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**The Securitisation of Democracy and Development and the Politics of Ethiopia`s Ruling
Coalition (1991-2018): Towards a Logics of Action Approach to Securitisation**

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Declaration

I, Alagaw Ababu Kifle, declare that this dissertation is my own work both in conception and execution, which I hereby submit for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Political Sciences at the University of Pretoria, South Africa and the African Leadership Centre, King`s College London, UK. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at this or any other university.

Ethics Statement

The author, whose name appears on the title of this dissertation, has obtained, for the research described in this work, the applicable research ethics approval.

The author declares that he has obtained the ethical standard required in terms of the University of Pretoria`s Codes of ethics for researchers and the Policy guidelines of responsible research

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Abstract

This study analyses the outcomes of securitisation of democracy and development by the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) (1991-2018). To this effect, a framework anchored on the logics of action approach is developed. The approach identifies the concerns of the EPRDF in securitising democracy and development, and in devising and implementing policies in the areas of fighting rent-seeking, intra-party governance and mobilization, and definition of threats and identification of enemies. The result, in general, indicates that while the discourse and policies of the regime suggest the securitisation of democracy and development, the practice rather indicates the securitisation of dissent as a threat to regime survival. This latter aspect of the strategic use of non-security speech acts/discourses to pursue an essentially security agenda is not accounted for in the mainstream literature on securitisation. By introducing the logics of action approach, this study makes four contributions to the literature on securitisation.

First, it accounts for the practices of actors that are not justified by or imbued with a security speech act or discourse. Hence, it makes sense of the pursuit of regime survival by the EPRDF as an existential concern above democracy and development. Second, it explains the effect of why an issue is securitised on what outcome securitisation results in. The case in which a faction of TPLF leaders' goal of surviving in power inspired both the securitisation of democracy and development in the first place, and strongly shaped the formulation and implementation of governance and development policies afterwards, can be taken as illustrative of this fact. Third, it introduces the concern of the securitising actor as a key determinant of the normative desirability of securitisation. The study argues that securitisation might be Janus-faced: even as it is abused for self-serving ends, it can have security enhancing effects when an emancipatory issue is securitised. Finally, by applying the logics of action framework to the Ethiopian case, the study suggested a new conceptualization of securitisation dominantly focusing on an actor-threat interface and that moves away from centring speech acts and audience. The study in general demonstrated that speech acts and audience acceptance cannot be considered a true test of securitisation.

Key Terms: Securitisation, Securitising Actor, Speech Act, Audience, Logics of Action, EPRDF, Democracy, Development, Rent-seeking, Intra-party governance, Threats, Enemies.

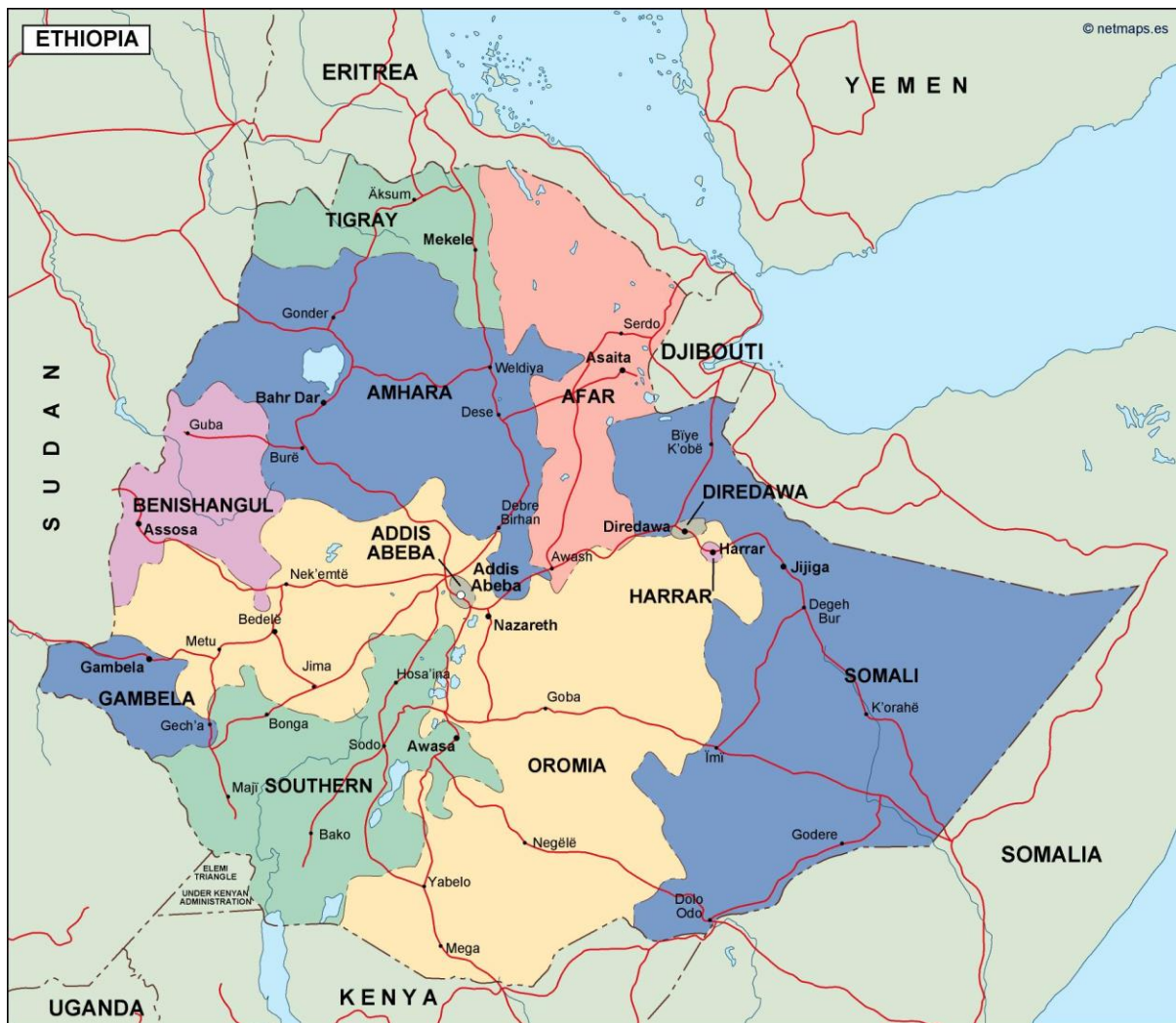
List of Acronyms

ANDM	Amhara National Democratic Movement
ARC	Africa Risk Consulting
ASEAN	Associations of South-East Asian States
CAADP	Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme
CUD	Coalitions for Unity and Democracy
DA	Development Agent
DFID	Department for International Development
EC	Ethiopian Calendar ¹
ECRA	Ethiopian Custom and Revenue Authority
EDFU	Ethiopian Democratic Forces Union
EFFORT	Endowment Fund for the Rehabilitation of Tigray
EPRDF	Ethiopian People`s Revolutionary Democratic Front
EPRP	Ethiopian People`s Revolutionary Party
ESAF	Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility
ETA	Ethiopian Teachers Association
FTC	Farmers Training Centres
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GERD	Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam
IFI	International Financial Institutions
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INSA	Information Network Security Agency
Meison	All Ethiopian Socialist Movement
Mejilis	Association of Islamic Affairs Council
MetEC	Metal and Engineering Corporation

¹ Ethiopian calendar, which is based on Julian calendar, is 7 to 8 years behind the Gregorian calendar. Between September and December, the difference between the two is 7 years whereas between January and August it is eight years. This is because Ethiopian new year starts in September.

MW	Mega Watt
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisations
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OLF	Oromo Liberation Front
OPDO	Oromo People`s Democratic Organisation
SPDM	Southern People`s Democratic Organisation
TPLF	Tigray People`s Liberation Front
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WB	World Bank

Map of Ethiopia and its Administrative Zones



Contents

Declaration.....	ii
Ethics Statement.....	iii
Acknowledgement	iv
Abstract.....	v
List of Acronyms	vi
Map of Ethiopia and its Administrative Zones	viii

Chapter One

1.1. Introduction.....	1
1.2. The Study of Security (as) Discourses and Securitisation: Contextualizing and Rationalizing the Study.....	4
1.3. Research Problem and Questions.....	11
1.3.1. Research Problem.....	11
1.3.2. Research Questions	15
1.4. Research Methodology and Method	15
1.4.1. Methodology	15
1.4.2. Methods of the Study	16
1.5. Securitisation Studies and Leadership Studies: A Justification for Choice of Concepts..	17
1.6. Structure of the Thesis	21

Chapter Two

2.1. Introduction.....	24
2.2. Meaning of securitisation.....	25
2.2.1. The performativity of Security	26
2.2.2. Audience and its Role	35
2.2.3. When is an issue said to be securitised?.....	38
2.2.4. Outcomes of securitisation	41
2.2.4.1. Emergency/Extraordinary Politics as an Outcome of Securitisation.....	42
2.3. Operationalisation of Securitisation and the Quest for a New Framework	47
2.3.1. Operational Definition of Securitisation	47
2.3.2. The Quest for a New Framework.....	49
2.3.2.1. Logics of Action	51
2.3.2.2. Framework of the Study	58
2.4. Conclusions.....	69

