



SEEK WISDOM, ELEVATE YOUR INTELLECT AND SERVE HUMANITY!

Addis Ababa University
አዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ



ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

**The Relationship Between Ethiopia and Sudan: The Case of
GERD (2011-2023)**

By Mntesnot Esayas Gitore

**COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, DEPARTMENT OF
POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

December, 2023

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia

**The Relationship Between Ethiopia and Sudan: The Case of
GERD (2011-2023)**

By:

MNTESNOT ESAYAS

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL
SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS (PSIR) IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE
DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
AND DIPLOMACY**

SUPERVISOR:

YACOB ARSANO (PHD)

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS**

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

October, 2013

APPROVED BY THE BOARD EXAMINERS

Yacob Arsano (Ph.D) _____

Advisor

Signature

Date

Firehiwot Sintayehu (Ph.D) _____

Examiner (Internal) Signature

Date

Tesfaye Shiferaw (Ph.D) _____

Examiner (External) Signature

Date

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis has been composed by myself and that it has not been submitted to or presented, in whole or in part, in any university for a degree. All the sources herein in the thesis have been properly recognized and acknowledged.

BY: MNTESSNOT ESAYAS

Sign_____

Date_____

SUPERVISOR: YACOB ARSANO (PHD)

Sign_____

Date_____

Contents

APPROVED BY THE BOARD EXAMINERS	iii
DECLARATION	iv
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	vii
LIST OF ACRONYMS	viii
ABSTRACT	x
CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the Study.....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem.....	3
1.3 Core Argument.....	4
1.4 Overall and Specific Objective of the Research	4
1.5 Overall and Specific Research Questions	5
1.6 Research Methodology and Method	5
1.7 Scope of the Study	6
1.8 Significance of the Study	6
1.9 Organization of the Study	7
1.10 Ethical Considerations	7
CHAPTER TWO	8
CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS.....	8
2.1.1 Hydro-Political Relations of African Countries.....	8
2.1.2 Ethio- Sudan Hydro-Political Relations.....	9
2.2 National Interest.....	13
2.3 Hydro-Politics	15
2.3.1 Definition	15
2.4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS	18
2.1.4. Constructivism	19
2.4.2 Counter-hegemony.....	22
2.4.3 Hydro-diplomacy	23
2.4.4 Water Diplomacy Framework (WDF)	26
CHAPTER THREE	27
GRAND ETHIOPIAN RENAISSANCE DAM (GERD).....	27
3.1. Dam Construction in Africa.....	27
3.2. Early Projects in Abbay River Basin and Evolution of the GERD.....	28

3.2.1.	Nile River Basin.....	28
3.2.2.	Early Attempts and Projects in Abbay River Basin.....	28
3.3.	Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) Project.....	31
3.3.1.	Location, Plan, and Structure.....	32
3.3.2.	Cost and Current State of the Project.....	33
3.4	Transformations Resulted from GERD in the Relationship between Upstream and Downstream Countries.....	34
3.4.1	Counter-hegemony Instrument.....	34
3.4.2.	GERD as an Arena of Cooperation.....	48
CHAPTER FOUR.....		51
THE CASE OF GERD IN ETHIO-SUDAN RELATIONS.....		51
4.1	Shifting Positions of Sudan; Effects on the negotiation process.....	51
4.1.1	Sudan’s Improved Hydro-relations with Ethiopia and Declining with Egypt.....	51
4.1.2	Secession of South Sudan: Impacts of Sudan’s Economy.....	54
4.1.3	Sudan, on the other way, round.....	58
4.2	Leadership Change in Both Countries and Its Impact on the Negotiation Process.....	65
4.3	Absence of Agreement in Dam Filling and Operation.....	69
CHAPTER FIVE.....		74
CONCLUSION.....		74
REFERENCES.....		76
Books and Book Chapters.....		76
Journal Articles.....		79
Conference Papers, Research Reports.....		86
Newspaper and Magazine.....		90
Thesis.....		91
APPENDICES.....		92

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, Glory to God, whose help and perseverance are with me all the time. I would like to thank my advisor Doctor Yacob for his intellectual guidance, critical insights, and patience. His willingness to guide me in a very busy schedule and has a friendly approach. Also, I would like to thank those who helped me directly and indirectly throughout my research by giving their precious time for interviews and discussions. I appreciate Informants from the Ministry of Foreign relations, Ministry of Addis Ababa University, Institute of Foreign Affairs, and also independent researchers and consultants like Doctor Ana Elisa Cascao for their insightful information. Lastly, my special heartfelt gratitude goes to my whole family members. Without their moral and financial support, I wouldn't be where I am today. Especially my mother, Workinesh Haile, who sacrificed her dream to fulfill mine. Also, my father, Esayas Gitore, thanks for teaching me the value and purpose of life. Zenebech Moges and other family members, thanks for your support and encouragement.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AU	African Union
CFA	Cooperative Framework Agreement
DoP	Declaration of Principles
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
EPRDF	Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
FFC	Forces for Freedom and Change
GoE	Government of Ethiopia
GERD	Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam
ICG	International Crisis Group
IPoE	International Panel of Experts
MASL	Meter above Sea Level
METEC	Metal and Engineering Corporations
MWR	Ministry of Water Resources
NBI	Nile Basin Initiative
Nile-COM	Nile Commission of Ministers
NIRSG	National Independent Research Scientific Group
PM	Prime Minister
SC	Sovereign Council
SPLA	Sudan People’s Liberation Army

TECCONILE Technical Committee for the Promotion of the Development and Environmental Protection of the Nile Basin

TMC Transitional Military Council

TNC Tripartite National Committee

UAE United Arab Emirates

UNDP United Nations Development Program

UNSC United Nations Security Council

US United States

USBR United States Bureau of Reclamation

USIP United States Institute of Peace

WDF Water Diplomacy Framework

ABSTRACT

This paper is about the Case of GERD in the relationship between Ethiopia and Sudan from 2011 to 2023. Following the historical commencement of the Project in 2011, it significantly changed the historical relationship between the upstream and downstream and also became the center of the relationship between Ethiopia and Sudan. Carefully following a series of events and negotiations, starting from 2011, analyzing its impact on the relationship between Ethiopia and Sudan is thoroughly undertaken. In the course of this research, qualitative research methods and exploratory research methodology are employed. Primary and Secondary data collection methods are employed, and through unstructured interviews with experts and officials from different government institutions and individuals, primary data are collected. These transformations are mainly continuing the counter-hegemonic struggles that began before the inauguration of GERD, and for the first time in history, the downstream countries are compelled to discuss the dam by Ethiopia's agenda of using the water resource. Additionally, Sudan shifted its position throughout the negotiation, one time supporting Ethiopia and another time against Ethiopia. This further complicates the negotiation process. Coupled with internal political problems, border issues, and geopolitical contention in the region, Sudan shifted its position to gain political and economic support, but this hampers the relationship with Ethiopia and the negotiation process. There was a change of leadership in both countries, contrary to what was expected, and this became a problem as the Sudan military leaders took the Egyptian side. With the filling of the dam going, Sudan pushes negotiations to gain a bargain for the future dam operation. This research paper could be a spring board for future research on the area as the case is still ongoing, and also, policy and consultants for deep analysis on the subject.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Ethiopia's relations with its neighboring states changed following the decolonization process by which African states gained their political independence (Doop, 2013:123). The main issues that made Ethiopia and its neighbors opposed are the issues of the use or access to the region's water resources, the dispute over territory and political integrity, and the issue of economic development (Doop, 2013:124). Ethiopia and Sudan have had long and continuous relations from ancient to the present time; the relationship can be characterized from peaceful and cooperative to hostile and conflictual. They share boundaries, the same people live across border areas, and there are a lot of commonalities between these states and a lot of problems between the two countries.

Immediately after the independence of Sudan in 1956, the relationship between Sudan and Ethiopia was mainly characterized by a conflictual one, marked by prevalent tension and suspicion, which is continued in the current relationship (Belete, 2016a:35). In the words of Regassa (2007:3), the main reasons are "internal political and socio-economic problems in Ethiopia and Sudan, together with super-power rivalries in the Horn brought about periods of increasing hostilities between the two countries".

Eventhough the bigger picture of the relationship between Ethiopia and Sudan is predominantly occupied by mistrust and tensions, there are different moments where it demonstrated the other way. One of the positive gestures in their relationship is the first peace agreement between the Sudan government and the South Sudan Rebels (Belete, 2012). In 1971 the first peacemaking initiative for Southern Sudan was started in Addis Ababa by Ethiopian emperor Haile Selassie, together with Sudanese president Jafaar Nimeiri, on 27 February 1972, the South Sudan Liberation Army and government signed the Addis Ababa Agreement. The other positive development of the relationship between Sudan and Ethiopia is the peace keeping mission in the Abiye region. The Ethiopian army had been deployed in the contested border areas between Sudan and South Sudan, the Ethiopian army was reliable and trusted by both contesting nations.

The Nile River, which starts in the Ethiopian highlands, is one of the important resources the two countries share. From the Ethiopian side, there have been attempts by consecutive leaders to use the river for agricultural irrigation and hydroelectric production. To this end, Emperor Haile Selassie I hired the US Bureau of Reclamation in 1964 to study and identify four sites for a potential hydroelectric dam, which included the current position of the GERD hydroelectric dam (Wheeler, K et al. 2016). Until recently, there has been no major development in the river by Ethiopia. In April 2011, Ethiopia publicly announced the plan for a huge hydroelectric dam near the Ethio-Sudan border (Cascao and Nicol, 2016).

Lakes Border Dam was the original name mentioned in the US Bureau Study in 1964, then Ethiopia named the dam 'Project X.' When the foundation stone was laid, a new name was given to the project 'Grand Millennium Dam, again the name was changed to 'Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (Negm et al., 2018:219).The Nile River has been a source of enormous opportunities for cooperation and significant threats of conflict between Ethiopia and Sudan because both states are among the main actors of this water resource (Embiale et' al., 2018:151). Hydro-political dynamics of the Nile have been the most important variable defining the historical past, present, and future relationship between the two states (Ibid). In addition to defining the relationship between Ethiopia and Sudan, it is also one of the main politico-economic issues in the broader region.

GERD is the first major dam on the Abbay River, a combination of a 1.8 km long high gravity dam, a 5 km long rock fill saddledam, and a 300 m long-separate spillway between the main and saddle dam on the Nile River (Wosenu and Shimelis, 2019:5). The announcement of the dam signaled various aspects from the historical and political relationship between the upper stream and downstream countries. Which was known for its antagonist and conflictual relation throughout many decades for controlling the sources of the Nile and deterring the upper stream countries from developing the river with different mechanisms (Cascao and Nicol, 2016:565).

At the same time, downstream countries have raised concerns regarding the changed stream flow and effects on the environment and ecology that the dam will induce (Abdelhadi et' al, 2015:75). It was only a year after construction of the project commenced that an International Panel of Experts(IPoE) began examining the documents of the project to reduce tensions and build trust (Tawfik, 2015:22).To overcome the deadlocks in technical negotiations over the implementation

of the panel's recommendations, a Declaration of Principles was signed by the three Heads of State in March 2015, thus taking the project on to a new phase of cooperation (Ibid).

Recently, the issue of the dam has become the epicenter of the disagreement between Sudan and Ethiopia, adding to the already existing situation and determining the relationship between them. Given the regime changes that took place in the two countries and the polarity in the regional and international power systems, the two countries are continuing their different paths of portraying the dam in their policies and international stages.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Ethiopia and Sudan have a long history of conflictual relations; the current dispute over the management of the flow of the Nile River is rooted in the evolving historical patterns of relationships among the basin countries. Regional and international power plays, competing for economic paradigms, cultural and social dynamics, and diverging perceptions on developmental recipes are factors that have contributed to shaping the current hydro-political environment (Grandi, 2016:168).

The late Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi cultivated close ties with the former president of Sudan, Omar al-Bashir, in pursuit of strategic goals; the main one is Sudan's support for the construction of the GERD. Sudan's position began to witness some gradual but steady changes, and many water experts and Sudan politicians started to argue that Sudan would benefit from the GERD (Salman, 2017). Moreover, the signing of the "Declaration of Principles" would not have happened if the Sudan government had not cooperated in the Nile water negotiation (Tsega, 2017:152). Later, Sudan's position started to change, as Wossenu and Shimelis (2019:145) Sudan started to soften its position on GERD, stressed the critical need for Egyptian participation, and stated its commitment to the 1959 Nile water share agreement between Sudan and Egypt.

The change of leadership in both countries has shown the divergent way they follow how they perceive the dam. Given Sudan's mild role situated between Ethiopia and Egypt, both countries tried to sway Sudan towards their respective positions; this has deepened factionalism within the transitional government in Khartoum (Sorbo, 2020:12). This, in turn, shows up its resulted in the relationship of Sudan and Ethiopia in negotiations over the dam. The smooth relationship

cultivated between the pre-2018 government of Ethiopia and al-Basheer has changed its course and resulted in antagonist paths followed by successive leaders in both countries.

Sudan fears so much about whether its interests are protected that it seeks assurance from Addis Ababa about reservoir management and safety procedures. According to Crises Group African Briefing (2021:5), the great source of friction between Ethiopia and Sudan is the GERD, Sudan worries about the absence of an agreement on terms for filling and operating the project, and its dams could be inundated. After the Sudanese 2019 protest, which resulted from leadership change, Sudan approached more to the Egyptian agenda of filling the dam for in longer time, which Ethiopia never accepted for various reasons.

Some literatures like Salman, 2016, Tsega, 2017, Young 2020 analyzed the issue of GERD in Ethiopia and Sudan, they focused on the Sudan's political dynamics and negotiations on GERD, but their literatures has not touched about the impact of leadership changes in both countries, Ethiopian internal dynamics and recent events. So, this research will explore the relationship between Ethiopia and Sudan in terms of the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam since 2011 and its effects on the centuries-long social, political, and economic relations of the two neighboring countries.

1.3 Core Argument

Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam has changed the traditional imbalance relation between the upstream and downstream countries and has had a huge influence on Sudan and Ethiopia's relations. This project becomes an epicenter of contention between the two countries, with many consequences on the cooperation-conflict dynamics, regional power balance, and international relations. It implies the future relations between Ethiopia and Sudan in terms of peace, security, and economic development.

1.4 Overall and Specific Objective of the Research

The overall objective of the research is to explore the relationship between Ethiopia and Sudan in the case of the Great Ethiopia Renaissance Dam starting from 2011 to 2023.

The specific objectives: -

- ✓ Investigate the fundamental transformations resulting from the GERD project on upstream and downstream relations.
- ✓ Assess the uneven position of the Sudan government, from supporting the GERD to supporting the Egyptian position and its consequences.
- ✓ Examine the implication of the change of leadership in both countries on the negotiation over GERD.
- ✓ Review the impact of the absence of agreements in terms of dam filling and operation.

1.5 Overall and Specific Research Questions

The overall research question is how the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam affected the relationship between Ethiopia and Sudan from 2011 to 2023?

The specific questions are: -

- ✓ What fundamental transformation resulted from the GERD in the upstream and downstream countries' relations?
- ✓ What are the reasons behind the shifting of the position of Sudan from supporting the GERD to taking sides with Egypt?
- ✓ How does the change of leadership in both countries affect the negotiations over the GERD?
- ✓ How does the absence of agreement in terms of dam filling and operation affect the relationship between the two countries?

1.6 Research Methodology and Method

Research Methodology is a broader concept, a systematic way to solve the research problem. It is about the logic behind the method we use in our research study and why we either use or do not use the method for the results to be evaluated by others or the researcher himself (Kothari, 2004). It does not only focus on such “how to” questions but also on one’s more inclusive reflections on the “why” choices regarding the choice of the data collection methods and technologies and the choice of how to analyze the data so collected (Pruzan, 2016:186).

This research work employs a qualitative research method, which is best for the intensive inquiry of case study research. The qualitative method allows the researcher to gather data from multiple sources rather than rely on a specific data source and enables the researcher to review the whole data and organize and analyze it properly (Cresswell, 2014:330). This study employs an exploratory approach for its deep analysis of the Ethiopia and Sudan relation in the case of GERD from 2011 to 2023.

This research uses both primary and secondary data collection tools. The primary sources are collected through semi-structured interviews with some important key informants. The key informants are selected purposively from the Political Science and International Relations Department at Addis Ababa University, government officials from the FDRE Ministry of Foreign Affairs, FDRE Ministry of Water and Energy, Institute of Foreign Affairs, and Addis Ababa University. The researcher's attempt to get an informant from the Embassy of the Republic of Sudan in Addis Ababa has not succeeded. These informants are selected based on their position and knowledge, which enables them to have current, valid, and authoritative information that is the backbone of this research work. Secondary data is also important for analysis and interpretation obtained from books, journal articles, web sources, official documents, media briefings, as well as published and unpublished literature.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The research assesses and explores the Ethio-Sudan Relation by putting its focus on the case of GERD from 2011 to 2023. This study only focuses on Ethiopia and Sudan relations on the GERD project as an area of study, and it only focuses on identified objectives and research questions.

1.8 Significance of the Study

This study is significant in exploring and examining insights on GERD, the relationship between Ethiopia and Sudan, and GERD's effect on their relationship. The findings of this study could contribute to the existing body of knowledge in the area since the literature is scanty that directly deals with Ethio-Sudan Relations within the framework of GERD. Moreover, it's expected to be a data source for future researchers and academics for further exploration and research on the

study area. In addition, policymakers and practitioners can use the findings of this research as input in the policy formulation, evaluation, or change of their policy.

1.9 Organization of the Study

This paper consists of five chapters. The first chapter is the introduction: Background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, Methodology and Method of data collection, scope of the study, Significance of the study, and Organization of the study, and Ethical Considerations. Chapter two consists of reviewing the literature on the Hydro-relations of African countries, Ethio-Sudan Hydro-relations, National Interest, Hydro-politics, and, Hydro-diplomacy relations. And theoretical frameworks that best fit the research. This helps to give a complete picture of the historical relations between Ethiopia and Sudan and GERD and the theoretical understanding of the issue. Chapter Three is about the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, its evolution, and the Current state of the dam. Chapter four explores the changes brought by the GERD in the upper and downstream relations, the shifting positions of Sudan and its effect, the leadership changes in both countries, and how it affected the negotiations and issues of dam filling and operation from the research findings, and finally chapter five is the conclusion and recommendation.

1.10 Ethical Considerations

There are certain codes of ethics in academic research that must be respected while conducting academic research. Accordingly, this research has followed those ethical principles and conducts. Before involving the key informants in the interview and introducing the researcher, the purpose and objective of this study were briefed to them to have their goodwill. Also, respondents were consulted on whether to use or not use their names in the research as a source. The researcher has properly acknowledged and cited sources from others and did not compromise the findings of this research to serve his perception or any other entity.

CHAPTER TWO

CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

2.1 Hydro-Political Relations

2.1.1 Hydro-Political Relations of African Countries

Africa has over 63 river basins that transcend international borders, and rivers that cross two countries to eleven countries are strategically important for their development ambitions (Ashton and Turton, 2009). Most of the African river basins are shared by two to four countries (Ashton et al., 2005). For instance, Rivers like Congo, Niger, Nile, Lake Chad, Zambezi¹, and other African rivers are shared by different countries (Wolf, 2005). Other important river basins in Africa transcend political boundaries and are utilized in different ways by various countries.

Anderson et al., 1994 analyzed the general characteristics of African River basins that influence their mode of development and have an impact on international cooperation. First, the concentration of run-off is largely limited to some mountainous areas, which are marked by seasonal and annual variations in rainfall. Second, the seasonal and annual flows in the river systems are subject to wide variations. Third, limited utilization compared to available water resources; the other characteristic is high water quality, and except for the Nile basin and the Niger Delta, there is no commendable irrigation land (1994:3-6). Another unusual characteristic of African river basins is several of them are endorheic (Ashton et al., 2005).

In African river basins, there are crucial factors that draw hydro political vulnerability², like climate change, population growth, and socioeconomic or development prospects. Ashton et al. (2005) argue that the risk of dispute or conflict is minimized if the institutional capacity to absorb change can respond appropriately to whatever change occurs; hydro-political vulnerability in Africa must examine both sides of the scale, i.e., the underlying hydrological factors that create or drive change and the legal and institutional responses to such change (2005:19-28). In addition to the previous factor's unilateral development projects, the absence of institutional capacity, hostile political relations, and power asymmetry (economic, political, or military) also lead to hydro-political vulnerability (Wolf, 2005).

¹Congo, Niger, and Nile River are shared by 11 countries, Lake Chad and Zambezi is shared by 8 countries.

²Hydro-political vulnerability is the risk of a political dispute over a shared water basin.

Complexities created by factors like economic interest, ecology, climate, political relations, and different cultures, transboundary water management is considered conflict management or prevention (Peterson-Perlman et al., 2017). After the end of the cold war, more and more countries are engaging themselves with co-riparian countries to deal with the common water resources, and this process has been seen with several negotiated water-sharing regimes (Ashton and Turton, 2009). To this end, the transboundary water management in the South African Development Community, though they are full of cooperation and conflict, is one of the core agendas that binds the community and is marked by a series of negotiations and treaties (Kistin, 2007).

In Africa, the Senegal River Basin is also a good example of its type. Its legal and operational framework is relatively well developed, and basin countries jointly research how to utilize and conserve water resources (Firehiwot, 2020). Political uncertainty arises from major events in politics, such as elections, military coups, priority shifts, and discourse determine the prospects of cooperation (Wu et al., 2016); in light of this, the Nile River Basin is a good example where there are several initiations to negotiate and establish an institutional framework for the management of the basin, but coupled with other problems political uncertainty and hostile relations hold it back from achieving its long-awaited processes. As a main objective of this research paper, the relationship between Ethiopia and Sudan over the Nile River will be discussed from the beginning to the current prospects on the issues.

2.1.2 Ethio- Sudan Hydro-Political Relations

Ethio-Sudan relation is characterized by hostile reactions to one another, as one country intervening in the internal affairs of the other country by supporting rebel movements and secessionist groups coupled with boundary issues resulting from the colonial legacy in the region. Also, Turhan (2020:6-8) pointed out the relationship between Ethiopia and Sudan is hostile because of the mistrust developed between the two countries for one another, and Verhoeven (2011) stipulates the lack of a permanent all-inclusive agreement on the use and management of the Nile River is one of many problems, which is the focus of this paperwork.

The main characteristics that dominated the hydro-relations between these two neighboring countries started a long time ago. Inequitable management of the Nile River has a historical background; the failure to reconcile differences in integrating common law towards a joint

outcome, and this goes back to the nineteenth century (Turhan, 2020:7). Those features that have been seen in the hydro-relations between two countries are manifested in the consecutive treaties which have been signed in the time of colonialism and thereafter. For the sake of a deep understanding of the issues, treaties will be presented in two categories: colonial and post-colonial treaties.

2.1.2.1 Colonial Treaties

1902 Agreement

In 1899, Great Britain controlled Sudan with the help of Egyptian forces; in 1902, on behalf of Sudan and Egypt, Britain signed an agreement with Emperor Menelik of Ethiopia. On May 15, 1902, Ethiopia and Britain agreed that the Ethiopian emperor Menelik would not build or allow any work on the waters of the Blue Nile, Lake Tana, or the Sobat (Turhan, 2020: Swain, 1997: Zaepoor, 2019: Mtua, 2017). Ethiopia agreed, under “Article III of the agreement, not to construct or permit construction on the Blue Nile and its tributaries, of any works that would arrest their flow, without the prior agreement of the government of Britain” (Mtua, 2017:33).

This agreement is also believed to be the basis for the boundary demarcation between Ethiopia and Sudan under Britain, which resulted in the ongoing boundary issues between Sudan and Ethiopia around the Al-Fashaga area on which both claim the land and on some occasions, armed conflict arises between peasants and border guards of Ethiopia and Sudan.

1929 Agreement

In 1929, Egypt and Britain (on behalf of the East African colonies) negotiated the Nile Water Agreement, which stated that ‘no irrigation or power works or measures are to be constructed or taken on the River Nile and its branches, or on the lakes from which it flows’ (Oestigaard, 2012:26). The agreement included that Egypt utilizes 48 cubic meters and Sudan utilizes four cubic meters of water annually, it has given Egypt monitoring power over any activity on the river, (Turhan, 2020: Mtua, 2017). The Agreement mainly aimed at securing the Nile water for Egypt by limiting the rights of Sudan and rejecting those of the other riparian states, particularly those of Ethiopia and other East African states (Mtua, 2017:38).

