan citizens (Good, 1968: 118-120). The competitiveness of elections under Kenyatta compelled lower-level members to vocally challenge the executive on policies, seeking to better represent their constituents in the hopes of remaining in power (Throup, 1993: 376). During KANU party reorganisation meetings that Kenyatta attended, members would argue against the restrictions the executive was placing upon the legislature, and that KANU's exclusion from the decision-making processes of Kenyatta's government was endangering their position as MPs in Kenya (KNA, GEN/254/19-22).

This complex web of issues characterises the makeup of KANU and the Kenyan parliament during Kenyatta's leadership and reflects in some of the foreign policy issues presented in chapter 5 of the thesis, alongside further domestic challenges elsewhere in this chapter. Issues with Odinga were compounded by Kenyatta's distance from KANU and his subsequent inability to control the party tightly (Opalo, 2019: 126). Opalo (2014: 69) highlights that Kenyatta's position was not weak, due to the respect he commanded as leader of Kenya, and his ability to use repressive measures to defend his position. However, it is important to demonstrate the challenging position Kenyatta and the leadership of Kenya found themselves in, and how this then reflects on the varied approaches to foreign policy and seeking out autocratic support the government took.

The challenges discussed here for the Kenyan case demonstrates similar dynamics. Domestic constraints in the Kenyan case – as the forthcoming chapter will note – correspond to specific patterns of international engagement. Constraints from domestic challengers, such as Odinga, alongside a desire within the Kenyan legislature for the state to remain non-aligned within the Cold War political landscape shaped the ways in which Kenyatta, and later Moi, were able to engage with the international community. Furthermore, chapter 5 also demonstrates how the ramifications of domestic challenges, such as the instability within KANU, reflected in the choice of agency-leveraging strategies that Kenyatta and Moi took, focussing more upon stability strategies, rather than reshaping the narrative. As such, this introductory discussion surrounding domestic constraints is useful in advance of the more detailed empirical discussion in the forthcoming chapter.

Finally, what needs to be considered is the argument some scholars make that leaders deliberately permit a level of dissent to exist amongst party and lower-level members as a 'release valve' for unhappy feelings to be publicly vented. This is theorised to strengthen the resilience of the government, allowing its leadership to either gauge and react to criticisms that were being publicly aired, or simply as a way for those criticising the leadership to feel less aggrieved and that they were being heard (Morgenbesser, 2015; Qiaoan & Teets, 2020). This process is theorised to be occurring

in contemporary authoritarian governments such as China, where public criticism is permitted on an infrequent and temporary basis when the leadership believes that authoritarian stability is threatened by public discontent (Chen, 2016). Gandhi and Przeworski (2006) note that parties and legislatures provide important functions in suggesting policy legislation and demonstrating where governments need to prioritise their focus through the airing of grievances. Meng (2020: 19-20) argues that constraints such as legislatures and the permitted airing of grievances can result in more resilient and adaptive authoritarian governments.

There are some important caveats to this school of thought pertaining to the Kenyan case. The institutional strength of the government, particularly when looking at the make-up and operationalisation of KANU as a tool, demonstrate that Kenyatta's government was not always using these institutions as a resilience measure, and indeed that KANU itself was at times a liability. Indeed, Meng (2021: 527-528) notes that although ruling parties can be a useful resilience tool, they often require significant sources of funding and acquiescence to operate in support of the authoritarian leadership to act as a useful resilience measure and effective channel for the release and vocalisation of grievances by backbench politicians.

As noted earlier, KANU never operated as a powerful organ through which Kenyatta could expand his authoritarian rule. As seen, KANU's problems of stability and their challenges to Kenyatta's authority meant that they were often marginalised by Kenyatta, who preferred to rule through a more direct approach, and with additional formal instruments such as constitutional changes. Subsequently, Kenyatta had little interest in maintaining tight control over the party and instead continued to operate independently. Because of this, it is argued that the criticism Kenyatta endured was not solely due to an organised process of controlling complaints as a 'release valve', but that KANU members aired their grievances in an uncontrolled manner and frequently felt like they were not being listened to, or that the government was pursuing processes of authoritarian consolidation and constitution-breaking measures that members did not agree to. Hence, archival evidence

demonstrates the unhappiness of KANU members such as Murumbi and Keen – as they were being overlooked by the leadership – and the angry responses given by Kenyatta, Mboya, and others in private meetings with the party when grievances are aired, rather than a language of acceptance and acknowledgement that the leadership needs to note the grievances of party members.

The scholarly logic of ruling parties being used by authoritarian governments as a release valve returns under Moi. Moi utilised the party apparatus as a more meaningful instrument to maintain power. Moi reformed KANU and instigated disciplinary proceedings within the party membership to solidify loyalty, and to use the party to challenge institutional roadblocks and challenges to his rule (Opalo, 2014: 69; Throup, 1993: 371).

The next section of this chapter builds upon these points, and further demonstrates political strains and issues that Kenyatta faced. Again, the issues highlighted in this section play a role on the actions Kenyatta undertook when engaging with autocratic supporters, both dictating to some extent what aspects of the agency-leveraging framework can be deployed, alongside the desired outcomes by Kenyatta and other Kenyan leaders.

Further domestic challenges for Kenyatta's government

As seen, Kenyatta's government faced issues of legitimacy and contestation from both within the party and beyond (Gertzel, 1970: 12). For Kenyatta, rivalries and challenges emerged from other prominent figures in the independence movements, particularly Tom Mboya and Jaramogi Oginga Odinga. Odinga, a rival Luo politician who joined KANU prior to independence, and had been a member of the colonial Legislative Council (LegCo) alongside Tom Mboya. Odinga was one of the staunchest supporters of Kenyatta prior to decolonisation (Arnold, 1974: 162-163; Lynch, 2011: 58). Alongside Odinga, Mboya was a prominent figure in the pre-independence LegCo, and rivalries emerged between the two over the question of who would assume leadership of a post-independence Kenyan government (Angelo, 2019: 242; Gertzel, 1970: 15).

To centre himself as opposed to Mboya in the post-independence government, Odinga accused Mboya of failing to fully support Kenyatta's release (Good, 1968: 116). Following independence, Odinga was elevated by Kenyatta to the position of Minister of Home Affairs and then vice-president; not just because of his support of Kenyatta, but because Kenyatta sought to shore up support of his government beyond the Kikuyu ethnic group, and Odinga represented a figurehead of the substantive Luo group for Kenyatta to engage with (Gertzel, 1970: 15; Hassan, 2020: 121-123).

Whilst Odinga and other socialist politicians in KANU argued that the Kenyan state should provide free land distribution for the poorest in the state, alongside free healthcare and education (Ochieng' 1995: 95; Prince, 2020), such demands ran asynchronous to the rhetoric from both Mboya and Kenyatta, who emphasised individuality and the belief that social services in Kenya should not be given out freely (Ochieng', 1995: 95; Speich, 2009). These were also sentiments not widely popular with Kenyan citizens, who believed that such approaches advocated by Odinga and others amounted to Communism (Branch, 2011: 53).

Despite Odinga's position as vice-president, his actual power was minimal, having been restricted by Kenyatta amidst suspicions over Odinga's intentions and ideological beliefs, as mentioned earlier in the chapter (Arnold, 1974: 163; Good, 1968). Odinga was further isolated from KANU activities and the prospect of any further decision-making powers as Kenyatta sought to solidify the dominance of conservative KANU members. During the 1964 coup attempt – which is discussed in chapter 5 – Odinga was told to stay at home, for fear that he may have been involved (Arnold, 1974: 163).

Odinga urged Kenyatta to engage with socialist partners abroad, seeking support and funding from China and the Soviet Union. Such support was forthcoming; Odinga managed to gain funding from the Soviets to open educational facilities, such as the Lumumba Institute (Arnold, 1974: 163) and medical facilities (Prince, 2020: 52). Odinga's network of funders also extended to a variety of socialist and Communist parties from across Europe and Asia (Speich, 2009: 455-456).

Yet Odinga's endeavours created further divisions between the 'radical' socialist section of KANU, and the leadership dominated by the conservative faction of the party. The creation and funding of the Lumumba Institute, ostensibly to train KANU youth members in party organisation and ideology, in turn legitimised the fear that Odinga was seeking to implement socialism in Kenya, in opposition to Kenyatta, Mboya, and others. Soviet and Chinese staff working at the Institute were sacked, and Odinga was forced to resign from KANU (Speich, 2009: 456). Attwood (1967: 173) notes the tensions that were carried between the Kenyan leadership due to Odinga's support received by China and Russia. Communist China had begun publicly proclaiming revolution and a need to radically disengage from imperialist powers such as the UK and US (Ibid. 1967: 172; Westad, 2005: 101) and as such Odinga's presence remained a threat.

Odinga left KANU with a vitriolic speech decrying the fact that the party had betrayed any sense of real revolution and freedom for Kenyan citizens. Whilst the socialist desire amongst Kenyans for revolution was weak (Branch, 2011: 53; Cullen, 2018: 41), Odinga still represented and articulated the frustrations many had with the slow pace of development in Kenya, and the beliefs held by some citizens that Kenyatta and KANU had quickly become unrepresentative of much of the population (Branch, 2011: 54-55). Other radical KANU members who had supported Odinga left the party and instead joined a rival group that had been established, the Kenya People's Union (KPU).

To combat this, Kenyatta and Mboya devised a plan to force all KPU politicians to run again in an election to retain their seats (Arnold, 1974: 164-165; Barkan, 1979: 69). This election forced many politicians to return to KANU, pledging their loyalty to Kenyatta in the face of losing power in a rigged election. Security forces were similarly used to attack KPU members and supporters and crush dissent (Branch, 2011: 59; Hassan, 126-127). Odinga's sources of financing from abroad were co-opted, with foreign supporters threatened to force them to withdraw their support (Branch, 2011: 57). Finally, Odinga's projects, such as a Soviet-built hospital in Kisumu, were treated with contempt by Kenyatta. The grand opening of the hospital in 1969 drew pro-Odinga crowds, who were attacked

by police forces in a show of strength against Kenyatta's opponent (Hassan, 2020: 121; Prince, 2020). Although Odinga remained in politics in an opposition position, he was never able to regain the level of power – and threat to the government – as he had prior to his departure from KANU (Angelo, 2019: 255).

Other figures – such as Tom Mboya – also came under similar scrutiny as Kenyatta sought to remove rivals to the leadership. Whilst some like Attwood (1967: 243) attest that Kenyatta never fully trusted Mboya, he had been seen as a reliable ally for the president from before Kenyan independence (Goldsworthy, 1982).

After Kenyatta suffered a debilitating stroke at the end of the 1960s, Mboya aimed to solidify his succession to the presidency. Mboya departed from tribalist politics, presenting himself as a Kenyan foremost (Goldsworthy, 1982), which in turn was seen as a threat to ethnic politics and the dominance of the Kikuyu (Branch, 2011: 75). Mboya had begun receiving increasingly substantive financial support from US sources, including the CIA (Ibid. 2011: 69-70), which again was used by prominent KANU politicians as an opportunity through which to discredit Mboya (Goldsworthy, 1982: 120; Ochieng', 1995: 101). Whilst it is important not to paint Mboya as simply a 'pro-West' threat to Kenya – with his desires and ambitions much more nuanced than replicating those of Western actors – it is through these simplifications that Mboya was attacked in parliament and by other prominent KANU members, such as Charles Njonjo (Branch, 2011: 77). Constitutional amendments, such as a proposed lower age limit of 40 for politicians to run for the presidency (which, when introduced, excluded Mboya at the age of 36 from running for the presidency following Kenyatta's presumed retirement in the early 1970s) (Arnold, 1974: 166), alongside a transition to KANU choosing the successor to Kenyatta, rather than parliament (Branch, 2011: 77), ensured that those close to Kenyatta could effectively sabotage Mboya's rise to power and instead promote Moi, the favoured successor by Kenyatta.

In 1969, Mboya was assassinated. This was an act widely believed to have been orchestrated by Kikuyu KANU members, with allegations that the move was authorised by the party elite (Arnold, 1974: 166). Whilst Mboya's assassination generated significant domestic unrest, some of the key efforts to blame foreign Communist powers for the assassination – as Moi did – led to a further cooling of relations with China and the Soviet Union, as will be expanded upon in the following chapter. Regarding the elite infighting in KANU, Kenyatta and other prominent leaders sought to resolve the matter by placing the blame for Mboya's death upon other ambitious members of KANU, thus resolving the matter of other potential challengers to the presidency, and absolving Kenyatta of any blame for Mboya's death (Branch, 2011: 82-84).

Other political assassinations also took place at this time, such as those of Pio Pinto and J.M. Kariuku. Unfortunately, this thesis does not have the space to explore these incidents in depth. However, what is important to note is that these incidents demonstrate the same point as Mboya's death; that KANU was often not operating as a strong party, contrary to its external rhetoric expounding as such. Rather, the party suffered from elite infighting, a difficulty in negotiating the constraints of parliament, and a struggle to articulate and legitimise its vision for Kenya's future, amidst competing narratives from Odinga and others.

As part of a system to control the potential for leadership challengers, Kenyatta had consolidated power amongst a small group of Kikuyu; the core elite of the government remained part of Kenyatta's inner circle of Kiambu Kikuyu (Branch & Cheeseman, 2009: 7). Following Mboya's elimination, Kenyatta embarked on a process of having Kikuyus swear loyalty to him, in a practice similar to the 'oathing' ceremonies that Kikuyus undertook to support the Mau Mau insurgency (Branch, 2011: 85). Although a small portion of this group were given elite posts in the government, Kenyatta continued to be concerned with the viability of his government up until his death, and the threat of disaffected Kikuyus gaining control of KANU and the presidency if he did not ensure their loyalty (Ibid. 2011: 90-91). As seen in the Ethiopian case, during Selassie's rule the legitimacy and

strength of the government relied upon a small core of elites who the leader was familiar with, with outsiders excluded (Ajulu, 2002: 261).

As these past few sections have shown, elite infighting and attempts at control were not completely quelled by this cultivated system of control by Kenyatta. As the leader's health deteriorated similar issues of elite infighting and conflict within KANU grew. As seen in the Ethiopia chapter, government strength does not always match up to rhetoric, and the power base of authoritarian leaders is frequently threatened by the instability seen both within the state itself, and the party or support base of the authoritarian government. Such challenges have been explored in detail here, and chapter 5 will emphasise the connection between these domestic challenges and the seeking out of autocratic support by the government from international actors. Domestic issues and challenges have often been projected outwards through different strategies of the agency-leveraging framework.

Domestic issues and challenges facing Moi's government

Daniel arap Moi – Kenyatta's successor from the Kalenjin ethnic group – also faced inter-party competition and a need to establish himself and his rule. The main concern here was rivalry from the previously dominant Kikuyu group of elites. Although Moi had been a favoured successor for Kenyatta and was widely popular, he also faced efforts by some of the Kenyan elite to discredit him and remove him from contention in succeeding Kenyatta (Ochieng', 1995: 104-106). Such efforts to alter the constitution to exclude Moi were unsuccessful, and furthermore brought about the threat of instability and conflict (Ibid. 1995: 105).

Moi's approach to this challenge was twofold. Initially, many of the Kikuyu elites were retained, both to maintain government stability in the short term, and as a legitimising act to demonstrate Moi's leadership philosophy. Like Kenyatta, Moi sought pledges of loyalty from KANU members early on in his presidency and isolated those who refused to do so (Branch, 2011: 137; Hassan, 2020: 151-153). Moi also utilised the fact that many KANU elites remained in their posts in government as evidence

backing his leadership approach of 'nyayo', or footsteps, emphasising that he wanted to maintain continuity and progress Kenya towards modernity. Alongside this, popular initiatives to combat corruption in state organisations were launched, and Moi played upon an image of himself as a populist, speaking to and engaging with the 'common people' rather than a small group of politicians (Lynch, 2011: 113).

However, Moi also pursued a similar process of co-optation and providing selective benefits to those close to him. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, Moi broke with Kenyatta's approach to KANU by forcibly integrating the party into the executive branch of the state. As Opalo (2014: 69) notes, Moi's position was much more precarious than Kenyatta's; the executive branch had previously been dominated by Kikuyus and so it made sense for Moi to instead use the variety of ethnic groups in KANU to promote politicians more favourable to his position as president. Integrating KANU into the executive branch also led to Moi having much more control over the legislature, thus reducing potential challenges from party backbenchers (Ibid. 2014: 69-70; Khadiagala, 2010: 67).

Furthermore, Moi was able to shift the ethnic makeup of KANU branches, using security forces and loyalists within the party to force out those opposed to his rule and instead promoting loyalist bureaucrats (Hassan, 2020: 164-167). Moi also made use of land allocation policies, undertaken through the strong administration system of the state to favour Kalenjin residents to further boost his support amongst his own ethnic group, though on a lesser scale than Kenyatta (Hassan, 2020: 154-156).

Amongst Kenyan citizens, Moi maintained legitimacy both domestically and internationally through a narrative of stability and modernity. Whilst the state legitimised itself amongst the Kenyan citizenry by providing examples of modernity and progressiveness in infrastructural projects and prosperity, Moi also claimed that order and stability through the maintenance of KANU rule and a restriction on political freedoms was needed (Lynch, 2011: 113). This careful balance between legitimisation and repression operates both similarly to Gerschewski's (2013) articulation of how authoritarian

governments maintain stability, alongside a similar approach to how Ethiopian governments have balanced these approaches to maintaining rule and order.

However, crises amongst the elite remained, particularly during the attempted 1982 coup. Although more will be said on this in chapter 5, it is important to highlight that this coup provided a strong sense of concern over Moi's leadership, both from within and beyond the state. Lengthy issues, including the closeness that Moi retained to Western powers – and the widespread adoption of unpopular IMF structural adjustment policies – led to increasing dissatisfaction amongst domestic critics, including Odinga and Kikuyu elites (Branch, 2011: 150-152).

An attempted military coup in 1982 prompted a crackdown on the Kikuyu by Moi, who removed Njonjo, the most powerful remaining Kikuyu elite in the government, alongside many high-ranking officers and security staff across Kenya (Throup, 2020). Beyond Kenya however, Western powers questioned Kenya's position as a stable ally of the US and Britain given the violence and unrest (Stamp, 1983; TNA PREM 19/3838).