Chapter Three

3.1. Introduction.....	71
3.2. Origin, Policy Articulation and Evolution of the Securitisation Discourse.....	72

3.2.1. Origin of the Securitisation Discourse	72
3.2.2. Policy Articulation of the Securitisation Discourse	77
3.2.3. Evolution of the Securitisation Discourse	86
3.3. EPRDF's Logics of Securitised Problem Definition and Policy Formulation	93
3.3.1. What Was Done in Speaking Security and What Was Justified by the Security Frame?.....	93
3.3.2. Losers and Beneficiaries of the Securitisation Frame	97
3.3.2.1. The Narrative of the EPRDF	98
3.3.2.2. The Narrative of the Splintered Group	99
3.3.2.3. The Oppositions' Narrative	101
3.3.3. Which Logic Dominates?.....	103
3.4. Conclusions.....	105

Chapter Four

4.1. Introduction.....	107
4.2. EPRDF Framing of Rent-seeking as a Systemic Threat	108
4.3. EPRDF's Logics of Issue Definition	111
4.3.1. Actions Done and Justified in Speaking/Writing about Rent-Seeking.....	112
4.3.1.1. Realizing Democratic Development.....	112
4.3.1.2. Limiting/Delegitimising Opposing Actors' Capacity to Mobilize Rent .	115
4.3.2. Losers and Beneficiaries.....	119
4.3.3. Juxtaposition of Different Logics	120
4.4. Conclusions.....	121

Chapter Five

5.1. Introduction.....	123
5.2. Transforming the Political Economy of Rent-seeking.....	124
5.2.1. Patterns of Government Expenditure	125
5.2.2. Agricultural Extension System.....	126
5.2.2.1. Unrivalled Resources Allocated for Agricultural Transformation	127
5.2.2.2. Political Control and Regime Survival	129
5.2.3. Government Business Relations.....	136
5.3. Corruption	146
5.3.1. Pervasive Corruption.....	146
5.3.2. Less than Satisfying Anti-Corruption Measures	151
5.4. Summary	154
5.5. Why Policy-Practice Disjuncture and What Does it Tell Us about the Securitisation Perspective?	154

5.6. Conclusion	159
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Chapter Six

6.1. Introduction.....	161
6.2. Intra-Party Dynamics and Polity Level Outcomes	162
6.3. Intra-Party Governance and Mobilization of the EPRDF.....	163
6.3.1. Values, Programmes, and Decision-Making Procedures.....	164
6.3.2. Intra-Party Struggle.....	168
6.3.3. Engaging Societal Movement for Democracy and Development.....	171
6.3.4. Party-Leadership Development.....	172
6.3.5. Principle, Strategies and Structures of Popular Mobilization	175
6.4. Logics of Issues Definition	178
6.4.1.Actions Done and Actors/Actions and Values Justified through Problem Definition	179
6.4.2. Losers and Beneficiaries of the Frame.....	183
6.5. Conclusions.....	184

Chapter Seven

7.1. Introduction.....	186
7.2. Maintaining EPRDF`s Democratic and Developmental Character	187
7.2.1. Intra-party Struggle and Intra-Party Democracy.....	187
7.2.1.1. Democratic Centralism	187
7.2.1.2. Intra-Party Democracy	189
7.2.1.3. Evaluation, Criticism and Self-criticism	194
7.2.2. EPRDF Leadership Building Programme.....	195
7.2.3. Engaging the Societal Movement for Development and Democracy.....	201
7.2.4. Principles and Modes of Popular Mobilization.....	203
7.2.5. Intra-party Governance Dynamics of Member Parties of the EPRDF.....	206
7.2.5.1. A Democratic Developmental TPLF?	207
7.2.5.2. A Democratic and Developmental ANDM?	209
7.2.5.3. Democratic and Developmental OPDO?.....	212
7.2.5.4. Democratic and Developmental SPDM?.....	215
7.2.6. Summary	217
7.3. Explaining and Justifying the Policy-Practice Disjuncture: Implications for the Securitisation Perspective	218
7.4. Conclusions.....	223

Chapter Eight

8.1. Introduction.....	225
8.2. Definition of Threats and Identification of Enemies	226
8.2.1. National Chauvinists and Narrow Nationalism.....	226
8.2.2. Religious Radicals.....	233
8.2.3. Neoliberal Forces	235
8.2.4. Summary	237
8.3. The Logics of issue definition.....	238
8.3.1. Actions Done/Actions/Actors Justified Through the Issue Definition	238
8.3.2. Losers and Beneficiaries of the Issue definition	242
8.3.3. Juxtaposition of Logics	243
8.4. The Logics of Policy Implementation in the Fight Against these “Threats/Enemies” ...	244
8.4.1. EPRDF and Chauvinist and Narrow Nationalist Forces	244
8.4.2. EPRDF and Religious Radicals.....	249
8.4.3. EPRDF and the Neoliberals	251
8.5. Summary	253
8.6. Why Did the EPRDF Fail to Act as Per Its Issue-definition? Implication for Securitisation Perspective	254
8.7. Conclusions.....	258

Chapter Nine

9.1. Introduction.....	260
9.2. Summary of Key Findings	261
9.3. Contributions of the Study	265
9.3.1. The Centrality of the Concern of the Securitising actors/ruling coalitions and its Concerns.....	265
9.3.2. Logics of Actions, the “Why” of Securitisation and its Outcomes.....	268
9.3.3. Empowering/Emancipatory Securitisation?.....	270
9.3.4. Conceptualizing Securitisation: Inter-Subjectivity, Modality of Handling Threats, and Actor-Threat Interface	271
9.3.4.1. Alternative Conceptualization	274
10. References.....	277

Chapter One

Problematizing and Situating the Study

1.1. Introduction

The end of the Cold War ushered in a marked shift in the security thinking and practices of Western states. It heralded the rise of a number of critical and constructivist perspectives of security that came to establish a niche in a field hitherto dominated by a realist paradigm. The result is a widened and deepened understanding of security achieved through including issues other than the military sector, and referent objects other than the state, respectively.¹ It also marked a shift in the way the international community approached peacemaking and conflict resolution. The UN, for instance, drastically increased its peacekeeping missions;² introduced new terminologies such as peacebuilding;³ and established new institutions/architectures aimed at conflict prevention and peacebuilding.⁴ Likewise, Western states and multilateral institutions developed an awareness of, and commitment to, the security-development nexus. Thus, both the theoretical evolution and the practical shifts were towards an approach that emphasises a broadened understanding of security.

However, the extent to which these shifts in thinking and practices enhanced societal security across states of the South has been rather questionable. Though these interventions were inspired by benevolent security considerations, most states relapsed into conflict in less than five years while some, like Somalia, remained in a state of protracted state failure.⁵ While the broadened notions of security that informed stabilization and peacebuilding measures across the South were mainly advocated by international actors, the Ethiopian state, under the Ethiopian People`s Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF),⁶ pioneered an understanding of

¹. Olav F. Knudsen, "Post-Copenhagen Security Studies: Desecuritisising Securitisation," *Security Dialogue* 32, no. 3 (2001).p.355

². Tamara Duffey, "United Nations Peacekeeping in the Post-Cold War World," *Civil Wars* 1, no. 3 (1998).p.6

³. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, "An Agenda for Peace : Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peace-Keeping : Report of the Secretary-General Pursuant to the Statement Adopted by the Summit Meeting of the Security Council," (31 January 1992), <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/145749>.

⁴. Examples include the Peacekeeping Department (1992); The UN Peace Building Architecture including the Peace Building Commission, the Peace Building Fund and the Peace Building Support Office were established in 2005-2006.

⁵. World Bank, "Conflict, Security and Development, World Development Report," (New York: World Bank, 2011).p.58

⁶ . The EPRDF was a Front of four parties: the Tigray People`s Liberation Front (TPLF), the Amhara National Democratic Movement (ANDM), the Oromo People`s Democratic Organisation (OPDO), and the Southern Ethiopia People`s Democratic Movement (SPDM). See section 6.3.1. for greater details.

its (national) security in a way that seemed to have effectively reconciled state and human security. On coming to power after a protracted insurgency against the military regime in 1991, the EPRDF promised to introduce political and economic liberalization. After spearheading the democratization and economic liberalization processes in the early phase of the transition, the EPRDF introduced a holistic programme of security, governance and development that was presumed to strengthen the state, facilitate societal security and enhance economic development.

This holistic programme approached the quest for democracy and development as a matter of national survival. A party training document formulated to introduce this new thinking boldly maintained that “a democratic system is not just a matter of choice; it is also a matter of survival.”⁷ Accordingly, to spare the country from war, atrocities and disintegrations, there is no other “option but to build our democratic system and ensure good governance.”⁸ Ethiopians, it claimed, do not even have the luxury “to vacillate, retreat or fail on this goal” because “failing on this goal means facing a danger that is difficult to think of let alone actually experience.”⁹ Due to the existential nature of the quest for democracy and good governance, the EPRDF claimed that the democracy envisioned for the country, though substantively similar to all other democracies, would have to rely on direct mass participation of the people without depending upon representative institutions alone (see 3.2.2.). Concerning the security imperative of development, the party training document also asserted that “[u]nless we start going out of the vicious circle of poverty immediately; if we do not show concretely that tomorrow will be better; if we do not create the conditions where hopelessness and fatalism will be overcome, senseless war and destruction is a matter of time.”¹⁰ To realise these existential issues, it noted that carefully selected policies and strategies should be adopted and the people mobilized to that effect with a force of urgency.