In this agreement, Britain played a multi-faceted role, from being part of the agreement as an arbitrator and retaining the larger share of the water to its cotton plantations in Egypt. Comparing

this agreement to the previous one, this one differs in the extent to which a veto power was given to Egypt to monitor activities on the river over other upstream countries. The basic intent of this treaty was to guarantee the amount of water that reached Egypt (Hamada, 2017).

2.1.2.2 Post-Colonial Treaties

1959 Agreement

In 1959, three years after Sudanese independence, representatives from the independent Egyptian and Sudanese governments met to sign a historic accord: the Agreement for the Full Utilization of the River Nile (Tvedt, 2004). This agreement was signed exclusively between Sudan and Egypt, without other riparian countries, including Ethiopia, which is the source of the Blue Nile and contributes about 85% of the Nile River.

According to Mason (2004), this agreement created a legal base for water allocation, and the two countries agreed on a joint view if negotiations with another riparian state are necessary or in case there is a demand for water sharing in the future (p, 186-187). In the recent negotiations on GERD, Sudan, and Egypt claim the 1959 agreement gives them the full right to utilize the water without permission or intervention by the upstream countries. Sudan's allocation was raised from 4 BCM in the 1929 agreement to 18.5 BCM/year of the 84 BCM average annual flow of the river measured at Aswan High Dam, and Egypt allowed the right to use 55.5 BCM and the remaining 10 BCM/year was estimated to be lost through evaporation (Ibid).

Following the independence of African states in the 1960s, the basin-wide negotiations were no longer initiated by the British Empire; the newly independent African states began to realize working together for their common interest on the Nile River. Different platforms were organized to bring some of the basin countries to discuss the river basin, Hydromet (1967-1992), Undugu (1983-1993), and TECCONILE (1992-1998).

Hydromet³ (1967-1992) was the first multilateral cooperative effort in the Nile Basin. It was launched by Egypt, including; Kenya, Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda, in 1967 with the support of the United Nations Development Program and the World Meteorological Organization. Rwanda and Burundi joined the initiative later, and Ethiopia participated as an observing member as of 1971 (Mtua, 2017:66). It formally started with the Hydrometeorological Survey of the

³ Hydromet project only included the Equatorial lakes and its catchment areas, so it did not participate in Ethiopia as a full-fledged member.

Catchments of Lakes Victoria, Kyoga, and Albert in 1967, the purpose was to establish a network for hydro-meteorological data collection and to develop a water balance model of the system of lakes and their catchment areas (Zaerpoor, 2019:54). Due to the narrow geographic coverage of the project, it did not include the Eastern Nile Basin countries (Yacob and Imeru, 2005).

Undugu⁴ (1983–1993) was formed as a forum upon the initiative of Egypt; it included Egypt, Sudan, Uganda, D. R. Congo, and the Central African Republic, the latter is not a Nile basin country, and the objectives of Undugu included consultation on infrastructure, culture, environment, telecommunications, energy, trade, and water resources (Yacob and Imeru, 2005:19). After the Hydromet project had been completed, the water resources ministers from Hydromet project countries, plus Rwanda created the Technical Committee for the Promotion of the Development and Environmental Protection of the Nile Basin (TECCONILE) (Swain, 1997), from the time they agreed to create TECCONILE in Kampala, there had been consecutive meetings in the capital cities of member states.

The legal and institutional framework is a necessary component in the attempt to develop and management of a river basin; in this vein of argument, all the previous attempts to establish a governing body of the Nile River Basin utterly failed because the initiatives taken by countries could not bring together all countries (Mohammed, 2004), and instead of picking up genuine agenda for the benefit of all parties, emphasis was given to tricks to retain the water for some countries and depriving the natural and sovereign rights to utilize the water.

Nile Basin Initiative (NBI)

The Nile Basin Initiative (NBI), launched in 1999, is headquartered in Entebbe, Uganda, and is mandated to develop a framework for regional cooperation for equitable distribution, integrated water resource planning, and reduction of potential conflict among the riparian nations of the Nile River (Mtua, 2017:81). The Nile Basin Initiative is comprised of the Council of Ministers of Water Affairs of the Nile Basin (Nile-COM), a Technical Advisory Committee (Nile-TAC), and the Secretariat (Nile-SEC) (Swain, 2002: Yacob and Imeru, 2005: Cascao & Nicol, 2016). The World Bank (the main supporter of the NBI) demonstrated a willingness to further the

⁴ Undugu comes from the Swahili word 'ndugu which means brotherhood or fraternity

equitable reallocation of the Nile waters, and this was a significant milestone in Nile hydro-politics since the World Bank effectively recognized the main positions of Ethiopia and other upstream riparians (Vielleux and Dinar, 2017). Also, because of World Bank pressure, Egypt has agreed to a shift in its foreign policy over the Nile water issue (Swain, 2002:303), which is one of the main achievements of the NBI, Egypt is known for its stubborn stand on the issue of Nile as life and death issue.

Ethiopia is an active member of the Nile Basin Initiative, unlike the previous platforms like Hydromet, Undugu, and TECCONILE, in which Ethiopia participated as an observer or did not participate. From this, we understand that NBI is broader than the previous ones (Mason, 2004), the number of countries it included, the diversity of agendas, it consisted of local, national, and basin-wide development projects on the river basin. The linkage made between the public, negotiating parties, third parties like international organizations, and civic organizations distinguishes it from the other negotiations.

On June 29, 2009, nine basin countries gathered in Alexandria to discuss on Cooperative Framework Agreement, an 39 article document that was agreed upon by seven countries, and Egypt and Sudan rejected the framework because it aims at “guaranteeing water security for the upper riparian’s” (Howe, 2010:38), also Egypt and Sudan refused to sign because they felt it is against their historical rights. Many say the consequence of not agreeing on the utilization, development, and management of the Nile Basin results in the development of unilateral projects that even widen the differences in terms of future negotiations and agreements.

2.2 National Interest

Like most of the terminologies, definitions, and concepts in social science, the concept of national interest does not have a single, agreed-upon definition, as the concept is used by different scholars and statesmen (Nuechterlein, 1976), and the general society differently. In the words of Joseph Nye (1999:22), National Interest is a slippery concept used to describe as well as prescribe Foreign Policy. Its vagueness stems from the variety of meanings that cannot be reconciled. The ambiguity results from the adjective 'national' referring both to the nation, which is a social group, and to the state, which denotes its political organization (Frankel 1970:1).

There is a distinction between the use of the concept for political action and political analysis, Frankel (cited in Rosenau, 1968) described the difference as follows,

As an analytic tool, it is employed to describe, explain, or evaluate the sources or the adequacy of a nation's foreign policy. As an instrument of political action, it serves as a means of justifying, denouncing, or proposing policies. Both usages, in other words, refer to what is best for a national society. They also share a tendency to find the intended meaning of what is best for a national society (p.34).

Even though different scholars define the concept in different ways, varying with the context of its usage and assumption, there is literature that describes the concept well. In the field of international relations, different theories have different and sometimes contradicting views about the concept of national interest depending on the basic assumption that defines the basic events and happenings.

From a normative perspective, the community has its goal, with its own, more inclusive end, like its preservation and improvement as the expression of its citizens and the means for promoting their common norms, and its interest is a common good (Clinton, 1986:498). The common good or common interest is an end that is defined by rational consideration of what leads to the benefit of the society and by a normative choice of where the good as a whole lies (Ibid). In this regard, Clinton 1986, describes the notions of national interest in two realms.

The public interest or the national interest lies, in part, in that which makes the state better able to fulfill its obligation of protecting and promoting the good of society. In the international realm, this includes the ability both to protect the society from outside threats and to engage in mutually beneficial cooperation with other societies (p. 499).

The national interest "is the perceived needs and desires of one sovereign state with other sovereign states comprising the external environment" (Nuechterlein, 1976:247). From this definition, the perceived needs are the result of a political process in the given sovereign state, which is not just the perceptions of a ruling elite but the perception of the general public, and a sovereign state means it is only conducted between states, not between the state and some international organization or non-state actor.

Nuechterlein (1976) discusses four basic types of national interest, by which states present their desire concerning other states

(i) Defense interests: the protection of the nation-state and its citizens against the threat of physical violence directed from another state. (ii) Economic interests: the enhancement of the nation-state's economic well-being in relations with other states. (iii) World Order interests: the maintenance of an international political and economic system in which the nation-state may feel secure. (IV) Ideological interests: the protection and furtherance of a set of values that the people of a nation-state share and believe to be universally good (p.248).

There is a big difference in determining and proceeding with national interests in democratic and non-democratic socialist countries. In democratic countries determining national interest is a bit contentious business (Nye, 1999); since there are different interest groups and political parties, no single political group or interest group can determine or proceed with it in the way that it wants. There are intense debates, and bargains, to embrace the values and beliefs of the general society and different groups. The difference in the socialist or other undemocratic countries is that the process of determining the national interest and the way they trade-off is done by a small group of people (Nuechterlein, 1976), whether by the ruling elite or people around him, no genuine negotiation, a bargain between different interest groups and not inclusive of the values and beliefs of the common society.

2.3 Hydro-Politics

2.3.1 Definition

Water is an essential and elusive resource that is inextricably woven into numerous. Spheres of the economic and social component for human livelihood; it's a resource with no substitute (Turhan, 2020). Water is the only scarce resource for which there is no substitute and for which the need is overwhelming, constant, and immediate (Wolf, 1999:3). Trans-boundary rivers form an important part of the "geographic, economic, and political landscape of the globe, about 40% of the world population lives within these basins, and more importantly, over 90% of the world's population lives within the countries that share these basins" (Sadoff and Grey, 2005:420). Water resources are changing over time and space due to precipitation and temperature cycles, which have become unpredictable to the consequences of

climate change. To respond to this alteration, users have altered water resources, changing the availability, quantity, or quality of water resources (Peterson-Perlman et al., 2017:1).

Hydro-politics as a term is coined from two words; hydro which means water, and relation, which is to show the relations between and among countries. “Hydropolitics,” a term coined by Waterbury in 1979, relates to the ability of geopolitical institutions to manage shared water resources in a politically sustainable manner, i.e., without tensions or conflict between political entities (Wolf, 2005:6). The study of Hydropolitics is relatively a new academic pursuit, and as with any new endeavor concepts in most cases are poorly developed and invariably used indiscriminately in the literature (Turton, 2002:13). Literature in most cases uses the term Hydropolitics in exchange for terms like water politics, hydro-relations, and so forth. Also, there is bias and inconsistency in the utilization of the concept in the literature on Hydropolitics; in addition, the concepts and definitions in the literature focus on the state-to-state relation in the management and utilization of the water resource.

According to Turton (2002), four elements impact the literature as a form of bias, and the first bias is that of water and conflict; in this writing, the state and its components are used as the unit of analysis, or they focus on the conflict-cooperation within the framework of the state. The second part of the literature is about water and the environment; this writing seeks to place water within the broader environmental setting; the third body of literature focuses on water and security, which aims to draw attention to the elements of crises within the water sector and seeks to politicize and securitize management of water. The fourth category is water, society, and culture; this seeks to explore the social and cultural components of water and water-related issues; it tends to examine water in a more abstract and less empirically defined sense (pp., 13-15; see also Cascao and Zeitoun, 2013).

Aviram et al. (2014:610) define hydro-relations as interactions that deal with the utilization or division of water quantity, joint management of water quality, mitigation of floods, generation of hydropower, and ecological management of shared resources between states. Mirumachi (2015) defines it as the body of work on transboundary water conflict and cooperation between two or more countries on how they use water resources. Elhance (1999:218) defined hydro-politics as a systematic analysis of interstate conflict and cooperation regarding international water resources. The above definitions are narrow and focus on sovereign states and their components, which do

not include non-state actors and other international organizations that are affecting the arena of negotiation and project development, especially in the developing world.

The issue of range and scale in the study of Hydro-politics are crucial; Scale⁵ ranges from the individual to the household, village, city, social, provincial, national, and international levels with undefined levels in between (Turton, 2002:13). The issue of range⁶ is infinitely wide and includes issues such as conflict and its mitigation, states and non-state actors, water service delivery, the social and psychological value of water (Ibid). The main focus of this research paper is the Hydropolitics of state-to-state relations, in which I deeply explore the patterns and mechanisms that are put in place to conduct the relations between Ethiopia and Sudan on the Nile River and specifically how the building of GERD is affecting their relations.

Various reasons bring countries together that share a river basin. Despite all known water benefits for the existence of life that compel individuals, communities, states and countries, and even greater international organizations to come together to discuss, deal with, and decide about water, there are some specific motives. The territories through which it travels depend on each other, as the water use in one country or section of the river basin can affect the quantity and quality of water available in the other country (Just and Netanyahu, 1998; Kistin, 2007). The other reason is the economic motive of the countries in the basin; the future economic plans cannot be implemented in the absence of high-level assurance of water supply (Ashton and Turton, 2009) and to have secure water supply countries come together.

International water management evolved significantly in the 19th century to deal with the increasing demand for water resources; agreements over the development and protection of water resources were limited mainly to navigation, later the scope expanded to the allocation of use (Just and Netanyahu, 1998:4). For which there appears to be “no directly relevant reference in international water law beyond the principles, factors, and norms for sharing water by the allocation of rights” (Sadoff and Grey, 2005:423: See also, Wolf, 1999: Wolf, 1998). An international law that governs transboundary water resources is poorly developed, contradictory, and unenforceable (Wolf, 2005:7).

⁵Scale is the vertical dimension of the discipline, from the lower to the higher.

⁶Range means the horizontal dimension of the discipline of Hydropolitics.

There are some significant customary international Water laws adopted to govern transboundary water resources. As Just and Netanyahu (1998) discussed, in 1966, the International Law Association adopted the Helsinki Rules, which consist of guidelines for “a reasonable and equitable” water allocation. In 1994, the International Law Commission approved the “Draft Articles on the Law of Non-Navigational Uses of International Water Courses” These articles are more comprehensive than the previous one (1998:6-7). They are broad, vague, and undefined and have no practical guidance for negotiating parties (Waterbury, 1997).

2.4.THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

Theoretical understanding in political science particularly in International Relations is mainly for “both to understand the causes of events that occur in international relations every day and to answer the foundational questions in the field” (Mingst, McKibben & Arreguin-Toft, 2019:5). There are various arrays of issues in the international system, this brought about a series of debates by the scholars and commentators of international politics, the debate is about the issues that are incorporated into the international relations and their scope. The debate is on one hand “focus exclusively on states and interstate relations; but at another extreme, IR includes almost everything that has to do with human relations across the world (Jackson and Sorenson, 2013:22). Irrespective of whether the debate accurately describes the ongoing practical political issues or not, but these debates shape and reshape the field significantly (Dunne, Hanssen & Wight, 2013).

Transboundary boundary water management issues are becoming one of the burning issues in today’s political environment, where theoreticians started to devise some theoretical understanding to mitigate disputes among states and suggest ways forward for governing the resource peacefully. The growing emergence of inter-states Institutions, as well as the increasing worldwide attempts towards regional integration and institutionalization of supranational bodies, together with the limited number of conflicts associated with international disputes over natural resources, opens room for the emergence of some theories (Grandi, 2016:80).

Nile River Basin is one of the transboundary water resources which is not governed under inclusive cooperative legal and institutional frameworks, due to this reason, it is a bone of contention for the riparian states. GERD as a dam in the basin, since its commencement is a subject of intense diplomatic battles between Ethiopia and the downstream countries, not only

states are using GERD in their relationship with one another in the region, but they are politicizing it in the regional and geopolitical positionings. To understand the dynamics between Ethiopia and Sudan's relationship in the case of GERD, it is crucial to look into the issue from a theoretical lens from the vast plain of International Relations.

2.1.4. Constructivism

From the time that it was believed to the beginning of International Relations as a field of inquiry in 1919, two opposing views of individuals, state, and society dominated the scene in the debate. These two opposing views dominated the academic and policy debates. In the 1980s intense attempt to understand the epistemological underpinnings of the field, there was a discussion between positivist and "post- positivist" methods (Dunne, Hanssen & Wight, 2013). This endeavor called into question certain assumptions regarding the nature of the discipline's objects of study, such as sovereignty or anarchy (Ashley 1988). Neo-institutionalism entered the theoretical debate within International Relations, Robert Keohane introduced the difference between the reflexive institutionalist and rationalist, and this paved the way for a distinction that was fundamental to the coming debates and approaches regarded as a non-positivist understanding of science or by interpretive-based methods (Keohane, 1988).

Constructivism's arrival in IR is often associated with the end of the Cold War, an event that the traditional theories such as realism and liberalism failed to account for (Theys, 2017:36). This failure can be linked to some of their core tenets, such as the conviction that states are self-interested actors who compete for power and the unequal power distribution among states which defines the balance of power between them (Ibid). Many events that happened during the late 1980s demonstrated that the international system is not as objective as it was stated by the positivist theories of international relations (Guzzini, 2000).

One of the pioneers of the Constructivist theory of IR is Alexander Wendt, in his famous writing "The Agent-Structure Problem in International Relations Theory" in 1987, where he criticized the agency-structure relationships in the dominant theories like neo-realism (Wendt, 1987). At the heart of the actor- structure problem lies the fact that from a social scientific perspective action is always embedded in specific structures, so there are essentially two approaches to explaining social phenomena: either regarding various actors and their attributes or about the

structures in which actions are embedded (Ulber, 2014:251). Wendt emphasized the structural explanations as he bases to get at the ultimate social action (Wendt, 1987).

Wendt argues that the way international politics is conducted is made, not given, because identities and interests are constructed and supported by intersubjective practice (Wendt, 1992). The approach revolves around identities, which is construed as more basic than interests, notions of self and the environment shape interactions and are shaped by interactions so that social reality is created (Zehfuss, 2004:12). And so the competitive international could change. Wendt's other influential work "Anarchy Is What States Make of It" reveals a clear development in his work towards *processes* of social interaction and the endogenous development of interests and ideas. In this essay, I borrow from the term coined by Nicholas Onuf (Onuf, 1989).

Wendt's Social Constructivism is a structural theory of the international system that makes the following core claims: (1) states are the principal units of analysis for international political theory; (2) the key structures in the state system are intersubjective, rather than material; and (3) state identities and interests are in important part constructed by these social structures, rather than given exogenously to the system by human nature or domestic politics⁷.

Wendt argues that the way international relations are played out is not given but socially constructed. Briefly, a 'world in which identities and interests are learned and sustained by intersubjectively grounded practice, by what states think and do, is one in which "anarchy is what states make of it" (Zehfuss: 2004:40). It is the intersubjective, rather than the material, aspect of structures that influences behavior. Intersubjective structures are constituted by collective meanings.

Wendt (1995) offers an excellent example that illustrates the social construction of reality when he explains that 500 British nuclear weapons are less threatening to the United States than five North Korean nuclear weapons. The number of nuclear arsenals may vary from that time, but the construction of the reality has continued till now, that North Korea is considered to be a rogue state with very few capabilities compared to the mightiest United States.

⁷ Wendt, 'Collective Identity Formation'. Wendt now defines constructivism separately from claims about international politics

These identifications are not caused by the nuclear weapons (the material structure) but rather by the meaning given to the material structure (the ideational structure) (Ulber, 2014:37). It is important to understand that the social relationship between the United States and Britain and the United States and North Korea is perceived similarly by these states, as this shared understanding (or intersubjectivity) forms the basis of their interactions (Ibid).

The issue of power is a central unit of analysis for both mainstream and constructivist theoreticians but the way they understand power is different from one another. Constructivism argues that both material and discursive power are necessary for any understanding of world affairs (Hofp, 1998:176) the notion that ideas are a form of power, that power is more than brute force, and that material and discursive power are related is not new (Ibid), Michel Foucault's analysis of the nexus between power and knowledge, Max Weber's analysis of the difference between authority and coercion, and also Gramsci's theory of hegemony.

The notion of national interest is also one of the central focuses of analysis in international relations theories, but the difference is how each theory views the source of such national interest. Constructivist international relations theoreticians focus on the social content involved in the production of international relations (Hurd, 2008:301). For constructivists, beliefs, expectations, and interpretations are inescapable when thinking about international affairs, and their importance shows that the materialist position is untenable (Hurd, 2008:301).

Among other things, certain common attributes distinguish a state from other states- corporate and collective identity (Ulber, 2014). These common attributes can be traced back to certain material characteristics (political system, a monopoly on violence, sovereignty, citizenry, territory) and motives for action (ensuring survival, autonomy, welfare, sense of collective self-worth), which are the same for all states and which lead to the state being understood as a coherent actor (Wendt 1999: 193–245).

For constructivists, the foreign policy of the state is not permanently derived necessarily from the international structure, but it's "shaped by preexisting dominant ideas and their relationship to experienced events" (Legro, 2005:4). So the above understanding leads us to how actors acquire their identities, which is "relatively stable, role-specific understandings and expectations about self— by participating in ...collective meanings" (Wendt, 1992:397). Interests are the product of

identities that determine the policies and approaches to follow in their interactions with another state.

Transboundary river basins offer us a wonderful test base for constructivist theory in international relations, they contain diverse populations, many states at the same time bound by a very material and real artery of life (Kalpakian, 2015:41). They offer us the ability to see whether or not outcomes in terms of conflict and cooperation are based on physical considerations or policy and ideational discourse (Ibid). This research work employs the constructivist understanding of international relations in the relationship between Ethiopia and Sudan about the GERD. From its commencement to current status, the political and diplomatic tracks taken by these two states will deeply be analyzed under the constructivist understanding of how interests and identities are formed, and also how the relationship between the two states is affected by the idea and understanding about one another.

2.4.2 Counter-hegemony

A state or a group of the state that perceives the existing situation over the sharing, management, and utilization of a shared resource as not equal- at least in a way according to their needs and development activities- tries to renegotiate to the extent that meets their current demand. The non-hegemon states that seek the ultimate goal of the relation to be stable “shared control” of the resource with the hydro-hegemon, the non-hegemonic state will resort primarily to its agenda-framing power (Zeitoun and Warner, 2006:244). In doing so, the non-hegemon states use bargaining as their currency to change the course of the negotiation on their side.

Casco and Zeitoun (2010) analyzed the hegemonic and counter-hegemonic situation in the Nile Basin. They affirmed that bargaining power is a key element of any counter-hegemonic strategy and is effective if used collectively (p, 189). Negotiating positions can be improved by leveraging bargaining power, as is the case of the upstream riparian states in the Nile River Basin. Ethiopia, in collaboration with other upstream Nile riparians, successfully executed bargaining power to shape the negotiation tables (Cascao, 2008). This is also the case for non-hegemon Syria over hegemon Turkey; its bargaining power emanated from issue linkage between the two countries in the region (Daoudy, 2008).

The most common bargaining way that non-hegemon states use to counter the hegemonic state in the river basin is the customary international law of water that intends for equitable and reasonable use of international waters and moral value judgments over the use of water by the hegemon state (Woodhouse and Zeitoun, 2008). Despite its shorthand applicability to international water laws, it's still useful in the context of referring to the practice of water sharing. This research investigates the role of GERD in diplomatic and other forms of relations concerning Ethiopia and Sudan.

2.4.3 Hydro-diplomacy

The issue of water management was simple and local business in the good old days; there was a small population, a simple economy, and did not need to large reserve, nor was there the know-how and technology (Islam and Susskind, 2013). When the world population began to increase, agriculture needed to supply the large population (Salman, 2015), the economy became diverse, and importantly, technology to utilize the water resources appeared, which made water management more complex⁸ (Islam and Repella, 2015). The 19th century was the beginning of the concern about how to manage and utilize water, especially transboundary water (Just and Netanyahu, 1997). Several treaties have been signed to manage and utilize the water resource in bilateral, multi-lateral forms, and there is a developing customary international law (Wolf, 1998; Swain, 2002; Sadoff and Grey, 2005)

Despite several attempts to create an institutional and legal framework to manage and utilize transboundary water resources, still, 'two-thirds of the world Transboundary Rivers are not governed by cooperative management framework' (Molnar et al., 2017). In transboundary water management and cooperation, there was a mismatch between the 'scientists or engineers that rely on boundaries to specify initial conditions, conduct controlled experiments, and measure results and the political actors that set geopolitical boundaries for various reasons' (Islam and Susskind, 2013:7). These approaches lack the cooperation of the scientific knowledge about the volume, quality of the water, effect of climate change on the water resource and high-level political decision on the cooperation with other stakeholders.

⁸Cause-effect relationships are ambiguous; uncertainty, nonlinearity and feedback are inherent; emergent properties dominate system behaviour and response (Islam and Repella, 2015:2).