Whilst solidifying his rule and eliminating opponents, the 1982 coup did not prevent additional domestic challenges. The impact of structural adjustment processes upon Kenya, including the rising issues of unemployment and low levels of growth (Maxon & Ndege, 1995: 154-155) led to widespread dissatisfaction from large sections of society. Repression of non-Kalenjin ethnic groups, alongside censorship of the press and rival political associations became a frequent approach used by Moi to prevent instability and uprising (Hassan, 2020: 156-158; Throup, 2020). Urban unrest also became more frequent, with protests held by students, trade unions, and the media. Odinga meanwhile was pressing for a second, socialist party to be founded in Kenya, buoyed by the demonstrations and calls for action amongst the Kenyan citizenry (Branch, 2011: 152).

What is seen here are themes similar to the Derg in chapters 4 and 5, alongside the general discussions on authoritarian legitimation held earlier in the thesis. Moi's domestic instability again resulted in narrowed options for the government to seek legitimation, thus leading to an increased

requirement for repressive measures to be used to achieve their aims (Gerschewski, 2013; Maerz, 2020). As options for domestic legitimation become increasingly limited and the government is faced with increased discontent, uses of repression becomes more frequent. As will be seen in the international sphere, authoritarian governments such as Moi's during this period, and the Derg in Ethiopia utilised the threat of instability and instances of violence committed by rebels as evidence of the need for greater levels of autocratic support. Despite the weaknesses that these governments display in dealing with domestic insurgency and coup threats, they continue to argue that having themselves in charge of their respective states is a preferable option to the chaos and instability that a new government would bring (Wilson Center, 1977a; TNA, FCO 31/5860)

As will be discussed in chapter 5, a second significant domestic challenge Moi faced concerned the greater international pressure to democratise at the end of the Cold War (Throup, 2020). Akin to the challenges the Derg faced in Ethiopia as their Soviet support ebbed away in the late 1980s, Moi's government – and its brutal approach to maintaining order – became increasingly difficult for Western democracies to tolerate and support. Through pressures from international partners, the withholding of aid, alongside street protests and the development of the pro-democracy Forum for the Restoration of Democracy (FORD) party by Odinga and others, Moi was forced to relent and permit multiparty elections in 1991 (Brown, 2001; Khadiagala, 2010; Throup, 2020).

Although Moi continued to rig such elections throughout the 1990s – and maintained his rhetoric of order and stability being ensured by KANU's continued position in power – genuine competitive elections emerged in 2002, with Moi stepping down, and his chosen successor, Uhuru Kenyatta losing to Mwai Kibaki (Barkan, 2004). Kibaki in turn had campaigned against the repressive excesses of Moi, in particular promising to reform the administration and security services that had coerced portions of the populace for decades prior (Hassan, 2020: 212).

Domestic issues and challenges facing Kibaki's government

This section focuses on several challenges that impacted the foreign policy of Kenya towards autocratic supporters during Kibaki's government. During the 2002 election, coalition parties became a substantive force in Kenyan politics. Kibaki headed the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) which successfully defeated Uhuru Kenyatta, Moi's chosen successor. NARC was comprised of several ethnic groups and regional representatives. As seen in the chapter thus far, Kenyan politics, despite the rhetoric of nationalism espoused by Kenyatta, largely operated on ethnic lines, as seen with the core elite of Kikuyu members in the upper echelons of KANU under Kenyatta, and the transition towards Kalenjin dominance in the government under Moi.

NARC under Kibaki ostensibly aimed to move away from ethnic politics, by incorporating a variety of ethnic and regional groups aiming to break the dominance of Moi and KANU in Kenyan politics (Branch, 2011: 249-250). Upon taking power, the coalition further aimed to resolve issues that they saw as endemic under Moi, such as the regular awarding of government contracts to favoured businessmen associated with Moi and other Kalenjin elites. Similar anti-corruption campaigns were launched across the judiciary and civil service (Ibid. 2011: 251).

Whilst these efforts were lauded, the early years of rule under Kibaki and NARC also faced challenges. For one, reform of the Kenyan constitution became a difficult issue during Kibaki's tenure. The Kenyan constitution had disproportionately granted power to the executive, bypassed legislative measures and authorised the president to use a variety of repressive measures to maintain power, as previously detailed with the use of the Provincial Administration by Moi and Kenyatta to strengthen their rule (Hassan, 2015).

A pledge to review and revise the constitution under Kibaki was a major point raised both publicly during the election campaign, and privately within the coalition. Raila Odinga was offered the new post of prime minister under a reformed constitution as part of the coalition-building plans prior to the election (Branch, 2011: 249).

However, the process of revising the constitution was immediately mired in controversy. Members of the NARC coalition tasked with drafting a new constitution alleged that Kibaki and a small group of elites surrounding him provided their own revisions to the draft, whittling down curbs on presidential power and centralised power (Khadiagala, 2010: 76-77). Odinga soon began publicly attacking Kibaki for allegedly reneging on the agreement, before departing the coalition within a year of NARC coming to power (Dercon & Gutiérrez-Romero, 2012: 732-733; Khadiagala, 2010: 76). Efforts by members of the coalition to break down the power of the Provincial Administration also ran into difficulty, as Kibaki resisted such plans. Former Kalenjin members of the Administration had been replaced by Kibaki's own personal selections, many often hailing from Kibaki's Kikuyu group, whilst the budget for the Administration's activities was increased year-on-year during Kibaki's first term (Hassan, 2015: 594-595).

Finally, corruption also remained a serious and widespread issue across government, despite Kibaki's public commitment to deal with the problem. Anti-corruption policies were soon abandoned, with many ministers who had been brought into the government to tackle corruption soon enriching themselves. Such problems caused rifts domestically, with many members of NARC dissatisfied and seeing Kibaki's actions as another reoccurrence of ethnic politics that benefitted the few, rather than the many (Khadiagala, 2010). Importantly for the following chapter, the level of corruption soured some of the foreign relations Kenya had; the British government publicly denounced the corrupt practices of Kenyan ministers under Kibaki, whilst donors and NGOs expressed concern and disappointment that 'old habits' had returned to the Kenyan government despite democratisation (Branch, 2011: 253; Murunga & Nasong'o, 2006: 19).

As Khadiagala (2010: 76) notes, Kibaki's government demonstrated promise in how coalition politics could operate in Kenya after decades of single-party authoritarian rule, but underlying issues of ethnic dominance, preferential treatment, and corruption were not adequately dealt with. For this thesis, it is important to note that domestic challenges of coalition fracturing, corruption, and

concerns surrounding the revising of the constitution led to a revision of how donors and supporters treated the government. Democratisation had occurred and the election of Kibaki had brought about hope for further change, but within a couple of years and amongst domestic strife, concerns were again raised surrounding whether real change had occurred since Kenya's democratisation (Ibid. 2010: 76-77; Murunga & Nasong'o, 2006: 2).

The result of these many domestic issues was the collapse of the coalition around Kibaki. The constitutional referendum, which ended up being opposed by Odinga and a variety of other parties, was defeated, resulting in Kibaki dissolving the remaining parties of the coalition and reforming the makeup of the government. Opposition groups instead banded around Odinga, forming the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM). Odinga drew a large level of support from Kalenjin communities in the Rift Valley, who hoped that an ODM victory would increase their status, restore lost land, and prevent Kikuyu dominance under Kibaki (Lynch, 2008, 2011: 200). Conversely, threats of displacement, violence, and hostility led many Kenyans who were unsupportive of the ODM to treat Raila as an existential threat.

These issues in turn manifested in the second election Kibaki faced, in 2007. The violence that followed the 2007 election has several complex causes that are too lengthy to describe in detail here. Further detail of this process – and how it impacted the foreign policy direction of Kenya towards autocratic supporters – will be developed in chapter 5. However, for the purposes of this chapter, it should be highlighted that some of the root causes of the violence stem back to the issues facing the NARC coalition concerning ethnicity and divisions between elites.

Whilst electoral violence along ethnic lines had occurred during prior elections (Branch, 2011: 206; Cheeseman et al. 2014: 2), the violence of 2007 was more substantial and, as seen in the following chapter, a major source of instability and pressure for Kibaki's government internationally. Anderson and Lochery (2008) highlight how the violence was centred upon certain geographic areas – and ethnic identities – of Kenya, particularly amongst those living in the Rift Valley in the west of the

country. Although the violence should not be purely defined by ethnic identity, it should be noted that some of the triggers for the violence were shaped by the dominance of the Kikuyu in positions of power, as noted earlier. Ethnic differences, as seen throughout this chapter, have been exploited for political gain, and such divisions came to a head during this period (Bedasso, 2015; Dercon & Gutiérrez-Romero, 2012: 732).

For those in communities in the Rift Valley, the violence evolved from decades of Kenyan leaders either favouring the Kikuyu and providing land to privileged Kikuyu to maintain control and co-opt potential rivals into the leadership (Branch, 2011: 91) which in turn resulted in land being taken off Kalenjin in the Rift Valley (Anderson & Lochery, 2008; Boone, 2011; 2012; Dercon & Gutiérrez-Romero, 2012: 732). Although the Kalenjin had benefitted from Moi's leadership and associated prominent roles in the government and parastatal enterprises – a result again of Moi's need to provide patronage and benefits to those close around him (Lynch, 2011: 133-134) – such benefits were seen as short-lived, with a widespread view that Kikuyu 'arrogance' would lead to retributions and a distinctly unfair electoral period (Ibid. 2011: 200). In part, these fears were realised; Hassan (2020: 215-219) notes that Kibaki had undertaken some actions similar to his predecessors, such as granting benefits to Kikuyu areas, and were complicit in some alleged election rigging activities. Groups on both sides of this ethnic divide – Kikuyu and Kalenjin – have been connected to exacerbated tensions, with Anderson and Lochery (2008: 334) quoting senior Kalenjin members who claimed that a 'war' was to break out that would split Kenya, whilst senior politicians on both sides were linked to instances of violence perpetrated by paid thugs.

With the stakes escalated in the election, initial results that placed Raila in a commanding lead led many to assume that the election had been won by the ODM. Even though the electoral results of few provinces had been called, Raila was at this stage leading by nearly a million votes (Lynch, 2011: 202). This was later to be abruptly changed, as within a couple of days Kibaki was announced as

having won the election by the Electoral Commission of Kenya (ECK), and was sworn in the following day after the announcement (Ibid. 2011: 202; Branch, 2011: 270).

Such an abrupt change – and a quick swearing-in ceremony – prompted accusations of fraud from the ODM and other observers and voters (Dercon & Gutiérrez-Romero, 2012: 735). Violence preceding election day had already been used to try and disrupt the voting patterns of citizens in the Rift Valley, and so a belief that Kibaki's supporters and the state apparatus could commit widespread fraud in favour of the incumbent had some credence (Anderson & Lochery, 2008: 329-330).

Accusations of rigging were vocally made by those supporting the ODM, who drew upon concerns from international election observers of irregularities at polling stations. Their concerns were further driven by perceived bias in the ECK, where many senior staff were appointees of Kibaki (Branch, 2011: 271; Hassan, 2020). International observers concluded that it was likely that both sides committed some degree of vote rigging and voter intimidation, alongside unidentified assailants breaking into vote counting centres in Nairobi (Branch, 2011: 271; Dercon & Gutiérrez-Romero, 2012: 737). Again, the international ramifications for Kenya were pronounced; international observer groups, including those from the EU had been unable to observe the election in many constituencies, and suggested that the electoral process had suffered from several deficiencies, including criticism of the ECK and its conduct during the vote-counting process (Throup, 2008). This process – as seen in chapter 5 – again strained relations with Western donors. Both the US and EU held press conferences to the wider international community, highlighting that there was clear evidence that Kibaki's tally had been artificially increased, and that there were serious concerns that the elections had failed to adhere to international standards (Ibid. 2008: 302).

The violence following the election was severe. A report from the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) calculated that over 1200 people were killed, alongside the displacement of over 268,300 people (OHCHR, 2008: 8), alongside thousands more injured in the riots and protests that followed (Branch, 2011: 272). This event demonstrated some of the key

themes emergent in this chapter, and followed on from the earlier discussion about Kibaki's conduct during his first term. As noted, ethnic favouritism and corruption had been rife once again despite the democratisation process, and accusations had been levelled at Kibaki by ODM members that he wished to retain power following the election, as his predecessors had done throughout the twentieth century (Khadiagala, 2010: 76; Murunga & Nasong'o, 2006). As such, Kibaki's disputed victory legitimised these fears amongst those that believed them. Violence flared up across many parts of Kenya and throughout the Rift Valley, occurring along ethnic lines, particularly in areas in which ODM supporters outnumbered those supporting Kibaki (Anderson & Lochery, 2008; Branch, 2011: 271). Violence was tied to perceived ethnic identity and the ethnically driven nature of Kenyan politics (Wolf, 2013: 145). Supporters of Kibaki were assumed to be Kikuyu, and much of the violence in the Rift Valley was targeted at those deemed to be 'outsiders' by Kalenjin militia groups (Branch, 2011: 273). Grievances over selective land policies and favourable benefits given to Kenyans due to their ethnicity by past authoritarian leaders – and a perception that Kibaki's disputed victory represented the latest culmination of these policies – drove violent acts to be committed against anybody perceived as having benefitted in the past. Homes built upon land granted to Kikuyu settlers in the Rift Valley were burned down, whilst those who had settled in areas and were perceived as outsiders by the dominant populace were forced out (Anderson & Lochery, 2008: 336-338).

As Lynch (2011: 210-211) notes, ethnicity has historically been used by political elites to create and reinforce hierarchies of dominance and to shore up support amongst the small groups of elites who made up the leadership around Kenyatta, Moi, and Kibaki, whilst also fostering a class system supporting those best able to benefit from the exclusionary practices of authoritarian leaders. Due to the need to benefit those supportive of the Kenyatta government, many Kikuyu were offered land in the Rift Valley, pushing many Kalenjin peasantry off their territory, which exacerbated existing discriminatory practices of forcible land acquisition that Anderson and Lochery (2008: 337) note had already been undertaken under colonial rule. The contestation and accusations of rigging that

surrounding Kibaki's electoral win were seen as merely a further demonstration of the exclusionary practices of past leaders, emphasising ethnic cleavages between who would and would not benefit from political representation (Ibid. 2008; Branch, 2011: 271; Lynch, 2011: 210-211).

Domestic issues and challenges facing Uhuru Kenyatta's government

The ramifications of this violence led to several issues with the 2013 election of Uhuru Kenyatta and his deputy William Ruto, which were related to the issues of their attempted prosecution by the International Criminal Court (ICC) due to their alleged role in the electoral violence, and the political machinations that both figures used to bolster their support during the electoral period. More is said on this topic within chapter 5, particularly pertaining to how they combated the ICC through their connections with external supporters, but within this chapter it is worthwhile briefly surmising the domestic situation.

With Kibaki legally unable to stand for a third term as president, both Uhuru Kenyatta – son of Jomo Kenyatta – and Ruto sought to stand, again against Raila Odinga, who had served as Kibaki's deputy in an internationally mediated power sharing agreement (Lynch & Zgonec-Rozej, 2013). Mueller (2013: 26) highlights that the alliance between Kenyatta and Ruto was pragmatically linked to accusations that both had been involved in instigating violence around the 2007 election; Kenyatta on the Kikuyu side, and Ruto on the Kalenjin side. This matter had been referred to the ICC well before the 2013 election, however due to the long process of evidence gathering, formal announcement of those to be prosecuted did not arrive until 2010 (Lynch & Zgonec-Rozej, 2013). Furthermore, the Kenyan government itself stalled prosecution efforts to protect those charged with crimes who were favourable to Kibaki's government, such as Kenyatta (Lynch, 2015).

Cheeseman et al. (2014) highlight that the partnership between Kenyatta and Ruto in the 2013 election resulted in a reduction in violence and the divisive ethnic politics that had characterised the 2007 electoral period. The ICC prosecution, as previously stated, brought two prominent figures from the Kikuyu and Kalenjin groups together to contest the election, thus lessening the potential

for violence and instability arising from the two warring groups. Advances in institutional capacity also played a role; following the 2007-8 violence, efforts to reform electoral institutions in pursuit of a desire for peace led to a delegitimisation of claims of electoral malpractice (Ibid. 2014: 4). Although issues remained with some of the vote-counting technology used in the election – and some observers raised doubts about the veracity of the results – accusations raised by Raila that the election was rigged were dismissed by the Kenyan Supreme Court, and had little effect on public perceptions of the electoral process, unlike the prior election (Lynch, 2015). Kenyatta and Ruto’s party – the Jubilee party – portrayed the ICC and its attempts to prosecute in neo-colonial terms; the ICC was simply the latest iteration of a Western-led organisation that was seeking to violate the sovereignty of the state, and that its evidence for prosecution was biased and flimsily put together (Ibid. 2015: 186). Jubilee also focussed on a narrative of peace and reconciliation following the violence of 2007-8, framing Kenyatta and Ruto not just as leaders who could decisively combat neo-colonial efforts to violate Kenya’s sovereignty, but who could also unite Kenyans who had previously committed violence against each other (Lynch, 2015: 187).

For the purposes of this thesis, the change in foreign policy and rhetoric against Western neo-colonialism are important to note, and further detail will be contained in chapter 5. A need to challenge the ICC prosecutions – and situate Kenyatta and Ruto as peacemakers rather than dividing Kenyans – led to a change in how Kenya’s foreign policy was articulated (Shilaho, 2016).

As this chapter has shown, the invocation of ethnic groups for political means has been a source of strength and instability for authoritarian and later democratic leaders of Kenya. Kenya does not represent a case where institutions and state apparatus are likely to collapse; whilst the domestic side of this chapter has demonstrated some weaknesses and a reliance upon colonial forms of control to maintain authoritarian leadership (Branch & Cheeseman, 2009), a deferral to institutions, and the utilisation of constitutional changes to maintain power throughout the authoritarian rule of Jomo Kenyatta is evidence that such institutions are robust enough to be widely respected (Bedasso,

2015). In contrast, the prior Ethiopian case has demonstrated that in multiple governments, a widespread respect of and deference to the legitimacy of institutions was not present. Indeed, as chapter 2 demonstrated, authoritarian rulers in Ethiopia instead often resorted to more repressive measures to maintain control, versus the constitutionally-aligned, legalistic approach taken in Kenya. Institutional strength to maintain control was often sidelined in favour of centralised control under individual leaders such as Selassie and Mengistu, resulting in – as seen – frequent bouts of political instability, coups, and civil conflicts.