This securitised understanding of democracy and development was articulated in, and sought to inform, many of the key policies of the country ranging from foreign policy, governance, to industrial development and poverty reduction policies and strategies. The *Foreign Affairs and National Security Policy and Strategy*, for instance, asserted that the two key national security

7. FDRE, *የዲሞክራሲ ስረዓት ግንባታ ጉዳዮች በኢትዮጵያ* (*Issues of building democratic system in Ethiopia*[Unless otherwise stated all translations are mine]) (Addis Ababa: Ministry of Information, 1994 EC),p.12

8. Ibid.p.12

9. Ibid., pp. 12-13.

10.Ibid., pp.7-8.

threats of the country were lack of development and absence of institutionalized democracy.¹¹ The policy proclaimed that “our foreign relations and national security policy and strategy can only have relevance if it contributes to the fight against poverty and promotes speedy economic development, democracy and peace.”¹² Failing in these goals, it claimed, the country will collapse, disintegration will follow and since this collapse cannot happen peacefully, crisis of a severe magnitude will ensue. Similarly, the Rural Development Policy of the country affirmed the existential requisite of broad-based growth without which, it claimed, the alternative is endless bloodletting.¹³ The Industrial Development Strategy of Ethiopia also asserted the existential necessity of development, arguing that there is no other alternative that guarantees the security of the country other than accelerated development.¹⁴ Hence, it called for the subordination of every other issue to the goals of rapid and sustained development.

All the above statements indicate not just the securitisation of democracy and development but also its cross-institutional embeddedness whereby institutions working on national security issues, rural development, industrial development and governance were all in some way informed by the existential consideration of democracy and development. Moreover, this securitising act was not restricted to these formative documents, which rather continued even when the EPRDF governance record was questioned. Subsequent government security discourses, training and party documents and speeches of officials continue to reiterate the existential nature of the quest for democracy and development (see 3.2.2).¹⁵ In these speeches and documents, the choices of Ethiopians were articulated to be either institutionalizing democracy and realizing rapid development or war, atrocities and disintegration. The choice was presented as an existential choice from which nobody could be a bystander.¹⁶ Even when the regime was registering rapid growth it claimed that “if we want to dry out the deeper

¹¹. Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, *Foreign Affairs and National Security Policy and Strategy*. (Addis Ababa: Ministry of Information, 2002).

¹². Ibid.p.1

¹³. Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, *Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Rural Development Policy and Strategy*. (Addis Ababa: Ministry of Information, 2002).p.11

¹⁴. MFED, *የኢትዮጵያ ፌዴራላዊ ዲሞክራሲያዊ ሪፐብሊክ የኢንዱስትሪ ልማት ስትራቴጂ* (*Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia: industrial development strategy*) (Addis Ababa: Ministry of Information, 2003).

¹⁵. EPRDF, "የማሸቆልቆል ምዕራፍ ተዘግቶ የእድገት መራፍ የተከፈተበት የሩብ መት አመት የትግልና የድል ጉዞ" (Quarter of a century journey of struggle and success that closed downward journey and opened a chapter of growth), *አዲስ ራዥይ* (*New Vision*) 5, no. 5 (2008 EC)p.25; "የተሃድሶ መስመራችን፣ ጸረኪራይ ሰብሳቢነት ትግሉና የወቅቱ ሁኔታ" [Our Renaissance Line, the Struggle against Rent-Seeking and the Current Situation], *አዲስ ራዥይ* (*New Vision*) no. 4.p.78

¹⁶. *ዲሞክራሲ እና ዲሞክራሲያዊ አንድነት በኢትዮጵያ* (*Democracy and democratic unity in Ethiopia*) (Addis Ababa: E. I. P. D. O, 1997 EC).

sources of war and chaos and ensure the continuation of the Ethiopian renaissance, we have to tackle poverty quickly and build a democratic system that can accommodate our diversity.”¹⁷

The question, however, is whether and how imbuing security discourses to democratic and developmental goals influenced the regime’s developmental and governance undertakings, as is anticipated in the literature on securitisation. This study seeks to analyse this question by tracing the regime’s logics of action in three areas—the fight against “rent-seeking”; party recruitment, promotion and organisation; and definition of threats and identification of “enemies”— between 1991-2018.¹⁸

1.2. The Study of Security (as) Discourses and Securitisation: Contextualizing and Rationalizing the Study

The theoretical perspective best suited to situate the debates on the securitisation of development and democracy in Ethiopia is the securitisation theory.¹⁹ Securitisation, as initially formulated by Wæver and elaborated by Buzan, Wilde and Waever, refers to the process through which phenomena are approached as existential threats to a referent object, thereby necessitating extraordinary measures.²⁰ According to Buzan, Wilde and Waever, security utterances are speech acts through which the very invocation of security (existential danger, urgency, and point of no return) transforms the phenomena from being a mundane social problem into a security threat.²¹ Subsequent works have critiqued and extended securitisation theory in different directions. Points of controversy include issues of the performativity of security articulations, the yardsticks of securitisation, audience and its nature, the conception of security, and the nature of, and need for, extraordinary politics. First, arguing that security cannot be a speech act and inter-subjective²² at the same time, subsequent scholars,

¹⁷. የታላቋው መስመርና የኢትዮጵያ ህዳሴ (The renewal line and the Ethiopian renaissance) (Addis Ababa: Mega Printing Press, 2011EC).p.113

¹⁸. These three elements are chosen because in so far as securitisation of development and democracy has informed EPRDF’s reason for action, the most likely arena to look for are the three themes. The reventant chapter indicates why this expectation is the case.

¹⁹. In so far as securitisation theory is concerned with how certain issues are viewed as more threatening than others, it will reveal how the ruling coalition in Ethiopia came to regard the lack of development and democracy as an existential threat and with what effect.

²⁰.Barry Buzan, Jaap de Wilde, and Ole Waever, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (London: Lynne Rienner, 1997).p.30

²¹Buzan, Wilde, and Waever *Security*; Ole Waever, "Securitisation and Desecuritisation," in *On Security*, ed. Ronnie D. Lipschutz (New York: Colombia University press, 1995); Ole Waever, "Politics Security and Theory," *Security Dialogue* 42, no. 4-5 (2011).

²². Intersubjectivity is taken as shared understanding of threats between the securitising actor and the audience. As speech act security speeches take an issue to a security issue in the moment of speaking but as inter-

with very few exceptions,²³ opted for an approach that emphasises either speech acts or inter-subjectivity. Retaining the speech act approach Vuori and Huysmans, for instance, reflect on the nature and type of speech acts in securitisation.²⁴ Floyd added security practices and the intention of the securitising actor as key ingredients of the performativity of security articulations.²⁵ Others, notably Balzacq,²⁶ Stritzel,²⁷ Salter,²⁸ Leonard and Kaunert,²⁹ and Watson,³⁰ emphasise different (macro and micro) contextual determinants of securitisation. According to these scholars, contextual factors, the authority of the securitising actor and audience acceptance influence the performativity of security speech acts.

Second, this difference in focus leads to a diverse understanding of securitisation. While securitisation connotes speech acts and security practices for Floyd, for the other authors noted above, securitisation exists when the relevant audience accepts the “security-ness” of an issue. However, as central as the notion of “audience” might be, there is no consensus on who the audience is, what constitutes acceptance, and what it is that is accepted.³¹ Roe suggested a reconciliation of the two positions by approaching securitisation as a dual process (entailing

subjective process this will depend on meaning negotiation with and agreement of relevant audience. Scholars find this contradictory.

²³. Lene Hansen, "The Politics of Securitisation and the Muhammad Cartoon Crisis: A Post-Structuralist Perspective," *Security Dialogue* 42, no. 4-5 (2011).

²⁴. Juha A. Vuori, "Illocutionary Logic and Strands of Securitisation: Applying the Theory of Securitisation to the Study of Non-Democratic Political Orders," *European Journal of International Relations* 14, no. 1 (2008).p.72; Jef Huysmans, "What's in an Act? On Security Speech Acts and Little Security Nothings," *Security Dialogue* 42, no. 4-5 (2011).

²⁵. Rita Floyd, *Security and the Environment: Securitisation Theory and Us Environmental Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); "Extraordinary or Ordinary Emergency Measures: What, and Who, Defines the 'Success' of Securitisation?," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 29, no. 2 (2016).

²⁶. Thierry Balzacq, "The Three Faces of Securitisation: Political Agency, Audience and Context," *European Journal of International Relations* 11, no. 2 (2005); Thierry Balzacq, "Enquiries into Methods: A New Framework for Securitisation Analysis," in *Securitisation Theory: How Security Problems Emerge and Dissolve*, ed. Thierry Balzacq (New York: Routledge, 2011), 31-53.

²⁷. Holger Stritzel, "Towards a Theory of Securitisation: Copenhagen and Beyond," *European Journal of International Relations* 13, no. 3 (2007).

²⁸. Mark B. Salter, "Securitisation and Desecuritisation: A Dramaturgical Analysis of the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority," *Journal of International Relations and Development* 11, no. 4 (2008).

²⁹. Leonard Sarah and Kaunert Christian, "Reconceptualizing the Audience in Securitisation Theory," in *Securitisation Theory: How Security Problems Emerge and Dissolve*, ed. Thierry Balzacq (New York: Routledge, 2011), 57-76.

³⁰. Scott Watson, *The Securitisation of Humanitarian Migration: Digging Moats and Sinking Boats* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009).