The idea of water diplomacy was born out of the necessity for collaboration between political decision-makers and scientists about water resources. The concept has no clear, agreed-upon definition in the literature; different writers, carrier diplomats, and the public comprehend it in different ways. According to Keskinen et al. (2021:3), water diplomacy is a blurry affair, and it has no standard definition; this is because of a variety of water diplomacy contexts and the number of theoretical frameworks related to shared water and their governance. Also, close connections with and overlaps that water diplomacy has with transboundary water resources create additional confusion, particularly actors coming outside the water field (Ibid). The very term used in the literature differs from one another, “water diplomacy” (Islam and Susskind, 2012; Islam and Repella, 2015; EU, 2018) and “blue diplomacy” (Pohl, 2014; EU, 2020).

Among other things, these new avenues have recently been created to address the complex water challenges politically⁹, and water diplomacy has evolved around the governance of water, putting water at the forefront of the political agenda. (Molnar et al., 2017:8). There is a tendency to use water diplomacy interchangeably with other related concepts like; transboundary water management and water cooperation (Hefny, 2011; Molnar et al., 2017). Water diplomacy can ‘similarly to water resources management and water cooperation deal with various water uses, ranging from agriculture and food production to industry and households’ (Salminen et al., 2019:2).

There are differences between water cooperation and water diplomacy. While water cooperation typically builds upon the assumption of shared objectives and mutual interests, water diplomacy concentrates on the ‘political’ related to water and its use and therefore takes potential tensions and even conflicts as given and expected (Salminen et al., 2019:2). The difference between the two can also be seen from their scope, Water diplomacy have a ‘broader scope beyond water, including influencing regional peace and stability’ (Molnar et al., 2017:11), it also helps for improved trade, investment and regional economic integration (Ibid). Water diplomacy leads to water cooperation (Keskinen et al., 2015); this is when there is growing disagreement between riparian states over shared resources (Molnar et al., 2017). In contrast process, water cooperation can be seen as “an operative end-product of the process of water diplomacy” (Keskinen et al.,

⁹Putting water as one of the foreign policy aspect of a nation.

2021: 4), when hindering factors are avoided with the help of water diplomacy, cooperation can easily be entailed.

After briefing the road to water diplomacy, defining the concept from different perspectives is necessary to know how different writers, theoreticians, and carrier diplomats perceive definitions will be analyzed. Hefny (2011:20) defines Water diplomacy as it's about dialogue, negotiation, and reconciling conflicting interests among riparian states, involves the institutional capacity and power politics of states, the aim of concluding water agreements within the strategy and plans of foreign policy and national security of states. His definition is more political, even though he recognizes the cooperation between the technical and political knowledge for the betterment of water agreements for riparian states. Water diplomacy is defined as a process ranging from water disputes to water dispute resolution, water conflict prevention, water cooperation, and joint water management (Molnar et al., 2017:21). This definition is slightly different from the previous one which emphasizes more on the political process, the authors focus on the water issues. But here, they define it with the range it covers, and they show water cooperation can be underwater diplomacy.

Klimes et al. (2019:4) conceptualize water diplomacy depending on its characteristics of comprising various stakeholders, "Contextualizing data from technical, development, and foreign policy fields – water diplomacy leverages this knowledge to inform foreign policy decisions on shared international waters." When the technical and policy-making environment falls short of correlating with others, the political/national security concern triumphs (Ibid). Information from technical experts informs foreign policy decision-makers about the shared water resource to have a deep understanding of the issues and have strategies that ensure sustainable cooperation and mutual benefit.

As the water resource of the earth gets smaller and smaller, the need for water diplomacy gets bigger, and there are several reasons for the question "Why water diplomacy now?" the European Union-Council Conclusion Water Diplomacy (2018:2) clearly states that "Tensions and conflicts over access to and use of water continue to rise, including cross border effects of water-related conflicts within countries, as the availability and quality of the world's water resources and ecosystems deteriorate, and the threat of water scarcity spreads." Practically speaking, water scarcity and climate change effects are posing a global threat, and many of the

most affected areas are also impacted by political tensions, armed violence, and internal water mismanagement (Klimes et al., 2019:4). Acute cases of water-related conflicts include Iran, Syria, and the Israeli Palestinian Conflict, the war in Yemen, Darfur in Sudan, and previously, the 1994 genocide in Rwanda (Huntjens et al., 2016:1). To tackle this problem the stakeholders must act, actions that participate different bodies from various area of knowledge, experience, and political power.

Water diplomacy has various purposes; conflict prevention and peace promotion, engaging multiple stakeholders, and improving foreign relations (Molnar et al., 2017; Klimes et al., 2019). Various works of the literature suggest their water diplomacy models with how to correlate technical information and foreign policy decision-making to have better relations between riparian states over water management and other kinds of relations. These suggestions vary from one another as they try to show their understanding of what and how water diplomacy should be pursued.

2.4.4 Water Diplomacy Framework (WDF)

Value Creating and Non-zero sum game, this framework was developed by Islam and Susskind (2012 and 2013) and by Islam and Repella (2015). This framework suggests making a distinction between values, interests, and tools and suggests ways of thinking about these issues before prescribing a solution (Islam and Repella, 2015:2). By challenging the traditional system engineering approach, it assumes water is a network rather than summation sub-system and it “rooted in the complexity theory and non-zero-sum negotiation and seeks to bridge scientific objectivity and contextual understanding” (Islam and Susskind, 2013:9). This framework provides three key assumptions about water network; water networks are open and continuously changing, water network management must account uncertainty, nonlinearity and feedback, and the third is the management of water network ought to be adaptive and negotiated using non-zero-sum approach (Islam and Susskind, 2013; Islam and Repella (2015).

CHAPTER THREE

GRAND ETHIOPIAN RENAISSANCE DAM (GERD)

3.1. Dam Construction in Africa

The technological advancement that enabled human beings to use natural resources for their well-being is a fact of the past, and enormously in the current century, people conquered the rivers that were thought above the capacity of men. Especially after the 1950s Concrete Revolution, several hydroelectric and irrigation dams were built throughout the world; most of them were built by the Western countries, the then USSR, and China for themselves or their friendly countries (Sneddon, 2015). In Africa, however, the intensity of building large dams was very little compared to other parts of the world, but there were good beginnings in different parts of the continent; in Egypt, Sudan, Ghana, and other countries, Ethiopia also started to survey its water resources to develop them.

Few development initiatives in Sub-Saharan Africa have the economic and political importance of river basin developments, whether in terms of the sheer size of the undertaking, magnitude of social and environmental transformation, or impact on the future of the entire (Carr, 2017:1). Undertaking river basin development relies on the technological advancements, economic status, and political stability of the country. In this regard, Ethiopia is a good example, with over 12 river basins (Ministry of Water Resources, 2002), including the Abbay River Basin in the North-western part of the country, but if one asks how much Ethiopia developed its natural resources for its development, the answer would be very few. Because directly or indirectly, developing one's natural resources depends on the economic, social, and political situations, which Ethiopia did not have or possessed until recently.

The financial and technical support to construct major dams in Africa has not come from its internal income sources or its technological abilities; they are from outside donors or supporters. Aswan High Dam was constructed with financial and technical help from the USSR, Roseires and Merowe Dam in Sudan were also built by external financial and technical support. The firms that survey the project, the construction companies, and the consultants usually come from Western or Asia countries. In the words of Carr (2017:2), International aid organizations, particularly multilateral development banks, and major bilateral agencies have for years held comparable enthusiasm for large dam and dam-linked basin projects in Africa. The technical

assistance, aid, and loans from foreign firms to Africa are not free of political, economic, and geopolitical considerations- during the Cold War or even after the Cold War. The large size of loans extended for mega-dam development provides major donor countries and banks with the opportunity for continued or expanded economic and political leverage in African nations along with major investment opportunities, access to natural resources, and other ~~benefits~~ (Carr, 2017:2).

3.2. Early Projects in Abbay River Basin and Evolution of the GERD

3.2.1. Nile River Basin

As the main focus area of this research work, the Abbay River Basin is the largest catchment area in Ethiopia and is widely used for development activities that boost the economic, social, and political aspects of Ethiopia. The development projects not only help Ethiopia and its people to have a better life, but they also enable the neighboring countries to get cheap hydroelectric power and, in the long run, many other agricultural and industrial commodities that will be manufactured in the river basin.

The Blue Nile Basin is the largest section of the Nile Basin in terms of volume of discharge and the second largest in terms of area in Ethiopia and is the largest tributary of the Main Nile (Conniff, 2012:17). It covers an area of 311,548 km² (Hydrosult et al., 2006). The basin is characterized by highly rugged topography and a considerable variation of altitude ranging from about 350m at Khartoum to over 4250m a.m.s.l. in Ethiopian highlands (Sileshi et al., 2012). The basin is characterized by a highly seasonal rainfall pattern, most of the rain falling in four months (June to September), with a peak in July or August (Conniff, 2012:17). Rainfall varies significantly with altitude and is considerably greater in the Ethiopian highlands than on the Plains of Sudan, and rainfall ranges from nearly 2,000 mm/yr in the Ethiopian Highlands to less than 200mm/yr at the junction with the White Nile (Sileshi et al., 2012).

3.2.2. Early Attempts and Projects in Abbay River Basin

There were numerous attempts by the Ethiopian authorities to make use of the water resources that flow from inside its territory (Wheeler et al., 2020). Until the 1990s and 2000s, the attempts were either subverted by outside intervention- British or Egyptian- or aborted by the country's feeble economic situation that added to its socio-political instability- civil wars, interstate wars, an uprising against the ruling government by different social classes like the students' peasants,

secessionist movements. In addition to the socioeconomic and political situation of the country, weak institutional structures that monitor and implement water development activities and problems with the legal system regarding water resources also hinders Ethiopia from developing its water resource (Yacob, 2010). With the coming of the 20th century, Emperor Menelik of Ethiopia signed an agreement with the British colonial administration that restricted Ethiopia from utilizing the river (Menga, 2016); the aim was to protect Britain's interest in Egypt.

Successive administrators of British colonies in Egypt and Sudan tried to convince Ethiopian authorities to build on the Nile River around Tana, and the planned constructions were to feed the colonial agricultures and Suez Canal in Egypt. However the responses from Ethiopian authorities were not in favor of the British side, given the intended projects would not help Ethiopia and feared opposition from the Orthodox Church as the effect would have been on the monasteries on the islands of Tana (Yacob, 2007). Starting from the midst of the 1920s, the basic knowledge of the Abbay River Basin began to show change and became the center of focus of government action for development activities; beyond that, the river was considered a tool for attracting foreign policy objectives to Ethiopia (Tadesse, 2015). This shift also helped the development of institutions that were charged with the study, use, and development of the water resources in the Nile Basin and others throughout the country.

Ras Teferi Mekonnen (the later Emperor Haile Selassie I), during the reign of Empress Zewditu, started to set the venue for the very first study on the Abbay Basin from 1924-1925, the survey led by Swiss hydrologists around Lake Tana for development purposes (Marcus, 1987). The report was submitted to the Ras in 1925, recommending some development activities around Lake Tana. At the beginning of 1930, with the diplomatic ties between the United States and Ethiopia, J.G. White Engineering Corporation carried out a whole-scale survey around Lake Tana in the Abbay Basin from 1930 to 1934. The project on Lake Tana did not go as planned for two reasons; the British government opposed the planned project on the watershed Nile and the Italian aggression on Ethiopia was already taking place, so the government's attention was captured by defending the country (Yacob, 2007:153).

After a brief period of British domination in Ethiopian politics which resulted from its help to drive out Italian forces from the country, the assistance of the reclaiming of the throne for the Emperor, and help in the Eritrean case, the Emperor, however, became suspicious about the

British taking over the country, to balance this domination the emperor inclined to Americans. During the latter period, US policy on Ethiopia was informed by multifaceted issues, which included 'fears of communist inroads in the region,' 'hostile Egyptian activities,' 'the Somali problem,' and 'US interests to counteract forces menacing its influence in Ethiopia' (Tadesse, 2015: 386). From 1952 to 1956, different agreements were concluded between Ethiopia, and economic and military assistance programs were designed; in light of this, a Point Four agreement in 1951 followed by the 'Agreement for Mutual Defense Assistance' in 1952 and 1953, 'Technical Cooperation Program for Water Resource Development' in 1953, and 1957 'Agreement Relating to Economic Assistance' (Bahiru, 2002).

The final report by the reconnaissance mission in 1952 identified different areas that were favorable for irrigation, especially flat areas around Lake Tana, along Tinishu Nile, Gumara, and Rib tributaries, also fertile plains of Andassa River, to the west Didessa River along the Ethio-Sudan border and Guder and Muger Rivers in central Ethiopia (US Bureau of Reconnaissance, 1952). In 1956, the 'Third Operational Agreement for the Extension of the Program for the Study of the Water Resources of Ethiopia for the Multi-purpose Nile Basin Investigation' was signed to facilitate the economic potential of the land, water, and other resources of that area to the end that the data thus gained may be used in the future for planning specific projects (British Embassy African Commission 1956 cited in Tadesse, 2015). Since 1958, plans for constructing a dam on the Blue Nile have started (Elbarbary, 2021). The United States Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) conducted several geographical surveys between the period of 1956 to 1964 until it offered four potential dam sites in 1964, Mabil, Karadobi, Boarder, and Mendia (Saeed, 2018). Border project is now pursued as GERD with much more modification and expansion than the original plan (Tadesse, 2015; Swain and Chen, 2014).

The project conducted by the USBR, Irrigation, and hydro-electric power, was also aimed at "training of Ethiopian engineers in the fundamental technical skills of river basin planning and the establishment of a comparable agency within the Imperial Ethiopian Government" (Sneddon, 2015:88). In addition to the study for development, the human resource development was given good attention. As an aid and technical assistance from foreign countries, it was not free of some consideration by the US, "it would advance US business interests and expand markets for US firms involved in dam construction and other infrastructure projects" (Ibid). The survey by the

USBR was a way to influence Egypt - a socialist country led by Gamal Abdul Nasser- who had a strong desire to build a huge dam on Nile waters with the help of the USSR (Salman, 2016).

In addition to the US Bureau of Reclamation, in 1962, German engineers also undertook an extensive study on the potential of the Abbay River Basin; the report recommended that Gilgel Abbay Basin, which is a much smaller area favorable for the production of oil seeds, fodder crops, and pulses (Dessalegn, 1999:6). “The findings of the study, however, could not be translated into actual investment ventures because the Gilgal Abbay development project was subsumed in the larger Nile basin study carried out during 1958–64” (Yacob, 2010:168).

Ethiopia recently joined the dam-building competition in the Nile Basin; though the country has long surveyed its water resource in the Nile River Basin, it started with the Fincha’a dam –which was completed in 1973 for hydroelectric generation (Salman, 2016:4), followed by another two hydroelectric dams on Tis Abbay, Lake Tana. However, at the beginning of this century, “Ethiopia moved to the fourth project on the Nile, the largest and most significant of all. That was the Tekeze Dam on the Atbara River which was started in 2002 and was completed in 2010” (Ibid).

3.3. Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) Project

The motive behind the venture to build huge infrastructure can be different from country to country or from time to time, but mostly economic factors weigh more than any other reason to build infrastructure; in this regard, Ethiopia’s motives can be seen from this angle. Civil war and severe poverty in the early 1990s have changed in the last two decades, and economic growth has transformed Ethiopia into a country with increasing demand for new infrastructure, food, and energy sources, and at the same time, a growing capacity to build infrastructure (Cascao and Nicol, 2016:557). With the failure of Nile Riparian states to utilize the Nile water, the Ethiopian government took a unilateral action to build a dam; the Ethiopian government surprised the Nile Riparian countries with the launch of GERD Construction in 2011 (Wossenu and Shimelis, 2019:5). The Ethiopian Government also intends to supply surplus energy to the other countries and benefit the wide region (Swain and Chen, 2014:12).

The late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi made a speech on the inauguration day in 2011 about the aim of the construction and its benefit for Ethiopia and the wider region.

*He emphasized that ‘the benefits that will accrue from the dam will by no means be restricted to Ethiopia. They will extend to all neighboring states, particularly to the downstream Nile basin countries, to Sudan and Egypt’. He added that the GERD has the potential to resolve the **differences over equitable utilization of the Nile water resources** since it will increase these resources by reducing evaporation and regulating the flow, and providing cheap energy to downstream countries (Tawfik (a), 2016:1).*

A strong objection has faced the announcement of the project from day one (Vielleux, 2015) till now; the historical upper hand of downstream countries on the river has been challenged by this mega project and created a huge diplomatic war between Ethiopia, Egypt, and Sudan. The current place for the dam was one of the recommended areas by the USBR in their survey on the Abbay River from 1952 to the 1960s.

3.3.1. Location, Plan, and Structure

The location of the GERD project is about 20km from the Ethio-Sudan border, it’s around 500 km from the capital of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa, and the specific place is called Guba, which is located in the Benishangul Gumuz National Regional State. Out of four recommended sites by the USBR, the border area project is the place where GERD construction is taking place with much adjustment to the capacity of the dam (Chen and Swain, 2014). From that on, the government of Ethiopia carried out additional surveys on the project site and came up with the current design. The Government of Ethiopia surveyed the site in October 2009 and later in August 2010, and the final design of the Dam was submitted in November 2010 (Yohannes, Khalil, and Salem, 2017:4).

The planning phase of the project was carried out under the name Project X, which was later changed to Millennium Dam (Kansara et al., 2021), and finally to the present name (Grand Renaissance Dam, or just Renaissance Dam). The day of announcement- March 31, 2011- was a special day for millions of Ethiopians, as they hoped the project would solve the power problems in the country and it would become a national symbol of resilience and unity.

Wossenu and Shimelis (2019) summarized the dynamics of the project and what it symbolizes at the beginning of the construction.

The planning and design of the dam were kept secret, and the construction was portrayed as a national landmark to symbolize economic success and national security and, to some extent, score political advantages by bringing internal unity through nationalism. However, the GERD has also been marred with domestic challenges from political oppositions and fallouts of international and regional diplomacy, particularly in securing funds (p, 5).

The GERD is a Roller Compacted Concrete (RCC) dam with a dam height of 145m, complemented by a saddle dam about 5km long and 50m high; the scheme from the root of its reservoir to the dam site extends over a corridor approximately 246km (International Panel of Experts on GERD, 2013:7). The reservoir area will cover 1,874 square kilometers at the full supply of 640m above sea level; the total storage volume is 74 billion cubic meters with an active storage volume of 59.2 billion cubic meters (Ibid). Its power generating capacity is 6000 MW (Soliman, Soussa, and El-Sayed, 2016; Attalla, 2015; Kansara et al., 2021; Abdelhady et al., 2015). It has two powerhouses on the left and right sides. The right powerhouse has 10 Francis turbines with 3750 MW total installed capacity, while the left powerhouse has 6 Francis turbines with 2250 MW installed capacity (Abdelazim, Bekhit, and Allam, 2020:3).

The dam will consist of two major parts; the central section and the shoulders plus the powerhouses on the shoulders; there are four gates on the shoulders; two on each side, and these gates will operate during the river conversion and reservoir operation (Attalla, 2015:25). The central section will be used as a spillway (IPoE, 2013). The saddle dam's main function is to raise the water level in the reservoir from 600 m asl to 646 m asl; the body of this dam is a rock filled with a bituminous upstream face (Attalla, 2015:25). 'When completed, the GERD will be the largest hydropower facility in Africa (Wheeler et al., 2020), with a power the dam will double Ethiopia's electricity generation and potentially stimulate the country's economic growth through increases in the output of electricity-dependent sectors' (Basheer et al., 2021:1).

3.3.2. Cost and Current State of the Project

The initial cost of the project is estimated to be 4.8 billion US dollars (Wheeler et al., 2020; Salman, 2016); and about two-thirds of that is going to civil workers and one-third to equipment (Attalla, 2015:25). The owner of the project is the Ethiopian electric power corporation (IPoE, 2013). Ethiopia announced from the start that it intends to finance the GERD from its resources

and through the issuance of bonds to Ethiopians and interested foreign nationals, with no resort to foreign borrowing (Salman, 2016:5; Yohannes, Khalil, and Salem, 2017). Chinese banks funded the turbines and associated electrical equipment for the hydel power plants at the cost of US\$ 1.8 Billion (Yohannes, Khalil, and Salem, 2017:6). The rest of the cost will be covered by the government of Ethiopia.

Salini Costruttori, an Italian construction company well known for its construction works from the 1960s in Ethiopia, is in charge of the construction works, and METEC, a public company under the national army, was assigned for the hydro-mechanical works (though METEC was not effective due to corruption and lack of experience in the field). As of now, the project has reached more than 90 % as the government gives proper attention to the construction work and rectifies the issues around the project. The state media reported that the project is expected to be finished in 2024 (2016 Ethiopian Calender). The filling of the dam was also started in 2020, and some of the turbines began to generate electricity for trial. As of 2023, the dam has been filled four times and the Ethiopian government declared it was the final round.

Since the ‘GERD has transformed the hydro-political interactions and debate in the Eastern Nile from sharing water resources to sharing benefits from projects constructed on the Transboundary River’ (Tawfik, 2015:2), this research paper explores, as its first objective, how and to what extent, GERD has been an agent to changing the long-lasting norm in which the downstream countries controlled the resource with their relative power -better politico-economic and military advantage- over the upstream countries.

3.4 Transformations Resulted from GERD in the Relationship between Upstream and Downstream Countries

3.4.1 Counter-hegemony Instrument

3.4.1.1 Counter-hegemony before GERD: The Role of NBI and CFA in the Counter-hegemony

In the history of the Nile Basin, the downstream countries are the hegemonies of the basin, and the upstream countries are non-hegemons that struggle to secure their rights to utilize and benefit from the Nile waters (Interview with Doctor Wubigziher, August 17, 2022; Kiefe, 2004; Cascao, 2008). This can be traced to some definite reasons that dictate the hegemon power in the Nile River Basin and elsewhere; the first reason is the asymmetric power distribution in the basin

(Zeitoun and Mirumachi, 2008; Zeitoun, Mirumachi and Warner, 2011) and also, asymmetries in exploiting potential (Cascao, 2009; Alan, 2009). Asymmetries of power arise from the lack of internal political and economic stability, the lack of international support and funding, relatively larger knowledge gaps, and weak expertise, institutional, and negotiating capacity (Cascao, 2009:20). Despite obvious differences among the riparian states, there is a big variation in ‘values, nationalist expectations, and strategic design that informed a decade-long negotiations process’ (Tadesse, 2015:400). The riparians portray the river in a very different way, Ethiopians portray the river as the engine of their development motives, and the Egyptians see the river as ‘their source. This varying symbolization of the river gives rise to different and contradicting nationalist sentiments.

Considering that the downstream countries retained all these attributes to themselves, this gives them the hegemon power in the Nile River Basin. With better economic and political stability, Egypt and Sudan exploited the river for development purposes far better than any other basin country. Thus, the basin countries differ in their basin key issues, equitable entitlement, regional cooperation, and the use of water resources (Gashaw, 2019:8).

Things began to change with the relative political and economic progress shown in the upstream countries, especially Ethiopia’s relative economic growth and political stability enabled the country to use its natural resources for development purposes (Interview with Doctor Teferi, October 26, 2022; Cascao, 2008). Starting from the 1990s, the hydro-political relations in the Nile River Basin began to change, and Ethiopia and other upstream countries started to challenge the age-long hegemony of the downstream countries. This change has revealed itself with various developments in the basin. One of the developments in the Nile River Basin is the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI). The objective of the NBI has been to accomplish signing “a cooperative framework agreement that would incorporate the principles, structures, and institutions of the NBI and that would be inclusive of all the Nile riparians” (Salman, 2013:20). The NBI is a unique platform, unlike the previous basin-wide initiations, as Dereje (2013:87), stated clearly, “the NBI represents a significant break from the past in terms of its inclusiveness and, more importantly, in its bold move to address the fundamental question of equitable water allocation which previous initiatives had consistently eschewed.” In terms of framing, the debates over the sharing and allocation of water are also distinct features of the NBI.

Gashaw (2019:10) points out that “All previous cooperative efforts were initiated by Egypt and their priority area of cooperation was technical and thus legal issues were intentionally ignored,” but the NBI is intended to bring the technical, legal, and institutional framework for the use and management of the basin. Ethiopia has been participating in the NBI as the main leader of the ‘upper block.’ This participation is, on the one hand, the plan for forcing the downstream countries to sign an agreement, that guarantees the fair share and equitable use, and on the other hand, to raise funds for its hydraulic missions (Cascao, 2009).