Indeed, although faith in democracy and the party system of Kenya was damaged by the events of 2007-8, and the further accusations of electoral malpractice in 2013 (Cheeseman et al. 2014: 3; Dercon & Gutiérrez-Romero, 2012: 740-741), chapter 5 will demonstrate that core aspects of Kenya's system of governance and institutions were invoked through Kenyatta's tenure, including its ability to mediate conflicts across the region, and its traditional standing as a 'stable' friend of Western powers in the region (Mabera, 2016; Shilaho, 2016).

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the domestic development of authoritarianism in Kenya, and challenges that each government has faced in manifesting its rule and maintaining stability. This chapter has demonstrated that Kenyan authoritarianism has faced issues of stability, legitimisation, and elite rivalry throughout the rules of Jomo Kenyatta and Daniel arap Moi. Despite the process of democratisation that occurred under the leadership of Mwai Kibaki, the legacies of ethnic division and selective benefits provided to small sections of the leadership continued to present challenging issues of stability for the Kenyan leadership – and as seen in the forthcoming chapter – result in a further need for assistance from autocratic supporters as Kenyan elites seeks out assistance to solidify its rule and enact increasingly authoritarian mechanisms of control.

By outlining the domestic challenges facing Kenyan elites, the work here builds upon the discussions in prior chapters on how authoritarianism is maintained through nuanced approaches to

legitimisation, repression, and co-optation. The support gained from external actors seeks to build upon these three pillars and further resolve issues of stability present in the makeup of Kenyan authoritarianism, alongside providing support for the emergent democratic governments of Kibaki and Uhuru Kenyatta in providing assistance to quell disquiet and protests over the more authoritarian tendencies of their governments, such as the selective acquisition of resources and enrichment that their governments provide to select elites and ethnic groups.

This chapter has furthermore demonstrated the intricate connection between domestic pressures and opportunities, and the foreign policy that such governments pursue. The governments of Kenyatta, Moi, Kibaki, and Uhuru Kenyatta have all faced their own domestic and international challenges that have impacted upon their chosen foreign policy direction. The following chapter will demonstrate that such challenges, constraints, and opportunities have impacted upon the framework of agency-leveraging strategies. These strategies have also used to prioritise the acquisition of support designed to offset some of these domestic challenges. The next chapter, as with the Ethiopian case before it, will focus on the impact of these domestic challenges and factors on the agency-leveraging capabilities of Kenyan governments with external autocratic supporters.

Chapter 5: The history of autocratic support for Kenya, 1963-2018

Having discussed in depth the connections between domestic and foreign policies in Ethiopia in chapters 2 and 3 – and how governments in the state have executed various agency-leveraging strategies to seek out autocratic support from abroad – this chapter completes the Kenyan case by expanding upon the foreign policy moves of governments in the state from independence in 1963, until 2018.

As seen in chapter 4, Kenyan governments have faced substantive challenges to their authority, the territorial integrity of the state they ruled, and domestic constraints over their ability to rule. Jomo Kenyatta's and Daniel arap Moi's governments faced challenges of coups and incursions on Kenya's territorial integrity during their respective tenures, alongside domestic constraints and challenges deriving from the processes of ethnic favouritism and selective benefits that were given to elites to maintain a significant power base, a process seen in both Ethiopia and other authoritarian governments across the non-Western world (Clapham, 2017; Lefort, 2007).

However, this process of solidifying power also brought about issues with the ruling party KANU acting as a legislative barrier for the government to carry out its own policies uninhibited. The governments of Kibaki and Uhuru Kenyatta also experienced several domestic challenges, including the collapse of Kibaki's democratic coalition, and electoral violence, particularly during the 2007-8 electoral period.

The final section of this chapter concerns challenges that Uhuru Kenyatta faced from the beginning of his tenure in 2013, until 2018. Uhuru Kenyatta, and his deputy president William Ruto faced dogged accusations of inciting violence during the earlier 2007-2008 electoral period, which culminated in investigations by the ICC, alongside condemnation and diplomatic pressure from Western democratic states. This period of crisis resulted in a reframing of how autocratic support was sought out by Kenyatta's government. Criticism by Western donors led to a shift in Kenyan foreign policy, with a propensity to instead seek out support from China, Russia, and other non-

Western actors, several of which had little desire to promote democracy and the pursuit of international justice against the Kenyan leadership through the ICC. Key strategies – such as the use of ‘aligning aims and interests’ – were used throughout the rules of all key governments in Kenya. Akin to the Ethiopian case, stability narratives became a key component of the agency-leveraging strategies when governments faced periods of domestic or international crisis, such as the increasing pressure for multiparty electoral politics during the latter years of Moi’s rule, and the electoral violence during Kibaki’s rule.

However, what will be highlighted as a key difference between the Kenyan and Ethiopian cases is the ability for earlier Kenyan governments – those of Jomo Kenyatta, and the first half of Moi’s rule – to reshape narratives with external actors. Rather than being reliant upon stability narratives, these periods of Kenyan governance demonstrate a substantial effort to engage in historical linkages with external actors (most prominently, the UK) alongside emphasising the positive reasons why external actors should support the ruling government, such as the legitimate reasons behind Kenyatta and Moi’s rule, rather than purely aligning to existing aims and interests held by external actors. As noted in the thesis introduction, it is not as simplistic as the Kenyatta and Moi governments consistently using strategies from the ‘reshaping the narrative’ constellation; indeed, governments in the Kenyan and Ethiopian cases have used several strategies from both constellations.

The choice governments make in which agency-leveraging strategies to use is dictated by the context in which governments find themselves in, and the domestic challenges each government’s leadership finds itself facing when seeking out appropriate actors and forms of autocratic support. In addition, regional and international issues and challenges also have a profound effect upon the strategies that governments use to seek out autocratic support. The Kenyatta and Moi governments are argued to have successfully focussed on their legitimate right to rule, such as Kenyatta’s ‘father figure’ narrative, which proved persuasive in gaining support from external actors. This chapter

engages with the previous chapter on the domestic challenges of authoritarianism and intra-elite competition to illustrate the corresponding foreign policy changes seen in this chapter.

Kenyatta's government and Western actors

As mentioned in chapter 4, the initial ascension to power of Kenyatta and KANU was not secured in the years leading up to independence. British colonial authorities aimed to destabilise KANU as a political force, believing that KANU's aim of centralised control of the state would be detrimental to British interests, as opposed to the decentralised, regionalist approach advocated by KADU. British forces were also fearful that Kenyatta was a Mau Mau leader – despite a lack of evidence – and that he would be an influential force in post-independence politics. Although Kenyatta had not been a founding member of the party, he had risen to prominence and become a popular figure both within the party and in wider Kenyan society (Angelo, 2019: 97). Kenyatta's alleged involvement in many of the most violent acts of the rebellion had led British administrators and white settlers in Kenya to cast him as one of the biggest threats to their position in Kenya (Kyle, 1997: 43).

Furthermore, KANU's position during the pre-independence Lancaster House conferences had been fiery and concerning for the British colonial administration; KANU negotiators sought to undertake a quick and substantive break with the colonial period, and furthermore clashed with the British on matters concerning land settlements for white settlers (Angelo, 2019: 98-99). KANU, being composed primarily of powerful Kikuyu elites, was a threat to the cohesion of Kenya, and fears were rife amongst the British that KANU would then use their substantive power and popularity in Kenya at the time to gain power at independence, before excluding the British and forcibly removing white settlers (Kyle, 1997: 42).

Whilst prominent figures in British politics feared the future of British influence in Kenya if Kenyatta and KANU were to gain power and influence. Kyle (1997: 42) notes that the office of British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan described such an eventuality as something akin to a disaster for the decolonisation process. British officials charge of negotiating a solution to the white settler issue

allegedly considered assassinating Kenyatta and other prominent KANU members due to the perception that due to KANU dominance, this issue was only going to result in settler expulsion (Attwood, 1967: 160).

However, the British quickly became more amenable to Kenyatta and KANU. Despite fears about Kenyatta's potential for radical politics, it became apparent that Kenyatta represented a more moderate strand of politics, being more amenable towards British fears of white settlers being removed from their lands (as opposed to the previous KANU policy of aggressively opposing the continued ownership of land by white settlers). Angelo (2019: 95-114) provides more substantial detail on how Kenyatta's approach to land acquisition following independence was well-positioned in how it allayed the fears of colonial authorities. Although Kenyatta was often silent on the thorny issues of post-independence leadership despite being in a prominent position of power, he did occasionally present moderate opinions publicly not only on the land settlement issue, but also on economics and the relationship Kenya under him would have with Western powers.

Despite the domestic crises that dogged Jomo Kenyatta's presidency, several aspects of the agency exercising framework were utilised by the Kenyan leadership to shape their foreign policy and relations with Western external actors. These included 'aligning aims and interests', projecting the government as strong, but also 'establishing government coherence and legitimacy' calling back to the process through which Kenyatta had come to rule, and how his authority resulted in a stable and economically sound government. Importantly, some of these strategies – such as emphasising the strength of KANU in providing leadership – did not reflect the realities of how the government was undergoing issues surrounding the divisions amongst the elite, and regular revisions and defeats of legislation in parliament.

Public statements by prominent KANU members emphasising the stability of the party, and the necessity therefore to support the party emerged early in the government's life, buoyed by the popularity of KANU versus other political contenders such as KADU. As noted in the prior chapter,

KANU had become the most popular political party following Kenyan independence, driven by several factors including the dominance of the Kikuyu ethnic group in Kenya (with whom Kenyatta originated from), and Kenyatta's popularity as a respected freedom fighter and former prisoner of the Mau Mau rebellion under British colonial rule.

This popularity was translated into a compelling narrative for KANU to use in discussions with Western powers. As seen, there was initial British reluctance to accept KANU leadership of Kenya, and at times outright fears that Kenyan independence would lead to chaos and instability alongside a loss of British influence. However, KANU's ascension to power was relatively stable and faced little insurrection or violence. Political disagreements were rife, but crucially these did not translate into violence or destabilisation of the state.

Whilst this series of events represented a much better picture of Kenyan political stability than perhaps the British administration had anticipated, the continued political instability within KANU – and the rivalry between the political elites of Mboya and Odinga – was known about by British and other Western governments. British commentators, including diplomats based in Kenya were regularly dispatching notes on the precarity of the KANU government, especially during the contestation with KADU, the departure of Odinga from the government, and the emergence of the KPU in opposition to KANU (TNA, FCO 31/209; FCO 31/3; FCO 31/356). In each of these, diplomats focus in on the stability of the government, often contradicting the projection KANU officials or Kenyatta made of the government's strength. Mboya's political ambitions and the turmoil that this created in KANU, especially during Kenyatta's periods of ill health towards the end of his life, were particularly picked up upon by British Foreign Office officials (TNA, FCO 31/356: 6-7). Discussions on KANU's approach to rigging elections also considered whether the need to rig ballots was driven from a position of weakness, rather than strength, especially towards the end of Kenyatta's rule.

British officials acknowledged that 'Daniel arap Moi [...] is probably the most acceptable non-Kikuyu candidate for President in succession to Kenyatta [...] however, the internal squabbling over control

of KANU [...] may break down party unity to such an extent that only a Kikuyu candidate would receive sufficient support [...] as things stand at present the sudden death of Kenyatta could lead to a very tense 90 days' (TNA, FCO 31/209).

To counter this, Kenyatta's government projected stability through various mechanisms. For one, the party system and regular elections held under Kenyatta (and future leaders) allowed Kenyatta to publicly reaffirm the stability of his government and its appropriateness for Western supporters to engage with. In KANU manifestos, the party is represented as a solid and stable political entity that can maintain law and order, and a stable state with territorial integrity (KANU, 1963). Whilst evidently manifestos are designed primarily to speak to a domestic audience, early manifestos, especially during the independence and transitional political period from British rule, also sought to project political legitimacy through foreign policy. Meng (2021: 527) argues that manifestos can be effectively used to project the desired aims and outcomes of a government both domestically, and to an international audience.

Within speeches, Kenyatta blended several aspects of agency-leveraging to good effect. Kenyatta's 1966 Madaraka Day (a Kenyan national holiday to signify the date Kenyans attained self-rule) speech to both Kenyans and foreign dignitaries Kenyatta opens by focussing on the strength of the security that KANU has provided, alongside its commitment to ending tribal politics. Under KANU's rule, '[Kenyans] have a nation now in which our people can move in safety. No one is condemned to live in fear. There is no discrimination or privilege; and the strong may not oppress the weak' (KNA, GEN/254/6

Kenyatta furthermore argues against what he describes as the policy of 'giv[ing] everything free to the people', arguing that it is 'a cowardly way of trying to win popularity [...] those who speak about getting everything for nothing must mean that I should call out the army and the police to seize by force a lot of land [...] this would mean utter chaos, total injustice, and would lead to the destruction of the state' (Ibid.).

Such comments, as mentioned earlier in the thesis can be interpreted as speaking to and allaying the fears of British politicians who felt that Kenyatta and KANU may take Kenya down a socialist path or seek to violently redistribute land, but also as a direct rebuke to the policies of Odinga, as mentioned in the previous chapter.

Kenyatta further entrenched these ideals by directly appealing to Western diplomats and officials in speeches and private conversations. Archival evidence of Kenyatta's speeches – including those where he was alerted by civil servants that 'this gathering consists of professional analysts [and that] every word [Kenyatta would say] will be carefully analysed, dissected and weighed' (KNA, KA/GEN/254/19) – demonstrate that Kenyatta was aiming to display KANU's ability to maintain stability and to be diplomatically accepting of Western external actors. In these speeches, Kenyatta emphasises that KANU will continue to pursue the moderate economic and political process of 'African Socialism' – as established by Mboya and discussed in chapter 4 – and emphasises a frequent point raised in the KANU manifestos; that Kenya would not involve itself in the intrigues of Cold War politics and taking sides.

Deleted excerpts of these planned speeches further developed Kenyatta's viewing of the Cold War situation. Kenyatta was planning to say;

'Non-alignment is sometimes described as positive, because this is in fact its theme [...] Our function, under the term of African Socialism, must be to seek to draw the countries of the world together, and not fan the flames of those rivalries which have increasingly driven nations and people apart.'

This excerpt demonstrates Kenyatta's thinking on this subject, and despite cutting this part of the speech out, Kenyatta did still highlight and vocalise that Kenya 'took no sides, and [would not] be dragged into intrigues between rival groups and power-blocs. This is our position on the world stage.'

Therefore, Kenya was pitched as above the political disagreements of East and West, and instead focussed upon achieving long-term political stability both within and beyond the continent (KNA, KA/GEN/254/19-21).

Whilst it must be acknowledged that Kenyatta's speeches are of course part of a political theatre designed to exemplify the government and speak to their desired audience – in this latter case, to a diplomatic corps luncheon – the points made in this speech and elsewhere achieve a powerful goal of demonstrating government continuity and moderacy. As seen from later documents on the British and American sides, Kenyatta's initial overtures towards promoting stability and moderacy were seen favourably, and led to the development of deeper ties between Kenya and the West, alongside concrete instances of support, such as British military assistance for Kenyatta early on in his tenure, when the threat of a coup seemed probable (Cullen, 2017).

From the American side, support for Kenyatta's government increased as his tenure went on, with requests for military assistance granted in substantial amounts in the 1970s (FRUS E-6/178; E-6/195), alongside bilateral support to extend and develop existing ties in education and development assistance (Attwood, 1967: 162).

Kenya's economic prosperity during the early years of Jomo Kenyatta's rule was also an important agency-leveraging point for the government. Kenya experienced several years of high GDP growth alongside following pro-capitalist economic policies, with an average 7.1 percent level of annual growth between the years of 1968-77 (Ndulu & Mutalemwa, cited in Jerven, 2011: 3). In contrast, other states that followed more socialist economic policies, such as Tanzania, achieved less impressive growth records (Barkan, 1994). Whilst Jerven (2011) has revisited the growth record of Kenya during Jomo Kenyatta's leadership and questioned the simplistic narrative of a miraculous growth record for Kenya versus other similar post-independence African states, it is important here to note that both members of Kenya's government and external actors utilised this initial pattern of growth and prosperity as an agency-leveraging mechanism; a process previously identified within

the framework as 'demonstrating success'. Indeed, Kenyan Attorney General during Kenyatta's leadership, Charles Njonjo, regularly emphasised Kenya's prosperity as a marker of Kenya's development beyond other East African states (Nyawira, 2008). Kenyatta himself highlighted Kenya's prosperity relative to other post-independence states as a point to further legitimise his rule, and highlight KANU's continued rule as being for the benefit of the entire Kenyan populace (KNA, KA/GEN/254/22; MAC/OAU/2/2). In discussions with other external actors such as the US, Kenya's prosperity was again seen as a key reason for support; Foreign Minister Waiyaki highlighted that Kenya had maintained a progressive and stable economic policy since independence – not just rejecting socialism as an economic policy but crucially maintaining an open economy for foreign investment (FRUS, E-6/177). As such, the demonstration of Kenya's economic success interacted not only with the 'demonstrating success' strategy, but also coincided with the 'aligning aims and interests' approach.

In Kenyatta's case, it is argued that the government can overcome preconceived notions and demonstrate key reasons why they are worthy of support over other potential challengers. The various mechanisms of exercising agency and modifying supporter expectations are layered and nuanced. For one, Kenyatta's demonstration of government stability and moderation has been well-noted, but external observers were aware of the instability of the government itself. In 1968, US Vice President Hubert Humphrey toured Kenya and other African states and clearly outlined the point that he found the structure of political power;

'complex [...] personality is also important, especially in the case of Jomo Kenyatta [...] yet this imposing figure does not stop political manoeuvring, and the in-fighting [between political elites] is already active in anticipation of the removal some day of Kenyatta from the political scene.' (FRUS, XXIV/231).

In Humphrey's view, the Kenyan political elite were 'less able' and that Kenya was only 'relatively well governed because its working cabinet includes well-trained economists, experienced politicians, and [...] nationalists. It retains British personnel in certain key jobs.' (Ibid.).

This image of tribalistic in-fighting permeated the view not only of Humphrey and American onlookers, but was also highlighted by the British, who noted that during health scares Kenyatta experienced in the late 1960s and early 1970s, KANU elites had quickly sought to establish their position as potential leadership successors, alongside seeking to oust Moi (TNA, FCO 31/209).

Secondly, Kenyatta's image as a 'father' figure to post-independence Kenya also brought with it a sense of moderacy and stability in a volatile region. This line of thinking was echoed by Humphrey, who noted that Kenya was 'an object of envy [with] a powerful position in Africa'. Whilst noting that there was a 'real danger that stability [...] rests on a remarkable collaboration between an aging patriarch and an aggressive elite', Humphrey argued that the US 'should continue to expand our assistance where there is either a [...] bilateral gain to be made, or where [...] emerging regional cooperation can be strengthened' (FRUS XXIV/231).