³¹ Jonathan Bright, "Securitisation, Terror, and Control: Towards a Theory of the Breaking Point," *Review of International Studies* 38, no. 4 (2012); Rita Abrahamsen, "Blair's Africa: The Politics of Securitisation and Fear," *Alternatives* 30, no. 1 (2005, p.58); Balzacq, "Three Faces of Securitisation," p.181; Michael C. Williams, "Securitisation and the Liberalism of Fear," *Security Dialogue* 42, no. 4-5 (2011)p.455; Bryn Hughes, "Securitisating Iraq: The Bush Administration's Social Construction of Security," *Global Change, Peace & Security* 19, no. 2 (2007); I. D. O. Oren and T. Y. Solomon, "Wmd, Wmd, Wmd: Securitisation through Ritualised Incantation of Ambiguous Phrases," *Review of International Studies* 41, no. 2 (2014)p.320; Vuori, "Illocutionary Logic"; Adam Côté, "Agents without Agency: Assessing the Role of the Audience in Securitisation Theory," *Security Dialogue* 47, no. 6 (2016).

both the mobilization of the audience and the implementation of security policies).³² The Paris School of Securitisation eschewed the focus on speech acts when it shifted the emphasis to the practical rationality of security professionals who determine threats and how to deal with them, and hence, restricted securitisation to how these professionals identify and handle threats and risks.³³

The third debate focuses on the very conception of security underpinning securitisation theory. According to Ciuta, the Copenhagen School's innovative conception of security as a speech act is ultimately subordinated to its second definition of security as survival.³⁴ Similarly, Abrahamsen modified Buzan, Wilde and Wæver's logic of security by arguing that languages of danger need not be about an existential concern to count as securitisation.³⁵ Finally, a marginal area of debate has been the outcome of securitisation. In the original model of securitisation, successful securitisation is almost always followed by emergency measures and the outcome of these measures is by and large undesirable.³⁶ However, subsequent works argue that not all securitisation ends in breaking rules to the same degree;³⁷ that there is even a rule for rule-breaking;³⁸ that the normal-extraordinary distinction may not work; and that the nature of the threat mediates the nature of the response (threats may be addressed by mundane measures such as establishing new institutions; allocating greater resources, and mobilizing the wider population for a unified goal).³⁹

Related to, but not entirely overlapping with the outcomes of securitisation, is the normative debate on securitisation which inquires whether securitisation can be normatively justifiable

³². Paul Roe, "Actor, Audience(S) and Emergency Measures: Securitisation and the UK's Decision to Invade Iraq," *Security Dialogue* 39, no.6 (2008).

³³. Didier Bigo, "The (in)Securitisation Practices of the Three Universes of EU Border Control: Military/Navy – Border Guards/Police – Database Analysts," *Security Dialogue* 45, no. 3 (2014).

³⁴. Felix Ciutã, "Security and the Problem of Context: A Hermeneutical Critique of Securitisation Theory," *Review of International Studies* 35, no. 2 (2009).

³⁵ Abrahamsen, "Blair's Africa."

³⁶. Buzan, Wæve, and Wilde, *Security*.

³⁷. Bright, "Securitisation, Terror, and Control."

³⁸. At least in Western democracies governments would take emergency measures after parliament authorize them by introducing laws to take such measures. Floyd, "Extraordinary or Ordinary Emergency Measures"

³⁹. Bright, "Securitisation, Terror, and Control"; Matt McDonald, "Securitisation and the Construction of Security," *European Journal of International Relations* 14, no. 4 (2008); Maja Touzari Greenwood et al., "Copenhagen–Cairo on a Roundtrip: A Security Theory Meets the Revolution," *Security Dialogue* 44, no. 5-6 (2013); Michael C. Williams, "Securitisation as Political Theory: The Politics of the Extraordinary," *International Relations* 29, no. 1 (2015); Tine Hanrieder and Christian Kreuder-Sonnen, "Who Decides on the Exception? Securitisation and Emergency Governance in Global Health," *Security Dialogue* 45, no. 4 (2014).

and even desirable.⁴⁰ Some theorists argue that security essentially calls forth insecurity and, thus, it is not a viable means for handling social problems.⁴¹ Others challenge this arguing that an ordinary solution for an extraordinary situation is not logically sound.⁴²

The debates noted above can be, for the sake of brevity and simplicity, divided into conceptual works that seek to define/redefine securitisation, and (mostly) empirical works that examine the ramifications of securitisation. Conceptual works interrogate dimensions of securitisation, such as the performativity of security articulations, the role of audience and contexts thereof, and discourse and practice in securitisation. As informative as these works are, they have a number of shortcomings, including a formulaic understanding of securitisation that is not applicable to all political orders (Buzan, Wilde and Waever, and Balzacq for instance⁴³); zooming in on some element of the theory over others (Vuori's problematic focus on grammar of security, for instance⁴⁴); the lack of proper grounding in the extant theory of speech acts (Buzan, Wilde and Waever, for instance⁴⁵) or discarding the idea of the speech act even if, as argued in chapter two of this study, it would be necessary to retain at least an aspect of it (Balzacq, for instance⁴⁶); lack of sufficient clarity to apply for case studies (Stritzel, for instance⁴⁷); and failure to explain the link between why an issue is securitised and what follows from securitising it (almost all works). These shortcomings are, at deeper level, reflective of the challenge involved in relating the various components of the theory of securitisation, more specifically, the securitising actor, the speech act, the audience and emergency measures. Hence, refining the literature along these points would lead to a better understanding of the securitisation perspective.

Works that examine the ramifications of securitisation, on the other hand, focus mainly on the kind of outcomes that follow from the securitisation of issues, which can be variously categorized as positive and negative, intended and unintended, meaningful change and limited

⁴⁰. Rita Floyd, "Can Securitisation Theory Be Used in Normative Analysis? Towards a Just Securitisation Theory," *ibid.*42, no. 4-5 (2011).

⁴¹. Claudia Aradau, "Security and the Democratic Scene: Desecuritisation and Emancipation," *Journal of International Relations and Development* 7, no. 4 (2004).P.398

⁴². Ken Booth, *Theory of World Security* (Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Floyd, *Security and the Environment*.

⁴³. Buzan, Wilde, and Wæver, *Security*.

⁴⁴. Vuori, "Illocutionary Logic."

⁴⁵. Buzan, Wilde, and Wæver, *Security*.

⁴⁶. Balzacq, "Three Faces of Securitisation."

⁴⁷. Stritzel, "Towards a Theory of Securitisation"; Buzan, Wilde, and Wæver, *Security*.

change.⁴⁸ Most of these works analyse the securitising practices of actors outside Africa (mostly in regard to migration, terrorism, the environment, and development), which make it difficult to disentangle the outcomes of securitisation from the general processes of North-South relations.⁴⁹ This is because the themes securitised are social problems of Africa and the South in general while the securitising actors are Western states. Since the concern of the securitising actor is key in the implementation or otherwise of securitising agenda, this under-representation of empirical study on securitisation in Africa is problematic. Limited attention has been given to the securitisation practices of Africa actors and the bearing these practices might have on the theorization of securitisation. One such implication, for example, is the extent securitisation of drivers of instability has actually led to the adoption of measures that have broadly positive outcomes for society.

One of the key divisions between the Boothian critical approach to security and the securitisation framework is the difference regarding the prospect of using the powerful connotation that is associated with the word “security” for emancipatory ends. While securitisation scholars are critical of this potential, Booth argues that this practice would be possible if threats to human emancipation are securitised. Both approaches accept that security “is always powerful and never inconsequential, no matter how messy, frivolous or inconsistent the actors’ use of the word ‘security’ might be.”⁵⁰ To label an issue a security issue is to render the issue a matter of priority⁵¹ and prioritizing an issue entails at the very least giving less

⁴⁸. Stefano Bonino, "The British State ‘Security Syndrome’ and Muslim Diversity: Challenges for Liberal Democracy in the Age of Terror," *Contemporary Islam* 10, no. 2 (2016); Scott Watson, "Macrosecritisation and the Securitisation Dilemma in the Canadian Arctic," *Critical Studies on Security* 1, no. 3 (2013); Stephan Keukeleire and Kolja Raube, "The Security–Development Nexus and Securitisation in the Eu's Policies Towards Developing Countries," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 26, no. 3 (2013); Lee Jones, "Beyond Securitisation: Explaining the Scope of Security Policy in Southeast Asia," *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 11, no. 3 (2011); Nicole J. Jackson, "International Organisations, Security Dichotomies and the Trafficking of Persons and Narcotics in Post-Soviet Central Asia: A Critique of the Securitisation Framework," *Security Dialogue* 37, no. 3 (2016); Ralf Emmers, "Asean and the Securitisation of Transnational Crime in Southeast Asia," *The Pacific Review* 16, no. 3 (2003); Melita Lazell, "Liberalism(S) and the Critical Securitisation of Development Debate," *Globalizations* 13, no. 4 (2016); Sabine Hirschauer, *The Securitisation Rape: Women, War and Sexual Violence* (UK: Palgrave Macmillan 2014); Peters Katie and Mayhew Leigh, "The Securitisation of Climate Change: A Developmental Perspective," in *Securitisation of Foreign Aid*, ed. Stephen Brown and Jorn Gravingholl (UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 212-236.

⁴⁹. Floyd, *Security and the Environment.*; Stephen Brown and Jörn Grävingsholt, Security, Development and the Securitisation of Foreign Aid, In *The Securitisation of Foreign Aid*, ed. Brown Stephen and Gravingholl Jorn, (UK: Palgrave Macmilan, 2016); Philippe Bourbeau, *The Securitisation of Migration: A Study of Movement and Order*, Security and Governance Series (Routledge, 2011); Demirsu Ipek, "Counter Terrorism and the Prospects of Human Rights: Securitising Difference and Dissent," *Revista SAAP* 12, no. 1 (2018); Keukeleire and Raube, "The Security–Development Nexus"; Melita Lazell, "Liberalism(S) and the Critical Securitisation of Development Debate," *Globalizations* 13, no. 4 (2015).

⁵⁰. CiutĂ, "Security Problem of Context," p.310.