And the initiative is backed by international organizations like the World Bank and UNDP (Zeitoun et al. 2020; see also Nicol and Cascao, 2011; Jonsson, 2013; Interview with Dr. Firehiwot, November 4, 2022). Some writers like Ibrahim (2011) contemplated that the age-old hegemon of the downstream countries started to cease with the combined effort of the upper-stream countries in the NBI. But, it’s too early to comment on the handover of the hegemonic power of the downstream countries and the take-over by upper-stream countries, yet there are obvious reasons and spectators that there is a change in the relationship between the upper and downstream countries.

The point of departure for the upper and downstream countries signaled the array of agendas on their way to designing and signing the NBI outcome, the Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA). Upstream countries came against the historical rights, which are advocated by the downstream countries, issues like historical treaties; between the colonial powers, Egypt and Sudan (Nicol and Cascao, 2011). These treaties and agreements did not include the upstream countries; some of them were not independent and, in Ethiopian case -not part of the negotiation (Meredith and Givental, 2016) and, “particularly Ethiopia believe that other factors such as geographic and hydrological characteristics, the social and economic needs of riparians, and the potential uses of the watercourse, assure their rights to share the Nile waters” (Samaan, 2019:163). These demands occurred after the independent upstream countries started a plan to conduct large hydraulic missions to meet the development questions after the independence, and on the Ethiopian side, the regimes in Ethiopia embarked upon harnessing the resources for development ends. Generally, the situation in the Nile River Basin is clearly stated by Ibrahim (2011:297), “fundamental change of circumstances occur.”

As the contention between the upper and downstream countries continues, apart from the quantity of water sharing and utilization, the international water law by itself is one problem, the principle they advocate for. The CFA enshrined several international legal principles, including the 'equitable and reasonable utilization' of water resources preferred by upstream riparians, but also the 'no-harm' and 'prior notification' principles emphasized by Egypt and Sudan (Nicol and Cascao, 2011:321; Interview with Doctor Dareskedar, August 29, 2022). In other words, the upstream countries took the nascent concepts of 'equitable use,' and the downstream countries took the old-school thoughts of 'natural and historical rights' (Meredith and Givental, 2016). Eng. Tefera corresponds to the above idea that "upstream countries suspect every move, whether a multi-lateral or bilateral diplomatic activity, by the downstream countries on the back of their demands to endure the unfair and unjust treaties and agreements of the past and their power to twist the rights and truthful rights of upper-stream countries" (Interview on August 23, 2022). This paved the way for a diplomatic breakup of the NBI negotiations on the CFA in 2010 between the upper and downstream resulting in Ethiopia's maneuvering and alliance formation to take on a counter-hegemonic move (Cascao, 2014; Doctor Belete Interview with Sheger FM 102.1; Interview with Doctor Wubigziher, August 17, 2022). Ethiopia's leadership in the counter-hegemonic struggle against the downstream countries showed itself when the Nile Basin Initiative, Ethiopia, and other upstream states signed the Cooperative Framework Agreement (Meredith and Givental, 2016); this marked the intensified struggle against the downstream domination in the river basin.

As claimed by different writers, the NBI has become a political contestation between the upper block and the downstream block; rather than coming to a middle ground in establishing a legal and institutional podium, they end up widening their already irreconcilable differences. This was uncovered by the series of negotiations that took place after 2009; the negotiations were meant to bring all parties together and 'have brought the core issues back to the agenda' (Zeitoun, Mirumachi, and Warner, 2011). They brought a new concept into the negotiation process, the reason for bringing the concept of 'water security' into CFA is generally 'to accommodate the divergent views of upstream and downstream countries, and it has neither broken the deadlock nor brought divergent views into compromise' (Gashaw, 2019:13). Rather the concept of 'water security' is used by Egypt as a cover to shield the status quo (Ibid). 'Water security, which 'further exacerbated the differences and complicated the negotiation, does not exist in any

multilateral or bilateral water treaty, and it's not a legal theory per se, merely a political and socio-economic concept' (Salman, 2013:22).

In addition to the upstream equitable and reasonable utilization and downstream historical and natural right advocacy, the third concept of 'water security' has widened the gap between the two blocks (Dereje, 2010). In virtue of this, the negotiation process under the auspices of NBI is more of a political contestation between the upstream and downstream, both genuinely interested in fulfilling their interests than establishing the legal and institutional regime in the Nile Basin (Nasr and Neef, 2016; Gashaw, 2019; Zeitoun, Mirumachi, and Warner, 2011). Ibrahim (2011:304) put it clearly, that 'drafting a treaty knowing that it would not be signed is a clear indication of the non-legal intent of the upper riparian states which insisted on its drafting.' To sustain their current utilization, the downstream desires entirely to sustain the historical treaties and agreements; on the other hand, the upper stream strives to abrogate the colonial and post-colonial treaties and agreements in which they were not taking part.

There are different ways that states use to go against the established hegemonic system in a given river basin. Nile Basin is one of them, in which the downstream countries enjoy a relative hegemony over their upper-stream states. For almost a century, the downstream countries enjoyed this hegemonic status since Britain started to set up a series of river surveys and launched several river projects in the basin. Following the independence of African states, Egypt and Sudan harnessed the river for their benefit, not only utilizing the river but also concluding different treaties that ensured them with preserving the water resource without any interference. The upstream countries have been doing everything in their power and applying different mechanisms to change the current situation.

As briefly presented in the second chapter, the counter-hegemony struggle against the hegemonic power in the basin can be pursued by some specific mechanisms. The upstream countries came together and adopted various mechanisms to change the unfair and unjust status quo. The first mechanism is utilizing coercive mechanisms, in which there is a use of violence or sabotage of an element of order; regarding this mechanism, little has been done in the struggle because the relative coercive power of the downstream countries deterred the upstream countries from applying it. The question must be, had there been a more powerful country in the upstream, would that be a better choice to coerce the downstream countries? It would have been an

inappropriate way of handling the issue. This mechanism of coercing is highly unlikely to happen between the Nile River Basin countries, given the rare chance of a water war (Wolf, 1998 & 1999, Turton, 2002; Wheeler and Hussein, 2021), and there has been no attempt what so ever coercing the downstream to change the status quo.

The second mechanism of this research paper presented in the theoretical part of chapter two is the leverage mechanism, which includes; hydro-diplomatic initiatives, using International Water Laws, and alternative sources of funds for huge hydroelectric dams. In this mechanism, there is a lot to do with the upstream countries. Bargaining power- one of the leverage mechanisms- is the major tool for the upper-stream countries against their downstream counterparts (Cascao, 2009). Ethiopia and other upstream riparian states have to rely on bargaining power and have fewer alternatives available but have to take some political and diplomatic mechanisms (Cascao, 2008:20).

Engineer Tefera asserts that Ethiopia's cooperation with the other upstream countries challenges the downstream countries; while we are the major contributor to the river, we were put aside as if we have no share in it (Interview on August 23, 2022). This alliance with other riparian states thus plays a significant role in the counter-hegemonic power play (Nasr and Neef, 2016:15), 'non-hegemonic alliance' a multi-lateral move against the hegemonic order with or without a hegemonic power (Gashaw, 2019:10). Even though the downstream countries, especially Egypt try to counter this counter-hegemonic struggle to change the status quo by gathering the basin countries and try to appease them with some economic and other benefits (Interview with Doctor Firehiwot, November 7, 2022), the upper riparian states collectively presented their move against the downstream hegemonic status.

The other mechanism adopted by the upstream countries is bringing up new realities via political agendas; in this regard, the late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi's interview with Egyptian State Television, Ethiopia, is not saying "we should divide the Nile water equally'. We did not say that. We said, 'Let us divide it equitably ... according to the needs of every nation.'"¹⁰ The aim of Ethiopia and other upstream countries is not to request an equal share of the water resource but the aim is to have an equitable share, one according to its need. This paves the way for new

¹⁰ Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL11A98688058BBD6C> (accessed on November 7, 2022).

alternative political agenda in the river basin where the agendas of the downstream countries gained the upper hand in the pre-NBI times -of course; it is not to mean that the downstream political agendas are not significant anymore, even today they are significant, especially in the international arena.

The signature of the CFA has also led to a new discourse: transboundary cooperation in the Nile Basin is desirable and possible if this legal and institutional agreement is in place (again, with or without Egypt and Sudan) (Zeitoun et al. 2016:15). This fact is a huge factor in the struggle to change the status quo of the basin, in the past, any kind of basin initiative needed the blessing of the downstream countries (Ahmed, 2018), but the present move of the group of upstream countries is a threat to the century-long hegemonic discourses of the downstream in which they always try to make a discourse that any obstruction of the water flow or subtraction of a drop from Nile could have a huge consequence¹¹. The construction of knowledge is also another move by the upstream countries, different initiatives have been a good aura for constructing and orchestrating scientific knowledge to confront the bias in the river basin, and experts who have good knowledge and experience in the field of research are airing their part.

Reactive diplomacy as a strategy to counter the hegemonic stance of the downstream block has not been successful; it could not bring the desired result of a shift in the relation hydro-political relation between the upper and downstream. However the active diplomacy that has been carried out by Ethiopia and other upstream countries since the 1990s is a bit successful in bringing the hegemonic downstream countries to the negotiating table- even though it has a long way to go to settle them with the desired goal. The cooperation by the upstream after the commencement of the NBI is a real power in the counter-hegemonic struggle, and it succeeds in having a concrete stand in the upper stream block.

An upstream posed a real counter-hegemonic stand on its downstream contenders after 2010 and 2011, and their diplomatic and political actions became stronger. During the 18th annual meeting of the Nile Council of Ministers (Nile-COM) held in Addis Ababa on July 10, 2010, the downstream demanded an extraordinary meeting of the Nile-COM be conveyed to discuss the CFA, but the upper riparians showed no interest (Salman, 2013:25). There were similar demands

¹¹ This kind of threats are common especially from the Egyptian political elites, like Anwar Sadat, Boutros Ghali, and Mohammed Morsi, they threatened to use force against anyone who attempts to use the Nile Waters without Egyptian Permission.

by the downstream, but the upstream showed no interest to do so (Salman, 2018), unless it would limit itself to dealing with legal and institutional structures (Gashaw, 2019; Salman, 2013). This showed that there is a change in the basin power structure- although it in no way matches the material and ideational power of the downstream- the leveraging power of the upstream countries come a long way from reactionary diplomacy to active diplomacy, to the extent that is setting agenda and bringing the downstream countries to the negotiation table in a way different from the past.

Some major events happened in 2011 in the Horn of Africa and the Nile River Basin that seriously affected the political, diplomatic, and negotiations on the CFA. The independence of South Sudan from Sudan brought another competitor for the resources and partner in the negotiation, including CFA (Nicol and Cascao, 2011: 323) and another major event in the January 2011 Revolution in Egypt- part of the Arab Spring. This changed the nature of the Egyptian State and potentially its relationship to the Nile development issues (Nicol and Cascao, 2011:323). The third and perhaps more than the above two occurrences regarding the Nile River Basin is the commencement of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, which changed the historical perception of the Ethiopian government and people in general and the political balance in the Nile River Basin in particular. This topic will be discussed in the following subtopic.

As of now, there are six signatories¹² of the Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA), including Ethiopia, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda, who signed the opened CFA in Entebbe, Uganda, on May 14, 2010. Kenya signed the CFA in Nairobi, Kenya, on May 19, 2010, and the last signatory state, Burundi, signed the CFA on February 28, 2011. There have been four ratifying states¹³; Ethiopia ratified the CFA on June 13, 2013; Rwanda ratified on August 28, 2013; Tanzania ratified on March 26, 2015; and Uganda ratified on August 15, 2019.

3.4.1.2 The GERD and Counter-hegemony

Early attempts to utilize water resources in Ethiopia go back to the early decades of the 20th century, and consecutive regimes tried to harness the water resources for developing activities, but their performance was not that satisfying. The Ethiopian Water Resources Management

¹²<https://www.nilebasin.org/index.php/81-nbi/73-cooperative-framework-agreement>

¹³ Ibid. to get in to force there must be six signatory states, its uncertain even let us say it get six signatory states, because the downstream countries expelled themselves from the negotiation process. Without their presence it's doubtful to have a legal regime and institutional framework to govern the resource.

Policy was adopted in 1998/1999, admitted that the water sector works implemented so far revealed a very low level of performance due to the absence of a well-defined and coherent policy and lack of adequate investment (Tadesse, 2015:397), failed the country's water resources to contribute to the overall socio-economic development of its population (Ibid).

To counter these problems, the Ethiopian government came up with a policy framework based on sustainable, reliable development, and using the water resources of the country would be the main task, and it stipulated the specific directions that would be followed in the hydropower and irrigations¹⁴. This policy direction is devised to turn off past failures and inadequacies in different ways, like insufficient attention by consecutive regimes for the water sector, lack of expertise in the area, and budget problems (Interview with Mr. Mezmur on August 23, 2022). In addition, Engineer Tefera stated that the water sector is relatively gaining good attention; it became an independent Ministry office, several Ethiopians acquired a good education in foreign and domestic universities, and project executing capacity is also growing from time to time (Interview on August 23, 2022). The above changes in the policy arena, institutional and expertise capacity, and other motives like the growing power demand and problems related to food security forced the government to venture into some huge hydraulic missions.

Regarding transboundary water resources, the Ministry of Water Resources set out a clear policy direction, it stated that “to study, promote and ascertain Ethiopia's stakes in the allocation of shared watercourses, to establish integrated frameworks for joint and equitable cooperation on such resources, and to utilize transboundary waters based on accepted international norms” (FDRE WRM report 2002, Quoted in Tadesse, 2015). Three additional legislations, the Ethiopian Water Resources Management Proclamation No.197/2000, the Ethiopian Water Resources Management Regulation No.115/2005, and the River Basin Councils and Authorities Proclamation No.534/2007 (Tadesse, 2015:398), were also issued -providing details of the powers, responsibilities, and jurisdiction of state organs in the management, utilization, and administration of water resources in Ethiopia (Ibid).

The relative economic growth in Ethiopia in the 1990s and 2000s demanded a huge amount of hydroelectric power; this was not only the economic factor but also a result of a strong military

¹⁴FDRE Ministry of Water Resources (1999), *Ethiopian Water Resources Management Policy*, Addis Ababa, page 1.

apparatus that Ethiopia has in the region and the diplomatic success of the government in various regional, continental, and international issues (Interview with Dr. Wubigziher on August 17, 2022). The project is indicative of many factors; Ethiopia's relative political stability, economic growth, population growth, nationalistic hopes, and human expertise in dam development and management (Veilleux, 2015: 5). Wisdom of the elite in keeping both China for its economic assistance and the United States for the security missions in the region especially, a key role of Ethiopia in a part of the war on terror mission in Somalia against the extremist al-Shabab. The above developments in the internal matters of the country enabled it to turn its face to utilizing its natural resources for development purposes.

After 2009, some specific developments in the NBI forced Ethiopia to initiate a unilateral project in the Nile River Basin; “the disagreement over CFA- to how to enter into force, interpretation of verses in article 14-, and the downstream countries suspension of their membership in the NBI” (Tawfik, 2016:74). The downstream countries intentionally prolong the negotiation processes over the Nile River Basin and when the other basin countries come to a common ground they either suspend their membership or put some clauses that are against the interest of others. This strategy of discursive negotiation is one of the pushing factors for the upstream countries, especially Ethiopia, to undertake a unilateral project in the Nile River Basin.

The site was one of the four projects identified by the U.S Bureau of Reclamation between 1958 and 1964, at the time of the Blue Nile Survey (Wuhibegzer, 2013); subsequently, the GoE conducted a survey at the site in October 2009 and August 2010, and the project was announced on 31 march 2011 (Yohannes, Khalil, and Salem, 2017:4). On 2 April 2011 the project was launched by the late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, Meles stated that the cost of the project would be covered by the GoE and the people, from the famous, wealthy men, sportsmen, artists to the common citizen to the lower grade students millions participated in buying bonds. Without funding from financial institutions such as the World Bank (Hilhorst, 2016:7; see also Water Technology.net 2014), this was mainly because of the Egyptian strategy of denying—or permanently delaying—non-objection, which used this policy to ensure that almost no funding could be secured for investments in large water resources infrastructure in the upstream riparians (Hilhorst, 2016:8). The building of the dam was contracted to the Italian construction firm Salini Impreglio.

The historical relationship between the upstream and the downstream countries in the Nile River Basin was known for its zero-sum game, which is characterized by the dominating power of Egypt and Sudan. But after the beginning of GERD, things happened to change in the region; Mr. Gissila states that the “power GERD has given to Ethiopia cannot be matched by anything else; it has shown the world that Ethiopia can plan and execute as such projects like GERD and, also shifted, in a relative way, the power held by the downstream, namely Egypt and Sudan” (Interview on October 12, 2022). In the years before the beginning of the construction of GERD, the downstream countries did everything in their power to deter upstream countries from developing river basins by using different mechanisms, sometimes they used their geopolitical and diplomatic power to not support or lend finances by the international finance institutions, and also they do engage in attention diversion from harnessing the river (Interview with Dr. Teferi, October 26, 2022, see also Whittington, Waterbury, and Jeuland, 2014; Hilhorst, 2016).

Although Ethiopia has long claimed a right to use Nile waters, until 2011, there had been no serious challenge to Egypt’s historic rights or to the status quo prevailing in the Nile basin that involved the construction of large water storage infrastructure (Whittington, Waterbury, and Jeuland, 2014: 597). Apart from the changing power dynamics in the basin, the GERD has guaranteed the natural rights of Ethiopia to use a river that flows from its territory (Gashaw, 2019), as Ethiopia contributes around 85% of the annual flow of the Nile River Basin it has a natural right to use its resource. Not only guaranteed it’s a natural right but also more than that for some; Zerihun (2016), With a major shift of emphasis and action, the GERD is promoting justice for Ethiopia, and for all other users of the river. The unjust past has happened to Ethiopia, and the other upstream countries began to compensate for it by holding the right to use the resource by the very people and government of the upstream countries.

This did not come easily, as the downstream counties always oppose any kind of hydraulic infrastructure in the upper-stream countries, Egypt and Sudan established a legal framework for them vetoing the powers of the Nile River Basin (El-Syed and Mansour, 2017), and at the same time, they withdraw from any kind of treaty that gives benefit to Ethiopia and the other upstream countries. Egypt and Sudan withdrew from the NBI, a treaty that was supposed to guarantee the equitable use of water resources to all riparian states, and they claim the sustenance of the 1959 treaty, which gave them every right on the river and did not include any upstream country. They

also use other tactics like delaying a negotiation by intentionally adding or subtracting a phrase or an article in the negotiation, as they did in the NBI negotiations carried out in different phases in article 14 and the modalities of the treaty to get into force. Intentionally delaying the process of negotiation, they sustain their domination.

“Who owns the river has changed; now Ethiopia owns the river” (Interview with Dr. Dareskedar, August 29, 2022); this signals that the historical and political terrain in the basin is changing from time to time in favor of Ethiopia and its upper-stream allies. Starting from the Haile Selassie I, consecutive Ethiopian regimes tried to control and develop the river, but they couldn’t for obvious reasons like inadequate financial and expertise capacity, political instability, and others. Surveyors from the United States Bureau of Reclamation were anxious about the plausibility of the studies they carried out, this was because of the inadequate capacity, and they even wondered if the coming generation would succeed (Belete Interview with Sheger FM 102.1).

The past strategies of retaining the hegemonic power by the downstream countries were carried out by controlling the discourses, holding the moral grounds of utilizing the river, influencing consecutive negotiations, and having expertise and knowledge capacity. GERD is used as a counter-hegemonic instrument. One of the strategies is that GERD is used as a counter to the sanctioned discourses and provides an alternative discourse via reactive and active diplomacy (Naser and Neef, 2016:10). Historically, the downstream countries control the Nile River Basin; via existing treaties that gave them the power over the resource, by constructing various hydraulic infrastructures, and by containing co-riparians through the institutional structures that perpetuated their hegemonic power (El-Sayed and Mansour, 2017:236). In addition, the downstream countries established a sanctioned discourse that gave them the ideational power to utilize the river as they wished, and they imposed this discourse even on the upstream countries whenever they encountered them with negotiations.

GERD has been changing the discourse around the Nile River Basin in different ways; the first one is changing the age-old sanctioned discourse by the downstream countries, like they are the ‘sole owners of the river’ (Interview with Dr. Teferi, October 26, 2022). This has been changed by the construction of the GERD, which manifested the change in discourse; like any other downstream country, Ethiopia and other upstream countries can utilize the water resource that

goes down from their territory. The discourse change is a result of the expertise and knowledge creation capacity change; as more people get educated and produce more knowledge on the river, there is a more chance to change the way the river is narrated. The other way by which GERD has changed the sanctioned discourse is it brought another discourse in the diplomatic arena, the ‘right to development’.

This discourse goes alongside the development goals that are planned to march against poverty. Ethiopia is one of the largest recipients of food aid in the world, as it is hit by recurrent drought due to climate change. To change this fact, the GoE has been planning a “Growth and Transformation Plan 2010-2020, the current ten-year plan; the gist of these plans is first to ensure food security which can only be implemented by using its water resources such as Abbay River and others. Also, it is one of the fastest-growing GDPs in the world, with increasing investment attraction that demands huge power for emerging industries; moreover, half of the population has no electricity. As a country known for its 12 river basins, all start from its territory and flow outside of its territory, and it’s a paradox that Ethiopia has low electricity coverage. Still, its population largely depends on non-eco-friendly ways of energy consumption. The entire struggle by the GoE is to alleviate these problems that the people have been suffering from.

Developments happened during the active negotiation times in the NBI, and Ethiopia’s unilateral initiation to undertake construction on the Nile River Basin has changed the downstream countries’ approach to handling the Nile River Basin. First, they chose a peaceful diplomatic way to deal with the issue. For instance, Egypt has shown a change of approach from trying to control every agenda on the matter to preferring a diplomatic way to handle the issue. “Egypt’s policy has changed with consecutive governments, as well as with the development of the project” (Tawfik, 2016:74). It resorted to a diplomatic means of handling the issue to assess the downstream effects of projects in the upper-stream countries, projects like the GERD. In 2011 the Egyptian Interim Prime Minister Essam Sharaf came to Addis Ababa, and both countries agreed to conduct a study on the effects of the GERD on the downstream countries. The study group consisted of two experts from Egypt, Sudan, and Ethiopia and four international experts. Even though the result of the study conducted by the IPoE in 2013 further divided Egypt and Ethiopia, it was a mark that Egypt was forced to draw on diplomacy rather than relying upon the old ways of coercion.

The case with Sudan is also the same; in 2012, Sudan officially stated its support to the GERD, and there are various reasons for the Sudanese case. The first one is it has a good experience of regular flow maintained by the Tekeze River Dam, which was completed in 2009; the Sudanese political elite and academicians anticipated the same output with the construction of the GERD. (Interview with Dr. Teferi, October 26, 2022). The other one is a political one, the then-ruling elites of EPRDF had a good relationship with the former Sudanese president Omar Hasan al-Basheer, and this enabled the two countries to have a common interest in developing the river projects (Salman, 2018). The third reason is the rift between Egypt and Sudan; Sudan has not been able to utilize its water share that was given in the 1959 treaty with Egypt, so Sudan has the ambition to utilize its share. But Egypt obstructs this ambition of Sudan, and on the Sudanese side, this act by the Egyptians is deemed as disrespectful and, coupled with other political and boundary issues between them, led Sudan to align with Ethiopia (Zeitoun et al., 2016). This position of Sudan was a turning point in the hydro-political relation of the basin, as Sudan was a historical ally of Egypt and withdrew from the NBI following Egypt (Tawfik, 2016; Interview with Dr. Wuhibegzer, August 17, 2022).

Instead of using strategies that sustain their hegemonic power, the downstream countries have been forced to adopt peaceful and diplomatic mechanisms to handle issues in the Nile River Basin, which is a result of combined efforts by the upper-stream countries on launching an active and proactive diplomacy, coming to a common ground on the struggle to abrogate an unfair treaty signed between the downstream countries. The other reason is the unilateral action taken by the GoE. Launching the GERD project assured Ethiopia of its natural right to utilize its natural resource that originates from its territory. The GERD project has also changed the discourse around the basin and brought a new discourse. A discourse emanated from the downstream countries and was amplified by their allies in the region and internationally has been taking shape by the upper stream's agenda of equitable use. The urge for development and natural right to use the river in a way that does not harm the downstream came as an alternative and emerging discourse in basin politics. Beyond its importance in socio-economic and political aspects, the construction of GERD "could be interpreted as a direct attempt by Ethiopia to take control of the Nile River to challenge the current hydro-hegemonic regime" (Nielsen, 2015:35).