In part, Kenyatta's ability was pragmatic; he maintained a distance from the elite fighting between Mboya and Odinga, and was ruthless in removing threats to power such as KADU and later the KPU. British observers noted this and saw it as a testament to Kenyan stability and noted that the removal of opposition had served to strengthen the party (TNA, FCO 31/1191; FCO 31/209). Such was the belief in the moderacy of Kenyatta as a leader that US diplomats believed that any successor to Kenyatta, Moi or otherwise, would take the country in a more leftwards political direction and potentially threaten US interests (FRUS, E-6/195). Whilst investment was not seen as unduly threatened by Kenyatta's succession, comments such as this demonstrate the faith that US figures had in Kenyatta as a sound and dependable ally.

Kenyatta's government and non-Western actors

Whilst not as extensive as the relationship between Kenyatta's government and Western powers, certain tenets of Kenyatta's approach towards non-Western support – that of the Soviet Union and China – demonstrate more approaches the government took from the agency-leveraging framework in chapter 1, as well as demonstrating more commonly noted approaches African states have made to exercise agency, such as the 'balancing' approach of seeking out Western and non-Western support (Brown & Harman, 2013). What will be noted however is that Kenyatta's government – despite initially seeking out support from China and the Soviet Union – quickly severed any substantial ties to both states. Ideological ties to socialism were not forthcoming amongst Kenyatta and the senior members of KANU, whilst the most significant challenger to the government, Oginga Odinga, was strongly affiliated with both the Soviet Union and China, and so both states represented a threat.

Initial relations between Kenyatta's government and those in the Soviet Union and China were positive. Aid from both states was provided soon after independence, focussed on providing non-military support. Attwood (1967: 173) notes that Kenyan Vice-President Murumbi told him that the Soviets had provided a package of support including a hospital, technical radio equipment, factories, and education programmes. The Chinese meanwhile provided financial support through interest-free loans, and quickly established diplomatic relations with Kenya by early 1964 (Chege, 2008: 20). The willingness at first by the Soviet Union and China to co-operate with Kenya has been attributed to the efforts of the left-wing of KANU under Odinga; projects such as the Soviet supported hospital were attributed in public to Odinga and his efforts in securing assistance from the Soviet Union (Prince, 2020). Similarly in the Chinese case, Odinga made regular overtures and visits to China, heading regular ministerial delegations (Yuzhou Sun, 2020: 42).

The positive relationship between Kenyatta, China, and the Soviet Union was short-lived. Within a decade, Kenyan relations with both states had soured, resulting in at its worst point public

demonstrations by Chinese Revolutionary Guards in Nairobi, counter-demonstrations by KANU supporters outside the Chinese embassy in Nairobi, and an expulsion of Kenyan and Chinese ambassadors in their respective countries in 1967, resulting in no diplomatic relations between the two until 1980 (Chege, 2008: 22).

Relations with the Soviet Union did not fare much better. Although Soviet infrastructural projects such as the Kisumu hospital were finished, though they were tied to the domestic rivalry between Kenyatta and Odinga, and so future projects or further developments stemming from these initial offers of support were not forthcoming (Prince, 2020). Whilst relations between the two states were not as vitriolic as that between Kenyatta and Mao-era China, towards the latter years of Kenyatta's rule and into the Moi era, Soviet support for Somalia and the rising irredentist Shifta movement that fought against Kenya, and which Kenyan officials suspected were supported directly by the Somalian government, resulted in increased tensions (Makinda, 1982). Akin to Haile Selassie's mistrust of the Soviets seen in chapters 2 and 3, Kenyan mistrust of the Soviets was driven not just by the closeness between Odinga and the Soviet Union – as will be discussed shortly – but by the perceived support the Soviets gave to Somali incursions into Kenyan territory². Indeed, concerns about the threat of a Soviet-backed Somali invasion into Kenya were substantive enough to invoke a British promise of military assistance if such an eventuality were to happen (Branch, 2011: 39; Okumu, 1979: 251).

The souring of relations with both China and the Soviet Union came about primarily due to domestic strains between Kenyatta and Odinga (Chege, 2008: 21). Although there is a much more detailed and nuanced story as to Odinga's connections to Communist and socialist politics – and the extent to which he was ideologically connected to Communism³ – Cullen (2018: 40) rightly notes that Odinga's visible support for greater ties with the Soviet Union and China meant that Kenyan foreign policy

² Interview with Kenyan foreign policy advisor, 17th March 2022

³ See Attwood, 1967: viii; Cullen, 2018; Speich, 2009; Yuzhou Sun, 2020 for deeper discussions on Odinga's ideological or practical ties to Communism

with these states invariably became tied to Odinga, and thus entangled in the power struggle Odinga had with Kenyatta.

The scale of potential Soviet and Chinese support for Odinga to take power was noted by British sources, who in discussions with Bruce Mackenzie, at the time an advisor to Kenyatta ascertained that 'the [Kenyan] government are extremely worried about the support which [...] Odinga would enjoy if he got more funds [...] their information was that Odinga might be getting funds up to about £30,000 in instalments [...] with such funds he could win a lot of support'

Furthermore, Mackenzie says that the Kenyan government has been 'hounding [...] Odinga' who had been 'seeking contact with Tanzanian politicians inimical to Kenyatta or with Communist bloc diplomats' whilst on trips to Dar es Salaam, which naturally concerned the Kenyan government and fuelled further speculation that Odinga sought to overthrow Kenyatta with the help of socialist-leaning Tanzanians, or Russian or Chinese supporters (TNA, FCO 31/209)

However, as Odinga was sidelined, Chinese efforts only served to further isolate more conservative members of the Kenyan leadership, such as Kenyatta and Mboya. Mboya had simultaneously been meeting with American officials, developing closer ties in fields such as education and technical assistance (Goldsworthy, 1982b: 235). Similarly, Charles Njonjo was a close supporter of Britain, maintaining British influence in the actions of the KANU government (Branch, 2011: 40).

Vice-President Murumbi was taken aback by the hostile and racist nature of Chinese officials during an early meeting (Yuzhou Sun, 2020: 44-45), whilst Chinese Foreign Minister Zhou Enlai's infamous statement that Africa was 'ripe for revolution' in 1965 also presented problems in connecting with Kenyatta's government, as it did with Haile Selassie's government in Ethiopia (Gertzel, 1970: 68).

Whilst Kenyan officials noted that Zhou's comments should not have applied to Kenya (being a post-colonial state), these comments came at a time when Kenyatta was most wary of a potential coup, and as such Zhou's comments were viewed as a threat (Ibid. 1970: 69; Yuzhou Sun, 2020: 49).

As noted in the previous chapter, in the context of the battle for power within KANU, the risk of Chinese or Russian intervention became increasingly concerning to Kenyatta. Shipments of Russian arms were sent to Kenya in 1965, ostensibly as a gift for Kenyatta, though the Kenyan leadership believed that they were destined to be used in a coup attempt by Odinga (Arnold, 1974: 163; TNA, DO 213/65). Chinese and Soviet support had led to a scholarship programme being established for Kenyan students to be sent across Eastern Europe and China, in a rivalry to Mboya's American scholarship programme (Branch, 2011: 41). Yet Kenyan officials within Kenyatta's conservative faction became increasingly concerned with rumours that Kenyan students were receiving military, rather than academic training, and that Odinga was providing students with such training not only to gain patronage and a loyal base of support amongst younger Kenyans, but that Kenyans trained in military tactics and Communist political thought represented an existential threat to KANU. As such the ties with the Soviet Union and China deteriorated further, as the institute was shut down and Odinga politically isolated (Arnold, 1974: 163).

This discussion illustrates that relations between Kenyatta's government, the Soviet Union, and China were short-lived and fraught with tensions based upon Odinga's role in domestic politics. However, this does not mean that agency-leveraging measures from the framework were not utilised by Kenyatta's government to endear Kenya to both states. As mentioned, Kenyatta's government embarked upon a blitz of foreign policy delegations to both Western and non-Western states, designed both to broaden their potential list of foreign partners, and also reinforce a set criteria of foreign policy pillars. The benefits of engaging with Kenya that Kenyan ambassadors and delegations emphasised within negotiations with China and the Soviet Union did not align with those projected to Western actors as mentioned prior; indeed, from the limited engagement Kenyan negotiators had with Soviet and Chinese ministers, different priorities emerged.

For one, Kenya's economic prowess was not an asset where these states were concerned; whilst this played a substantial role in demonstrating the importance and stability of Kenyatta's government to

Western actors, the capitalist nature of Kenyan economics, and the desire to steady the course of Kenyan politics rather than develop a more socialist economic and political model was not an endearing point – even more prominently for the Chinese, who during the first independence years were actively pursuing further radical politics, and declared that states that pursued capitalist or moderate politics (including Kenya, following the diplomatic split with China) were ‘reactionary’ and undeserving of support (Chege, 2008: 21; Lovell, 2019: 140-141). Yet aspects of Maoist politics that China pursued – and rhetoric from the Soviet Union – were echoed and justified through Kenyan experiences.

Kenya’s experience under imperial rule – and the violent struggle that Kenyatta endured towards the end of colonialism – was one relevant aspect of Kenyan history and politics used to project a more favourable image during the immediate post-independence years. As mentioned in chapter 1, historical connections have been used as a powerful agency-leveraging tool, and Kenyan officials recognised this. Despite Kenyatta publicly retorting against Chinese comments on revolution and the threats of coups, his government remained pragmatic for the first few years of independence. Kenyatta still projected the image of non-alignment between East and West, despite at times overt favouritism of capitalism and Western engagement (Attwood, 1967: 246-249). KANU manifestos, alongside speeches and discussions with foreign actors all emphasise a continuing desire to maintain impartiality in Cold War affairs, and to pursue a process of non-alignment (KANU, 1963; TNA, FCO 31/593). Non-alignment was a frequently used and simplistic tool for African governments, designed to hedge their opportunities and diplomatic connections with both East and West. Kenyan efforts in this regard were no different, though they also served to be used as a political tool to ensure continued support from China and the Soviet Union, even when relations between these states deteriorated.

Assessing Jomo Kenyatta's agency-leveraging strategies

This discussion has demonstrated that Kenyatta's government utilised a wide variety of agency-leveraging strategies. Their capability in doing so rests upon favourable domestic and international contexts, alongside Kenyatta's ability to project himself as a moderate, legitimate ruler for Kenya.

With the US and UK, Kenyatta's government demonstrably engaged not just with familiar narratives of stability and security issues as seen in multiple Ethiopian examples, but that Kenyatta exuded authority as a moderate political force who was willing to co-operate with the UK and a variety of other actors.

Kenyatta's government did engage in some substantive attempts at 'aligning aims and interests' as an agency-leveraging strategy with Western donors. Kenyatta's approach to rule – his rejection of socialist economics and politics, and his ability to provide stable leadership in the post-independence period – naturally endeared him to Western supporters, and aligned the Kenyatta government with the existing Cold War-era aims of external actors. Yet further emphasis was placed on additional agency-leveraging mechanisms; the impressive economic status of Kenya during Kenyatta's rule – as noted in this and the previous chapter – became an important further agency-leveraging mechanism that, whilst demonstrating political stability, was not an overt alignment with Western interests and indeed should be classified under the 'demonstrating success' strategy of the framework.

This discussion has further demonstrated some key differences with the focus on security and stability that dominated governments in the Ethiopian case, and highlight that Kenyatta's foreign policy approach focussed more on the 'reshaping the narrative' approach to agency-leveraging strategies. This was driven by several factors, including the non-alignment of Kenyatta's government in foreign affairs, Kenyatta's willingness to engage with the Soviet Union and China (in the immediate post-independence years) and his withdrawal from overt political infighting occurring between socialist and conservative factions of KANU all assisted in the widening of the potential agency-leveraging strategies his government used.

As seen, Kenyatta's refusal to take sides in the Cold War did not translate fully from rhetoric to reality; the government remained heavily aligned with Western donors. Yet it operated as a way in which Kenyatta's government could seek out support; this discussion has noted that Kenyatta's personal legacy as an anti-colonial figure was utilised to build relations with China and the Soviet Union and receive autocratic support, in an example of the 'mobilising historical linkages' strategy from the framework.

It is argued therefore that Kenyatta's government displayed elements of the 'reshaping the narrative' constellation; his government did not just align with predominant interests held by external actors to gain support and assistance, but crucially leveraged Kenyatta's personal past and the economic prosperity of Kenya to further the argument for assistance from Western and non-Western sources.

Moi's government and Western actors

Having explored Kenyatta's government, the development of relations between the government of Daniel arap Moi and Western states demonstrates some further examples of aspects of the agency-leveraging framework being utilised. Again, it is emphasised that domestic issues and the challenges of legitimisation and repression undertaken by Moi's government play a substantive role in which agency-leveraging tools could be used, and their effectiveness when deployed. Whilst at the beginning of Moi's rule a wide variety of strategies were in use, such as the continued deployment of the 'aligning aims and interests' and 'demonstrating success' strategies, a combination of domestic and international factors limited the viability of several agency-leveraging strategies. In Moi's case, an economic slowdown, domestic challenges to his government, and increased political pressure for reform from Western donors led to an increasing reliance upon repressive measures, requests for military support from foreign actors, and paradoxically an increase in emphasis upon stability narratives in foreign policy discussions.

The first point to mention in Moi's foreign policy connects back to the economic prosperity experiences under Kenyatta's rule. As a mainstay of demonstrating stability in the KANU government under Kenyatta, the economic prosperity – and adjoined engagement the government had with conservative, capitalist economic models – had proved to be a powerful mechanism that solidified engagement between Kenya and Western powers. However, Kenya's early economic growth waned, driven by amongst other things the spike in oil prices and downturn of the global economy in the 1970s. As briefly mentioned earlier, plans to create an economic community between the East African states of Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda, collapsed due to political disagreement between the states, and the economic imbalance between Kenyan prosperity and Ugandan and Tanzanian underdevelopment (Nyawira, 2008; Okumu, 1979: 251), alongside the latter two's desires to pursue socialist economic policies versus Kenya's conservative governance model (Mugomba, 1978).

Beyond this, further international issues undermined Kenyan economic growth in the latter years of Kenyatta's rule, and into Moi's tenure. As in the Ethiopian case, Kenya was affected by the global financial crisis in the 1970s, and the restriction of oil that followed the Iranian crisis in 1973.

Kenyatta's government faced a balance of payments problem in the 1970s with imports from Western actors, alongside debt arising from World Bank loans, alongside the impact of droughts depressing growth in the economy (Fahnbulleh, 2006: 41-42; Jerven, 2011: 18). Economic slowdown was noted as occurring late into Kenyatta's era (FCO 31/593; Jerven, 2011). Furthermore, Kenyan growth that typified the notion of 'Kenyan exceptionalism' during Kenyatta's early years was attributed to substantial foreign investment, particularly from Western actors, thus resulting in economic vulnerability when global slowdown of economies happened, as in the 1970s (Okumu, 1979: 248-249). In Moi's era, Kenyan parliamentary records detail the enormity of the economic hardship that these events took upon the state.

Then Minister for Finance, George Saitoti, established the scale of Kenya's budget issues, noting that infrastructural development projects started by Western actors were halted due to a lack of funds,

whilst the Moi government had requested that donors focus on smaller, more focussed projects that they could 100% fund, rather than providing partial funds to projects that the Kenyan government could not afford to complete (Kenya National Assembly Library, HAN/KEN/328/67: 709-710). World Bank projects, such as infrastructural development and clean water initiatives were explored and initiated, but Kenyan government officials deemed the charges and initial costs by the government itself to be too costly and so cancelled such projects (Ibid. HAN/KEN/2328/67: 641). This change in dynamics also led to the implementation of structural adjustment programmes in Kenya. Structural adjustment was unpopular amongst parliamentarians, for its effect on restricting the provision of public services, and the damage opening up the economy had on the survival of Kenyan-owned businesses and agriculture (Jerven, 2011: 3).

The scale of the economic issues facing Moi's government necessitated a change in agency-leveraging strategies. A focus on Kenya as a bastion of stability was instead reinforced throughout discussions between the government and Western states. Whilst as will be discussed the notion of Kenya as a strong and politically stable state was reinforced in some ways by the contrasting volatility seen across East Africa during Moi's tenure, this focus on stability was not always logically sound and rooted in the realities the government faced. Besides the economic volatility that led to challenges for authoritarian rule in Kenya and necessitated efforts to look beyond traditional donors for support, the government also faced a substantial coup attempt in 1982, alongside aforementioned issues of political infighting both following Moi's ascension to power, and throughout the earlier years of his reign.

Several contextual events converged during the 1980s and the height of Moi's rule to drive his government to focus more upon stability narratives as an agency-leveraging strategy. Soviet involvement in Somalia and then alternatively Ethiopia led to concerns surrounding the geopolitical situation in East Africa. Soviet efforts to increase their regional influence and gain geographical

positions of power suitable for further inroads into the Red Sea and Arabian Peninsula led to one of the most significant Cold War interventions into Africa (Kibreab, 2021: 10).

Following Kenyatta's death, the economic slowdown, and the volatile regional situation, Moi appealed to the US repeatedly using stability narratives and the 'aligning aims and interests' and 'demonstrating success' strategies. Moi is recorded as asking for military assistance and offering closer military ties with the US, based upon Kenya's prior reputation as a stable and capable state in a volatile region (Mabera, 2016). Moi argued that Kenya had focussed since independence upon maintaining peace and stability, whilst regional problems and tensions with neighbouring states had led to the unfortunate conclusions that Kenya must defend itself. Such narratives reflected well with the US during Moi's early years when the ramifications of the economic crisis had not yet hit; Moi was able to draw upon Kenya's nominally non-aligned stance, and its focus on economic prosperity as justifications for the narrative that military action and funding of the army was a last resort. Moi also highlights his position as an arbiter of regional affairs, distancing himself and Kenya from the violence and instability of East Africa and compartmentalising Kenya as a different, stable, and prosperous case (FRUS, XVII/173).