⁵¹. Booth, *Theory of World Security*, p.109.

attention to other issues. The result of this debate is not impervious to the concerns of the securitising actor and the nature of threats that are securitised because these two factors influence the normative desirability of securitisation. If drivers of instability are securitised by an actor with an overriding concern for addressing these drivers of instability, securitisation would be normatively desirable. Thus, engaging this debate in relation to homegrown securitisation of threats that appear to be transformative, would generate insights that possibly extend the empirical and theoretical application of the securitisation perspective. Indeed, as the empirical chapters of this study indicate, the concern of the securitising actor and the issue securitised determines whether securitisation would be normatively desirable.

Focusing on outcomes of home-grown securitisation also has practical implications. What concerns most people is not whether an issue is securitised or not: it is whether doing so better addresses their security concern and the wider social problem they face. Hence, an empirical study of the outcomes of securitisation would facilitate the conversation between theories and practices of securitisation. In this regard, the Ethiopian case, which is a domestically driven securitisation process where transformative issues (democracy and development, or rather lack of them) were securitised by the EPRDF, would provide insights into the above debate while also potentially extending the conceptualization of securitisation.

Generally, the literature on securitisation remains bifurcated wherein some of these works focus on the conditions triggering securitisation while the others examine the effects following from the securitisation of an issue. Guzzini attempted to highlight this disconnect by approaching securitisation as a causal mechanism that is contingently triggered or with indeterminate effect. He argues that at one stage of the process, the conditions that trigger securitisation are analysed. The focus, therefore, would be on the social process before securitisation is triggered. In the second stage of the causal process, what the securitisation of an issue results in, whatever its trigger might be, is analysed. However, his approach takes for granted the bifurcation of the two strands of work by attempting a separate theorization of what makes securitisation possible and what effect securitisation brings. Since actors securitize intending to bring about a certain (desirable) outcome, these two elements should not have been disconnected. A securitisation theory that separately theorizes these two entangled components of the securitisation processes, therefore, is by necessity problematic.

At the source of this problematique is extant perspectives on securitisation's emphasis on the speech act and/or the audience as a key determinant of securitisation, which in turn is the result

of their commitment to the inter-subjective nature of security. This commitment overlooks the outcome of threat articulation as an essential element in theorizing securitisation. This focus on outcome would have clearly indicated (as the case under study did) the inadequacies of total reliance on the speech act and audience, especially in accounting for security driven practices of actors that are not justified by or imbued with a security speech act or discourse. Hence, this study focusing on outcomes of securitisation of democracy and development in Ethiopia suggests an alternative way of approaching securitisation that places the concerns of the securitising actor at the centre of the analysis as opposed to speech acts or audience acceptance.

This recentring of the concerns of the securitising actor would not only help systematically relate the disconnected elements of the securitisation process but also have two other advantages. First, it accounts for security inspired practices that are not justified by or imbued with a security discourse. For instance, the EPRDF managed dissent as threat to regime survival though it never expressed such an intention in its discourse. On the other hand, although it declared democracy and development as existential issues, its governance and development measures were not strongly inspired by this consideration. The mainstream securitisation literature conceptualizes the latter as a case of securitisation but not the former, which is problematic and underscores the need for an approach that goes beyond audience and the speech act. Second, re-centring the concerns of the securitising actor also provides insights into the normative debate on securitisation by suggesting that the concern of the securitising actor might be a key factor influencing the desirability of securitisation. The study introduces the notion of logics of action⁵² (elaborated in the next chapter) to re-centre the concerns` of the securitising actor as a driver of securitisation and the outcomes thereof.

This thesis aims to achieve four interrelated objectives. First, it seeks to redefine securitisation to make it applicable to the political order of Ethiopia under the rule of the EPRDF (1991-2018). Second, it aims to develop a framework anchored in the logics of action approach used to analyse both the origin and logics of securitising democracy and development, and the outcomes of this securitisation of development and democracy in Ethiopia. Third, it aspires to analyse outcomes of securitisation of development and democracy by focusing on the three areas of fighting rent-seeking, intra-party governance and mobilization, and the definition of threats and the identification of enemies. Finally, the study derives the implications of this

⁵². Logics of action refers to concerns/preoccupations that informed the regime`s problem definition, formulation and implementation of policies and programmes. The framework is fully elucidated in the next chapter.

focus on the outcomes of securitisation for theorizing securitisation, thereby questioning the balance between the various elements of the securitisation perspective and the normative debates thereof. By pursuing these interrelated objectives, the study seeks to empirically demonstrate the limitations of the speech act oriented and audience-centric theories of securitisation and to suggest an alternative way to approach the securitisation process.

1.3. Research Problem and Questions

1.3.1. Research Problem

The above theoretical rationale for studying the outcomes of securitisation makes it imperative to study “homegrown” securitisation in Africa whereby studying the Ethiopian case would be informative. However, as illuminating as the Ethiopian case might be, much knowledge is still desired in understanding the outcomes of securitisation of democracy and development by the EPRDF because this issue has not attracted sustained and vigorous scholarly attention. The few existing works and analyses of the EPRDF’s developmental and democratic commitment draw divergent conclusions and observations. While some studies indicate the EPRDF’s sincere commitment for development to the exclusion of other goals, others question this sincerity. Lavers, for instance, traces the emergence of the productive safety-net programme, one of the largest in Africa, to the securitisation of development,⁵³ and Assefa attributes the democratic shortfalls of Ethiopia to the EPRDF’s overriding focus on development.⁵⁴ Fana also argued that this regime used securitisation of development to “aggressively extract and mobilize resources”, and to augment “the power and stature of the ruling coalition.”⁵⁵ Similarly, other scholars attributed the high rate of economic growth to the EPRDF’s developmental commitment arguing that this exceptional growth rate would not have been registered without the regime’s prioritization of economic growth to the level required by a securitised discourse.⁵⁶ They, therefore, assert the sincerity of the EPRDF in prioritizing development according to its securitisation agenda.

⁵³. Tom Lavers, "Social Protection in an Aspiring 'Developmental State': The Political Drivers of Ethiopia's Psnp," *African Affairs* 118, no. 473 (2019).

⁵⁴. Assefa Fiseha, "Federalism, Development and the Changing Political Dynamics in Ethiopia," *International Journal of Constitutional Law* 17, no. 1 (2019).

⁵⁵. Fana Gebresenbet, "Securitisation of Development in Ethiopia: The Discourse and Politics of Developmentalism," *Review of African Political Economy* 41, no. sup1 (2015).p.65

⁵⁶. Christopher Clapham, "The Ethiopian Developmental State," *Third World Quarterly* 39, no. 6 (2017); Aaron Tesfaye, *The State and Economic Development in Africa: The Case of Ethiopia* (Switzerland: Springer International Publishing AG, 2017).p.48

However, other scholars reject the EPRDF's sincerity in securitising development and pointing out the rampant nature of corruption which amounts to state capture, the lack of commitment to a national cause, and the blatant disregard of meritocratic bureaucracy.⁵⁷ Hone noted that the EPRDF's poverty figure was so politicized that it ultimately says little about the actual rate of poverty reduction and, by extension, economic growth.⁵⁸ Concurring with these critiques, Fisher and Anderson,⁵⁹ argue that the EPRDF has used/abused the global discourse of securitisation of development to pursue other priorities related to authoritarianism at home and fighting terrorism abroad. Thus, irrespective of the developmental and governance outcomes achieved in Ethiopia, it is by no means clear what logics had informed the EPRDF's securitisation of democracy and development, the policies emerging therefrom and their implementation.

Moreover, the effect of securitisation of development seems to go well beyond the factors identified by the scholars referred to above: it appears to have shaped the party's sensemaking and sense-giving practices and its conception of its identity vis-a-vis its contenders. It proclaims to approach issue such as rent-seeking, chauvinism/narrow-ism and religious radicalism, as well as intra-party governance issues, in light of their effect on the securitised issues of development and democracy. Protests and violent uprisings tended to be reduced to issues of unemployment and manipulation by antipeace forces, thereby magnifying their economic dimensions and attenuating their political aspects. Similarly, the discourse seems to be used to project a certain view of the ruling coalition ("we are out there to usher in development and democracy") vis-à-vis its opponents. What other reasons can explain the regime's very use of the discourse of democracy to completely foreclose the political space, repress dissent and consolidate its control? Hence, there is much valuable insight to be gained in scrutinizing the dynamics of securitisation of development and democracy in Ethiopia under the EPRDF's rule.

⁵⁷. Messay Kebede, "Meles's Political Dilemma and the Developmental State: Dead End and Exit," (2011), <https://www.scribd.com/doc/58593218/Debate-on-Developmental-State-Ethiopian-Scholars>; Seid Y. Hassan, "Corruption, State Capture, and the Effectiveness of Anticorruption Agency in Post-Communist Ethiopia," *Economic and Political Studies* 6, no. 4 (2018); R. Lefort, "The Theory and Practice of Meles Zenawi: A Response to Alex De Waal," *African Affairs* 112, no. 448 (2013).p.463; Abebe Habtesilasie, *ኢትዮጵያዊነት፣ የኢኮኖሚ ልማት እና እንቅስቃሴዎች፣ አዲሱ የለውጥ ጉዞ ወዲትና እንዴት?* (*Ethiopianess: Economic development and its riddles: The new reform process where and how?*) (Addis Ababa: Far East Trading, 2010 EC).p.153

⁵⁸.Hone Mandefro, "Politics by Numbers: Poverty Reduction Discourse, Contestations and Regime Legitimacy in Ethiopia," *International Review of Sociology* 26, no. 3 (2016).p.402

⁵⁹. Jonathan Fisher and Anderson David M., "Authoritarianism and the Securitisation of Development in Africa," *International Affairs* 91, no. 1 (2015).