3.4.2. GERD as an Arena of Cooperation

The need for cooperation in the Nile Basin River goes back to the early phase of negotiations in the NBI when Ethiopia and the upper-stream countries called for an equitable share of the resource, the process which was supposed to make a legal regime for the Nile Waters after all negotiating parties sign and ratify the CFA. The power achieved by Ethiopia is then placed at a regional level with the call for cooperation within the framework of the CFA; for this reason, it is argued that the nature of interactions is moving towards cooperation (Nielsen, 2015:51). Even though the NBI is not that much strong and tested by the downstream countries in the negotiation process, it could bring Egypt and Sudan to the negotiation table to deal with the upstream countries on the issues of fair and equitable utilization of the Nile Waters (Interview with DR. Firehiwot, November 7, 2022).

The intended result of the NBI –creating a legal regime for the utilization and conservation of the Nile Waters- is not yet realized; the diplomatic portion of the negotiation is more achieved by compelling Egypt and Sudan to come to the table. First of all, it brought all the upper-stream countries in one to struggle against the hegemonic power of the downstream, where the downstream countries controlled everything (Interview with DR. Dareskedar, August 29, 2022). Second, the NBI served as a plain for airing upstream agendas of a cooperative approach to deal with mater, by which they objected to the colonial and post-colonial unjust treaties and replaced them with a new treaty that gives a right to other countries to utilize the river following their demand. There can be added ideas like NBI negotiations resulted in different types of discourses than previous Egypt-initiated cooperation, Ethiopia and other upstream countries started to implement proactive diplomacy.

During the NBI negotiations, the common position by the upstream counties contested the long-held hegemony of Egypt and the beneficiary of the hegemony of Sudan. Generally, in the words of Rawia Tawfik, “The common negotiating position taken by most Nile upstream countries represented asignificant transformation in Nile hydro politics” (2015:73). This significant transformation in the Nile Basin was not concluded as it was supposed to with the withdrawal of Egypt and Sudan; it could not transform itself into a comprehensive legal regime to govern the river basin. With the failure to reach a common ground in the NBI, countries took their way to utilize the river according to their need.

Some writers and commentators argue that there was cooperation between the Eastern Nile Countries before the announcement of the GERD project, the cooperation was progressing well along both technical and political tracks until mid-2010, and under the NBI ... countries adopted new joint and cooperative norms in the planning, management, and development of the Nile basin's shared resources (Cascao and Nicol, 2016:559). The negotiations under the auspices of the NBI are of a new type; at least, they could bring all the riparians to the same venue for a similar agenda, and nonetheless, their expectations of outcomes from the negotiation are so contrary. When it comes to the results of the cooperation under the NBI, it was more of a political than a technical endeavor; there has been no kind of project realized from the anticipated joint projects in the Eastern Nile Countries (Interview with Cascao, October 2022).

Once again, this brought back patterns that were common in the basin, like; tensions between the riparians, reactive diplomatic activities, and condemning one another. Immediately after Ethiopia launched the GERD project, the then Egyptian interim Prime Minister Essam Sharaf came to Addis Ababa on May 13, 2011, and met with the late Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Meles Zenawi. The two prime ministers officially agreed to establish a group of an International panel of experts to review the design and construction documents of the project and to report on the possible effects (Aljazeera, 2011). The meeting was also continued in Cairo, and Sharaf said, "We can make the issue of GERD something useful with other dams in the Nile; it can be a path for development and construction between Ethiopia, Sudan, and Egypt (Aljazeera, 2011). This comment by top officials of Egypt was made when Egypt had not recovered from the aftermath of a revolution that toppled Hosni Mubarak.

Sudan did not declare its position upon the GERD during the first months (Samaan, 2019: 189), but Sudan has seen the benefit of constructing a dam on the upper side of the Blue Nile as it is a relief from the irregular flow of water and erosion, especially after the construction Tekeze Dam on 2009. The Sudanese government and the scholars know the benefit of a dam project, and they would not be hesitant to cooperate on the issue of GERD. The GoE sent a delegation led by Alemayeh Tegenu, arrived in Khartoum on October 25, and met with President Bashir, after which Sudan announced its participation in the IPoE (Tsfalem, 2011).

After Sudan announced its participation in the IPoE on October 25, the three water ministries agreed on the terms of reference and the rules and procedures for the establishment of an IPoE,

and within two months, the governments nominated two national experts and four international experts (Cascao and Nicol, 2016:564). This move was very important that the three countries, despite their historical animosity over the utilization of the Nile River Basin, came together and tried to solve disagreements on a technical means rather than politicizing the issue. Also, these moves have shown the willingness of these countries to cooperate over GERD and were able to conduct an assessment of the impact of the dam on the downstream countries.

The IPoE work took place from May 2012 to May 2013, conducting six regular meetings and four field visits to the GERD site (Samaan, 2019:190). On May 31, 2013, the IPoE submitted its final report to the three governments addressing three main topics: dam safety and engineering, water resources and hydrology, and environment and socio-economics (Ibid). Despite their willingness to assign an international panel of experts along with six other experts –two experts from each country -they did not agree on the results of a study by those experts, and both Egypt and Sudan refused to abide by the reports, only Ethiopia praised the report.

There are a few other agreements that have been made between these three Eastern Nile countries; Egypt, Ethiopia, and Sudan. The Declaration of Principles is one and the most important ones, signed in 2015 in Khartoum. This Declaration of Principles has a real game-changing effect on the negotiation process. Egypt officially accepted the GERD as a legitimate project.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE CASE OF GERD IN ETHIO-SUDAN RELATIONS

4.1 Shifting Positions of Sudan; Effects on the negotiation process

4.1.1 Sudan's Improved Hydro-relations with Ethiopia and Declining with Egypt

Relations between Ethiopia and Sudan have their dynamic, but from ancient times they have been powerfully shaped by the two countries' location on the Nile and their respective relations with Egypt (Young, 2020:3). This continued to shape the relations between the two countries, as Sudan shifts its alliance from Egypt to Ethiopia and its relations with Egypt showed being hostile at least in the 1990s and 2000s, and also after the commencement of GERD.

In March 2012, former Sudanese president Omar Hasan al-Bashir announced that Sudan supports the construction of the GERD in the Nile River; this was mainly a result of "Sudanese fear of isolation from the greater majority of upstream Nile River Basin countries" (Sorbo, 2020:10). Sudan froze its membership in the NBI negotiation following Egypt, unlike the past, a block created by the upstream countries is becoming a strong body in the negotiation process could proceed in its track to sign and ratify the CFA, and also successfully contesting the downstream hydro hegemony (as briefly discussed under previous subtopic), Sudan's coalition with Egypt is no useful –at least in this specific issue.

The al-Bashir regime improved relations with Ethiopia, and at the same time, deteriorating relations with Egypt resulted in an incline towards Ethiopia. This was a result of different happenings within and outside the Sudanese Political System; starting from the early 1990s, the Sudanese political elite and Ethiopian counterparts had established personal-level relationships. The former liberation fighters and later EPRDF coalition masters from Tigray, the TPLF, had been sheltered in Sudan during their fight against Dergue; from that time onward, Sudan and Ethiopia Enjoyed relatively stable economic and political relations (Belete, interview with Sheger FM 102.1).

Things were not as smooth between Egypt and Sudan as they were between Ethiopia and Sudan. The well-established and a year's long relationship between Sudan and Egypt began to deteriorate in the 1990s; Egypt did not trust the Islamist regime in Sudan after the attempt of assassination to the Egyptian President Mubarak in Addis Ababa in 1995, and Egypt occupied

the Hala'ib Triangle, which is claimed by Sudan (Sorbo, 2020:10). Both Sudan and Egypt manipulates the border issues between them for a political cause when things begin to appear bad they point out the border case and accuse each other as an aggressor. Especially after 2011, the Sudan elite and public started to see GERD as more beneficial to Sudan, and they positively accepted the GERD project "as they have seen the benefit of dam construction in North of Sudan with the Tekeze Dam" (Inter with Dr. Teferi, October 26, 2022).

Moreover, "Sudan acknowledged that its security and economy depended more on its relations with Ethiopia than with Egypt" (Young, 2020:11). This resulted from the realization of the Sudan regime that Ethiopia's positive role in the peacekeeping mission in the border area of Abiye, and stopped supporting the SPLA. The other reason is the resentment of Sudan for not utilizing its water share in the 1959 Nile Agreement with Egypt. The Sudanese policymakers are embarrassed by the fact that they could not utilize their water share as per the treaty (Samaan, 2019). With the discovery of oil, the Sudanese economy started to boom they started to upgrade the capacity of their dams –Merowe Dam.

The above reasons and the series of events that took place in the 1990s and 2000s between Sudan and Ethiopia and Sudan and Egypt changed the course of relations. The course of change for Ethiopia and Sudan is a positive one, which resulted in the development of economic ties, relatively stable and peaceful border areas, and greater political relations between ruling parties. On the other side, the relationship between Sudan and Egypt has shown a relative decline. Mistrust between the ruling elites up to conspiring to assassinate and political and ideological differences are major ones. One was accusing the other of infringing sovereignty and many other cases. The other bone of contention between Egypt and Sudan is the divergent stance on South Sudan's civil war; also, Khartoum accuses Cairo of supporting rebels in Darfur Region (Turhan, 2020). These reasons brought the relations into a decline –but still strong compared to the one with Ethiopia, given their historical political, religious, and Arab influence.

In November 2013, Egypt and Sudan demanded the suspension of the construction of GERD until the completion of studies by the IPoE; at the same time, Ethiopian electric current carrying wires reached Sudan, emphasizing the benefit of the dam. Sudan reaffirmed its support for the dam (Salman, 2015). Sudan did this even by declining the statements by the neo-International Experts who were opposing the construction of the dam. The strategy of making a rift between

Egypt and the Sudanese alliance by Ethiopia has succeeded once again by gaining the latter's support; the water alliance dates back to 1959 with the conclusion of the Nile Water Agreement. Egypt then changed its mind and drew back its demand for the suspension of construction of the Dam pending completion of the studies at a meeting of President el-Sisi and Haile Mariam in Equatorial Guinea on the sidelines of the African Summit of June 2014 (Salman, 2015).

This relative decline in the relationship between Egypt and Sudan paved the way for the Sudanese government to shift its ties to Ethiopia, and this paper argues that Sudan stood on the side of Ethiopia and other upstream countries due to this reason. If it were not for those declining relationships with Egypt and the close personal-level, well-established ties between the Sudanese political elite and the Ethiopian political elite, it would not be the same result of bringing Sudan to support the GERD. This is the driving force that initiated Sudan's cooperation with the upstream block, and the latter struggles to get rid of the very treaties that the former is part of and benefited from.

The signing of DoP on March 23, 2015, could have never happened if not Sudan had been able to make Egypt and Ethiopia compromise on their intransigent stands on whether to historical rights on the former's side and fair share and equitable distribution of the water on the latter's side. As a swing state between Egypt and Ethiopia, Sudan, with its former President al-Bashir, succeeded in good diplomatic and economic relations with Ethiopia and was able to persuade Egypt to this agreement. Tefera (Interview on August 23, 2022) pointed out the positive role of Sudan throughout the whole time, from being the favorite place for preparing the draft of the agreement also of course the venue for the DoP. The relationship that was rooted in the ruling elite of Ethiopia and Sudan, though it was full of ups and downs related to Egypt's long hands, border issues, and other internal factors, helped bring the two rival states into the negotiation.

According to Whittington, Waterbury, & Jeuland (2014), Sudan has a significant stake in the peace between Egypt and Ethiopia regarding the use of the River. There appears to be a legal agreement between Ethiopia and Sudan for the sale of hydro-power from then GERD, which directly depends on such accords, as Sudan's agricultural and hydropower interests now align with those of Ethiopia (Tsega, 2017:6). As mentioned somewhere above, in 2013 when the first power carrying circuit reached Sudan from Ethiopia, Ethiopia's government successfully

persuaded Sudan's government on its side, this has been not only getting something from Ethiopia's hydropower plants but it's major policy shift in the Sudanese economy.

4.1.2 Secession of South Sudan: Impacts of Sudan's Economy.

Since independence in 1956, the elites at core 'have negotiated effective bargains' with regional and local elites and rebels to ensure 'the political survival of the old established autocracy' (El-Battahani & Gadkarim, 2017:34). This trend has helped them to stay on power for some time, but as witnessed throughout the second half of the past century the Sudanese politics was dominated by fierce power competitions within the ruling elite and regional rebel war against the central government. Throughout its history, Sudan has been divided between its Arab heritage, identified with northern Sudan, and its African heritage to the South. Especially since colonial times, tensions have existed between the two parts resulting in two civil wars between 1955-1972 and 1983-2005 (Kammel, 2013:1).

The main reasons for all these messes in the Sudanese political system are more or less similar to its neighboring states, and its traced back to the problems related to political misrepresentation of groups along ethnic and religious lines, prevalent economic segregation, and social unrest resulting from previous problems. In Sudan, politics is further complicated by ethnic differences between Arab-Sudanese and African-Sudanese, as in much of Africa, borders were crudely drawn up in the 19th century to divide the continent between competing colonial powers (Cooke, 2015:727). The unique feature of Sudan is that "marginalization was not exclusive to the south but also characteristic of armed conflicts between the government of Sudan and elements other northerners like Beja in the east, Fur in Darfur, Nubia and Kordofan and others" (Bello-Schunemann, 2019:7).

The leaders in Khartoum have never striven for equality for those not related to their tribal group or of Arabic ethnicity, "the Dinka and Nuer tribes of the South and the non-Arabic and Chadian related Sudanese in the western region of Darfur have always felt isolated and so have regularly taken up arms against Khartoum" (Cooke, 2015:727). The inequality that prevailed along ethnic and religious lines brought about one of the most horrific civil war histories in Sudanese history, and it does not seem Sudanese politics has learned its lessons from the previous wars, as they continued to take place in Sudan.

Sudan's armed conflict landscape is highly complex and has been described as a civil of "interlocking civil wars" with a series of 'interwoven causes', including economic, resource-based, ethnic, cultural, religious, and international issues (El-Battahani, 2006:12). This innate characteristics of Sudanese politics had been there since its inception as modern state in 1956.

They fought over power and resources, the role of religion in the state, and self-determination (Johnson, 2007: Young, 2012). This is especially obvious in the case of South Sudan, where Nilotic African-origin South Sudan people pick up guns to fight their northern counter parts. Regarding the resource "Sudan's governance structure is controlled by a small group of elites that command strategic resources and preside over the state in ways that produce conflict with major societal groups (El-Battahani & Gadkarim, 2017). This way of controlling and using resources for political gain, instead of the well-being of the society is the source of resentment in many African states.

There had been some attempts to resolve the problem with peaceful political mediation, the first one was the Addis Ababa Accord in 1972, an initiation taken by the last emperor of Ethiopia to mediate between the Sudanese government and rebels of the South. The accord was hoped by many as it would fulfill Sudanese reconstruction, stability, and development could be achieved within the framework of a peaceful and stable political system (Harari, 1994:11). Given the fact that the Addis Ababa Accord was one of the rare cases in which African internal conflicts were resolved by peaceful negotiations, it was an achievement not only by Sudanese standard but it was propagated as the model for solving similar problems in Africa and elsewhere (Ibid). Additional measures were taken by the Khartoum regime like a permanent constitution in 1973, reconciliation in 1977, and Southern self-governance in 1972, but all these short cut by the very man- General Jaffer Nimeiri- who did all the previous processes.

The decision by the government in Khartoum to build an oil refinery in the North to refine southern oil sparked the new civil war. In 1983, the southern regional assembly was dissolved and the Southern Sudan was broken up into three regions (Doop, 2013:127). The Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) of South Sudan, under the leadership of John Garang de Mabior, attacked the construction site of the Jonglei canal and forced the operation to a halt (Young, 2012).

The June 1983 decision of the then president of the Sudanese Republic General Jaffer Nimeiri to abrogate all the previous political processes and the constitution itself became a point of departure to the civil war between the Sudan Liberation Army in the South. Between 1983 and 2005, in what is known as the second Sudanese Civil War, the Khartoum-based government of Sudan fought a war against rebels in the south, of which the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) was the most consolidated group (Bello-Schunemann, 2019:6).

After a series of negotiations in various places for years, in 2005 the government of Sudan and the Sudanese People Liberation Movement signed a Comprehensive Peace Agreement in Naivasha, Kenya. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement(CPA) of 2005 is the most crucial milestone in the ongoing political development of Sudan, ending Africa's bloodiest war between the northern and the southern parts of the country (Kammel, 2013:1). In fact, the agreement established a seven-year transition period, de-facto autonomy for southern Sudan, a unity government in Khartoum, and incorporated agreements on security, boundaries, revenue sharing from southern oilfields and the administration of three contested areas straddling North and South (Kammel, 2013:1-2).

The January 2011 referendum effectively ended the prolonged, violent confrontation between the Republic of Sudan and the territories that would ultimately gain independence as South Sudan, this development marked an important stage in the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) (Mbaku & Smith, 2012:1). With the independence of South Sudan, Sudan began to face a new problem in its economy. Disagreement among the National Congress Party, the ruling party in Sudan, began to be witnessed when its senior figures started to oppose Al-Bashir's move regarding the referendum.

Through the late summer and early fall of 2010, as Bashir began to face increasing external calls for the NCP to unblock bottlenecks and allow the referendum preparations to proceed, these internal fissures and pressure points played an important role in his decision-making (Day, 2018:90). The NCP survivalist drive was a deeply economic one as well (Ibid). During 2010, the already weak Sudanese economy had dived in the wake of inflation, corruption, and widespread expectation of southern secession (Elbeely, 2013).

With roughly 80 percent of Sudan's pre-secession oil reserves located in the South, the National Congress Party was acutely aware of the enormous risks posed by secession, which also threatened to saddle Khartoum with the entirety of the country's \$38 billion in debt (Ibid). In the NCP's view, these were both zero-sum issues: every barrel of oil and every dollar of debt was either going to Khartoum or Juba (Day, 2018). And with Juba clear that "everything was negotiable except the referendum," the National Congress Party treated the economic issues with maximum brinksmanship and minimum flexibility (Temin & Woocher, 2012).

The Sudanese state particularly known for its highly centralized oil-based patronage system has now lost its oil to the newest state, where Sudan was dependent with 97% of government revenue and 60% of GDP (De Waal, 2023). It's plausible to say that Sudan's subsequent political and economic trajectory is somehow the result of hyper-dependency on oil money.

To mitigate the economic that resulted from the secession of South Sudan the government of Sudan devised three Years Recovery Program (2011-2013), to maintain and sustain the stability of the economy, continuing the adoption of the free market economy introduced earlier (Elbeely, 2013:81). The anticipated result of the recovery plan was not as it expected, rather it was collapsed and did not realize the desired result. This was a result of different reasons; the first one is the eruption of war between the North and the South in South Kordofan and the Blue Nile area, the situation was aggravated due to the invasion and capturing of oil fields by South Sudan in 2012 (Elbeely, 2013:82). Where this oil field contributed around 50% of Sudan's oil production.

It's natural for Sudan to shift its focus from an oil-based economy to other sources of income, in doing so obviously it puts its attention to the agricultural sector since it has the water resources and the fertile land, rather than other sectors like industry, which it has not much of it. The coincidence between Sudan's demand for agricultural expansion and GERD development created an opportunity for the two countries to work together.

After losing its oil-rich areas to South Sudan after the 2011 referendum, Sudan started to expand its agricultural and power generation as compensation for the lost oil economy. This policy convergence with Ethiopia's policy of harnessing its natural resources for economic development made the two countries work together in the negotiation of Egypt and also in the NBI.

This led to increased hydro-relations between Sudan and Ethiopia, signaled by cooperation for mutual benefit. The Water Diplomatic framework, which is suggested by Islam and Susskind, fits here; the framework is based on a value-creating and non-zero-sum game. Ethiopia and Sudan engaged in harnessing the benefit of the water resource in symbiotic mode, where the dam in Ethiopia creates a stable and predictable flow of water for its irrigation and relief from a massive flood that hit Sudan. The Sudan national interest aligned with Ethiopia from the inception of the GERD to 2019, and from that on, the track changed from a value-creating and non-zero-sum game to the old ways of a zero-sum game due to a change of leadership and its foreign policy of national interest.

4.1.3 Sudan, on the other way, round

To comprehend Sudan's perspective on the Nile waters, it is necessary to turn to its internal problems, to understand the place of the water issue in domestic politics and its influence on the Sudanese statehood (Otinov, 2022:4). Things began to change in 2019, as Sudan officially shifted its alliance with Ethiopia to the Egyptian side; this shift has resulted in a major change in the tripartite negotiation process over the GERD. The political changes that took place in Khartoum in 2019, in which the longest-serving Sudanese president Omar Hasan al-Bashir was toppled by the military coup, resulted in "a significant shift in regional power dynamics and it influenced Sudan's external relations" (Andrews and Omar,2019:3). One of the major changes took place after the coup is the nature of negotiations on the GERD between Egypt, Ethiopia, and Sudan.

This shift could be seen from different angles; the internal power dynamics and internally induced foreign policy orientation changes by the government of Sudan. The position of Sudan was determined not by the objective reasons for the lack of water resources but rather by foreign policy issues of relations with neighboring countries (Otinov, 2022:6). According to Cascao (Interview October 21, 2022), every country has its own permanent foreign policy goals, as for Sudan politics, religion, and other aspects are permanent, to realize these aspects Sudan standing on the Egyptian is more beneficiary than standing on the Ethiopian Side. Given the historical relations between Sudan and Egypt, one can argue that it's natural for Sudan to side with Egypt. Comparing the depth of relations between Sudan and Egypt with that of Sudan and Ethiopia, Grandi (2016) stipulated that the relations with Egypt are more concrete and deep than that of

Ethiopia, as Egypt has the upper hand in the modern Sudan state with huge economic, political, religious connections, and of course the Arab heritage on both countries.

Not only Sudan (which was on Ethiopia's side) but even Egypt gave recognition to the GERD as a hydropower generating plant on the DoP on the March 23, 2015 agreement in Khartoum. As the construction progressed to dam filling and water reserving, the GERD negotiation process by itself changed from dealing with the design issues and dam quality standards to the timeline of filling and operation of the dam (Cascao, Interview on October 21, 2022; Interviewee number 9 on October 2022). From the history of relations between Sudan and Ethiopia, "Sudan works with Ethiopia as long as Ethiopia is stable; otherwise, Sudan shifts its allegiance or supports anti-Ethiopian groups "Dareskedar (Interview August 29, 2022).

The Sudanese Transitional Government Civil Leadership under Abdala Hamdoug had a positive attitude towards GERD, and it saw the project as a development project and important for the Sudanese people. During the mediation process between the civil and military powers after the 2019 coup, Ethiopia tried to settle the dispute peacefully, and Prime Minister Abiy could become a deal breaker between the two parties. Power shared by the two disputing parties, Abdala Hamdoug, former ECA senior official who lived in Addis Ababa for more than a decade, became Prime minister –this gave hope for the continuation of good relations between Ethiopia and Sudan. Things did not go as expected, and the opposite happened; Sudan's military leaders, who had strong support from Egypt, consolidated power and started to use different disputing issues with Ethiopia, like; the GERD and border issues, to escape the internal pressure from the people of Sudan. Later on, starting from April 2019, "the Sudanese position shifted, slowly, the tide appears to be turning" (Ahmady, 2020). Eventually, the upper hand of the military wing in Sudanese politics led by General Abdul Fatah al-Burhan shifted the orientation from Ethiopia to Egypt in domestic politics and regional geopolitical positioning.

After securing the economic portion of national interest through the construction of GERD, Sudan turned its face to the others, as the other portions of national interest could be served by Egypt rather than Ethiopia; they took the Egyptian side. Of course, this is not only about pursuing the national interest of Sudan, but it has issues with the new leadership that came after toppling al-Bashir's regime; the new leadership headed by General al-Burhan shifted its foreign Policy from Ethiopian Side to Egyptian and its Arab counterparts.

4.1.3.1. The Gulf Diplomatic Crises and Impacts on Ethio-Sudan Relations

The political spillover from the Gulf and Middle East continues to influence the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea region. In the war in Yemen in 2016, Saudi leased the Egyptian Red Sea coasts, which are disputed by Sudan, UAE port development in Somali Land, and Iranian encroachment in Sudan are the major ones. For Sudan specifically, the turmoil that has plagued Sudan for a decade and its current transition must be understood in the context of the larger arrangement of relations in its immediate area, which includes the Gulf, Horn of Africa, and the Red Sea (Sorbo, 2020:8). Also, recent developments happened in Ethiopia like border issues, and GERD are some of the factors that shape and reshape the pattern of relations in general and the GERD negotiation process in particular.