Moi had taken charge as Chairperson of the OAU and had as such become an important arbiter of African regional affairs. The importance of this position is also noted in the archival documents consulted for this case study; besides from the requests for assistance and the common narrative of stability driving further engagement with external partners, Moi was consulted on African regional affairs by US and British counterparts, including on political developments in South Africa, and issues concerning Uganda, Tanzania, Somalia, and other neighbours of Kenya. Akin to both Kenyatta before him – who had played a significant diplomatic role in the Congo Crisis – and Haile Selassie of Ethiopia, Moi utilised his role as a regional arbiter to further strengthen the legitimacy of his claim of Kenya as a force of stability and moderacy in the region. Moi is identified in British documents as an astute diplomat due to his chairmanship of the OAU and intervention in African political affairs, such

as his focus on ensuring territorial integrity amongst African states, and on mediation within Kenya's immediate region (Mabera, 2016: 378). Again, Kenya was seen under Moi's rule to be a stable and more responsible partner than its neighbouring states.

Moi's focus on stability, moderacy, and territorial integrity became useful narratives to be used to respond to substantive challenges to his rule. Following the coup attempt in 1982, for instance, the instability here was framed not as a substantive issue that should lead to external actors questioning their support for Moi's government, but rather that it was an isolated incident primarily driven by the delusional ambitions of lower ranked members of the military. This narrative naturally jars with the discussion in the previous chapter concerning the precarious political position Moi found himself in when coming to power, amongst significant political infighting at the level of the leadership. As N'Diaye (2002: 60) notes, the 1982 coup attempt was a significant event that damaged the legitimacy of Moi's rule, resulting in a brief loss of power. N'Diaye attributes the coup attempt to a long-term defunding of the military in Kenya by both Kenyatta and Moi, who sought instead to centralise power in the Provincial Administration and security services who could be better tamed by Moi. As such, the root causes of the coup were attributed to long-term factors, and not a sharp fracture of instability amongst a long-term process of stable, moderate governance.

Nevertheless, narratives of stability continued to hold amongst Western actors. Within a couple of years following the coup attempt and amidst turbulent regional politics, British observations indicated that Moi's hold on power had grown stronger; he was described as 'confident [and in] firm political control' with the caveat that 'aid and the development of Kenya is always a major concern for him' (TNA, FCO 31/742). Even amongst the latter years of increasing repression and torture – tools relied upon by Moi's government to maintain power when options for legitimacy through other means become less achievable – Moi's focus in his narrative remained upon stability as a crucial agency-leveraging mechanism. Within interviews with Western media, concerns raised by interviewers surrounding Kenya's human rights record are angrily rebuffed by Moi and other

prominent figures in his cabinet, such as Foreign Minister Robert Ouko. Instead, the narrative focus was pivoted by Kenyan figures to instead focus upon the regional stability Kenya has provided throughout Moi's rule, and notions of Kenya as an 'island of stability' amongst volatile neighbours (TNA, FCO 31/5163).

The focus on stability acted as a crucial example of the 'aligning aims and interests' strategy. Western actors were naturally focussed on the stability of a pro-Western state in East Africa, as already highlighted in the Ethiopian case when looking at Selassie's support from the US. Western actors were receptive of the stability narrative used by Moi until the early 1990s, and the end of the Cold War. A prominent example of this support emerged in the late 1980s in the UK, where Moi's government successfully lobbied the British to pressure the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) to stop their reporting of human rights abuses in Kenya by the Moi government. Moi's representatives – and British counterparts – both rationalise the intervention as necessary due to Kenya's stability, and its ability to project stability in a volatile region (TNA, FCO 31/5861). In a response to the BBC, Foreign Minister Mwangale 'challenged the BBC to name any single Kenyan that has been charged or detained [and] has been found guilty of subversion [...] Kenya maintained a stable and open society with greater press freedom than any other country in the world' (TNA, FCO 31/5163). Western states that continued to criticise the Moi government's record on human rights – such as Scandinavian states – were subject to harsh diplomatic criticism by Kenyan officials. Officials threatened to cut diplomatic ties, expel diplomats, and cancel development projects funded by Scandinavian development organisations. Moi's government therefore had the capacity to cut off certain external actors due to their strong connection with others, driven by the stability narrative. Kenyan narratives of stability and moderacy were not entirely responsible for the development of the relationship between Moi's government and Western states during the first decade and a half of Moi's rule. Pragmatic interests on the part of external actors during the height of the Cold War in Africa during the late 1970s and 1980s led to substantive support for Kenya due to the necessity of

engaging with a state favourable to Western interests and ideology and situated in a strategically important location were also important. This discussion has highlighted how a combination of pre-existing motivations alongside crucial narrative development by Moi's government resulted in a continual level of autocratic support, both through technical and military assistance, alongside the rhetorical commitments to support given by Western actors.

The latter part of this section details the changes in this relationship that the Moi government faced during the 1990s. Akin to the collapse of the Derg in the Ethiopian case, 1991 and the end of the Soviet Union resulted in drastic changes to the foreign policy of Moi's government. However, rather than these changes being the withdrawal of Soviet support as had happened to the Derg, the changes in Kenya occurred due to the lack of a credible alternative external actor for the government to draw aid from.

The decades of authoritarian rule under Moi had become increasingly repressive, with popular bases of support becoming substantially smaller than under Kenyatta. Moi's rule had become progressively more centralised around Moi and a small group of loyalists, driven by selective expenditure on infrastructural development in loyalist areas of the state, and concurrent deprivation of areas of the state dominated by those not in Moi's ethnic group (Barkan, 1993: 87-89). As noted in the prior chapter, Kenyatta was Kikuyu, the most populous and influential ethnic group in Kenya. Moi meanwhile was Kalenjin, and in the process of consolidating power sought to remove Kikuyus from power. Therefore, as Barkan (1993) notes, Moi faced a lack of popular support. On top of this, domestic groups had increased their calls for multiparty democracy, whilst the slowing of the economy – attributed to corruption, alongside global economic issues – all contributed to growing pressure for reform.

The role of Western donors in this process centred upon the imposition of conditionalities for reform upon Moi's government, operating alongside the domestic clamour for democratic change. Whilst conditionalities had previously been present in the form of economic Structural Adjustment

Programmes, in the early 1990s explicit calls for democratic reform by donors were tied to the continuation of financial assistance. As such, multiparty elections occurred for the first time in 1992 since Kenyatta's era.

This change in attitude was, as said, a result partially borne out of the collapse of the Soviet Union as an alternative means of support for African states (as seen in the Derg example in chapter 3) but also emerged in the Kenyan case as an example of how conditionalities could be used to influence political change. Barkan (1993: 91) describes the pressure placed upon Kenya by donors as designed to create an exemplar for donors to follow in other African cases, driven by the increasingly personalist rule Moi employed in the late 1980s, and the desire to demonstrate that even in the most authoritarian of cases, a transfer to multiparty democracy and competitive elections could be achieved through international pressure.

Multiparty elections were reintroduced during this time, but it is important to nuance this amidst questions surrounding the genuine moves to democracy in Kenya. Whilst the 1990s may have introduced multiparty politics in Kenya, the elections of 1992 and 1997 were still heavily weighted in favour of KANU and Moi, with the frequent and blatant use of rigging occurring in both elections (Branch, 2011). Brown (2001) argues that donors crucially continued to implicitly support Moi throughout the 1990s until his eventual removal from office in 2002, through endorsing flawed elections as 'progress' towards democracy, and amplifying incremental changes despite the continual presence of corruption, ethnic division, and violence within Moi's government against potential opponents.

Brown's work highlights the flawed role of donors in the process of multipartyism in Kenya during this time, which once again suggests that aspects of the agency-leveraging framework were in use during this time by Moi's government. Whilst some elements remained the same during this time from Moi's previous terms, such as focussing on stability, the government also contributed to the notion amongst donors that incremental change was a necessary precursor to real democratic

change, and highlighted the small transitions to democracy that – whilst themselves contributed little to real democracy – were to be regarded as genuine commitments to change.

Moi employed several strategies and narratives to forestall and discredit democratisation in Kenya. For one, Moi sought to portray democratisation as an inherently unstable process, causing violence across the state, and clashing with the predominant aims and interests of external actors in maintaining Kenyan political stability. This was not a new phenomenon, but was – as noted in chapter 3 – a frequent occurrence in the Ethiopian case. In addition, this strategy also relied on some questionable logic and assumptions surrounding the makeup of Moi’s government; as seen, the state had not been stable or absent from violence despite a focus throughout this time period from Moi on his government as a stable and reliable ally for Western external actors. As Western actors pressured for greater levels of democratisation however, a renewed narrative of autocratic stability was used. Moi proclaimed in the early 1990s that Kenya was a cohesive society only because of its authoritarian politics, and that multiparty politics would lead to a lack of cohesion and violence becoming more common. In addition, Moi declared that protests and citizen action towards democracy were disrupting the ‘law and order’ that KANU had brought to Kenya following independence (Klopp, 2001: 481-482). In discussions with donors, figures in Moi’s government reiterated the same tenets of this argument, claiming that single-party rule under KANU had maintained a fragile peace that could soon be disrupted through multiparty competition.⁴

Once multiparty elections were introduced in the 1990s, Klopp (2001) highlights that violence was instead used as a tactic to intimidate and disrupt the elections. Violence authorised by KANU was widespread prior to the first ‘free’ election held in 1992 across the state, designed to protect the dominance of KANU and Moi.

A second approach focussed on providing piecemeal changes towards democracy, to relieve pressure on the government for reform, yet maintaining autocratic power. Brown (2001) highlights

⁴ Interview with Kenyan academic, 29th March 2022.

that the act of providing elections – regardless of their integrity – not only sated some of the domestic calls for democratisation, but also crucially placated donor desires for change. This is a strategy used elsewhere in contemporary authoritarian governments; the plethora of governments that now employ elections as a façade of democracy has been regarded in the literature as an example of the development of a democratic norm, needed amongst authoritarian states as a mechanism to maintain support from donors (Levitsky & Way, 2010). In Kenya’s case, this led to the development of elections, but there was little intention to make these elections free and fair. Klopp (2001) argues that this could be seen as an example of Moi implementing such a plan. Whilst this may be the case, attributing this situation entirely to Moi’s political machinations is inappropriate. Indeed, it may be the case that Moi implemented sham elections as a way of fooling donors, yet it also remains the case that Kenya continued to be an important political and economic stalwart in East Africa that donors necessarily had to engage with. Diplomatic isolation with Kenya remained a problem, and so it became an important balancing act for donors to press for political reform, whilst also acknowledging that such changes would be incremental and fraught with challenges.

Moi’s government and non-Western actors

Having analysed the complex and changing dynamics of Moi’s relationship with Western donors, the government’s maintenance tactics need to also be understood in the context of Kenya’s changing relationship with China. Indeed, it is during the latter years of Moi’s rule that engagement with China – and the Moi government’s use of hedging tactics – became more apparent. Parallels can be drawn here between the use of China as a hedging tactic by the EPRDF in Ethiopia following challenges to their legitimacy and government strength during contested elections in 2005 as highlighted in chapters 2 and 3. Moi’s engagement with China began in 1980, and had been the first significant period of diplomatic relations since Kenyatta’s era between the two states (Chege, 2008). Moi’s choice to engage with China at this time stemmed from domestic and international factors. Domestically, the government had been facing a prolonged period of consolidation (and concurrent

isolation of certain ethnic groups) of power following Moi's ascendancy in 1978, whilst internationally the government began to struggle with accusations of abuses of power, and a stagnating economic picture. As mentioned prior, Western focus upon structural adjustment – and the perceived damage this caused to Kenyan public services – also contributed to the redirection of Kenyan foreign policy towards China (Mabera, 2016: 378).

As in the Ethiopian case, turning to China provided a simple hedging approach to maintain aid flows, with China equally keen to foster relations with African states beginning in the 1980s. The Chinese leadership had distanced itself from its revolutionary rhetoric by this point, alongside withdrawing from its volatile policy of seeking to overthrow existing governments in Africa that had contributed to the severing of ties with leaders such as Kenyatta and Haile Selassie. Rather, diplomatic, technical, and economic ties were sought after (El-Khawas, 1973).

In Moi's case, initial ties to China were not as well developed as in the Ethiopian case. Moi's main motivation in seeking out China was to domestically shore up support for his government and ethnic group, by gaining funds to undertake development projects in the predominantly Kalenjin Rift Valley (Chege, 2008: 22). To this end, Chinese engagement was primarily technical and economic, with funds provided to support such projects. However, further visits between both states resulted in cooperation agreements in education, health, and learning agreements for Chinese delegates, to adopt best practice on Kenyan economic successes, such as the growing agriculture and tourism industries. Crucially, these projects were directed by Moi and other prominent government members, rather than being subject to conditions and implementation by donor governments, allowing the government to shape assistance as they saw fit, and to use such aid as autocratic support.

What this engagement did not do, however, is fundamentally reshape Kenyan foreign policy. Moi's government was still heavily reliant upon Western sources of aid and assistance to maintain authoritarian rule. Contemporary concerns surrounding autocratic support from China were not

evident in Moi's engagement; rather, China's engagement centred upon – at this point – non-political objectives. Its inclusion into this discussion demonstrates that further agency-leveraging tools – in this case the use of hedging and the beginnings of utilising condition-less development assistance from China – was an option for Moi's government.

Assessing Moi's agency-leveraging strategies

The discussion in these past couple of sections has demonstrated that the agency-leveraging capabilities of Moi's government were severely stymied by domestic and international crises, in comparison to Jomo Kenyatta's government.

Moi's government faced substantial challenges both within and beyond the state. These included an economic slowdown both domestically and within the international system, that not only challenged the government's ability to secure external support, but also delegitimised the Moi government as a bastion of economic prosperity; a key angle through which Jomo Kenyatta's government had sought to demonstrate its success. Moi furthermore faced internal and external crises, resulting in a restriction on the available agency-leveraging strategies for the government, and an increasing reliance upon repression to maintain rule for Moi. However, this hardening of authoritarian rule also meant that the Moi government was faced with international calls for democratisation, that only further escalated towards the end of the Cold War.

As such, it is clear to see that the 'stability' constellation of agency-leveraging strategies became the dominant approach taken by Moi's government, as further options for legitimising the government and securing autocratic support, such as 'demonstrating success' became untenable. Moi's government also failed to secure autocratic support beyond the end of the Cold War – and had to resort to permissive multiparty democracy in 2002 – because the prime strategy for leveraging agency no longer held sway with external actors. Moi's efforts to promote Kenya as a bastion of stability whilst under authoritarian rule failed to register with the rising demands for democracy from Western donors beyond 1991, demonstrating that the government's capability to leverage

support designed to bolster authoritarian rule hinged upon aligning to pragmatic donor and supporter interests.

Kibaki's government and Western actors

The final sections of this chapter concern the latter two Kenyan governments explored as part of this case study. As noted in the previous chapter, this thesis does not consider either Kibaki's or Uhuru Kenyatta's governments to be fully authoritarian, but instead notes that some authoritarian practices – such as rampant corruption, the use of security services to routinely implement the will of the executive, and instances of violence surrounding elections – occurred under the rule of both presidents. During the tenure of both presidents, aspects of the agency-leveraging framework from chapter 1 were utilised to further stabilise the rule of Kibaki and Uhuru Kenyatta respectively when in discussions with Western actors.

Addressing first Kibaki's rule, the focus here will be on the utilisation of stability narratives, especially regarding the volatile regional situation and the War on Terror. Akin to Ethiopia under the EPRDF, Kenya became an important regional ally for Western powers following the beginning of the War on Terror in 2001 (Mogire & Agade, 2011: 475). Kenya itself became a target for terrorist activities throughout the final years of Moi's government, and throughout the first term of Kibaki's presidency (Fisher, 2013: 4; Mogire & Agade, 2011). It has already been noted in the Ethiopian chapters that the War on Terror presented a useful context in which East African governments could effectively present themselves as crucial components and allies, endearing themselves to donors and receiving preferential support (Fisher, 2013).

Kenya's approach did differ from Ethiopia's, however, with Fisher (2013) noting that Kenya's approach to assisting US strategy was less well-defined and compliant than other states, such as Uganda. Indeed, efforts on the part of the US to pass the implementation of counter-terrorism and domestic security legislation in Kenya ended in failure, as the Kenyan parliament – emboldened by

its relative independence from the executive as opposed to prior iterations of the parliament under authoritarian rule – refused to pass such legislation.

This leads to some important issues surrounding the agency of African states, and the ability to craft their foreign policy in a manner that both benefits the maintenance of Kibaki's rule, and quells domestic disquiet and challenges. Whilst Kibaki's Kenya was broadly aligned with US interests in the War on Terror, the Kibaki administration also faced some substantive issues related to his connections with the US. Opponents of Kibaki's government throughout his tenure – and especially during the run-up to the 2007 election – used Kenya's participation in the US-led War on Terror as an example of Kibaki's willingness to betray Kenyan independence (Branch, 2011: 267). During periods of Kenyan military intervention into areas suspected of harbouring terrorists, such as Kenya's northern border with Somalia, and in Somalia itself, similar accusations of Kenya becoming a 'lackey' of the US, beholden to its whims rather than pursuing its own foreign policy became more common.⁵

Such accusations also clashed with long-held narratives and themes of Kenyan foreign policy. As Mbera (2016) notes, a common theme in Kenyan foreign policy – as has been seen in other African and post-colonial states – has been the independence and non-partisanship of Kenyan foreign policy. Whilst as seen throughout this chapter Kenyan leaders have aligned themselves with Western powers, particularly the US and Britain, in principle as noted in campaign leaflets and manifestos for KANU, non-alignment and legislative independence was regarded as sacrosanct.

Despite these pitfalls, engagement with the US on the War on Terror permitted the Kibaki government to exercise agency and crucially utilise this context to build upon narratives of stability and autocratic support. Kibaki's government received a significant amount of counterterrorism aid, such as training for security forces and funding to expand the capabilities of the government to address institutional weaknesses and corruption that had led to the prevalence of terrorist attacks in

⁵ Interview with Kenyan foreign policy advisor, 17th March 2022

Kenya. However, as Prestholdt (2011: 5) notes, such funding and support has instead been redirected to further embolden the excesses of government, used to persecute Muslim minorities in border regions near Somalia, alongside permitting the security forces to use heavy-handed tactics with impunity. Mogire and Agade (2011: 478-479) meanwhile note that the influx of resources from the US without legislation or institutional strength to control the excesses of the government and security services led to a dramatic increase in corruption, implicitly endorsed by the US and other Western actors under the counter-terrorism banner.

Regarding support for Kibaki's government, Prestholdt (2011: 21) argues that US support emboldened Kibaki's government to continue its own goals of securing the northern regions of Kenya, and acting with impunity against those who the security services perceived to be a threat to the state. This fundamentally allowed Kibaki's government to remove challengers to the leadership, and respond to issues in the north of Kenya that the government may see as a challenge, without any accountability on the part of the security services (Bachmann & Hönke, 2010: 108-109).