Regarding the democratization process of Ethiopia, although the EPRDF's discourse indicates that it had securitised democracy, there is no extensive scholarly discussion of the issue, probably due to the regime's authoritarian mode of governance. Many observers seem to agree that the democratization journey of this country was reversed for all intents and purposes after the 2005 election, either due to the EPRDF's developmental zeal or due to the bare logic of political survival. Indeed, the pursuit of democracy (as understood conventionally) in Ethiopia has been side-lined since the 2005 election whereby a free and fair pre-election campaign was overshadowed by post-election violence and repression. Some of the manifestations of this authoritarian backlash include the introduction of restrictive laws,⁶⁰ the entrenchment of structures of control,⁶¹ and the use of state resources and development aid for shoring up party support.⁶²

This authoritarian backlash notwithstanding, the EPRDF consistently asserted the existential nature of the pursuit of democracy in a country as diverse as Ethiopia.⁶³ Many of the policy documents, party pamphlets and rhetoric of senior-level politicians are replete with such an assertion.⁶⁴ Moreover, what critics considered an authoritarian practice was not viewed as such by the EPRDF. Justifying the pace of democratization during his reign, Meles, for instance, argued that for democracy to thrive the people needed to be ready to "sacrifice" for it.⁶⁵ This requirement, as he viewed it, was lacking because the opposition parties were "undemocratic" and "forces of destruction",⁶⁶ and the various civil society groups were no more than an appendage of the opposition and primarily accountable to their foreign funders. Thus,

⁶⁰. FDRE, "Charities and Societies Proclamation No 621/2009," (Addis Ababa: Federal Negarit Gazeta, 2009); FDRE, "Antiterrorism Proclamation No 652/2009," (Addis Ababa: Federal Negarit Gazeta, 2009); FDRE, "Freedom of the Mass Media and Access to Information Proclamation No 590/2008," (Addis Ababa: Federal Negarit Gazeta, 2008).

⁶¹. Lovise Aalen and Kjetil Tronvoll, "The End of Democracy? Curtailing Political and Civil Rights in Ethiopia," *Review of African Political Economy* 36, no. 120 (2009).

⁶². Human Rights Watch, "Development without Freedom: How Aid Underwrite Repressions in Ethiopia," (New York: Human Rights Watch, 2010).

⁶³. WikiLeaks, "Ethiopia: Meles Discusses Inquiry Commission Report, Cud Trial, " 2006 October 27, https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06ADDISABABA2877_a.html.

⁶⁴. Wikileaks, "Acting a/S Carter Raises the Issue of Political Space, " 2 February 2009, https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09ADDISABABA258_a.html ; Wikileaks, "Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles on 2010 National Elections, Draft Ngo Law, and Ogaden Humanitarian Crisis," 12 May 2008, https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08ADDISABABA1259_a.html.

⁶⁵. Wikileaks, "Meles on New Cso/Ngo Law: Brace for Change, " 11 June 2008, https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08ADDISABABA1593_a.html.

⁶⁶. See for example the party pamphlet EPRDF, *ዲሞክራሲ እና ዲሞክራሲያዊ አንድነት በኢትዮጵያ (Democracy and democratic unity)*; WikiLeaks, "Ethiopia: Divided Cud Struggles to Recover from Crackdown, " 28 November 2005, https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/05ADDISABABA3954_a.html.

authoritarian practices were deemed, from the perspective of the EPRDF's ideology (also see 6.3. below),⁶⁷ as measures aimed at promoting long-term democratization.

Given the above debates, one wonders what compelling reasons for action underpin the EPRDF's security framing of issues of democracy and development, the introduction of policies and strategies to deal with them, and the implementation processes of these policies. One could indeed ask why the EPRDF frames democracy as an existential concern if it was not ready to deliver upon its mandate. According to the EPRDF, the main development and indeed survival problem of the country was the existence of economic and political conditions that are more favourable for rent-seeking (the drive to accumulate wealth without creating value) than value creation. Rent-seeking, the EPRDF claimed, thrives in undemocratic conditions and, hence, instituting democracy and ensuring good governance were part of the policy package needed to herald the structural transformation of the Ethiopian economy, an idea that ultimately connect the securitisation of development with the securitisation of democracy. In the face of this situation, the EPRDF's securitisation of democracy may not simply be an effort to legitimise an otherwise illegitimate regime as many of its critics would assume.

Hence, analysing the logics of action informing the government's developmental and governance measures will not only clarify some of the issues noted above but also provide important theoretical insights into the conceptualization of securitisation. It will help re-engage the conceptualization of securitisation by putting the theory's centre of gravity somewhere other than on the speech acts and audience. It also highlights the need to integrate the "siloes" approach to securitisation whereby the reason an issue is securitised is theorised separately from what effect follows from that securitisation. Finally, it gives insight into the normative debate on securitisation.

In terms of practice, the study possibly will help advance the policy debates on a range of related issues. It would help answer whether and how the powerful connotation associated with the word "security" could be used to herald positive/emancipatory social outcomes. The two

⁶⁷. Drawing from its Marxist root the regime pursues an ideology called Revolutionary Democracy. The ideology is based on a distinction between the mass and the elite where the party is the vanguard of socio-economic transformation. A key element of this ideology has been the principle of democratic centralism where ostensible democratic decisions of the top leadership were implemented by lower-level members across the country with strict discipline and without any deviations. See chapter six and also Sarah Vaughan and Ketjil Tronvoll, "The Culture of Power in Contemporary Ethiopian Political Life.Sida Studies No.10," in *Suda Studies*, ed. Anne Sisask (Sweden: SIDA, 2003); Jon Abbink, "The Ethiopian Second Republic and the Fragile "Social Contract"," *Africa Spectrum* 44, no. 2 (2009).

major challenges of many African societies are economic development and democratic governance. Hence, to consider the realization of development and democracy as an existential concern cannot be anything but pinpointing a threat to the survival of the state and society at large. If securitisation can indeed be a force for good at least when the threat identified is essential for strengthening the state and enhancing human welfare, this study would help inform practice.

1.3.2. Research Questions

To what extent did concern for democracy and development influence the conduct of the Ethiopian People`s Revolutionary Democratic Front?

Sub-Questions

- A. What logics of action informed the EPRDF`s effort at fighting rent-seeking behaviour in and outside the party?
- B. What logics of action informed the principle and practices of intra-party governance and mobilization?
- C. What logics of action informed the EPRDF`s definition of threats and identification of “enemies”?
- D. What explains and justifies the EPRDF`s deviation from democratic and developmental logics of action?

1.4. Research Methodology and Method

1.4.1. Methodology

The study analyses the securitisation of democracy and development in Ethiopia by deploying a case study approach. A case study is well-suited for studies that aim at explicating causal mechanisms, developing new explanations, generating hypotheses, and holistically situating concepts.⁶⁸ As a study that seeks to question existing accounts of securitisation and develop an alternative conceptual framework to analyse outcomes of securitisation, a case study approach is best suited to answer the research questions noted above. Moreover, this study analyses

⁶⁸. Alexander George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Study and Theory Development in the Social Science*. (Massachusetts: MIT press 2004).pp.25-29

situations of discourse-practices disjuncture, issues that are best approached through a focus on context-sensitive methods. Without overlooking the constructed nature of what a study is “a case of”, this study is undertaken as a case of securitisation of emancipatory issues in developing countries. Hence, the Ethiopian case is not taken as a unique instance of securitisation, but one amongst other attempts at securitising issues that have positive ramifications for society in countries with weak institutions.

An analytical approach that examines narratives and traces the evolution of discourse and practices was deployed to assess the outcomes of securitisation of development and democracy by the EPRDF in Ethiopia. To this effect, the study traces the range of security and non-security discourse articulations and activities undertaken before and following the securitisation of development and democracy and the concerns animating these actions. It implicitly takes as its point of comparison what happened before the securitisation of development and democracy was introduced by the EPRDF in 2001 while also scrutinizing continuities and changes in the post-2001 period focusing on critical incidents—such as the 2005 election, the death of Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, and the 2014-2018 Oromo and Amhara protest. In terms of the time frame, the study analyses the case between 1991 (when the new regime came to power) and 2018 (when the current reform process was initiated). The institutional focus of the study was largely the operation of the party-state both at the EPRDF/federal level and the level of each member party of the EPRDF.

1.4.2. Methods of the Study

The study largely relies on documents, archives, interviews, books written by (mostly former) government and party officials, and personal observations. Documents and archives include policy documents, party pamphlets, party and government training manuals, minutes of party meetings, newspapers and other publications produced for the special events of the party-state. These documents cumulatively provide information on the rationalities of the regime. Government officials’ narration of their experiences proved to be a crucial source of data to trace the logics and rationalities of the inner circle of the key leaders that for long had been closed to public preview. In this regard, books written by Abiy Ahmed, Abadula Gameda, Erimias Legesse, Bereket Simon and Birhane Tsigab are some of the sources used for the study.

Moreover, the media, mainly newspapers and magazines of both the EPRDF and other member parties, were found important to analyse the logics of actions of the EPRDF and the government

it was running. For this purpose of research, the Amhara National Democratic Movement (ANDM) and the Southern People`s Democratic Movement (SPDM) offered access to their library and documentation centres from which very useful information was retrieved. Government policy documents, yearly audit reports and anticorruption studies were also useful to enrich the empirical depth of the study. The Ethiopian House of Federation provided access to its library thus enabling the review of the Minutes of its parliamentary committees` discussions of some of the contested laws. Media interviews provided by former and current government officials were also extensively reviewed to compensate for the lack of direct access to some of these high-level officials.