While Sudan was trying to maintain ties with Qatar –one the major financial supporters of the al-Basheer regime and Turkey - Ankara signed a ninety-nine-year lease with Sudan to redevelop the Ottoman-era Red Sea port of Suakin (” (USIP 2020: 26). Sudan contributed the largest portion of ground force for Saudi and UAE led forces in the Yemen war, but when it came to Ethiopia, Ethiopia maintained a relatively neutral position in the war (Young, 2020). John Young raises three main reasons for Sudan’s flirtation with Turkey and Qatar; the failure of Saudi Arabia and the UAE to provide the finances needed to keep his tottering regime afloat, Egypt’s refusal to negotiate over the Hala’ib Triangle, and grievances with the United States, which continued to designate Sudan as a state sponsor of terrorism (2020:14).

The GCC split has been exacerbated by divergent views on political Islam, particularly the Muslim Brotherhood, which has affected how the Gulf States see the Sudanese revolution (Sorbo, 2020:9). Egypt mainly accuses Sudan of harboring the members of trained Muslim Brotherhood that fled during the coup against Mohammed Morsi. There is the same attitude against Muslim brotherhood by the Saudi and UAE as they are monarchic states, and the consolidation of political Islam could be a danger for their regime in addition to Iran. That is why “Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Egypt were quick to support the Transitional Military Council in part because these governments hoped that the Transitional Military Council would purge the government of Bashir-appointed Islamists close to Qatar and Turkey” (USIP 2020: 25).

According to some accounts, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Egypt may have helped to facilitate Bashir's overthrow (Abdelaziz, Georgy, and El Dahan, 2019) by providing

political and financial assistance to the Transitional Military Council¹⁵. Particularly, Egypt encouraged the military to hold firm, as the Saudi and UAE (Copnall, 2019), when the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) of Sudan under General Mohammed Hemedti Dagalo, took part in the Yemen war against the Houthis was hailed (Redie, 2022). The RSF was generously rewarded with huge amounts of money and weapons from Saudi and UAE, making the RSF powerful in Sudan (Kirkpatrick 2018). This is why they are helping the Transitional Military Council, and the Military Council is paying the favor in pushing agendas that are pro-Egyptian. Recently Qatar and Turkey appeared sidelined by the Transitional Military Council, and the status of their recent deals, including on Suakin, is unclear (Blanchard, 2019:8). This follows the events that happened in Sudan's political terrain and its switch of alliance clearly shows the pattern it will take in near future that the GERD negotiation on reserve filling and dam administration would require more of discursive agendas by Sudan and Egypt.

Later on, the Gulf countries started to align publicly with the Egyptian and Sudan Transitional Military Council (supported by the Gulf Countries and Egypt) side. Saudi Arabia publicly aligned with Egypt and Sudan on the GERD (Mohammed, 2020). This explicitly shows the extent to which the Sudanese politics fell under the Gulf and Egyptian hands, and Egypt allied to curve Ethiopia and its national interest. Egypt somehow succeeded in grasping Sudan's political change more than Ethiopia did; Egypt effectively held the military council to its side, and also the Gulf countries who played a key role in Ethio-Eritrea re-approaching aligned to support their Arab League fellows.

Whereas Sudan was trapped between the Gulf Rift, struggling to prove to its patrons in the Gulf, Saudi and UAE had been brokering peace between Ethiopia and Eritrea (Lacher, 2022). Ethiopia relied more on the Transitional Government led by Abdala Hamdoug, the alliance led by Egypt took a side on the Military wing and, this resulted in the disruptive stand that the military wing-led government took in the negotiation process regarding the GERD and Sudan (Interview with Wuhibegzer in August 2022). Egypt, with its political dominance in the Arab League, in addition to Sudan's Military Council, persuaded other Arab League Nations as well as Western powers to its side to put pressure on Ethiopia.

¹⁵Declan Walsh, "Amid U.S. Silence, Gulf Nations Back the Military in Sudan's Revolution," *New York Times*, April 26, 2019. And Samy Magdy, "As Sudan Uprising Grew, Arab States Worked to Shape Its Fate," Associated Press, May 8, 2019.

4.1.3.2. Border Issues

Though much historical and archaeological evidence indicates the very long economic and political relations between Ethiopia and Sudan, their most visible relations in the modern period started in the 19th century (Bahiru, 2009:344). The quest for border lands began after the colonial powers started to approach the area. Ethiopia and its western neighbor Sudan share a common boundary of over 1600 km, stretching from the junction of the Tekezze and the Royan Rivers in the north to Lake Turkana on the border with Kenya in the south (Mulatu, 2016:1).

The current border dispute goes back to the early periods of the 20th century when Emperor Menelik II of Ethiopia and the British government negotiated in 1902, which is a result of protracted negotiation that assigned the present region of Benishangul-Gumuz to Ethiopia and Blue Nile waters from Ethiopia's Lake Tana (ICG, 2012:2-3). After Britain occupied Egypt, Sudan handed over to Egypt, in 1881 the Mahdist Sudan revolted against the Anglo-Egyptian condominium rule, and they encircled the Egyptian army around Kassala.

Therefore, when Egyptian troops were besieged in Khartoum by the Mahdists the British decided to intervene, they sent a British negotiator Rear Admiral Sir William Hewett to the court of Yohannes to solicit the support of Ethiopian troops. A treaty was signed on 3 June 1884 (Bahiru, 2009:344). This resulted in a war between Ethiopia's emperor Yohannes IV and the Mahdists. Though Hewett's treaty is an immediate cause of the war, there were differences in ideological and religious ambitions between Christian Ethiopia and Muslim Mahdists, and the armed conflict ended with the death of Emperor Yohannes IV at the battle Gallabat in March 1889 (Seri-Hersch, 2010). That same year, the accession of emperor Menelik to the throne coincided with the end of Mahdiyya's military phase (Ibid: 2).

In the last decade of the 19th century, Britain embarked on a policy desire to check the Nile valley from other colonial powers from the west and east –against the French, Italy, and Emperor Menelik- and the British supported Italy's colonial ambition over Ethiopia, in turn, Italy support Britain for her Egyptian policy (Marcus, 1963). However, the Anglo-Italian Protocol of April 1891 collapsed due to the defeat of Italy by the Ethiopian forces On March 1, 1896, at Adwa.

The French tried to push Britain from the Nile valley, but Britain succeeded in controlling the valley, so did the Menelik's expansion (partially), thus the negotiation to regularize the border

tried to reconcile the antagonistic policies of Britain and Ethiopia, whereas, expelling the French out of the Nile valley (Marcus, 1963; Seri-Hersch, 2010). The 1902 treaty could be looked at as an outcome of the remaining acts of the Fashoda incident between Britain and France, where Britain became the strongest power in the Nile Valley, and secured its interests in the region (Belete, 2016b).

When it comes to border demarcation or re/demarcation, Ethiopian leaders typically took the initiative to reach a compromise on the issue of the border to their strategic interest, and sometimes to corner Sudan in to surrender (Belete, 2012; Erlich, 2010). This was seen in different times like during the reign of emperor Yohannes IV with Britain to evacuate the encircled Egyptian soldiers, the 2008 concession of EPRD with Sudan, and the 1902 treaty between emperor Menelik and Britain (Belete, 2016b; Sanderson, 1962).

On the Ethiopian side, there is also a political concession by the ruling regime, the 2008 compromise arrangement was decided that the region be a soft border, and specifically, al-Fashaga could remain under the Gedaref State of Sudan, but Ethiopian farmers could continue to utilize the land without restriction¹⁶&¹⁷. However, the war in North Ethiopia revealed the problem with soft borders; this led to a demand for a more permanent solution to the problem¹⁸. As there is no complete control by either side and potential arms dealings could take place on the same border be dangerous for the Ethiopian government in its war with rebellions. This resulted in an increased presence of armies on both sides.

Ethiopia and Sudan have a history of engaging in proxy wars and supporting each other's armed opposition groups¹⁹. The Ethiopian government had an ongoing war with Tigrayan rebellions; effectively controlling the border meant effectively controlling any activity to help the rebellions by the external "anti-Ethiopian historical enemies." It's likely to give due attention to the border areas; both countries are pre-occupied with internal political and security problems: for the Sudanese political elite, it gives a justification for their nationalist appeals of keeping Sudan safe,

¹⁶<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-55476831>.

¹⁷<https://english.ahram.org.eg/News/398731.aspx>. Haitham Nouri, Wednesday 13 Jan 2021.

¹⁸<https://www.cfr.org/blog/ethiopia-sudan-border-dispute-raises-stakes-security-horn>.

¹⁹<https://issafrica.org/iss-today/ethiopia-sudan-border-tensions-must-be-de-escalated>. Shewit Woldemichael. (2021).

Ethiopia-Sudan Border Conflict must be de-escalated.

and by doing so, they externalize the internal problems, and for the Ethiopian government controlling the border could relief from potential arms movement in conflict-prone regions.

According to Jamie, the escalations of recent problems raised in the border areas are ascribed to two factors; the “first one is the perception of the new regime in Sudan; that the border issue was compromised by the al-Bashir regime, and the second one is the change in the position of Sudan over the GERD issues, in agreement with Egyptian hardline view against the dam” (2022:93). The politicization of the border issues by the Sudanese Transitional Military Council even complicated the issue, the military leaders personally have a land possession in the al-Fashaga triangle, and they take it personally than a state matter (Belete, Interview with Sheger FM 102.1). Moreover, the border issue is one of the reasons that stalled the 2021 negotiation on the GERD (Lowings, 2022).

The Sudanese authorities went too far regarding using the border dispute to their advantage; they devised the issue to incorporate the internal power game between the Civilian and Military government, Ethiopian internal problems, and even the GERD issues. The Sudan government authorities calculated a benefit from the conflict in North Ethiopia, as the Ethiopian military is busy in the war, they could regain the disputing areas from Ethiopia, and Sudan also strengthen military cooperation with Egypt (Jamie, 2022:94; see also Shay, 2022). In May 2021, top military officials from Sudan and Egypt signed a deal on military cooperation "JointDefence" (Ibid) by giving the name “Guardians of Nile” (Attia and Saleh, 2021); this explicitly provokes Ethiopia. While accusing Ethiopia in the UNSC of posing an existential threat by filling the dam without their consent, they also engaged in joint military activities.

A new trend has been emerging in the relationship between Ethiopia and Sudan; the latter is using the border and other internal issues of Ethiopia to gain bargaining power in the negotiation of GERD. This gestured at the time when Ethiopia was preoccupied with the North War, and the Sudanese leaders tried to encroach the border areas around Al-Fashaga. GERD has become the epicenter of the contestations between Sudan and Ethiopia, not only between them but also in the way they conduct their foreign policy in the region and elsewhere. The new leadership in Sudan aligned with the adversaries of the former leader, the adversaries of the former President of Sudan are also not friendly with Ethiopia. By swinging positions in the negotiation process, Sudan tries to fulfill its national interest.

4.2 Leadership Change in Both Countries and Its Impact on the Negotiation Process

Sudan's relatively peaceful relations with Ethiopia –especially after the second half of the 1990s– now seem to have gone back to the old days. As briefly discussed in the previous subtopic, various issues, both internal and external, are shaping and reshaping the relationship between Sudan and Ethiopia. Internal political changes in both countries, 2018 in Ethiopia and 2019 in Sudan, have resulted in variations in the political aspects of their respective governments and their orientations in their foreign policy, and with Sudan's case, it also shifted the negotiation of GERD from pro-Ethiopian outlook to pro-Egyptian outlook.

Protests in both countries go back four and five years before the change of leadership; in Sudan, President al-Bashir survived the series of anti-government protests in the Arab nations, which started in 2011 in Tunisia. Following that, there was a protest in 2013; with the growing living price, the Sudanese public once again went to the streets, relying on minor improvements and subsidies, and of course, with the help from the military al-Bashir's regime stayed in power. But the 2018 protest was not like the previous ones; it was a coalition of different civil societies and professionals (ICG, 2019a). This made it difficult for al-Bashir's regime to repress the protest, and finally, the military intervened in the situation and deposed the longest-serving president General Omar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir (Redie, 2022).

In Ethiopia, EPRDF is a coalition of four regional ethnic-based political organizations that led Ethiopia from 1991 to 2019; in its brief leadership time, Ethiopia has shown rapid economic growth, which was witnessed by International Organizations like the World Bank. Later on, the inequalities between the communities, unemployment, and problems within the ruling coalition brought a series of protests, especially in Oromia and Amara national regional states, and resulted in the resignation of Prime Minister Haile Mariam Desalegn and the coming of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (Ph.D.).

One of the immediate decisions by the new Prime minister was; “lifting of the state of emergency, releasing political prisoners, revoking and amending draconian laws, and inviting all insurgent groups and exiled opposition parties and individuals to join the transitional process” (Yonas and Kassahun, 2021:998). “Medemer” is a new political concept and language introduced in the period of hope for almost all Ethiopians, as reforms are long-awaited and a

result of the sacrifice made by thousands of youths across the country. It included releasing political prisoners, liberalizing the media, removing some legislative restrictions on freedom, and fighting corruption, but a lot of the political structures that it inherited are still in place (Verjee, 2021). Besides the aforementioned initiations by the new administration, the other main change was the change of the EPRDF into the Prosperity Party in 2019²⁰. This motive clearly shows that the new administration intends to bring a new kind of program to the ruling party rather than continuing the old way. Additionally, the would-be party incorporates all regional parties which were left behind by EPRDF.

Despite the aspired reforms by the public and initiations by the new government, the regime has been caught between different difficulties; internal displacement and ethnic conflict immediately erupted in the country, and this resulted in the death of thousands in different parts of the country. The economic sabotage by the former masters –according to the ruling elite- is also one of the problems, unsettled the public with skyrocketing living prices, and conflicts between Amhara and Oromia militants, Amhara and Metekel militants and others diverted the regime’s attention from executing reforms to emergency response. With its intensity and scale, the Tigray region (the North War) is the biggest threat to the regime so far, two years long war concluded after the death of many thousands has exposed the internal political problems in Ethiopia not just about a few years but also about the vulnerabilities of Ethiopian political defects.

Poor government institutions in Africa are dependent on the individuals who are in power; when they perform well, the government does well; otherwise, it becomes weak and results in chaos (Interview with Dr. Teferi, October 26, 2022; Dr. Dareskedar, August 29, 2022). The case of Ethiopia and Sudan is not different from this reality. On April 11, 2019, the military intervened and removed President el-Bashir after weeks of sit-ins by thousands of youngsters in front of the military base. The opposition expressed its gratitude for the military's commitment to the people's demands. Those military men who were working for al-Bashir’s government took power by promptly establishing a Transitional Military Council (TMC) on April 12, 2019 (Redie, 2022: Young, 2020).

The negotiation between the TMC and the coalition of oppositions (Forces of Freedom and Change (FFC)) failed, the reason was the FFC demanded the head of the new sovereignty

²⁰Office of the Prime Minister, ‘Ethiopia: A New Horizon of Hope’, 2019

council should be headed by a Civilian, but the military refused (El-Mquirim, 2021); the protesters stayed in the streets supporting for the civilian rule. On May 14, a three-year transitional arrangement was agreed upon between the military and representatives of the protesters, in which the military would act as a transitional government for three years, at which point civilian rule would be implemented (El-Mquirim, 2021:13). However, the FFC and the TMC were still at odds on the make-up of the sovereign council, which would serve as the highest governing body during the transition²¹.

The Islamists supported the Military Council, which was pro-al-Bashir, knowing the leaders of the Military Council were loyal to the overthrown President al-Bashir, General al-Burhan, who was a head of ground forces under al-Bashir is now the head of the TMC, General Mohammed Dagalo “Hemedti” is head of Rapid Support Forces (RSF), the force known for its atrocity in the Darfur Region and taking part in the Yemen conflict by the side of Saudi Arabia, UAE against the Houthi backed by Iran. Ultimately, the TMC and FFC of Sudan agreed early in July 2019 to share power during a three-year transition leading up to elections. The Sovereign Council would then be made up of five civilians and five military members, with one seat remaining to be filled by a civilian chosen by both sides (Jamie, 2022).

The internal division between the Sovereign Council came to the surface; on the one hand, the contestation between the al-Burhan and Dagalo was edging to the side, and on the other hand, the division between the civilian government led by Abdala Hamdouk also hampered the transition. This ultimately resulted in the coup d'état on October 25, 2021, that put an end to the period of civil-military partnership. The military has been in charge of Sudan since October 2021, and they continue to pledge to do so only throughout the transition, it is unclear if they will transfer control after the transition phase is over.

After the change of leaders in the two countries, things seemed to appear different. Abiy's role as prime minister introduced an element of uncertainty into Ethiopian–Sudanese relations because Sudanese political and military officials had developed close relations with the Tigrayans, who dominated these spheres until then (Young, 2020:13). Sudan sheltered and supported the TPLF

²¹ “Sudan Briefing: May – July 2019 Timeline of Events”, Relief web, July 15, 2019, available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/sudan-briefing-may-july-2019-timeline-events>.

that history is continued even with better ties after TPLF controlled the central government in Addis Ababa, but Abiy Ahmed had no history of working with the Sudanese political elite nowhere as near as the TPLF military and civil leaders did.

Contrary to popular belief and the original plan, the GERD construction had been delayed for years; this was due to the internal political problems of the ruling party, which they preoccupied with inter-party power contestations and responding to the growing protest from the public. But when PM Abiy came to power changed this reality, especially the attention given to the GERD and other mega projects, in which the construction process was stalled (Belete, Interview with Sheger FM 102.1). According to Dr. Dareskedar, the main effect of leadership change in Ethiopia regarding the GERD is the hastening of the project work, which led to another level of water negotiation (Interview on August 2022); this changed the negotiation process from focusing on the dam design and safety to the modalities of dam filling and operation (dam filling and operation will be discussed under the next subtopic).

In contrast to the Ethiopian side, the political change that took place in Sudan has been on shaky ground and desperately seeking external support to stay in power; this led it to the Egyptian, Saudi, and UAE camps (Cascao, Interview on October 21, 2022). To be on the Egyptian side is, of course, a fact it is to be on the opposing side to Ethiopia; by being opposite of Ethiopia, the military-dominated Sudanese sovereign Council got a good amount of economic and political support (Mohammed, 2020: Lacher, 2022). The change of leadership in the two countries resulted in two different ways of handling the negotiation about the GERD. Sudan with Egypt came up with a different discourse than it used to be, seeing the dam as an “existential threat” contrary to its previous stand “It is important for Sudan in many ways.”

The internal political dynamics have brought a lot of changes in the Foreign Policy and Hydropolitics of Sudan, which also did bring changes in the Ethiopian Foreign Policy and hydro politics. The new government in Ethiopia accuses the TPLF and METEC of corruption and mishandling of the dam. The new leadership in Ethiopia took advantage of the oldguard system by criticizing the way the project was handled and created room for compromising with the downstream countries, which could be sold as rectifying the mistakes of the predecessors’ mistakes (ICG, 2019b:8). The visit of the PM to Egypt signified this fact, but this created suspicion on Sudan’s side and become one of the twists in the negotiation (Interview with

Cascao, October 21, 2022). Externally the PM was able to cultivate better ties with Cairo (a historical rival), Riyadh, and Abu Dhabi (ICG, 2019b:8). The role of leadership change in both states has a significant effect on the hydro politics of GERD.

4.3 Absence of Agreement in Dam Filling and Operation

In May 2018, the intelligence agency heads of the three countries, along with the foreign and water ministers, held talks on this subject and set up a committee including experts from the three countries to agree upon a way forward (ICG, 2019b:10). The National Independent Research Scientific Group (NIRSG), was established to select International Consultants to conduct the IPoE studies, in the beginning, they were doing well, and they started to discuss the issues of dam filling as the dam construction was near 70%. Due to the Egyptian persistence on its current water consumption as the base for what would be studied, the scientific group could not agree on the standard scenarios of the studies (Attia and Saleh, 2021). The group of researchers disagreed not only on the baseline of the study but also on the timeline of the filling process and modalities of dam operation (Attia and Saleh, 2021; Wheeler et al., 2020).

The friction between the two countries after 2019 has shown itself with the border issues and other military mechanisms, but the issue of GERD is bigger than that of the remaining issues. After 2019, the greatest source of friction is the GERD; Sudan feels that Ethiopia is not sharing sufficient information about the status of the dam (ICG, 2021), but this statement is not acceptable to the Ethiopian officials in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Water and Energy, as they stipulate the situation as follow “we are sharing necessary information about the status of the dam, and we tell them in different occasions” (Tefera, Interview on August 26, 2022), “Ethiopia is cooperative from the very beginning until the present, but sometimes their demand goes to the extent that put over the sovereign right of Ethiopia to jeopardy” (Gissila, Interview on October 12, 2022).

Khartoum seeks assurances from Addis Ababa about reservoir management and safety procedures; for instance, it worries that absent an agreement on the terms for filling and operating the project, its downstream Roseires Dam could be inundated (ICG, 2021:5). The worry of Sudan cannot be ignored totally, whenever there is a dam construction the downstream countries want to be assured about the safety of the dam (Interviewee Number 9, October 25,

2022). But in 2020, Sudan was affected by a flood due to the overflow of the Nile River and its tributaries (FAO, 2020); on the other hand, Sudan opposed the filling process.

Due to the initiation taken by the new leader in Ethiopia to finish the building as soon as possible, the downstream countries rushed to tie the filling and dam operation issues by a treaty; after the failure of the NIRSG in 2018, Egypt took the issue of GERD to the external bodies out of the continent. In late 2019, Egypt invited the United States (US) and the World Bank as observers in the negotiations (Ylonen, 2020:6). The downstream countries realized that the previous negotiations were dominated by Ethiopia and its successful strategy of buying time to build the dam while sitting on the negotiation table (Hassan and Al-Bosrati, 2022:2). This move by Egypt and supported by the Sudanese new TMC is showed that they hoped the U.S and World Bank could make an arrangement in their favor and against Ethiopia.

Three negotiating parties agreed to the idea of the US and World Bank representatives as an observatory body in the dialogue held at the US Department of Treasury in November 2019 (Addis Standard, 2019). Ethiopia's giving of the green light to the US Department of Treasury and the World Bank received a mixed response from home; Jawar Mohammed, a former prominent activist and opposition politician, posted immediately after the PM met with Egyptian president Al-Sisi in Sochi, Russia, and agreed to continue the talks under the observation of US and World Bank. One of the reasons that he doubted the move the PM was without consulting the other upstream countries that were thoroughly supporting Ethiopia during the NBA and other diplomatic platforms.

In the beginning, the US Department of Treasury started as an observer, but later on, it proposed an agreement on the technicalities of the filling process and dam operation. It raised a question about the Treasury Department's neutrality in the negotiation. In February 2020, the US Department of Treasury, the main observer, and host of the talks issued a statement in which it announced that an agreement that addressed the concerns of all parties had been reached (Ylonen, 2020:7). But the actual result was different from what the Department of Treasury has announced, and Ethiopia walk away from the negotiation table, Ethiopia later claimed it was technically impracticable and would severely limit the energy-generation capacity of the GERD (Attia and Saleh, 2021:4).

What was new was that a clear consensus between Khartoum and Cairo after the Washington round was established, based on the conviction that any new negotiations should be based on the findings of the Washington table (Hassan and Al-Bosrati, 2022:27). The agreement that brought Sudan and Egypt on one side and pushed Ethiopia to another side demonstrates the Department of Treasury intended to take a side against Ethiopia, and here the former President Trump also commented carelessly that Egypt can blowout the dam is how frustrating for the President who wanted to tie Ethiopia with a treaty but Ethiopia left the table.

After another failed attempt to conclude with an agreement in Washington, Egypt turned its face to Internationalizing the issue by appealing to the Arab League and the UN Security Council. Arab League publicly stood on the Egyptian side (Mohammed, 2020), and also Egypt brought the dam issue to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) in 2020 AU led round of negotiations between the three parties was launched, ending in a deadlock in 2021 (Attia and Saleh, 2021:4). Even though Egypt and Sudan have the same stand on the Washington Agreement, Sudan maintained its reservations about the Egyptian pressure for the internationalization of negotiations (Hassan and Al-Bosrati, 2022:27). But Sudan still has an opposite stand on the filling process with Ethiopia.