There are questions to be asked over the agency of Kibaki and his government during this time. It is apparent that US, British, and other Western aid to Kenya over the terrorist threat was driven in part by Kenyan agency, alongside Western pragmatic need. As seen throughout this chapter, it is a nuanced mix of pragmatism and recipient-driven agency that leads to the development and deployment of agency-leveraging strategies. In this case, Prestholdt (2011: 21) notes that the US provision of counter-terrorism assistance to Kenya has been driven by the heightening of perceived terrorism, rather than actual events. As noted by Bachmann and Hönke (2010), due to the willingness of Western powers to support counter-terrorism measures, it became clear that security operations by Kibaki's government would be supported so long as they ostensibly served to tackle terrorism in Kenya or in its region. Furthermore, this also leads to a lack of need to strengthen institutional capacity and prevent further terrorism incidents, so long as they continue to demonstrate a need for counter-terrorism support.

Kibaki's government and non-Western actors

The second aspect to focus upon for Kibaki's government concerns the aftermath of the disputed 2007 election. Whilst much of the detail on this issue is discussed in chapter 4, the aftermath of the electoral violence led to issues with the foreign policy direction of Kibaki's government.

Indeed, the violence and disputes surrounding the election drew criticism and varied reactions from Western partners and accelerated the Kenyan transition towards non-Western sources of support. Although some Western actors such as the US had been quick to endorse Kibaki for a second term despite the ongoing challenges surrounding potential electoral fraud, others, such as the EU, raised questions about the legitimacy of the result amidst evidence of rigging. Again, pragmatic concerns surrounding the stability of Kenya, and its importance in the War on Terror are considered as clear reasons why the US sought to quickly resolve the election issues by endorsing Kibaki (Cheeseman, 2008: 171). However, with other Western actors calling into question the legitimacy of the election, and violence reaching substantial levels as seen in the previous chapter, intervention from other African states and the ICC to create a power-sharing agreement and seek to prosecute those accused of inciting violence led to a shift in how Kenya's foreign policy progressed (Mabera, 2016: 368).

Kenya's pivot towards China for development aid, infrastructural financing, and diplomatic assistance accelerated through Kibaki's first term, with 13% of Kenya's total external assistance coming from China in 2005 (Chege, 2008: 30). The reaction of Western actors and the attempt to prosecute prominent members of Kibaki's government within the ICC had led to the government moving away from its reliance upon Western actors.⁶ Indeed, this approach stems from multiple reasons. Interviewees highlight that members of Kibaki's government and those who were being prosecuted became aware of their reliance upon Western actors for support, and sought to diversify

⁶ Interview with Kenyan foreign policy advisor, 17th March 2022; Interview with Kenyan academic, 8th April 2022.

(Mabera, 2016: 369).⁷ Concurrent with the anti-ICC agenda that Kibaki's government took to scupper the proposed indictment of Kibaki's allies, a lower reliance upon Western support would be welcome (Ibid. 2016: 369-370). In interviews with foreign policy advisors in the Kenyan government, Western assistance was also argued by Kibaki's government to have a poor legacy in the eyes of officials and opposition politicians. Memories of structural adjustment and the ability for Western actors to enact what the Kibaki government saw as punitive measures upon the state was regarded as a serious threat, especially if repercussions came about due to the ICC issues Kibaki's government faced.⁸ Finally, and arguably most substantially, China's ability to provide infrastructural support above and beyond what Western actors could provide, as well as continuing projects that had been threatened to be cut off by Western investors due to the post-election violence and collapse in economic growth was invaluable. Indeed, following the 2007 election violence economic growth in Kenya plummeted, with the inflation rate reaching 25% by 2009 (Gadzala, 2009: 208). Large-scale infrastructural projects planned by Kibaki's government – such as road bypasses through and around Nairobi, and the construction of a railway linking the port of Mombasa with the Kenyan capital – were threatened with a restriction on funding, or extensive modification of their routes and scope, due to economic and political volatility during Kibaki's second term (Fiott, 2010).⁹ Chinese assistance meanwhile promised to finance the projects in their entirety, as part of the broader effort by China to engage with the African continent. Indeed, Chinese support to Kenya and the African continent outweighed World Bank lending by \$12 billion by 2010 (Githaiga & Bing, 2019: 223).

Whilst it should not be considered a complete detachment from prior to the 2007 electoral violence, the transition to primary support from China following this period of deteriorating relations with the West does suggest that political and economic issues arising from this period were a consideration. China's support also extended beyond immediate infrastructure financing, with support to

⁷ Interview with Kenyan foreign policy advisor, 17th March 2022; Interview with Kenyan academic, 29th March 2022.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Interview with Kenyan journalist, 10th March 2022.

modernise the Kenyan armed forces (Gadzala, 2009), whilst Kenya's long-standing pillars of foreign policy, such as its adherence to non-intervention in international affairs proving to be attractive for China in multilateral arenas such as the UN (Mabera, 2016).¹⁰

Looking at Kenyan agency in this light however, the pivot towards Chinese assistance also led to significant benefits in securing autocratic support. Wissenbach and Wang (2017) note that the construction of the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) linking Nairobi and Mombasa was planned to avoid crossing into Kikuyu and Kalenjin territory, instead being built through the lands of other ethnic groups. Branch (2011: 268) notes that Kibaki was desperate to shore up Kikuyu support both before and following the 2007 election, and Chinese support on large-scale infrastructure allowed Kibaki to do this.

Beyond this, Chinese support for Kenya also granted Kibaki's government greater legitimacy with international actors. Kenya's Vision 2030 – a development programme designed by Kibaki's government in 2008 to economically develop Kenya into a middle-income country – has been heavily supported by Chinese-funded infrastructural development. Akin to the performance legitimacy strategies noted to be used by authoritarian leaders in Ethiopia, such construction projects have been described as contributing to Kibaki's aspirational development narrative (Lesutis, 2022). Construction projects such as the SGR and large-scale road projects were framed as a legacy project of Kibaki's, designed to move the state beyond the fragility and violence of 2007.¹¹ In addition however, the projects also served to further the corrupt practices of the government, with land being forcibly acquired under questionable legal means (Ibid. 2022: 309).

Assessing Kibaki's agency-leveraging strategies

The agency-leveraging strategies enacted during Kibaki's tenure demonstrate some interesting developments on how autocratic support is developed and deployed in African cases. In addition,

¹⁰ Interview with Kenyan academics, 29th March 2022; 8th April 2022.

¹¹ Interview with Kenyan journalist, 10th March 2022.

the developments seen in how the Kibaki government's approach to how the constellations of agency-leveraging strategies are used represents an important deviation from prior governments in the Kenyan case.

Indeed, this section has demonstrated that Kibaki's government had key agency-leveraging capabilities with external actors at the beginning, driven by its beneficial domestic situation in comparison to the end of Moi's rule. That is, Kibaki's government promised to reform their rule, and the political situation in Kenya to be more amenable to Western donors, and to further align with their aims and interests. The multiparty democratic elections that brought Kibaki's government to power in 2002 undoubtedly represented a key break with the authoritarian rule of Moi, though Kibaki's further pledges to address corruption and further reform the constitution – as noted in the previous chapter – also endeared the government to donors and demonstrated the key appeal of the 'aligning aims and interests' strategy. Kibaki's efforts at furthering this through security issues and the emerging need for Kenyan assistance in the US-led War on Terror also provided important leverage for Kibaki's government to further align recipient and supporter aims and interests.

However, Kibaki's government also demonstrated key elements of the 'demonstrating success' and 'government coherence and legitimacy' strategies, particularly reinforced by Kibaki's legitimate electoral victory, renewed calls to Kenya's past, and its independence and non-alignment in foreign policy. Kibaki's initial ability to utilise these varied strategies – and move beyond simple alignment to existing narratives and interests of supporters – means that his government is argued to have utilised the 'reshaping the narrative' constellation of strategies.

As noted within the thesis introduction, the latter years of Kibaki's government moved further towards stability narratives, with domestic crises and challenges restricting the available agency-leveraging strategies for the government. Issues already discussed at length over the past couple of chapters, such as the electoral violence of 2007-2008, attempted prosecution of prominent government members by the ICC, and a withdrawal of Western donor support resulted in a

simultaneous reliance on security and stability issues to leverage agency, alongside a turn to China as an additional source of support. Whilst Chinese autocratic support provided the Kibaki government with further capacity to bolster their strength and legitimacy, China's involvement in Kenya was driven by an initial restriction of agency-leveraging capabilities for the government.

Uhuru Kenyatta's government and Western actors

The final case government to explore – that of the first term of Uhuru Kenyatta – follows a similar pattern to that of Kibaki, both in the foreign policy direction of the government, alongside the agency-leveraging strategies used.

The primary focus in this thesis for Kenyatta's government is on the challenge of the ICC prosecution for both President Kenyatta and his Deputy President, William Ruto, and the damage this incident, like in Kibaki's case, had done with Western actors. As with Kibaki's government, the five years of Kenyatta's government covered in this thesis is characterised by substantive engagement with China as a source of finance for infrastructural support, whilst continuing to maintain a strategic and diplomatic connection to Western states. As noted in chapter 4, Kenyatta and Ruto both utilised narratives of injustice and political persecution to strengthen their legitimacy and capture external support.

Indeed, Kenyatta's government continued to engage with the 'aligning aims and interests' strategy and leverage their strategic importance as a regional actor when in conversation with Western states. Support for US counter-terrorism measures continued, and Kenyatta notably increased his engagement with British and US forces, providing logistical support for the militaries of both states, alongside acting as a stable ally.¹² Kenyatta and his government became a political and economic lynchpin in the East African region, hosting important multilateral events on issues such as the climate, and trade and development (Mabera, 2016: 377).

¹² Interview with Kenyan journalist, March 8th 2022.

However as noted in the previous chapter, the attempted ICC prosecution of Kenyatta and Ruto necessitated a shift in the foreign policy of Kenyatta's government, encouraging the development of some of the agency-leveraging strategies seen under prior governments (Lynch, 2015). Interviewees noted that Kenyatta sought to project an image of Kenya not just a stable ally for Western states such as Britain and the US, but also sought to bolster his image as a champion of African affairs both within the East African region, alongside the wider continent.

Mabera (2016: 378) notes that as an attempt to counteract diplomatic criticism of his government, Kenyatta embarked on a 'charm offensive' of aiming to project African solutions to issues, alongside criticising multilateral institutions such as the ICC for their perceived bias against Kenya and other African states. Kenyatta's inaugural statement outlined these pillars of foreign policy as such, both chastising unnamed individual states for their control of international institutions and what is and is not acceptable in the international community, whilst also seeking to engage further with such states to expand the economy and Kenya's role in the world (Kenyatta, 2013).

Regarding the implementation of aspects of the agency-leveraging framework, projections of Kenya's authority as a regional stalwart were backed up by concrete action. Mabera (2016: 378) notes that Kenyatta became a strong force within the AU, later using this influence to lead for calls to drop the ICC investigations. Kenyatta also used his substantive influence across Africa to prepare a mass withdrawal of African states from the jurisdiction of the ICC, if no resolution was to be found (Dukalskis, 2017: 705). At the same time, military engagement in counter-terrorism measures continued to be highlighted by Kenyatta's government; a deployment into Somalia by Kenyan forces was framed by Kenyatta not only as a measure to address the spread of terrorism across East Africa, but also as a demonstration that Kenya was a stable state that had moved on from ethnic politics and destabilising violence (Kenyatta, 2013; Mbaya, 2019).¹³ Kenyatta argued that Kenya had become an 'anchor state' in the region, dedicated to resolving regional issues. Such an approach was further

¹³ Interview with Kenyan foreign policy advisor, 17th March 2022.

justified by Kenyatta's attempt to resolve conflicts across the African continent as ahead of peace initiatives in countries such as the DRC, CAR, and South Sudan (Mabera, 2016: 378). Whilst it cannot be singularly linked to these agency-leveraging approaches used by the Kenyatta government, it is noted by Mbaya (2019: 79) that relations with Western states developed from strained early in Kenyatta's tenure, to more developed and familiar setting akin to the connection seen in this chapter between Kenyatta and Moi's authoritarian governments and Western counterparts.

Uhuru Kenyatta's government and non-Western actors

The agency-leveraging strategies used by the Kenyatta government with Western actors equally translated to non-Western actors, supported by the change in dynamics in how China and Russia had begun to operate in diplomatic and military fields in Africa, as noted in chapter 2.

Akin to Kibaki's foreign policy dilemma following the electoral violence in 2007-2008, Kenyatta's government also sought to hedge their approaches to non-Western governments. China again played a substantial role in how Kenya managed infrastructural projects during Kenyatta's tenure, with the completion of several high-priority and highly-publicised Chinese funded projects, such as the aforementioned SGR, and the Nairobi Expressway through the centre of the capital. Again, such projects were presented as projects of national rejuvenation and legitimacy (Lesutis, 2022), whilst also being framed around the ICC prosecution. Kenyatta referred to Chinese support as a vital continuation of the faith international actors had in the leadership of Kenya under Kenyatta and Ruto, compared to the persecution Western states had made of his government following the ICC accusations.¹⁴

Kenyatta also greatly expanded the list of non-Western foreign powers he engaged with, capturing the support of several authoritarian governments who had, prior to this, had limited engagement with the Kenyatta government (Mbaya, 2019). Actors such as Russia, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and

¹⁴ Ibid. 17th March 2022; Interview with Western diplomat, 21st March 2022.

Morocco all began engaging in economic trade and development projects in Kenya. Interviewees noted that such projects were often launched following trips undertaken by Kenyatta himself, where the focus would be not necessarily upon Kenyan military prowess, but instead on its political strength, influence, and the favourable economic situation in Kenya suitable for foreign investment.¹⁵ Again, such projects – and the partnerships developed between Kenya helped diversify Kenyatta’s government away from a perceived reliance upon Western states, and a potential capitulation towards ICC prosecution.

What developed in Kenyatta’s era is the expanded diplomatic and security considerations China had with the African continent, and the ability for Kenyatta’s government to capitalise upon this. As noted in chapter 2, China’s relations with African states have developed substantially since the early 2000s, from being mostly based upon resource acquisition of raw materials (Alden, 2007), to a more complex focus on diplomatic ties and a focus on resolving security problems. Whilst too detailed to explore in this section, academic work from Benabdallah (2020b), Hackenesch and Bader (2020) and Ghiselli (2018) has all emphasised China’s expanding role as a security partner for African states, including through investment for African militaries, and taking diplomatic responsibility for resolving instances of violence across the continent.

Both of these angles were capitalised upon by Kenyatta’s government. As already seen, the projection Kenyatta focussed upon was not only as a mediator for the AU in multiple crises across the continent, but also as a leader capable of projecting military power outwards to counteract threats to stability, such as the intervention in Somalia. Talks between Kenyatta’s government and Chinese counterparts increasingly moved away from infrastructural and purely economic topics, towards security issues, and supporting then Kenyan government’s military capabilities.¹⁶ As such, support became more driven towards stabilising Kenyatta’s capabilities and legitimacy as an anchor

¹⁵ Interview with Kenyan academics, 28th March 2022; 8th April 2022.

¹⁶ Interview with Kenyan foreign policy advisor, 17th March 2022.

state, giving China a much more rounded and all-encompassing role in how autocratic support is received.

Assessing Uhuru Kenyatta's agency-leveraging strategies

The final case study government explored in this chapter has demonstrated some similarities with Kibaki's government earlier. The legacy of the ICC prosecution continued to present challenges for Kenyatta's government, and led to a much more forceful approach to foreign policy that emphasised Kenyan independence and sovereignty, alongside further entrenching the use of Kenyatta's 'government coherence and legitimacy' strategy. However, familiar strategies focussing on stability narratives and aligning Kenyatta's government with external supporter interests continued.

As such, Kenyatta's government is described within this thesis as focussing on the stability constellation, both within their engagement with Western donors, and in Kenyatta's capturing of Chinese support. As noted, China's role developed in Kenya during Uhuru Kenyatta's tenure, as seen across several other African cases, moving to security concerns alongside China's other pragmatic reasons for engaging with the continent, as discussed in chapter 1. Kenyatta's government furthered their 'aligning aims and interests' strategy, capitalising upon these concerns from the Chinese.

Finally, Kenyatta continued to utilise long-standing government legitimacy strategies that had been present throughout much of the Kenyan case examined throughout this chapter. Kenyatta continued to emphasise Kenya's central role in conflict mediation, peacekeeping, and diplomatic sway across the African continent as a further approach to solidify Kenyatta's position as a rightful leader, requiring diplomatic and material assistance from external supporters to continue their important political role across the continent.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided an extensive overview of the foreign policy and agency-leveraging strategies of Kenyan governments from Kenyan independence until 2018. As has been seen, the

connection between domestic constraints and opportunities in each government, and their resultant foreign policies is clear. In particular, periods of crisis, such as regional instability, a threat to territorial integrity, or political threats from abroad have resulted in a diverse range of approaches from each government, designed to counteract challenges and leverage agency.

Furthermore, there are clear similarities in the agency-leveraging approaches taken by governments in Kenya, versus those taken by the three authoritarian governments examined in Ethiopia in chapters 2 and 3. A focus on both states as bastions of stability in their respective regions, despite the realities of domestic instability is a common occurrence. Similarly, government heads such as Jomo Kenyatta, Haile Selassie, and Daniel arap Moi all sought to project outwards that their governments could resolve regional and international issues and play a substantive role in the maintenance of peace and stability during and after the Cold War.

A further broad comparison this chapter has made, again akin to the Ethiopian case, is the role that non-Western actors have played in the foreign policy machinations of governments in Kenya. As with Haile Selassie's government, connections between Jomo Kenyatta's government and China were poor and soured by the ideological differences between the conservatism of both Selassie and Kenyatta, and the Communist politics of China at the time. However, this chapter has again demonstrated – as chapter 3 did with the influx of Chinese support for the EPRDF – that China became a useful tool for governments to use as an alternative source of autocratic support. In the Kenyan case, initial contact made by Moi – who was suffering from a lack of legitimacy and the legacy of an attempted coup against his government – demonstrated the usefulness of moving away from a reliance upon Western support.