Finally, interviews with former and current senior and middle party leaders and key informants working in various sectors of the government were also used to assess the effects of securitisation of development and democracy in multiple spheres of life. Heads of anti-corruption offices, civil service reforms and agricultural extension services were some of the agents of the government interviewed for the study. A total of 19 government and party informants were interviewed. These informants were chosen based upon their previous leadership position and, therefore, their access to the inner debates of the EPRDF and its member parties. Their number was determined by the data saturation principle whereby I terminated my interviews when the information gathered from informants became repetitive. The results from these informants were juxtaposed with the documentary sources to triangulate statements, allegations and assumptions. This juxtaposition is important because informants` views, largely due to the post-2018 political liberalization, may have been different from what they would have provided if interviewed before the reform.

1.5. Securitisation Studies and Leadership Studies: A Justification for Choice of Concepts

The core concept of this study is securitisation. However, in PhD dissertation in Leadership and Security Studies one may wish to see a thorough integration of concepts drawn from leadership studies with those taken from security studies. A leadership scholar might even further argue that the leadership discipline has far more enriching concepts and theories than securitisation, to the topic at hand and, hence, may object to my choice of core concepts.

I offer four explanations for such potential objections. First, the study indeed incorporated relevant conceptual orientations emerging from the literature on political leadership while also

retaining the core concepts of securitisation. It draws significantly from Tucker's notion of "politics as leadership" whereby political leadership is viewed as a directive activity of political leaders in which the leader-follower relationship is an off-shoot of this directive role.⁶⁹ According to Tucker, "... [t]he process of political leadership is activated, normally, when circumstances take on meaning for a political community, or some important element of it, in such a way that the existence of a political problem situation is recognised."⁷⁰ Once activated, Tucker maintains that the process entails defining problem-issues, devising policy responses, and mobilizing the populace for its implementation. Hence, analysis of political leadership is tantamount to analyzing how leaders perform these functions, and the effects of these functions for themselves and the political community they lead. Tucker went further and argued that problem definitions are essentially mediated by the purposes and concerns of political leaders.⁷¹ The framework developed in the next chapter draws from this understanding of leadership because it analyzes the concerns and goals of the EPRDF's regime discernable from the definition of issue areas and their implementation. This process, in turn, was used to ascertain whether and to what extent the purposes and concerns of the EPRDF advance the existential quest to institutionalize democracy and realise development. Hence, criticism of the failure to incorporate conceptual frameworks of the leadership literature would be unjustified.

The potential criticisms noted above are indeed understandable in the face of the multiplicity and divergent meanings of leadership, thus, a short digression in this discussion is in order. The idea of leadership is an essentially contested concept with "as many different definitions of leadership as there are people who have tried to define it."⁷² Observing this fact, Grint, Jones and Holt wondered whether the concept is an "empty signifier" that has little or no meaning as a concept but serves other useful functions.⁷³ Hart and Rhodes also maintain that the field is replete with a diverse set of "concepts, frameworks, propositions, stories, assessments, prescriptions, and clichés...across many academic disciplines and professional domains."⁷⁴

⁶⁹. Robert C. Tucker, *Politics as Leadership* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1995).

⁷⁰. Ibid.p.31

⁷¹. Ibid.

⁷². Peter. G. Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 7th ed. (Sage: London, 2016).

⁷³. Keith Grint, Owain Smolovic' Jones, and Clare Holt, "What Is Leadership: Person, Result, Position, Purpose or Process, or All or None of These?," in *Routledge Companion to Leadership*, ed. John Storey, et al. (New York: Routledge, 2017), 3-20.

⁷⁴. R. A. W. Rhodes and Paul 't Hart, "Puzzles of Political Leadership," in *The Oxford Handbook of Political Leadership*, ed. R. A. W. Rhodes and Paul 't Har (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).p.2

These different and often diverging definitions and approaches can be categorized as leadership as person, position, process, purpose or result.⁷⁵

Drawing largely on leadership studies in business organisations, Northouse argues that, if there is some measure of consensus among leadership scholars, it is on the idea that leadership is a process, entails influence, occurs in a group and assumes common goals.⁷⁶ While some of these points of consensus are trivial (that it occurs in a group, for instance) others are contested. For instance, the assumption of a common goal is legitimately contradicted by Hartley, who takes leadership theorists to task for having a unitary perspective of leadership whereby divergence of interest, goals, values and purposes were not presupposed.⁷⁷ According to Hartley, these issues are not to be assumed but developed in the course of exercising leadership. This process applies especially to political leadership positions in which conflict of interests, values and goals are a perennial feature. Similarly, Elgie argues that, although leadership outcomes are acknowledged to be determined by the interaction of leaders and context, after decades of research it still is not possible to authoritatively establish how leaders and context interact and the proportion of influence of each element.⁷⁸ Hence, even if my study draws from a certain strand of the leadership literature, it will still be criticized by authors who subscribe to a different notion of leadership. As noted above, the work I draw from begins with the assumption that leader-follower relations, at least in some cases, should start from the situation society confronts, whereas other literature makes the leader-follower relationship the point of departure for their analysis.

Moreover, even when it appears to have useful concepts, the leadership literature was developed in relation to face-to-face interaction in organisational settings. This literature, for example, seems to offer a deeper understanding of how leaders and followers interact and the factors that mediate these interactions. There has also been a growing appreciation by this literature that “followers” are diverse in their identity, behaviour, and modes and reasons of attachment.⁷⁹ This fact notwithstanding, much of the discussion on leader-followers’ relations

⁷⁵. Grint, Jones, and Holt, "What Is Leadership?."

⁷⁶. Northouse, *Leadership*.

⁷⁷. Jean Hartley, "Politics and Political Astuteness in Leadership," in *Routledge Companion to Leadership*, ed. John Storey, et al. (London: Routledge, 2017), 197-208.

⁷⁸. Robert Elgie, *Studying Political Leadership: Foundations and Contending Accounts* (UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

⁷⁹. Michael Foley, *Political Leadership: Themes, Contexts, and Critiques* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

has been admittedly restricted to face-to-face relations in an organisational context.⁸⁰ However, many of the leadership activities are not face-to-face, especially in the arena of political leadership.⁸¹ Hence, the use of results emerging from such a face-to-face encounter to study leadership outside organisational settings is at very least “one-dimensional” or even worse “superficial”.⁸² This fact is more so for political leadership in which there are various layers of medium and structure between the leaders and the various strata of the population.⁸³ In such contexts, the activities leaders undertake may not necessarily entail face-to-face interactions. Consequently, Foyel opines that the notion of “follower” might be as much distortive as it is revealing.⁸⁴ Even in face-to-face encounters, the leader-follower relationship is often viewed in terms of stimulus-response whereby leaders initiate and followers respond. This definition admittedly glosses over the nuance involved in the interaction between the two actors⁸⁵ constricting the advancement of knowledge in relation to leaders and those who are led.⁸⁶

Due to these limitations of the leadership literature, I opted to use concepts of securitisation studies to capture the leader-follower problematique. The idea of the speech act and the relationship between the securitising actor and the audience, for instance, provides a useful and nuanced understanding of the interaction between leader and followers. According to the securitisation approach, the leader, or the securitising actor, is not simply communicating ideas but also undertaking linguistic actions, the success of which depends upon the audience’s understanding/uptake of what the leader is trying to achieve by making security speeches. In doing so, this approach separates the audience’ understanding from actually agreeing with the leader’s linguistic actions. It also brings to the fore that shared understanding develops in the processes of acting through language and symbols. Indeed, the notion of “audience” itself is as much a criticized concept as is the idea of “follower”. Who the audience is, what it accepts, and what acceptance entails has been debated in the literature on securitisation. Notwithstanding these debates, securitisation literature would furnish a favourable ground to take leadership literature outside both its organisational context and face-to-face interactions.

⁸⁰. Robert Hooijberg et al., "Being There Even When You Are Not: The Leadership of Organisations," in *Being There Even When You Are Not: The Leadership of Organisations*, ed. Robert Hooijberg James G. (Jerry Hunt, John Antonakis, and Kimberly B. Boal (Oxford: Elsevier Ltd, 2007).

⁸¹. Robert Hooijberg et al., “Being There”; Foley, *Political Leadership*.

⁸². Foley, *Political Leadership*.

⁸³. Ibid.

⁸⁴. Ibid.

⁸⁵. Mats Alvesson, "Studying Leadership: Taking Meaning, Relationality and Ideology Seriously," in *Routledge Companion to Leadership*, ed. John Storey, et al. (London: Routledge, 2017), 67-88.

⁸⁶. Peter Gronn, "Instead of Angels Leaders, Leadership and Longue Durée," in *Routledge Companion to Leadership*, ed. John Storey, et al. (London: Routledge), 89-103.

Hence, this study retains the derivative concepts of securitisation, securitising actor, audience, and speech acts.

The geographical segmentation of the literature on political leadership is the third reason for retaining the core concept of securitisation. What leaders can accomplish and what they wanted to accomplish is approached differently across geographic settings: in the US leaders are perceived to be very active and want to instigate benefits for their society; in Europe, leaders are perceived to benefit their society but are presumed not to have the capacity to do so due to institutional constraints; and in Africa, leaders are assumed to be capable of doing good but are perceived to lack the will to do so.⁸⁷ Since the choice of research concerns is mediated by these different perceptions and, since many of the leadership studies are developed in the West, it would be essential to be cautious in importing many of these concepts. Hence, the study opted to adjust the concepts of securitisation to the specific geographical context of the study, while also capitalizing on elements of the leadership literature deemed relevant.