While negotiations are still in a political deadlock, and without reaching a middle ground for all sides, the first phase of dam filling took place in July 2020 and finished in August 2020, which is a rainy season in Ethiopia. The Ethiopian public was happy about the filling of the reservoir. It was good news for the Ethiopian public whilst in the middle of political chaos, and equally appreciated by all parties. It also gave the government warm public support, at that time due to different problems the public somehow resented the new government. According to Cascao (Interview on October 21, 2022), none of the negotiating parties could afford to resent their respective public, since the government in all countries draws support from airing out nationalist discourses in the negotiation process and their election campaign.

After submitting its complaint to the UN Security Council, the statement of the UN Security Council came out to launch another new negotiation under the African Union, After consulting with the UN Security Council, AU under Cyril Ramaphosa proposed a negotiation. This approach of taking African issues to an external body can be considered degrading to African unity and its Union. Despite agreeing on most technical aspects ahead of the main talks, Ethiopia

starting to fill the dam reservoir during the rainy season would not cause any significant harm (Ylonen, 2020:8). But the parties could not agree on issues like legally binding dispute resolution mechanisms and drought mitigating measures (Ibid). Ethiopia proceeded with filling the reservoir for the second time.

Filling the reservoir has given Ethiopia a huge power (Interview Number 9, on October 25, 2022), Ethiopia controls the water that goes downstream which they depend on. That is why the Sudan and Egypt tried everything in their power to obscure the dam filling. Sudan tried to get leverage on the negotiation process by instigating border issues but did not help, Ethiopia within all pressures filled the dam four times in a row. After the second filling, it signaled that the room for negotiation under those old agendas could not bring the desired goal of the downstream countries. All the Sudan and Egypt are just an attempt to put the situation for the dam operation (Interview with Cascao on October 21, 2022).

Had a GERD tied with an agreement to fill the reservoir and dam operations, it would have prevented Ethiopia from acquiring the present power of controlling the flow and proceeding with power production (Interview with Mezmur on August 23, 2022). It is a strategy by Sudan and Egypt to tie Ethiopia with a legally binding agreement on how to fill a reservoir and operate a dam on a dam built by the Ethiopian people and government.

On July 13, 2023, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi received Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed in Cairo and discussed the negotiation regarding the filling and operation of the dam. The two leaders reaffirmed their shared political commitment to improving bilateral ties between their two nations on a political, economic, and cultural level²². During the meeting between the leaders they agreed to initiate a negotiation to finalize the stalled negotiation between Egypt, Ethiopia, and Sudan in four months, and Ethiopia ensured that it was committed to not causing any harm downstream.

Talks were held on August 29, 2023, in Abu Dhabi and September 2023 in Addis Ababa but the negotiating parties could not come to a binding solution. Similar patterns of terms of negotiation have been seen in both venues as the parties did not reach any middle ground. The issue of

²²<https://addisstandard.com/newsalert-ethiopia-egypt-agree-to-finalize-gerd-filling-rules-of-operations-agreement-in-four-months/>

drought mitigation downstream and the issue of sovereignty on the Ethiopian standstill. The downstream countries do not want to negotiate on the treaties that were concluded between them to be part of any negotiation table is still the bone of contention. In a nutshell, Egypt's intransigent position compels any kind of negotiation to be fruitless, this is mainly due to the 1959 Nile water agreement between Egypt and Sudan, which disregards any sovereign rights of Ethiopia to utilize its water.

On September 11, 2023, Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy announced that the fourth and final round of filling of the dam had been completed. In the event attended by top governmental officials and presidents of all regional states, the final dam filling was celebrated as a national milestone and fostering the project completion and hydropower production at its full capacity. Following this event Egypt opposed the filling and condemned it, Egypt considers the dam filling against international law.

For Ethiopians filling the dam has a special meaning, going against the interest of the public in the negotiation is a huge mistake for the government, as the people are the main financial contributors, and GERD is considered a nation-building instrument in modern times. Filling the dam which is inside the territory of Ethiopia is a duty of Ethiopians and their government, in doing so considerations should be taken about the possible precaution for the downstream countries. But the demand by the downstream countries does not show that, they demand the reservoir filling and dam operation to be in the way they want it to be.

In addition, GERD signifies the next big chance for Ethiopia, more than half of its population still does not get electricity. But for Sudan and Egypt, this percentage goes up to 90%.The dam filling resulted in a huge power for Ethiopia in controlling the flow of the water, contrary to the 1959 treaty, which gives Egypt and Sudan veto power over who utilizes the water, in what way, and in how much amount.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

This study has attempted to analyze the case of GERD in the Ethio-Sudan Relationship from 2011 to 2023. It aimed at the effect of GERD on the relationship between Sudan and Ethiopia, by assessing the transformations brought by the construction of GERD on the relationship between upstream and downstream. Consequently, assessed the impact of the swinging position of Sudan regarding the dam on the relationship between the two countries, and the effect of leadership changes in Ethiopia and Sudan respectively in 2018 and 2019 on the negotiation process. The dam filling and operation are issues of this study on how they are going and affect the relations by being a point of disparity. This study is based on the core assumption; since its inception in 2011 that GERD has a significant impact on the Ethio-Sudan relationship and the upstream and downstream relations. Likewise, it has a huge effect on Foreign Policy, cooperation-conflict dynamics, and regional power balance.

This study found that the old way of relations between upstream and downstream countries has been changed, with different initiations taking place for devising a legal and institutional framework for the Nile Waters. The upstream countries with Ethiopia in front are taking the upper hand in the negotiations, by coming together with strong bargaining power, and the idea of an equitable share of the resource. They effectively used the NBI platform to struggle against the old treaty of 1959, which gives veto rights to the downstream countries. GERD is also challenging the hegemonic power of the downstream; the downstream countries effectively checked any attempt at water utilization in the upstream, especially in Ethiopia. Contrary to popular belief and the discourse, GERD became a venue for talking about the Nile, it brought the downstream and Ethiopia to a table.

Accordingly, the study has found that the swinging position of Sudan has an impact on the negotiation process and the relations between the two countries. The internal political dynamics of Sudan dictate its foreign policy, which in turn affects international relations and the regional power balance in the Nile River Basin.

The independence of South Sudan created a hole in the Sudanese economy to fill the void Sudan relied on increasing irrigation agriculture by the water coming from Ethiopia and finances from

Qatar. The border issue is also another bone of contention, but the difference is like the Nile River, the Sudanese politicians use the border problems with Ethiopia to gain support from their public than creating a permanent solution for the situation. They use the border problem to gain a bargaining chip in the negotiation over the GERD.

Moreover, the issue of GERD has brought new dynamics in relations between Sudan and Ethiopia, before the GERD the epicenter of the dynamics of the relationship was using border issues and internal political problems for regional power balance. But after GERD, every issue in Ethiopia be it a border issue or civil war, Sudan manipulated it to gain the upper hand in the negotiation on the agreement in reservoir filling and dam operations. This was true when Ethiopia was preoccupied with the North War the Sudanese army held the area tightly.

Regarding GERD construction, the new leadership in Ethiopia did really good work in resuming the construction, which was almost stalled due to internal political problems. Following that, the negotiation process changed to agendas like dam filling and modalities of future operation of the dam. In Sudan, the new leadership under the transitional council faced an internal power struggle. This paved the way for external support, and the military wing became powerful by being supported by Egypt and its Arab League allies. Egypt Successfully twisted the leadership change in Sudan in its favor and persuaded Sudan to its side in a series of negotiations, while Ethiopia could not do that primarily due to feeble internal political and security situations.

The filling of reservoirs is continued, Sudan opposes the filling process, and this has not resulted from the harm that comes from the filling process but it came from the potential it gives to Ethiopia. The absence of an agreement is still a problem but in good faith, the three countries can negotiate on conflict resolution methods and water flow in times of drought downstream.

This study tries to shed light on the broader academic endeavor of GERD issues, most of the literature focuses on the contention between Ethiopia and Egypt, but this paper assessed the dynamics between Ethiopia and Sudan regarding GERD that is not studied well in academics as it should be. This paper calls for intensive future research on the issues. As these critical issues are ongoing and expected to be more contentious agendas shortly they need to be observed.

REFERENCES

Books and Book Chapters

- Allan, J. A. (2009). Nile Basin Asymmetries: A Closed Fresh Water Resource, Soil Water Potential, the Political Economy and Nile Transboundary Hydro Politics. In Henri J. Dumont (Ed.), *The Nile Origin, Environments, Limnology, and Human Use* (Pp. 749-769) [Monograph]. Springer.
- Andrews, A.& Mahmood, O. (2019). *Sudan after Bashir: Regional Opportunities and Challenges*. Institute for Security Studies, East African Report 23.
- Andersen, A, R. Rangeley, R., Thiam, M, B. & Lyle, A, C. (1994). *International River Basin Organizations in Sub-Saharan Africa*, (Vol. 250). World Bank Publications.
- Ashton, P., & Turton, A. (2009). Water and security in sub-Saharan Africa: Emerging concepts and their implications for effective water resource management in the southern African region. In Brauch, H. G. (Eds) (2009). *Introduction: facing global environmental change and sectorialization of security*. (pp. 661-674). Berlin: Springer.
- Attia, H., & Saleh, M. (2021). *The Political Deadlock on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam*. (GIGA Focus Afrika, 4). Hamburg: German Institute for Global and Area Studies (GIGA) - Leibniz-Institut für Globale und Regionale Studien, Institut für Afrika-Studien. <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-74082-8>.
- Bahiru Zewde. (2002). *A History of Modern Ethiopia 1855-1991*. (2nd Ed). Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa University Press.
- Carr, C. J. (2017). *River basin development and human rights in Eastern Africa—A policy crossroads*. Cham: Springer Nature.
- Cascão, A. E., & Zeitoun, M. (2013). Power, hegemony, and critical hydropolitics. In: Earle, A. (Ed.). *Transboundary water management: Principles and practice*, (27-42). Earthscan.ni
- Conniff, K., Molden, D., Peden, D., & Shileshi B. (2013). Nile water and agriculture: Past, present, and future. In Sileshi B., Smakhtin, V., Molden, D., and Peden, D. (Eds). *The Nile River Basin* (pp. 27-51). Oxford: Routledge.
- Cresswell, J. (2014), *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed-Methods Approaches*. (4th Ed), Los Angeles: Sage Publications Inc.
- Elhance, A P. (1999). *Hydropolitics in the third world. Conflict and cooperation in international river basins*. Washington DC: United States of America Institute of Peace Press.

- Erlich, H. (2010). *Islam and Christianity in the Horn of Africa: Somalia, Ethiopia, Sudan*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Firehiwot Sintayehu. (2020). Prospects for Cooperation in the Nile Basin. In Borders, Mobility, Regional Integration and Development. In Nshimbi, C & Inocent Moyo (Eds). (2020). *Borders, Mobility, Regional Integration, and Development: Issues, Dynamics, and Perspectives in West, Eastern and Southern Africa*. (pp. 127-144), Cham: Springer.
- Frankel, J. (1970). *National Interest*, London: Pall Mall Press Ltd.
- Hamada, Y. M. (2017). *The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, its impact on Egyptian agriculture, and the potential for alleviating water scarcity* (Vol. 55). Cham: Springer.
- Harari, S. (1994). Recycling the Past in the Sudan: an overview of political Decay. In Harari, S. & Tvedt, T. (1994). *Short-cut to Decay: the case of the Sudan*. (Eds.) (pp, 11-65), Uppsala: Nordic Africa Institute.
- Hurd, I. (2008). Constructivism, Reus-Smit, C., & Snidal, D. (Eds.). (2008). *The Oxford handbook of international relations*. (pp. 298-316). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Islam, S. & Susskind, L. (2012). *Water Diplomacy: A Negotiated Approach to Managing Complex Water Networks*. NY: Rutledge.
- Jackson, R., & Sørensen, G. (2012). *Introduction to International Relations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Jamie, F. O. M. (2022). Border Disputes in the Horn of Africa: Sudan–Ethiopia Border Case. In Redie B. and Dahre, U. J (Eds.), *Current Developments, Peace and Stability in the Horn of Africa* (pp, 79-100), Somalia International Rehabilitation Centre & Terra Nullius Publishing.
- Johnson, D. H. (2007). *The Root Causes of Sudan's Civil War's (4th Ed.)*, Nairobi: International African Institute.
- Just, R. E., & Netanyahu, S. (1998). International water resource conflicts: experience and potential. In Just, R. E., & Netanyahu, S. (Eds.). (1998). *Conflict and Cooperation on Trans-Boundary Water Resources* (Vol. 11). (pp. 1-26). Boston: Springer.
- Kinfe Abraham. (2004). *Nile Dilemmas: Hydropolitics and Potential Conflict Flashpoints*. Addis Ababa: The Ethiopian Institute for Peace and Development.
- Kothari, C. (2004), *Research Methodology, Methods and Techniques*(2nd edition). New Delhi: New Age International Publishers.
- Legro, J. W. (2015). *Rethinking the world: Great power strategies and international order*. NY: Cornell University Press.

- Lowings, B. (2021). *Sudanese-Ethiopian Border: Conflating New and Pre-Existing Concerns*. RETHINKING SECURITY IN THE 2020s SERIES, Brussels International Center.
- Marcus, H. G. (1987). *Haile Selassie I: the formative years, 1892-1936*. New Jersey: Red Sea Press.
- Mason, S. (2004). *From Conflict to Cooperation in the Nile Basin: Interaction between Water Availability, Water Management in Egypt and Sudan, and International Relations in the Eastern Nile Basin*. Zurich: ETH Zurich.
- Mingst, K. A., McKibben, H. E., & Arreguin-Toft, I. M. (2019). *Essentials of International Relations*. NY: W.W. Norton & Company.
- Mirumachi, N. (2015). *Transboundary water politics in the developing world*. NY: Routledge.
- Negm, A., Elshahabi, M., & Tayie, M. S. (2018). An Overview of Aswan High Dam and Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam in (Ed) Negm, A., & Abdel-Fattah, S. (2018). *Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam versus Aswan High Dam*, Cham: Springer Nature.
- Oestigaard, T. (2012). *Water Scarcity and Food Security along the Nile: Politics, population increase, and climate change*. Nordiska Afrikainstitutet. Current African issues 49.
- Onuf, N. (1998). Constructivism: A User's Manual, In Kubálková, V., Onuf, N., & Kowert, P. (Eds.) *International Relations in a Constructed World*. (pp. 58-78). NY: M.E. Sharpe.
- Pruzan, P. (2016). *Research methodology: the aims, practices, and ethics of science*. Cham: Springer.
- Redie B. (2022). Challenges of Transition from Military to Civilian Rule in Sudan. In Redie B. and Dahre, U. J (Eds.), *Current Developments, Peace and Stability in the Horn of Africa* (pp. 100-121), Somalia International Rehabilitation Centre & Terra Nullius Publishing.
- Rosenau, J. N. (1967) (ed.), *International Politics and Foreign Policy*, NY: The Free Press.
- Salman, S. M. (2017). The GERD and the Revival of the Egyptian–Sudanese Dispute over the Nile Waters, (pp. 79-110). In Yihdego, Zeray, Melaku Geboye Desta, & Fikremarkos Merso, (eds.), *Ethiopian Yearbook of International Law 2016*. Cham: Springer.
- Salman, S. A. M. (2018). The GERD and the Revival of the Egyptian–Sudanese Dispute over the Nile Waters. In Zeray Yihdego, Melaku Geboye Desta, Martha Belete and Fikremarkos Merso (Ed.), *Ethiopian Yearbook of International Law 2017* (pp. 79- 110). Cham: Springer.

- Samaan, M. M. (2019). *The Nile Development Game: Tug-of-War or Benefits for All?*, Cham: Springer.
- Sileshi B., Smakhtin, V., Molden, D., and Peden, D. (Ed.). (2012). *The Nile River Basin: water, agriculture, governance, and livelihoods*. Oxford: Routledge.
- Sneddon, C. (2015). *Concrete Revolution-Large Dams, Cold War Geopolitics, and the US Bureau of Reclamation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Theys, S. (2017). Constructivism, In McGlinchey, S., R. Walters and C. Scheinplflug (eds.) *International Relations Theory*. (pp. 36-41).Bristol: E-International Relations.
- Turton, A. (2002). Hydropolitics: The concept and its limitations. In Turton, A & Henwood, R. (Eds) *Hydropolitics in the Developing World: A Southern African Perspective*. (pp, 13-19). Pretoria:African Water Issues Research Unit (AWIRU).
- Tvedt, T. (2004). *The Nile: History's Greatest River*. London: I.B. Tauris.
- Ulbert, C. (2014). Social Constructivism, In Schieder, S., & Spindler, M. (Eds.). (2014). *Theories of international relations*, (pp, 249-268).NY: Routledge.
- Verhoeven, H. (2011). *Black Gold for Blue Gold?: Sudan's Oil, Ethiopia's Water and Regional Integration*. London: Chatham House.
- Wendt, A. (1999). *Social Theory of International Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wossenu A. & Shimelis B. (2019). *The Grand Ethiopian renaissance dam on the Blue Nile*. Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Yacob A. (2007). *Ethiopia and the Nile: Dilemmas of national and regional hydropolitics*. Zurich: ETH Zurich.
- Yacob A. (2010). Institutional development and water management in the Ethiopian Nile Basin. In Tvedt, T (Eds.) *The River Nile in the post-colonial age*, (pp.161-178).London: IB Tauris.
- Young, J. (2012). *The fate of Sudan: The origins and consequences of a flawed peace process*. London: Zed Books Ltd.
- Zehfuss, M. (2004). *Constructivism in international relations: the politics of reality* (Vol. 83). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Journal Articles

- Abdelhadi, D., Dagestan, K., Andersson, D. E., Beckman, O., Berndtsson, R., Palmgren, K. B., & Pilesjö, P. (2015). The Nile and the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam: Is there a

- meeting point between nationalism and hydro solidarity? *Journal of Contemporary Water Research & Education*, 155(1), 73-82.
- Abdelazim, N., Bekhit, H., & Allam, M. N. (2020). Operation of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance dam: Potential risks and mitigation measures. *Journal of Water Management Modelling*, 27: C469. Doi: 10.14796/JWMM.C469.
- Ahmad, I. (2018). The New Hydro-Political Situation in Africa. *World Affairs: The Journal of International Issues*, 22(4), 60-75.
- Ashley, R. K. (1988). Untying the sovereign state: a double reading of the anarchy problematique. *Millennium*, 17(2), 227-262.
- Aviram, R., Katz, D., & Shmueli, D. (2014). Desalination as a game-changer in transboundary hydro-politics. *Water Policy*, 16(4), 609-624.
- Bahiru Wondwosen .(2009). Colonial Boundaries of Africa: The Case of Ethiopia's Boundary with Sudan. *Ege Academic Review*, 9(1), 337-367.
- Basheer, M., Nechifor, V., Calzadilla, A., Siddig, K., Mikias E., Whittington, D., & Harou, J. J. (2021). Collaborative management of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam increases economic benefits and resilience. *Nature Communications*, 12(1), 1-12.
- Belete Belachew.
- (a). (2016). Ethiopia's Troubled Relations with Sudan, 1956-1983. *International Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, 10(1 & 2), 67-88.
- (b). (2016). Setit-Humera: A Blister on Ethio-Sudanese Boundary Disputation. *Journal of Borderlands Studies*, 31(1), 107-122.
- Cascão, A. E. (2008). Ethiopia-challenges to Egyptian hegemony in the Nile Basin. *Water Policy*, 10(S2), 13-28.
- Cascão, A. E. (2009). Changing Power Relations in the Nile River Basin: Unilateralism vs. Cooperation? *Water Alternatives* 2(2), 245-268.
- Cascão, A. E., & Nicol, A. (2016). GERD: new norms of cooperation in the Nile Basin?. *Water International*, 41(4), 550-573.
- Chen, H., & Swain, A. (2014). The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam: Evaluating its sustainability standard and geopolitical significance. *Energy Development Frontier*, 3(1), 11-19.
- Clinton, W. D. (1986). The national interest: normative foundations. *The Review of Politics*, 48(4), 495-519.

- Cooke, A. (2015). Division of Sudan- the causes and impacts of independence for South Sudan, *GEO FILE*, Series 33, Issue 2, 1-6.
- Daoudy, M. (2008). Hydro-hegemony and international water law: laying claims to water rights. *Water Policy*, 10(S2), 89–102.
- De Waal, A. (2023). Introduction: making sense of South Sudan. *African Affairs*, 122(486), 1-9.
- Dereje Zeleke. (2010). The Nile Basin Cooperative Framework Agreement negotiations and the adoption of a ‘water security’ paradigm: flight into obscurity or a logical cul-de-sac?. *European Journal of International Law*, 21(2), 421-440.
- Dereje Zeleke. (2013). The Quest for Equitable Resolution of the Nile Waters Dispute: Wandering in the Wilderness?. *International Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, 7(1 & 2), 77-100.
- Dunne, T., Hansen, L., & Wight, C. (2013). The end of International Relations theory?. *European Journal of International Relations*, 19(3), 405-425.
- Elbeely, K. H. (2013). The economic impact of Southern Sudan secession. *International Journal of Business and Social Research*, 3(7), 78-83.
- El-Sayed, M. K., & Mansour, R. S. (2017). Water scarcity as a non-traditional threat to security in the Middle East. *India Quarterly*, 73(2), 227-240.
- Embiale Beyene, Khan, A., & Ali, M. S. (2018). The Dynamics of Ethiopia-Sudan Relations over the Hydro-politics of Nile. *Insight on Africa*, 10(2), 150-168.
- Fana Gebresenbet & Dawit Yohannes. (2021): New Dimensions in the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam Negotiations: Ontological Security in Egypt and Ethiopia, *African Security*, DOI: 10.1080/19392206.2021.1905921.
- Gashaw Aychiluhem. (2019). Counter Hydro Hegemony Mechanisms and Their Roles in the Eastern Nile Basin. *International Affairs and Global Strategy* Vol. 69.
- Guzzini, S. (2000). A reconstruction of constructivism in international relations. *European journal of international relations*, 6(2), 147-182.
- Hassan, M., & Al-Bosrati, M. N. (2022). The Role of Internal and External Factors in the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) Crisis. *World Research of Political Science Journal*, 5 (1), 25-38.
- Hopf, T. (1998). The promise of constructivism in international relations theory. *International security*, 23(1), 171-200.

- Howe, L. (2010). Hydropolitics of the Nile River: conflict, policy, and the future, *Insights* Vol 4 No 1, 30-44.
- Ibrahim, A. M. (2011). The Nile Basin Cooperative Framework Agreement: the beginning of the end of Egyptian hydro-political hegemony. *Missouri. Environmental Law & Policy Rev*, 18(2) 282-313.
- Kansara, P., Li, W., El-Askary, H., Lakshmi, V., Piechota, T., Struppa, D., Abdelaty Sayed, M. (2021). An Assessment of the Filling Process of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam and Its Impact on the Downstream Countries. *Remote Sensing*, 13(4), 1-15; <https://doi.org/10.3390/rs13040711>.
- Kalpajian, J. (2015). Ethiopia and the Blue Nile: Development plans and their implications downstream. *Air & Space Power Journal-Africa and Francophonie*, 6(2), 40-58.
- Keskinen, M., Salminen, E., & Haapala, J. (2021). Water diplomacy paths—An approach to recognize water diplomacy actions in shared waters. *Journal of Hydrology*, 602, 126737.
- Keohane, R. (1988). International Institutions: Two Approaches, *International Studies Quarterly*, 32(4), 379 -396.
- Klimes, M., Michel, D., Yaari, E., Restiani, P., (2019). Water diplomacy: The intersect of science, policy and practice. *Journal of Hydrology*, no, 575, 1362–1370.
- Marcus, H. G. (1963). Ethio-British negotiations concerning the western border with Sudan, 1896–1902. *The Journal of African History*, 4(1), 81-94.
- Menga, F. (2016). Reconceptualizing Hegemony: The circle of hydro-hegemony. *Water Policy*, 18(2), 401-418.
- Meredith, D., & Givental, E. (2016). Hydro-politics and hydro-economics: Comparing upstream and downstream challenges for Vietnam and Ethiopia. *Yearbook of the Association of Pacific Coast Geographers*, 78, 148-167.
- Mohammed Abdo. (2004). The Nile question: the accords on the water of the Nile and their implications on cooperative schemes in the basin. *Perceptions: Journal of International Affairs*, 9 (2), 45-57.
- Mulatu Wubneh. (2015). This land is my land: the Ethio-Sudan boundary and the need to rectify arbitrary colonial boundaries. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 33(4), 441-466.
- Nasr, H., & Neef, A. (2016). Ethiopia's challenge to Egyptian hegemony in the Nile River basin: the case of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam. *Geopolitics*, 21(4), 969-989.