Whilst it has been shown clearly in this discussion that Western support has been a largely continuous endeavour in Kenya, a drop in pragmatic need to maintain ties to authoritarian governments has shown that Western support can be volatile, as in the case with Kenya's development of multiparty politics following Western pressure. Beyond this, however, this chapter

has shown that further domestic issues – such as the electoral violence in 2007 and 2008, and the subsequent ICC investigations – drove Kibaki’s and Kenyatta’s governments to engage with China as a means of continuing autocratic practices of corruption and an avoidance of international prosecution, as well as bolstering the legitimacy of both governments. In Kibaki’s case, Chinese support enabled the government to ride out accusations of vote rigging and maintain extensive corrupt practices. Infrastructure projects were used as a form of ‘performance legitimacy’ to enhance Kibaki’s reputation and proceed with further shoring up of support amongst his ethnic group. Finally, Chinese engagement with Kenyatta’s government allowed him to avoid prosecution from the ICC by maintaining ties, whilst also legitimising Kenyatta’s narrative of promoting African-based solutions to conflicts, and Kenya’s role as a regional arbiter of conflict and peace.

Having noted that governments in Kenya have utilised several of the agency-leveraging strategies from earlier chapters of the thesis, the thesis conclusion will provide further comparative detail on both case studies, alongside further highlighting and reinforcing the primary arguments of this thesis, and developing further areas of research on the nature of autocratic support across the non-Western world.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This thesis has interrogated the concept of external support for governments, occurring across a substantial time period in two substantive case studies, Ethiopia and Kenya. Autocratic support throughout this thesis has been identified as the process whereby existing authoritarian governments are bolstered and legitimised by external supporters, with the aim of strengthening the rule of recipient governments, alongside working with democratic states to encourage them to be more authoritarian in how they govern. Such support has been identified as occurring through several means, including the provision of material support and diplomatic assistance, and the diffusion of authoritarian norms and values to strengthen the legitimacy and stability of recipient governments.

Within this study, the focus centred upon identifying and exploring how agency is exercised by governments in Ethiopia and Kenya with a variety of external actors, including Russia, China, and Western donors. In line with contemporary literature on African agency, this thesis has emphasised that external support should be considered as a two-way system of negotiation. Recipient governments have substantial scope to shape how such support is provided, and through which mechanisms support is most effectively gained.

This thesis has provided three substantial contributions to the research areas of autocratic support and recipient agency. Firstly, it has built upon existing research surrounding the agency of recipient governments in autocratic support. The primary contribution this thesis has made is throughout the development of a framework of agency-leveraging strategies utilised by recipient governments when engaging with autocratic supporters. This has been utilised within both case studies to categorise and understand the strategies available to recipient.

Building upon this framework, this thesis has emphasised that the domestic contexts matter greatly in how governments deploy agency-leveraging strategies. I have argued that governments facing domestic constraints and challenges, including armed rebellions, a lack of legitimacy in rule, and a

reliance upon repression as a mechanism of control, are frequently reduced to utilising more stability-focussed strategies that emphasise the government as in-line with predominant concerns of supporting states. The 'aligning aims and interests' strategy, and a focus on 'establishing government coherence and legitimacy' are identified as key strategies that governments can continue to effectively use, even when their domestic legitimacy and stability is threatened. Conversely, governments that see themselves in a position of power or relative stability can use strategies that 'reshape the narrative' with autocratic supporters, such as mobilising historical linkages and emphasising the success and stability of the current government to attract external support. Such strategies are highlighted within the tables in chapter 1.

Thirdly, this thesis furthermore identified the use of particular groups of strategies by governments as 'constellations'; again, connecting the domestic situation a government faces, to the constellation of agency-leveraging strategies most frequently used, given the potential constraints faced. Two key constellations – the 'stability' constellation, and the 'reshaping the narrative' constellation – were identified as being utilised by governments in both case study countries.

Firstly, the stability constellation of strategies – encompassing the 'aligning aims and interests' and 'establishing government coherence and legitimacy' strategies – has been identified as often being used by governments that are facing constraints and challenges to their rule, from domestic or international sources. Agency-leveraging in these situations focuses on closer alignment with the predominant aims and interests of external actors; governments need to demonstrate their value, rather than shifting the focus of autocratic supporters and donors.

Secondly, the reshaping the narrative constellation of strategies – encompassing the 'demonstrating success', the extraversion aspect of 'establishing government coherence and legitimacy' and 'mobilising historical linkages' – are used by governments who have greater levels of domestic strength and legitimacy, and as such have the capacity to emphasise the benefits they provide as ruling governments. Recipient governments are therefore capable of demonstrating how and why

external actors should support them, versus aligning themselves to existing aims and interests of supporters. The table outlining the predominant agency-leveraging constellations connected to each case study government is contained in chapter 1 of the thesis.

The conclusion of this thesis develops some further areas for potential research, focussing upon autocratic support and recipient agency in the non-Western world. Whilst the limitations of the Ethiopian and Kenyan case studies explored in this thesis is acknowledged, it is argued that the framework of agency-leveraging strategies applied throughout this thesis is applicable across non-Western cases of authoritarian governments who are recipients of significant amounts of development aid. The findings of this thesis therefore represent potential building blocks for further research exploring the recipient side of autocratic support.

Exploring similarities and differences within cases

The previous four empirical chapters have demonstrated some of the key similarities and differences present within the Ethiopian and Kenyan cases. A focus within these chapters has been placed upon the domestic and international contextual factors driving the agency-leveraging strategies used by each recipient government. However, it is worthwhile at this point to emphasise some of the similarities and differences across both the Ethiopian and Kenyan cases to demonstrate the applicability of the framework and its discussions of constellations across cases. Beyond this, the conclusion will then offer some indications of how the framework is a useful tool in cases beyond the African continent – namely Myanmar and Venezuela – for future research.

Oftentimes, the manifestation of domestic constraints and opportunities has centred upon the origins of governments within each case, and how these origins have impacted upon the foreign policy direction and agency-leveraging strategies used by each subsequent government. Most prominently as an example of this phenomenon, Ethiopian governments have responded to – and been challenged by – the violent process of subjugation and conquest that characterised the initial state formation of Ethiopia under the imperial government in the late 1800s. This historical legacy of

Ethiopian statebuilding meant that subsequent governments faced recurrent insurgencies and political instability. The process of subjugation and conquest was not only forcible and resulted in a process akin to colonisation by the Amharic elite and the formation of a tiered ethnic system in Ethiopia, but it resulted in an archetype of authoritarian control to be followed in most of the subsequent Ethiopian governments examined. Selassie's government, and the subsequent Derg rule both featured a core process of centralised control, with the state ruled by an elite who focussed prosperity and representative government upon the central regions of the state, whilst maintaining outer regions of the state in situations of underdevelopment. Subsequently, rebellions and instances of violence directed by those with little prospect of participating in the rule of the state became common occurrences, once again leaving the authoritarian government to enact policies of repression as the dominant form of control, rather than focussing upon legitimisation or co-optation as mechanisms of maintaining rule (Gerschewski, 2013).

Similar processes – though not to the repressive extent seen in Ethiopia – also occurred within the authoritarian governments of Kenya. As seen in chapter 4, the post-independence governments of Jomo Kenyatta and Moi were invested in maintaining authoritarian rule through an elite comprised predominantly of their own ethnic group, alongside a pool of allies from other ethnic groups. Elections were rigged to favour sections of the populace loyal to the government, alongside selective land distribution policies designed to enrich and benefit the elite. Repression of domestic insurrection and rebellions – most prominently in the Somali borderlands – was a continual issue throughout the time period of this thesis, and autocratic support became a process through which to gain assistance in deploying repressive policies to counteract potential stability challenges to the government presented by rebellions. Centralised policies of control also played a key role in the resurgent periods of electoral violence seen after the return to multiparty politics, and the election of Kibaki.

As noted in chapter 4, the electoral violence of 2007-2008 contained the violent hallmarks of authoritarian politics, with much of the violence appearing due to ethnic divisions that were exacerbated by key political figures, whilst citizens in affected areas became convinced that choice land distribution policies favoured by the dominant ethnic groups would be enacted again to deny the prospect of fair multiparty democracy within Kenya. Repressive policies of control furthermore became important within Kibaki and Uhuru Kenyatta's tenures when addressing the threat of Islamic-inspired terrorism.

Beyond this, security concerns also came to the fore as narratives used to negotiate with external actors. This has been identified throughout the thesis as connected with a more limited ability for authoritarian governments to exercise agency. When government heads had a more limited capacity to shape the narratives through which foreign policy was conducted, a focus from recipients on security concerns acted as more of a driving strategy for the government.

The correlation between these points has been noted in several cases within this thesis. On the Ethiopian side, security concerns became an increasingly important aspect of agency-leveraging by Selassie's government, especially as internal challenges to the government were heightened. Security challenges for the ruling government were framed as existential concerns, coupled with the use of legitimacy narratives to heighten the importance of the current ruling government. Such concerns were further heightened – and focussed on – by the Derg government, who centred their entire agency-leveraging approach upon the security concerns the government faced upon coming to power, and how threats from both within the government (including rebellion groups who sought to overthrow the Derg) alongside international challenges (such as the threat of Somali invasion, and the isolation of the government from Western donors) were existential, and as such required assistance from external actors to bolster the government.

On the Kenyan side, security concerns remained a consistent factor in the agency-leveraging strategies of governments throughout the thesis time period. What has been established however is

that governments within the Kenyan case who were capable of utilising other aspects of the agency-leveraging framework, and had considerable legitimacy to rule through means beyond violence and repression were less likely to focus their efforts on raising security concerns with external actors. Rather, the Jomo Kenyatta government was focussed on reshaping the narrative of foreign policy with Western donors and other external autocratic supporters, reliant upon Kenyatta's own legacy as an independence figure, alongside the government's beneficial position as a popular post-independence government. Within later governments in the Kenyan case study – in particular Moi's government during its latter years, and its need for repressive governance to maintain rule – security issues came to the fore when the government addressed external actors. Akin to the Derg in Ethiopia, a dual approach of heightening the existential threat of internal and external threats to the ruling leadership, alongside calls to legitimacy and the right to rule for his government.

A secondary aspect of this correlation noted within the thesis is that of China's role in the governments of both Kenya and Ethiopia. China has consistently provided support for governments in both case study countries throughout the thesis time period, albeit to different degrees of significance. Whilst not always prominently featuring as a supporter amongst each Kenyan or Ethiopian government, China has always had at least a minimal role in providing autocratic support, be it through legitimacy-bolstering infrastructural projects, or diplomatic support in multilateral environments. Yet beyond this, what has been drawn out from this study is that there are similarities between how recipient governments engage with – and shape their agency-leveraging strategies through – China.

Heightened engagement with China has been tracked in governments from both Kenya and Ethiopia to correlate with an existing restriction on agency-leveraging capabilities. In situations where the recipient government faces substantive domestic or international challenges to their legitimacy or stability – with subsequent challenges to their ability to utilise a wide variety of agency-leveraging strategies – China's support has emerged as a viable option to diversify the list of autocratic

supporters a recipient government can engage with. China's role has been heightened in periods of acute domestic or regional crisis for recipient governments, alongside periods where relations between the recipient government and Western states were strained. On the Ethiopian side, China emerged most prominently as an autocratic supporter providing infrastructural and diplomatic support for Meles' EPRDF following the restriction on Western support provided to the government after the repressive crackdown on pro-democracy protesters in 2005. China became a viable autocratic supporter on a larger scale because of the challenges the government faced and the lack of agency-leveraging strategies the EPRDF could use with external actors, rather than initially appearing as a viable foreign power for the government to engage in when it already had substantial support from alternative donors.

A similar process of engagement is seen in a couple of instances within the Kenyan case. During Moi's latter years, during the period of Western pressure for democratisation, the government attempted to court China as an additional supporter. The Moi government was in a period of heightened instability, relying on greater levels of repression, and with a restricted set of viable agency-leveraging strategies at their disposal. China's support was seen as beneficial due to the volatile and restricted environment Moi's government found itself in. Similarly, Kibaki's government began substantive engagement with China following international condemnation and pressure on the government following the electoral violence of 2007-2008, alongside the opening of ICC prosecutions against prominent figures in Kibaki's government.

Again, engagement with China – whilst preceding these events on a smaller scale – escalated substantially following the pressure placed upon the government by international actors, and the corresponding decrease in the capability for the government to exercise agency through the framework of strategies. China not only provided infrastructural and diplomatic support to Kibaki's government during this time, but their assistance acted as a key component of Kibaki's Vision 2030 legitimisation strategy during the political instability following the electoral violence.

What this pattern demonstrates is that whilst China's presence has had a notable impact on the landscape of autocratic support, its presence within the Ethiopian and Kenyan cases does not fundamentally change how the agency-leveraging framework operates. Indeed, China's presence only becomes noticeable within times of constricted abilities for recipients to exercise agency, and within this, the agency-leveraging strategy framework is still utilised by governments from both case study countries.

As such, this thesis has discussed several important similarities between governments in Ethiopia and Kenya. As seen, the framework of agency-leveraging strategies has been employed by governments in both cases. Furthermore, the domestic and international context, challenges, and opportunities that governments face have both motivated and restricted them to employ particular strategies when in discussion with donors and autocratic supporters alike. Governments that have faced challenges pertaining to their legitimacy or stability have been driven to engage in stability narratives and emphasising the existing legitimacy and right to rule of their own governments. In contrast, governments that have been in stronger positions of legitimacy and stability – derived through domestic control and support – can utilise a wider variety of agency-leveraging strategies, whilst being less reliant upon stability narratives. Equally, the interaction between recipient governments and China as an autocratic supporter has been tracked to occur in a particular way across several cases; engagement with China was preceded by recipient governments being in a position of limited capacity to exercise agency, and often facing some sort of domestic or international pressure for democratising change to be implemented.

Whilst these similarities demonstrate an important set of aspects through which to identify how agency is exercised by recipient governments – and which strategies are most used in similar situations – what has been emphasised most forcefully throughout this thesis is that domestic individualities are some of the most persuasive indicators as to how agency is exercised, and through which strategies authoritarian African governments conduct their foreign policy. As the initial

theoretical basis of the examination of foreign policy within this thesis – that of Putnam’s (1988) ‘two-level game’ framework – demonstrates the importance of understanding and incorporating the domestic elements and context present with recipient governments when examining how foreign policy is designed and executed. This thesis has furthermore emphasised that domestic politics have a substantial impact within the process of autocratic support; chapters 2 and 4 respectively demonstrated the linkages between the domestic realities within states, the machinations of authoritarian politics, and the resultant approach to exercising agency in securing autocratic support.

Addressing the four contributions of the thesis

Having briefly ascertained some of the primary similarities and differences between governments in the Ethiopian and Kenyan cases, this next part of the concluding chapter will focus on the four primary contributions this thesis sought to make, as highlighted in the introduction. Following this, the chapter will present some limited further cases where the agency-leveraging framework can be applied – in Myanmar and Venezuela – followed by further implications for research going forward. Firstly, this thesis sought to provide a systematic study of agency over multiple governments in two countries, permitting both between- and within- case analysis. The previous section of this concluding chapter has highlighted some of the primary comparative findings from this study, noting that certain strategies of leveraging agency come to the fore dependent upon the domestic and international realities that governments face.

Within the four empirical chapters, this in-depth examination of agency in action has been undertaken. Chapters 2 and 4 provided an in-depth focus on the domestic situation facing governments in both case study countries. Chapter 2 highlighted how the violent process of conquest and territorial expansion undertaken by the Ethiopian imperial government, and subsequent efforts to exert control from a centralised power base under the Selassie and Derg governments resulted in continual issues of insecurity and domestic instability. Such issues were

tracked into the resultant agency-leveraging strategies used by Ethiopian governments throughout chapter 3, alongside charting the increased capabilities for the EPRDF to exercise agency, due to their greater connections with Western donors, their focus on ethnic federalism to resolve domestic security issues, alongside their impressive economic growth record.

The Kenyan case received a similar detailed level of treatment, with chapter 4 highlighting the complex process of decolonisation and the internal strife and ethnic clashes experienced under the Jomo Kenyatta, Moi, and Kibaki administrations respectively. The challenges and at times political instability that governments in Kenya faced is highlighted as having a major impact on the agency-leveraging strategies used by the governments highlighted in chapter 5, such as the increased capabilities for Jomo Kenyatta to utilise multiple strategies from the framework, and Moi's reliance upon the stability constellation to shore up the legitimacy of his rule versus domestic challengers.

In addition, select governments within the Kenyan case study – those of Jomo Kenyatta and Mwai Kibaki – have been argued to have used strategies as part of the 'reshaping the narrative' constellation. Both governments were in a stronger position and with greater legitimacy to utilise several strategies designed not just to respond to the chief concerns of donors and external supporters, but to bring the main benefits and advantages the government provides to external actors, through the 'demonstrating success' strategy.

The second contribution this thesis has made is in the development of a novel typology of agency-leveraging strategies that are not only employed by government in Ethiopia and Kenya but can be expanded upon and utilised when examining other non-Western cases; in particular, middle and smaller authoritarian powers that have significant aid dependency upon external states.

As noted in chapter 1, the development of this typology was driven by the shortcomings of several existing studies of agency in action in authoritarian African cases. Studies of recipient agency in the past have primarily focussed upon more theoretical understandings of the capability for non-Western recipients to exercise agency when in negotiation with China, Russia, or other external

actors (Brown, 2012; Carmody & Kragelund, 2016; Coffie & Tiky, 2021; Mohan & Power, 2008) with correspondingly fewer examples of literature that seeks to identify how agency is exercised by recipient African governments. Furthermore, the existent literature on autocratic support provided by China, Russia, and other authoritarian external actors rarely centres upon the recipients in such relationships, leaving a substantive knowledge gap on how the autocratic support relationship can be explored from both the supporter and recipient sides. As such, the development of a typology of agency-leveraging strategies within this thesis connects both these areas of research together, alongside providing an operationalised approach to not only uncovering the prospect of agency being exercised amongst non-Western governments, but exploring how and in what contexts agency can be exercised. As the following section of this conclusion will demonstrate, the key contribution this thesis has made in developing the agency-leveraging typology is that it can be utilised across a variety of cases as a framework to uncover how non-Western, authoritarian foreign policy in middle and smaller states operates, and under what circumstances certain narratives or strategies will be used.

Thirdly, this thesis has engaged with the broader scholarly study of 'autocracy promotion', contributing to discussions on the role of ideology amongst autocracy promoters when engaging with recipients. Chapter 1 identified the broader study of autocracy promotion, highlighting at length some of the theoretical and practical limitations that the autocracy promotion term has provided to this area of research. This thesis acknowledged that some of the broader issues highlighted by scholars such as Tansey (2016a; 2016b) and Way (2015; 2016) are valid, such as the promotion terminology implying that such actions taken by promoter states are equivalent to the broader efforts of democracy promotion, as undertaken by Western donors. As such, this thesis used the less contentious autocratic support term throughout.