- Nicol, A., & Cascão, A. E. (2011). Against the flow—new power dynamics and upstream mobilization in the Nile Basin. *Review of African Political Economy*, 38(128), 317-325.
- Nuechterlein, D. E. (1976). National interests and foreign policy: A conceptual framework for analysis and decision-making. *Review of International Studies*, 2(3), 246-266.
- Otinov, D. (2022). Wavering Sudan as Key to Resolving the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam Conflict. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 00219096221084256. doi.org/10.1177/00219096221084256.
- Petersen-Perlman, J. D., Veilleux, J. C., & Wolf, A. T. (2017). International water conflict and cooperation: challenges and opportunities. *Water International*, 42(2), 105-120.
- Regassa Bayissa. (2007). The Derg-SPLM/A Cooperation: An Aspect of Ethio-Sudan Proxy Wars. *Ethiopian Journal of the Social Sciences and Humanities*, 5(2), 19-44.
- Sadoff, W. C. & Grey, D. (2005). Cooperation on International Rivers, *Water International*, 30:4, 420-427.
- Salman, S. M. (2013). The Nile basin cooperative framework agreement: A peacefully unfolding African spring? *Water International*, 38(1), 17-29.
- Salman, S. M. (2016). The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam: the road to the declaration of principles and the Khartoum document. *Water International*, 41(4), 512-527.
- Sanderson, G. N. (1962). Contributions from African Sources to the History of European Competition in the Upper Valley of the Nile¹. *The Journal of African History*, 3(1), 69-90.
- Seri-Hersch, I. (2010). “Transborder” Exchanges of People, Things, and Representations: Revisiting the Conflict Between Mahdist Sudan and Christian Ethiopia, 1885–1889. *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 43(1), 1-26.
- Shay, S. (2022). Ethiopia—conflicts in three frontlines. *Security Science Journal*, 3(1), 76-94.
- Soliman, G., Soussa, H., & El-Sayed, S. (2016). Assessment of Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam impacts using the decision support system. *IOSR J Computer Engineering*, 18(5), 08-18.
- Susskind, L. & Islam, S. (2013). Water Diplomacy: Creating Value and Building Trust in Transboundary Water Negotiations. *Science & Diplomacy*, Vol. 1, No. 3.
- Swain, A. (1997). Ethiopia, Sudan, and Egypt: the Nile River dispute. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 35(4), 675-694.

- Swain, A. (2002). The Nile River Basin Initiative: Too MANY Cooks, Too Little Broth, *SAIS Review*, Vol 22, No 2, 298-308.
- Tadesse Kassa. (2015). The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam and Ethiopia's Succession in Hydro-legal Prominence: A Script in Legal History of Diplomatic Confront (1957-2013). *Mizan Law Review*, 9(2), 369-407.
- Tawfik, R.
- (a) (2016). The Grand Ethiopian renaissance dam: a benefit-sharing project in the Eastern Nile?. *Water International*, 41(4), 574-592.
- (b) (2016). Changing hydro political relations in the Nile basin: a protracted transition. *The International Spectator*, 51(3), 67-81.
- Temesgen Eyilet & Getachew Sineshaw. (2020) "Impacts of Border in Borderland Conflict along the Ethio-Sudan Border: Evidence from Metema Woreda, North-Western Ethiopia." *Humaniora* 32, no. 1: 10-18.
- Turhan, Y. (2020). The hydro-political dilemma in Africa water geopolitics: The case of the Nile River basin, *African Security Review*, DOI: 10.1080/10246029.2020.1844775.
- Verjee, A. (2021). Political transitions in Sudan and Ethiopia: An early comparative analysis. *Global Change, Peace & Security*, 33(3), 279-296.
- Waterbury, J. (1997) Between Unilateralism and Comprehensive Accords: Modest Steps toward Cooperation in International River Basins, *International Journal of Water Resources Development*, 13(3), 279-290.
- Wendt, A. (1987). The Agent-Structure Problem in International Relations Theory, *International Organization* 41 (3): 335 – 370.
- Wendt, A. (1992). Anarchy Is What States Make of It, *International Organization* 46 (2):391 – 425.
- Wendt, A. (1995). Constructing international politics. *International Security*, 20: 71–81.
- Whittington, D., Waterbury, J., & Jeuland, M. (2014). The Grand Renaissance Dam and prospects for cooperation on the Eastern Nile. *Water Policy*, 16, 595-608.
- Wheeler, K. G., Basheer, M., Mekonnen, Z. T., Eltoum, S. O., Mersha, A., Abdo, G. M., & Dadson, S. J. (2016). Cooperative filling approaches for the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance dam. *Water International*, 41(4), 611-634.
- Wheeler, K. G., Jeuland, M., Hall, J. W., Zagana, E., & Whittington, D. (2020). Understanding and managing new risks on the Nile with the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam. *Nature communications*, 11(1), 1-9.

- Wheeler, K. G., & Hussein, H. (2021). Water research and nationalism in the post-truth era. *Water International*, 46(7-8), 1216-1223.
- Wheeler, K., Jeuland, M., Strzepek, K., Hall, J., Zagona, E., Abdo, G., Whittington, D. (2022). Comment on 'Egypt's water budget deficit and suggested mitigation policies for the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam filling scenarios'. *Environmental Research Letters*, 17(8), 088003.
- Williams, M. C. (2005). What is the national interest? The neoconservative challenge in IR theory. *European Journal of International Relations*, 11(3), 307-337.
- Wolf, A.T. (1998). Conflict and cooperation along international waterways. *Water policy* 1(2): 251-265.
- Wolf, A. T. (1999). Criteria for equitable allocations: the heart of international water conflict. *Natural resources forum* 23(1), 3-30.
- Woodhouse, M. & Zeitoun, M. (2008). Hydro-hegemony and International Water Law: grappling with the gaps of power and law. *Water Policy*, 10(2), 103-119.
- Wu, X., Jeuland, M., & Whittington, D. (2016), Does political uncertainty affect water resources development? The case of the Eastern Nile, *Policy and Society* <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.polsoc.2016.07.001>
- Wuhibegzer Ferede (2013). Twists in the process of regime building in the Eastern Nile Basin. *International Journal of Educational Research and Development* Vol. 2(2), pp. 021-031.
- Yacob Arsano & Imeru Tamirat. (2005). Ethiopia and the eastern Nile Basin. *Aquatic Sciences*, 67 (1), 15-27.
- Yohannes Y., Khalil, A., & Salem, H. S. (2017). Nile River's basin dispute: perspectives of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). *Global Journal of Human and Social Science* 17, 1-21.
- Yonas Ashine. & Kassahun Birhanu. (2021). Implications of protest and reform for domestic governance in Ethiopia. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 56(5), 988-1006.
- Zeitoun, M., Cascão, A., Warner, J., Mirumachi, N., Matthews, N., Farnum, R., & Menga, F. (2016). Transboundary water interaction III: Contesting hegemonic arrangements. *International Environmental Agreements*, 17(2), 271–294.
- Zeitoun, M. & Mirumachi, N. (2008). Transboundary water interaction I: reconsidering conflict and cooperation. *International Environmental Agreements* 8(4), 297–316.
- Zeitoun, M., Mirumachi, N., & Warner, J. (2011). Transboundary water interaction II: Soft power underlying conflict and cooperation. *International Environmental Agreements*, 11(2), 159–178.

Zeitoun, M., Mirumachi, N., Warner, J., Kirkegaard, M., & Cascão, A. (2020). Analysis for water conflict transformation. *Water International*, 45(4), 365-384.

Zeitoun, M., & Warner, J. (2006). Hydro-hegemony: A framework for analysis of transboundary Water conflicts. *Water Policy*, 8(2006), 435–460.

Conference Papers, Research Reports

Ashton, P., J Turton, A. R., Earle, A., Malzbender, D., &... (2005). Hydropolitical vulnerability and resilience along Africa's international waters, 19-69. *Hydropolitical vulnerability and resilience along international waters: Africa. United Nations Environment Program Report no. DEW/0672/NA, Nairobi, Kenya.*

Bello-Schünemann, J. (2019). Sudan and South Sudan: violence trajectories after peace agreements. *ISS East Africa Report*, 2019(22), 1-32.

Blanchard, L. P. (2019, March). Sudan: Pressure Mounts on the Government. In *Congressional Research Service, United States Congress* (Vol. 1).

British Embassy to Foreign Office (African Department - London), 4 July 1956, JE 1423/95, enclosures, Addis Ababa.

Cascão, A. E. (2014). Countering Hydro-Hegemony in the Nile Basin. The presentation was given at the Seventh International Workshop on Hydro-Hegemony, 12–13 May 2014. London UEA Water Security Research Centre / London Water Research Group.

Council of the European Union (2018). Council Conclusions on Water Diplomacy.
Council of the European Union (2020). Council conclusions on Climate Diplomacy.

Day, A. (2018). Preventive Diplomacy and the Southern Sudan Independence Referendum (2010- 11). In Day, A., Nathan, L., Honwana, J., & Brubaker, R. (2018). *Capturing UN Preventive Diplomacy Success: How and Why Does It Work*, (pp, 88-108). United Nations University Centre for Policy Research.

Dessalegn Rahmato. (1999). WATER RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT IN ETHIOPIA: Issues of Sustainability and Participation. *Forum for Social Studies* Discussion Paper No. 1.

Doop, V. (2013). How to Handle Your Neighbors Conflict: Ethiopia's Relationships with Sudan and South Sudan. *Revista UNISCI*, (33), 123-138.

El-Battahani, A. (2006). A complex web: politics and conflict in Sudan. *Peace by piece: addressing Sudan's conflicts, Rapport de l'organisation Accord*. Issue 18(12). www.c-r.org/accord/sudan/complex-web-politicsand-conflict-sudan.

- El-Battahani, A. E. H., & Gadkarim, H. A. (2017). Governance and fiscal federalism in Sudan, 1989–2015: exploring political and intergovernmental fiscal relations in an unstable polity. *Sudan Report*. Report No. 1 (34) Chr. Michelsen Institute (CMI),
- El-Mquirmi, N. (2021). *The Sudan at Crossroads: Multi-layered Fragility*, Policy Center for New South, Policy Paper. November, 2021.
- FAO. (2020). *The Sudan Flood Response Plan 2020–2021: Supporting flood-affected farmers and pastoralists*, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations Rome, https://www.acaps.org/sites/acaps/files/key_documents/files/the_sudan_flood_response_plan_2020-2021_supporting_floodaffected_farmers_and_pastoralists.pdf.
- FDRE Water Resource Minister. (2002). *Water Sector Development Program, Main Report*. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia Vol. II.
- Hefny, M. 2011. *Water Diplomacy: A Tool for Enhancing Water Peace and Sustainability in the Arab Region*. Presented in preparation for the Second Arab Water Forum Theme 3: “Sustainable and Fair Solutions for the Trans-boundary Rivers and Groundwater Aquifers”.
- Hilhorst, B. (2016). Water management in the Nile basin: A fragmented but effective cooperative regime. *CIRS Occasional Paper*, (17).
- Huntjens, P., Yasuda, Y., Swain, A., De Man, R., Magsig, B., & Islam, S. (2016). *The Multi-track Water Diplomacy Framework: A Legal and Political Economy Analysis for Advancing Cooperation over Shared Waters* (The Hague Institute for Global Justice).
- Hydrosult Inc, Tecresult, DHV, and their Associates Nile Consult, Comatex Nilotica, and T and A Consulting. (2006). *TRANS-BOUNDARY ANALYSIS: ABAY – BLUE NILE SUB-BASIN*. NBI-ENTRO (Nile Basin Initiative-Eastern Nile technical regional Organization).
- ICG.
- (a)(2019). *Safeguarding Sudan’s Revolution*, African Report, Report <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/horn-africa/sudan/281-safeguarding-sudans-revolution> No. 281, 21 October 2019.
- (b)(2019). *Bridging the Gap in the Nile Waters Dispute*. International Crisis Group African Report. <https://www.crisisgroup.org/Africa/horn-africa/Ethiopia/271-bridging-gap-nile-waters-dispute>. Report N 271/Africa, 20 March 2019.
- ICG. (2021). *Containing the Volatile Sudan-Ethiopia Border Dispute*. Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°173Khartoum/Nairobi/Brussels, 24 June 2021.

- <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/horn-africa/ethiopia/b173-containing-volatile-Sudan-Ethiopia-border-dispute>.
- International Panel of Experts (IPoE), 2013, “Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam Project”, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Retrieved from: http://www.internationalrivers.org/files/attachedfiles/international_panel_of_experts_for_ethiopian_renaissance_dam_final_report_1.pdf.
- Islam, S. & Repella, A. (2015). Water Diplomacy: A Negotiated Approach to Manage 760 Complex Water Problems. UCOWR Special Issue on Water Diplomacy. 155, 1–10.
- Jonsson, B. (2013). Water as a Source of Cooperation or Conflict?-A Case Study of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam. <https://lup.lub.lu.se/luur/download?func=downloadFile&recordId=3357953&fileId=3404968>.
- Kammel, A. H. (2013). The Relationship between Sudan and South Sudan after independence-Independences as key variables for sustainable peace, Austria Institut für Europaund Sicherheitspolitik, FOKYUS/2013.
- Keskinen, M., Inkinen, A., Hakanen, U., Rautavaara, & A., Niinioja, M. (2015). Water diplomacy: bringing diplomacy into water cooperation and water into diplomacy. Available at: <http://www.wdrg.fi/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/>
- Kistin, E. J. (2007, October). Transboundary cooperation in SADC: from concept to implementation. In *8th WaterNet/WARFSA/GWP-SA Symposium, Lusaka, Zambia* (Vol. 30).
- Lacher, W. (2022). African conflicts amid multipolarity: implications of a changing actor landscape. Megatrends Africa, Policy Brief.
- Mbaku, J. M. & Smith, J. E. (2012). South Sudan’s First Anniversary: Progress, Challenges and Prospects, In African Growth Initiative at Brookings. (2012). One Year after Independence: Opportunities and obstacles for Africa’s Newest Country, (June 2012).
- Mohammed, L. (2020). The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam: Between the Burdens of Sovereignty and the constraints of Neighborhood. Policy center for the New South, PB 20/62.
- Molnar, K., Cuppari, R., Schmeier, S., Demuth, S., (2017). Preventing Conflicts, Fostering Cooperation – The many Roles of Water Diplomacy (UNESCO’s International Centre for Water Cooperation (ICWC) at SIWI, Stockholm, Sweden, and the UNESCO’s International Centre for Water Resources and Global Change (ICWRGC). Koblenz, Germany)

- Pohl, B. 2014, 'The Rise of Hydro-Diplomacy Strengthening Foreign Policy for Transboundary Waters', Adelphi Research gemeinnützige GmbH and German Federal Foreign Office.
- Salman, A. (2015). Blue Diplomacy: Transboundary Water Governance from a Foreign Policy Lens. Policy Brief Publication Series "Regional Green Dialogs" 2015. Heinrich Böll Stiftung. Pakistan.
- Salminen, E., Honkonen, T., Belinskij, A. & Keskinen, M. (2019). Vesidiplomatia - ennakoivaa rauhanvälitystoimintaa. (Aalto University & University of Eastern Finland for the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland).
- Sørbo, G. M. (2020). Sudan's transition: Living in bad surroundings. Sudan Working Paper. No. 4. Issue 17.
- Tawfik, R. (2015). *Revisiting hydro-hegemony from a benefit-sharing perspective: the case of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam* (No. 5/2015). Discussion Paper.
- Tsega, A. H. (2017). The geopolitics of water negotiations succeeding the GERD project in the Nile River basin: the case of Ethiopia, Egypt, and Sudan. *Humanitarian and Social Research Center (INSAMER)*. INSAMER, Istanbul.
- US Bureau of Reclamation. (1952). Reconnaissance Report, Blue Nile Basin, Ethiopia. Washington D.C.
- USIP. (2020). Senior Study Group on Peace and Security in the Red Sea Arena. Final Report and Recommendations. Washington D.C., United States Institute of Peace.
- Veilleux, J. C. (2015). Water Conflict Case Study–Ethiopia's Grand Renaissance Dam: Turning from Conflict to Cooperation. Elsevier Inc.
- Wolf, A. T. (2005). Hydropolitical vulnerability and resilience: series introduction. In *Hydropolitical vulnerability and resilience along international waters: Africa*, 3-17 Africa. United Nations Environment Program Report no. DEW/0672/NA, Nairobi, Kenya.
- Young, J. (2020). Conflict and cooperation: Transitions in modern Ethiopian-Sudanese relations. *HSBA Briefing Paper*.
- Ylönen, A. (2020). Talking Nile: Historical Aspects, Current Concerns, and the Stalemate in Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam Negotiations. *The Horn Bulletin Vol 3, Issue No 4* horninstitute.org.

Newspaper and Magazine

- Abdelaziz, K., Georgy, M and El Dahan, M. (2019). Sudan militia leader grew rich by selling gold, (November 26, 219) Retrieved from [https://www.euronews.com/2019/11/26/exclusive-sudan-militia-leader-grew-rich-by- \(26/11/2019](https://www.euronews.com/2019/11/26/exclusive-sudan-militia-leader-grew-rich-by- (26/11/2019).
- Addis Standard. (2019). First Trilateral Meeting on GERD with WB, US observers in attendance Concluded. <https://addisstandard.com/news-first-trilateral-meeting-on-gerd-with-wb-us-observers-in-attendance-concluded/>. (Accessed on August 30, 2022).
- Ahmady, M. (2020). Revisiting Sudan's Nile Position <https://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContentP/4/368692/ Sudan% E2% 80% 99s-Nile-position-aspX> Opinion/Revisiting-
- Aljazeera (September 17, 2011). Egypt and Ethiopia to review the Nile River dam. <http://www.aljazeera.com./news/middle-east/2011/09/2011917132445980153.html>.
- Belete Belachew. (2022). Ethiopia and Neighboring Countries: Difficulties Surrounding Ethiopia. Interview with Sheger FM. <https://youtu.be/8T4XrYKxzdA>.
- Copnall, J. (2019). 'Sudanese Third Revolution', History Today, Vol. 69, issue 7.
- KIRKPATRICK, DAVID D. (2018). 'ON THE FRONT LINE OF THE SAUDI WAR IN YEMEN: CHILD SOLDIERS FROM DARFUR', THE NEW YORK TIMES, DECEMBER 28, 2018. <HTTPS://WWW.NYTIMES.COM/2018/12/28/WORLD/AFRICA/SAUDISUDAN-YEMEN-CHILD-FIGHTERS.HTML>. ACCESSED ON 12-11-2022.
- Nye Jr, J. S. (1999). 'Redefining the national interest'. *Foreign Affairs*, 78(4) (Jul. - Aug. 1999), 22-35.
- Saeed, S. (2018). Ethiopia's Renaissance Dam and its impact on Sudanese water security. <https://sudantribune.com/spip.php?article64431>.
- Salman, S. M. A. (2015). How and why has the Ethiopian Strategy on the Renaissance Dam Succeeded? *Sudan Vision News Daily (March 30, 2015)*. Retrieved from: <http://www.sudanvisiondaily.com>.
- Walsh, D. 2019. 'The Fall of Omar Hassan al-Bashir, the 'Spider' at the Heart of Sudan's Web', The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/11/world/africa/omar-bashir-sudan.html>. Accessed on 13-11.2022.

- Temin, J., & Woocher, L. (2012). *Learning from Sudan's 2011 Referendum*. US Institute of Peace. Special Report, March 2012 available at https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/resources/SR303_0.pdf;
- Tesfalem Tekle. (. October 26, 2011). Sudan agrees to tripartite committee over Ethiopia's Nile dam. <http://www.sudantribune.com/Sudan-agrees-to-tripartite,40531>.
- Veilleux, J & Dinar, S (Nov 07, 2017). TROUBLED WATER [Nile Dynamics](#): The grand new dam on the Nile pits the downstream countries against the upstream. Will conflict ensue?, The American Interest.
- Water Technology.net (2014). Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam Project, Benishangul-Gumuz, Ethiopia. Available at <http://www.water-technology.net/projects/grand-Ethiopian-renaissance-dam-Africa/>. Accessed April 17, 2022.
- Zerihun Megersa Jima (23 October 2016). The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam: A Game-Changer for Nile Hydro-Politics. From <https://www.africanglobe.net/africa/grand-Ethiopian-renaissance-dam-game-changer-Nile-hydro-politics/>

Thesis

- Attalla, R. A. (2015). Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD): An Interactive Qualifying Project Report, MSc Thesis, WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE, Massachusetts, US.
- Belete Belachew. (2012). Ethiopia in African Politics, 1956–91, PhD Dissertation, Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- Elbarbary, H. (2021). Hydro-conflicts in the Nile Basin: An analysis of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) Project, MA Thesis, Åbo Akademi University, Finland.
- Grandi, M. (2016). *Hydro politics in Transboundary Water Management Conflict, Cooperation, and Governance along the Nile River*. Ph.D. Dissertation, Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies Pisa, Italy.
- Mtua, G. M. (2017). *Bilateral Treaties on the Nile River and Their Impacts on International Relations* Tumaini University Makumira, Doctoral dissertation,
- Nielsen, M. D. (2015). *The Waters of the Nile: Ethiopia Challenging Regional Hydro-Hegemony*. MA Thesis, University of Copenhagen.
- Zaerpoor, Y. B. Z. (2019). *Pursuing the common good: overcoming barriers to collective action through transboundary water negotiation along the Blue Nile River* (Doctoral dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology).

APPENDICES

Appendix I. Interview Guideline

A. For key informants to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Water, irrigation, and Energy.

1. What are the fundamental changes that resulted from the construction of GERD?
I, how does it influence the relationship between the upstream and downstream countries?

II, what are the leverages it presented for Ethiopia during the negotiation process?
2. How the change of leadership in both Sudan and Ethiopia does affect the negotiation process?
I, what are the differences of perception and policy determination after leadership change?

II, what have changed the roles of leaders in the negotiation process?
3. How does the absence of agreement in terms of dam filling and operation affect the relationship between the two countries?
I, what are the main reasons that hinder an agreement on the dam filling?

II, is there any effect of having no agreement for future dam operation?

Appendix II. Interview Guideline

B. For Key Informants to Addis Ababa University, College of Social Science, Department of Political Science and International Relations, Department of History, Institute of Peace and Security.

1. What are the roles of GERD and multilateral diplomatic initiatives in the struggle for counter-hegemony?
I, how do NBI and previous diplomatic initiatives enabled to challenge the status quo?

II, how did the GERD help Ethiopia mobilize the upstream and struggle against the downstream?
2. What are the differences between the pre-2018 negotiations and post-2019 negotiations?

I, what are the consequences of negotiations under the Trump administration?

Appendix III. Interview Guideline

C. For Key Informants to the Institute of Foreign Affairs, Zoom Meeting

1. How is the GERD influencing Ethiopia's relationship with other countries?
2. What are the internal political dynamics in both countries affect their relations with the rest of the world?
3. What are the main reasons for Sudan to shift its position?

I, what are the geopolitical implications of the GERD?

II, how do conflicts in the Gulf region influence the relations between Ethiopia and Sudan?

III, how is the border issue affecting the relation regarding GERD negotiations

Appendix IV. Key Informants Profile

No	Name	Sex	Organization	Position	Date of Interview	Remark
1	Wuhibegzer Ferede (Ph.D.)	M	Institute of Foreign Affairs	Researcher	August 17, 2022	Personal Interview
2	Teferi Mekonnen (Ph.D.)	M	Addis Ababa University	Lecturer	October 26, 2022	Personal Interview
3	Dareskedar Taye (Ph.D.)	M	Institute of Foreign Affairs	Researcher	August 29, 2022	Personal Interview
4	Tefera Beyene (Eng.)	M	Ministry of Water and Energy	Transboundary Water Affairs Advisor	August 23, 2022	Personal Interview
5	Firehiwot Sintayehu (Ph.D.)	F	Addis Ababa University	Lecturer	November 4, 2022	Personal Interview
6	Gissila Gebre Sellasie	M	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Neighboring Affairs Head	October 12, 2022	Personal Interview
7	Mezmur Tadesse	M	Ministry of Water and Energy	Legal Affairs Expert	August 23, 2022	Personal Interview
8	Ana Elissa Cascao (Ph.D)	F	Independent Researcher	Researcher/ Consultant	October 21, 2022	Zoom Meeting
9	Interview Number 9	M	Addis Ababa University	Lecturer	October 25, 2022	Personal Interview