Yet it is in the additional discussion of ideologically motivated autocratic support where the contribution of this thesis has been most valuable. Chapter 1 argued that ideologically driven

autocratic support may not have been present when the bulk of the literature rejecting such a phenomenon was written, but that subsequent actions – particularly by China – demonstrate that an ideological assumption of how authoritarian states should be modelled and act has developed, and is being exported to recipient governments across the non-Western world.

The focus of this discussion centred upon both public proclamation of a new order of like-minded authoritarian governments, as noted by Xi in speeches and discussions on the topic, alongside the increased multidimensional approach towards autocratic support by Russia and China, that has involved knowledge exchanges, and teaching recipient African governments on the best practices that they can adopt from autocratic supporters, such as processes of maintaining party strength and discipline, and tactics on repressing citizen protests (Bader & Hackenesch, 2020; Walsh, 2022). Such methods used by autocratic supporters were argued to constitute an ideological approach to autocratic support. The argument within this thesis has not been that these tactics and approaches by autocratic supporters have not been adequately factored in by prior critiques of the concept, but that much of this renewed approach to autocratic support occurred after the critiques by Tansey (2016a; 2016b) and Way (2015) were published. The explorations of China and Russia's party-to-party meetings and knowledge exchanges represent an important step forward in re-evaluating how autocratic support operates. This thesis has thus contributed to this emerging research area.

Finally, the thesis has provided an additional scholarly contribution to the study of foreign policy, and the diversity of actors that are involved in how foreign policy is crafted and executed. A brief discussion on the complexities of foreign policymaking was contained within the thesis introduction, that focussed upon the potential misconceptions that can be made about the process of foreign policymaking in authoritarian governments. These issues identified in some of the literature centred upon an assumption that due to the centralised nature of some authoritarian governments, and their reliance upon singular, dominant leaders, foreign policymaking often reflects the whims and desires of the leader. The discussion held in the thesis introduction, and the later empirical chapters

sought to refute this and instead demonstrated the complexity of foreign policymaking within the Ethiopian and Kenyan cases; within each case study government, it has been demonstrated that foreign policy is crafted by a diverse group of elites and political actors, whilst also suffering from a process of contestation, pushback, and necessary compromise with influential political figures both within and beyond the government.

In the Ethiopian case, the domestic politics chapter highlighted how each authoritarian government endured challenges and infighting that affected the crafting of foreign policy. Selassie's interest in crafting foreign policy extended only to his dealings with the US during bilateral visits, with other prominent figures such as his Foreign Minister having a significant hand in how Ethiopia dealt with external actors. The Derg and Mengistu faced substantive revolts from members of the party following their ascendance to power, resulting in a complex, shifting approach to foreign policy as different groups within the government sought to align more with Western and Eastern actors. The EPRDF similarly had internal conflicts that affected the direction of policy; Meles sought to shift the direction of the government's foreign policy towards a more moderate position to attract Western support, despite some internal challenges.

On the Kenyan side, the primary argument this thesis makes on the diversity of foreign policymaking is to highlight the important role of the Kenyan parliament throughout the thesis time period. As noted within chapters 4 and 5, the parliament played a major role as a sounding board for the KANU government to gauge the popularity of policies, but also as a constraint on the foreign policy ambitions of leaders such as Jomo Kenyatta and Moi. Furthermore, internal strife and the challenge of prominent elites within KANU to Kenyatta's foreign policymaking led to significant impacts on the desired external actors that Kenya courted in the immediate post-independence years, and subsequently the agency-leveraging strategies at use by the government. These four major contributions that the thesis has made have potential ramifications beyond the Ethiopian and Kenyan case studies. Whilst the cases have been used as in-depth, illustrative examples of how

autocratic support operates – and the ways in which recipients can leverage agency with external actors – the following sections of the concluding chapter will demonstrate how the argument of this thesis can be applied to additional cases, and operate as a key framework for further research on autocratic support.

Applying the agency-leveraging framework beyond Africa

This thesis has developed and presented a novel approach to understanding how non-Western recipients of autocratic support can and do leverage agency with their external counterparts to further bolster and legitimise their rule. A framework of agency-leveraging strategies, capturing the various mechanisms and approaches recipient governments have used. To illustrate the applicability of this agency-leveraging framework, the thesis employed two in-depth case studies, examining how governments in Ethiopia and Kenya, over a significant time period of 1963 to 2018, have utilised these strategies, alongside how domestic and international factors and constraints have influenced the type and effectiveness of such strategies.

The use of comparative case studies in this thesis has – as noted in the thesis introduction – reinforced the argument that the agency-leveraging framework is a useful framing device and explanatory tool to understand the use of agency-leveraging strategies by recipient states. As noted earlier in this concluding chapter, the noticeable similarities between cases demonstrates that this framework is applicable across multiple case studies. Furthermore, chapter 1 expanded the applicability of the framework by drawing upon cases from across the African continent to reinforce individual strategies. This approach accurately captured the range of agency-leveraging strategies available for recipient states, alongside the comparative cases reinforcing the notion that specific constellations of strategies have been used when similar constraints and challenges, such as threats to government strength and legitimacy, become significant issues.

Whilst the comparative approach has been beneficial in this light, it is worthwhile highlighting that some drawbacks to the case study choices have been identified. For one, both the Kenyan and

Ethiopian cases do not fully reflect the full range of agency-leveraging strategies available to recipients of autocratic support. Certain strategies, such as economic exchange, do not appear within either case in a significant capacity, and thus a fuller exploration of how this strategy is invoked and utilised is not present in this study. Nevertheless, this has been identified within chapter 1 of the thesis; one of the key points raised in that chapter when exploring the range of strategies emphasises that no one case study from across Africa contains an adequate and consistent use of all the framework strategies. In the Kenyan and Ethiopian cases, it was noted that both states do not have substantial supplies of rare raw materials desired by autocratic supporters and donors, to the extent that they can be utilised to exercise agency. In this way, other cases that utilise economic exchange as a key agency-leveraging strategy have been identified within chapter 1, such as Angola (Corkin, 2013).

Secondly, the Ethiopian and Kenyan cases demonstrate a strong reliance upon other agency-leveraging strategies that emphasise government strength and demonstrating success and legitimacy. As noted in earlier chapters, the emphasis with both the case study countries used in this thesis has been on how they have used their military strength and diplomatic persuasion to secure further support. As seen throughout the empirical chapters, references to the benefits of external supporters engaging with Ethiopia or Kenya have frequently relied upon these aspects of state strength. Again, it is emphasised that the ability for governments in both states to repeatedly utilise these talking points is not an ability shared equally amongst all African states undertaking foreign policy negotiations with autocratic supporters; as noted in chapter 1, some states are inherently weaker and have less capability to highlight their diplomatic and military importance to external actors. Both Ethiopia and Kenya therefore represent a particular type of case study where diplomatic and military importance – stemming from their unique domestic context and history – are heavily utilised to leverage agency.

Both cases have demonstrated the breadth and usefulness of the agency-leveraging framework in understanding how African authoritarian states conduct their foreign policy. However, I argue that this thesis does not provide an exhaustive coverage of how agency is leveraged in autocratic support through its case studies alone. To provide some indicative ways in which the framework can be further applied to cases not only outside of Africa but also where additional agency-leveraging strategies are employed such as economic exchange, this next section seeks to provide some brief overviews of other cases beyond the African continent, notably Myanmar and Venezuela. Both cases have been chosen because of their past and current authoritarian governments – thereby allowing for some comparison with the authoritarian governments examined in Ethiopia and Kenya – but also because each case demonstrates some additional agency-leveraging strategies not discussed in detail in the thesis thus far; notably the use of economic exchange and resources to exercise agency.

Agency-leveraging strategies in Myanmar

The Myanmar case demonstrates some broad similarities to the Kenyan and Ethiopian cases in how governments in the state have employed hedging and stability strategies to leverage support from autocratic supporters, yet resource wealth has also proved important.

Governments in Myanmar have experienced significant foreign policy pressure from China due to their regional closeness, alongside the historical levels of support China has provided Myanmar through military assistance and diplomatic support. Akin to the relationship China has sought to foster with African states examined in chapter 1 of this thesis, the historical legacies of mutual support and China's role in assisting Myanmar prior to colonisation, and following independence from Britain acted as an important historical connector between supporter and recipient (Than, 2003: 190-191).

China's close relationship with Myanmar, its geographic proximity, and strategic dominance of the region has – akin to other cases noted throughout this thesis – given rise to suggestions that the Myanmar government is dependent on China for both resources to ensure government stability, and

for its diplomatic protection internationally (Sun, 2012a; Oh, 2022). However, as has been stressed throughout this study, a simplistic view of dependence betrays the nuance and intricacies of how recipient states can respond to foreign pressure.

In Myanmar, several strategies from the agency-leveraging framework are present, as identified in secondary literature. For one, much of Myanmar's agency-leveraging capabilities have been drawn from their use of natural resources, and the 'economic exchange' strategy of the framework. It should be noted that geographically, Myanmar borders China, and as such many of the autocratic support strategies used by Myanmar are directed towards China as their closest external supporting states. Governments in Myanmar frequently used China's desire for natural resources to acquire modern weapons from China that were used to suppress internal revolts (Than, 2003: 196), alongside trading resources with China to secure large, interest-free loans for infrastructural development, including the planning and construction of dams, roads, and mines (Wong, 2019: 365). Whilst as noted in chapter 1 there are issues associated with classing resource wealth and economic exchange as an agency-leveraging strategy, it is noted within the literature consulted here that Myanmar leaders used the attraction of natural resources to capture large amounts of support from China, which was then channelled towards projects decided upon by the government, acting as an important stabilisation tactic (Sun, 2012b). Chinese support also worked to block Western attempts at criticising the government in Myanmar over human rights abuses, with China using its UN Security Council seat to veto condemnation of Myanmar (Oh, 2022: 3-4).

Importantly, the literature also highlights how further agency-leveraging strategies were used by governments in Myanmar, particularly during periods where the political alignment between Myanmar and China lessened. Indeed, during the brief period of political reform that Myanmar undertook in the 2010s, the government sought to diversify away from reliance upon Chinese support. Narratives such as the importance of maintaining stability in Myanmar in the face of potential terrorist threats were used to re-engage with the West, particularly the US, yet crucially

Myanmar officials also utilised the threat of US engagement as a catalyst to secure Chinese support and supplies, despite the Chinese disapproving of the political reform being undertaken in Myanmar (Bader, 2015: 25).

Talk of democratisation also encouraged re-engagement with the US, and resulted in the lifting of sanctions. This occurred despite the political liberalisation programme in Myanmar occurring under the auspices of the military leadership, rather than it occurring as a natural and genuine transition towards democracy (Wong, 2019). Hedging remained a consistent strategy for governments in Myanmar; the leadership of the military government had always maintained an official stance of neutrality in foreign policy (Than, 2003: 196), yet internal changes and threats to the government caused Myanmar to align either towards China for support, or against China as a threat and attempt to secure resources. Myanmar's government symbolically cancelled a major dam construction project funded by China in 2011 in order to demonstrate to the US that it was serious about reform and re-engagement with the West, whilst also acting as a domestic demonstration that Myanmar was not beholden to China (Sun, 2012b: 85), yet it was also used as a catalyst to induce further autocratic support. Chinese officials undertook a public relations campaign to prove that China was not a dominant power but instead had altruistic intentions, by building schools and hospitals across the country, endorsed by the Myanmar government (Sun, 2012a: 67-68).

As such, this brief discussion of the Myanmar case demonstrates that several strategies from the agency-leveraging framework are applicable in a case beyond authoritarian Africa, and that the framework represents a useful tool to collate and categorise foreign policy approaches by authoritarian recipients.

Agency-leveraging strategies in Venezuela

The Venezuelan case again represents a case study where several agency-leveraging strategies are in play. Contemporary Venezuela has been a case where autocracy promotion has been investigated in detail, with much of this discussion based upon Venezuela's political capabilities at influencing other

governments to become more authoritarian in their approach to governance, alongside their ability to leverage their oil wealth for autocratic support (Brand et al. 2015; Gratius, 2022; Kneuer, 2022; Menegol, 2022; Vanderhill, 2012).

Venezuela's engagement with autocratic supporters – akin to the Myanmar case – largely focuses on China and Russia. Brand et al. (2015) provide an overview of China's activities in Latin America, highlighting that although much of the focus of China's international activities has centred upon Africa and Asia, there is ample evidence to suggest that China seeks to play a greater role in Latin American affairs. Meanwhile, Gratius (2022: 149) notes that Russia has become interested in supporting Venezuela due to the large oil reserves of the state. Menegol (2022) furthermore suggests that China and Russia seek to bolster existing authoritarian governments across the continent and have a desire to reverse or stall democratic consolidation in several Latin American states. Menegol (2022) alongside other scholars (Gratius, 2022; Kneuer, 2022) therefore classify China's and Russia's actions as autocratic support, alongside both autocratic supporters seeking to stabilise existing authoritarian governments.

Autocratic support for Venezuela since the beginning of the twenty-first century has centred upon how Venezuelan governments have leveraged their importance as influential in encouraging other Latin American states in the region to embrace authoritarianism. This ability in turn has been used to endear the government to China, with Venezuelan officials emphasising their role in connecting China to other authoritarian governments across the continent (Kneuer, 2022). In some ways, this relationship and the actions of Venezuelan officials is similar to the 'aligning aims and interests' strategy of the framework; the desire by China to further integrate itself into authoritarian politics across the continent leads to a need for Venezuela to instigate and support such further integration. Gratius (2022: 151) notes that China has diplomatically supported the sovereignty of Venezuela and other Latin American states, counteracting Western efforts to promote democracy across the continent.

Other aspects of the agency-leveraging framework are more visible when exploring the Russia-Venezuela relationship, such as the 'economic exchange' and 'mobilising historical linkages' strategies. As noted earlier, Venezuela's oil wealth has given the government considerable leverage to engage with Russia, permitting a high level of investment in the state (Menegol, 2022). As highlighted by Gratius (2022: 149) this investment has led to Russian support for the existing government in Venezuela; the government has emphasised that it requires autocratic support to ensure that Russian investments are secure. Potential democratisation could in turn threaten Russia's position in extracting Venezuelan oil. Finally, Venezuelan officials have emphasised their historical connections to Russia, whilst also using their previous history and fraught relations with the US to connect to Russian narratives on combatting US hegemony (Way, 2016). Russia has enjoyed extensive relations with consecutive Venezuelan governments stemming from Hugo Chávez's tenure in the early 2000s (Vanderhill, 2012: 4), and more recently Venezuelan officials have capitalised upon this to emphasise the mutual support both states have given each other throughout history, thereby emphasising their mutual historical linkages (Gratius, 2022). Furthermore, ideological narratives promoted by Chávez and perpetuated by subsequent Venezuelan government officials on socialism, independence, and the rejection of US hegemony (Kneuer, 2022: 128) have chimed with Russian rejections of a 'US-led world order' (Way, 2016); both Russian and Venezuelan officials have built their relationship – and the process of autocratic support – on the notion that they together are seeking to counteract Western hegemony and democracy promotion across the Latin American continent (Gratius, 2022: 150).

Whilst again this is a brief exploration of the use of some of the agency-leveraging strategies at play in additional cases, it does present some tentative areas of research that show the applicability of the framework in authoritarian cases beyond the African continent.

Future areas of research

Having briefly explored some additional cases, there are several areas for potential research that this thesis has uncovered, but does not have the adequate space to undertake. Firstly, the introduction of the agency-leveraging framework into this research area presents a whole host of potential further studies. The framework as seen is designed to be applied to aid-dependent authoritarian cases across the African continent and potentially beyond. The study undertaken here emphasises that in-depth explorations of how autocratic support is negotiated upon requires a detailed understanding of the domestic context for each case. As such, further studies need to focus in detail upon the domestic context for cases, but the agency-leveraging framework and constellations of strategies presented here provide a useful tool for analysis and framing of this disparate research area. Therefore, whilst this thesis has provided two in-depth case studies through which the agency-leveraging framework has been tested alongside some brief further cases, one of the primary contributions has been to develop a novel approach to understanding agency in non-Western, aid-dependent authoritarian states, alongside highlighting the need for further in-depth, empirically-rich studies to fully explore and understand how autocratic support functions.

This thesis has, in addition, been produced during a time of political upheaval and change in several states such as Ethiopia, that for brevity's sake have not been captured in this study, and would be worthwhile targets for further research. The time period of this thesis – 1963 to 2018 – was purposefully chosen to remove the need to address the fast-changing policies and approaches of the Ethiopian Prosperity Party under Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, but also to interrogate the pre-2018 period in greater depth. Further developments through the writing of this thesis, such as the Tigray War, a stronger connection to Russia and China by Abiy's government, Ethiopia's isolation from Western donors, and the leadership change in Kenya to President William Ruto in 2022, all represent substantial changes that affect how both states will undertake foreign policymaking, alongside the agency-leveraging strategies that will be used with autocratic supporters and donors.

For example, emerging research concerning the Ethiopian case has highlighted that the Tigray War has further complexified the international relations of Abiy's government, and driven the continued use of aspects of the agency-leveraging framework. Whilst the conflict has strained relations with Western donors, who have condemned allegations that Abiy's government has committed numerous human rights abuses (Fisher, 2022), Abiy's government has continued to emphasise its role as a moderate force capable of maintaining stability in the region to a variety of autocracy supporters, such as Russia and China (Munday, 2021). As such, Abiy's continual use of stability narratives would be a worthwhile case study to continue exploring the applicability of the agency-leveraging framework.

As seen throughout this thesis, different governments have employed both new and familiar strategies compared to their predecessors, and it is only natural to consider that such changes will have occurred during Abiy and Ruto's tenures, respectively. As such, it is a useful area of research for future studies to explore, to the study of recipient agency in autocratic support.

A note on sources and archival references:

As noted in the thesis introduction, this project incorporates primary material from a wide variety of archival sources. As such, the bibliography has been divided, with the sources presented here pertaining to archival material, whilst secondary resources are presented within the following bibliography. The exception to this are resources from the Wilson Center, as these are digitally collated records from a wide variety of Soviet archives. As such these are referenced in the bibliography under the 'Wilson Center' title.

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