Finally, the study assesses outcomes of securitisation in relation to fighting rent-seeking, party recruitment, promotion and mobilization, and the definition of “threats” and identification of “enemies”. These are themes that naturally led to the incorporation of various aspects of the leadership literature in the subsequent chapters. The discussion on rent-seeking in chapter four covers the EPRDF’s relationship with Ethiopia’s business sector and the larger peasantry. Similarly, the discussion on intra-party governance and mobilization engages with the party’s leadership development programme. Moreover, in the empirical chapters the study questions the factors that explain the leadership’s conduct, and whether its conduct was justifiable, an approach which, therefore, incorporates elements of the leadership literature dealing with the behaviours of leaders. Though one may question whether a leader’s actions would amount to engagement with the leadership literature, I, along with Elgie, would maintain that such a critique is based on a narrow understanding of leadership.⁸⁸

1.6. Structure of the Thesis

The thesis is structured into nine chapters including this introductory chapter. The next chapter on “Literature Review and Conceptual Framework”, revisits, critiques and extends the literature discussed in this introductory chapter. Accordingly, it redefines the concept of

⁸⁷ Jean Blondel, "What Have We Learned?", in *The Oxford Handbook of Political Leadership*, ed. R. A. W. Rhodes and Paul 'T Har (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 706-718.

⁸⁸ Elgie, *Studying Political Leadership*.

securitisation to suit the contextual nuances of the case and develops a framework useful to assess outcomes of securitisation of democracy and development in Ethiopia.

The third chapter on the “Securitisation of Democracy and Development: Origin and Logics” traces the origin and evolution of the securitisation discourse in Ethiopia, and analyses the logics of actions that informed a securitised way of defining the country's democratic deficits and developmental problems. This chapter argues that the EPRDF securitised democracy and development as per the definition offered in chapter two below and states that this securitisation was informed by competing logics. This chapter also paves the way for the analysis of the outcomes of this securitisation in sectors and areas within which it was presumed to have a significant effect.

The fourth and fifth chapters focus on the EPRDF’s logics in the fight against rent-seeking. These two chapters were separated only to make them manageable for readers. Chapter four focuses on “EPRDF Logics of Actions in Defining Rent-Seeking as Threat to Democracy and Development”. It analyses the concern underpinning the EPRDF’s consideration of rent-seeking as the main threat to democratizing and developing Ethiopia and the suggested solution to reduce rent seeking. Chapter five, on “EPRDF’s Logics of Policy Implementation in the Fight against Rent-Seeking” continues the discussion begun in chapter four by scrutinizing the logics within which measures to fight rent-seeking were taken/not taken and the implication of this action to the securitisation perspective. These two chapters discuss how concerns that are related to delegitimising the opposition and entrenching the political dominance and economic predation of elites associated with the TPLF and their affiliates, dominate over the logics of securitisation.

Chapters six and seven (again divided into two chapters to make their content more manageable) focus on EPRDF’s logics of intra-party governance and mobilization. Chapter six titled “The EPRDF and Intra-Party Governance and Mobilizational Issues Definitions” analyses the main issues of intra-party governance and mobilization of the EPRDF and the logics that underpinned these issue definitions. Unlike the other chapters, this chapter argues that the dominant logics, along with the logic of the securitisation of democracy and development, was establishing and maintaining the democratic and developmental character of the EPRDF. Chapter seven— “The Logics of Practice of Intra-Party Governance and Mobilization”—continues from where chapter six ended. It examines the logics of practice in

relation to intra-party governance and mobilization and draws some implications from this situation for the securitisation perspective.

Chapter eight on “EPRDF Logics of Threat Definition and Enemy Identification” examines the logics underpinning how this regime defined threats and identified enemies. This chapter aims to question the extent to which threats and enemies were identified, based upon their implication for democratizing and developing Ethiopia as per the securitisation logic. Chapter nine, on “Conversations of Theories of Securitisation and Securitising Practice: By way of Conclusion” summarizes the findings of the study and the contribution of these findings to the various aspects of the securitisation perspective.

Chapter Two: Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

2.1. Introduction

This chapter develops a framework for assessing the outcomes of securitisation of democracy and development in Ethiopia under the EPRDF following three-step processes. First, it revisits the concept of securitisation and reviews the theoretical and empirical works on outcomes of securitisation with a focus on identifying the pitfalls and strengths of these theoretical and empirical works. Second, it redefines securitisation to suit the Ethiopian political order under EPRDF and reviews the literature on logics of action to develop a framework that connects the origin of securitisation with its outcome, by recentring the concerns and reasons for the actions of the party-state. Accordingly, the literature on logics of action is reviewed highlighting the points that need to be retained, and the gaps that need to be supplemented. Finally, drawing from the literature on logics of action and integrating it with extant knowledge in policy formulation and political judgement, this chapter develops a framework for assessing outcomes of securitisation of development and democracy in Ethiopia. The framework developed not only assesses outcomes of securitisation of democracy and development but also answers the question of why these issues were securitised originally. It, therefore, connects the “why” of securitisation with the outcomes emerging thereof by recentring the concerns of the securitising actor—currently a major gap in the literature on securitisation.

This chapter is divided into four sections including this introduction. The next section examines the debate over the conceptualization of securitisation, and reviews the literature on outcomes of securitisation. This section argues that existing approaches to securitisation need to be adapted to suit the Ethiopian political order and calls for a new framework to analyse the outcomes of securitisation of democracy and development in Ethiopia. The third section aims to redefine securitisation and develops a framework that draws from the literature on logics of action to analyse the outcomes of securitisation of democracy and development in EPRDF in Ethiopia. This section then redefines securitisation and develops a framework anchored on the concept of logics of action. Finally, the chapter ends with some concluding observations.

2.2. Meaning of securitisation

The first scholar to introduce the idea of securitisation is Wæver, who later elaborated upon this concept with Barry Buzan and Jaap De Wilde.¹ According to Buzan, Wilde and Waever, securitisation is the intersubjective process through which a mundane social problem is transformed into a security problem and, thus, justifies an extraordinary way of governing the issue.² The process entails a securitising move (the speech act of presenting an issue as a security issue) made by a securitising actor in relation to the existence of a referent object (a threatened entity) endangered by the actor/issue so defined. The process is set off when a securitising actor *does* security (it assumes language is a form of action and hence to speak/write is to act) in expressing the existential danger posed to an actor.³ In doing so, the actor calls forth extraordinary measures that would avert the threat sooner than later for “we will not be here or will not be free to deal with it in our own way” if the problem is left unaddressed.⁴

Owing to this aura of existential danger, urgency, and point of no return, to label an issue a security issue is a performative act, meaning that in speaking security something is done.⁵ The very act of speaking security “enacts a sharp distinction between the exceptional and the banal, the political and the everyday, the routine and the creative.”⁶ Thus, the essence of security is not in its reference to something more real “out there”, it is in the word itself (the very uttering of the word “security” or other related expressions pointing at danger is to create a security situation).⁷ Security, thus, is self-referential (it creates what it refers to); “speaking” security is “doing” security.⁸

¹. Buzan, Waeve, and Wilde, *Security*.

². Ibid.

³. Waever, "Politics Security and Theory."

⁴. Ibid, p.24

⁵. Waever, “Politics Security and Theory,” p.25-27; Waever Ole, "Security, the Speech Act: Analysing the Politics of the World," in *Research Training Seminar* (Sostrup Manor1989), pp.42-45; Waever, "Securitisation and Desecuritisation."

⁶. Huysmans, "What's in an Act?"

⁷. This is to say that, like betting or naming a ship, security language creates what it represents.

⁸. Carsten Bagge Laustsen and Ole Wæver, "In Defence of Religion: Sacred Referent Objects for Securitisation," *Millennium* 29, no. 3 (2000).p.708. How to understand this self-referentiality of security is open to debate where a charitable interpretation has it that security is self-referential because there is no extra discursive criterion to identify what is security and what it is not. Others however understand this to mean that security speech acts (the action done in speaking security (making securitising moves)) shape its context and hence what matters is the felicitous performance of a security speech act.

However, this performative power of a security speech act is realised only if a sufficient audience (an underdefined concept) accepts the securitising move. Three conditions are presumed to facilitate audience acceptance and thus the realization of securitisation: 1) the “grammar of security” or the securitisation logic, meaning that the presentation of an actor/issue as an existential threat to a referent object that has to be addressed in an extraordinary way, without which it leads to point of no return, 2) the “social position of the securitising actor”—the power relations between the securitising actor and its audience and 3) “features of alleged threat”, which is a reference to the more or less threatening nature of the issues presented as a threat.⁹

The outcome of securitisation, Buzan, Wilde and Waever noted, is the legitimization of emergency measures whereby the issue is handled outside the normal political processes. Since normal politics is generally preferred over emergency politics, they argue that securitisation is not normatively desirable. Buzan, Wilde and Waever’s understanding of securitisation has been subject to a number of criticisms and extensions. Each element of the approach (the idea of the speech act and its (security) grammar; the ordinary/extraordinary distinction; the nature and need for emergency measures; the relevance of contextual factors) has been questioned and extended by subsequent writers to which the next four sub-section now turn with the aim of identifying those elements of the concept relevant for the case under study.

2.2.1. The performativity of Security

As noted above, Buzan, Wilde and Waever argue that speaking security creates a situation of insecurity provided that the audience accepts the securitising move. Thus, the issue/actor about which security utterances are made would no longer be viewed as a normal social problem but as a security problem or as a danger that has to be addressed as a matter of urgency and in an extraordinary way. Explicating how Buzan, Wilde and Waever reaches this conclusion and the objections against it, requires digressing to Austin’s (incomplete) theory of the speech act and its subsequent extension.

According to Austin, speaking a language, which can easily be extended to writing as well, is not just expressing one’s opinion on an issue; it is also a form of action in and of itself.¹⁰ Austin identified three parts of any meaningful utterance. First, it entails the uttering of a certain noise

⁹. Buzan, Waever, and Wilde, *Security*, p.33.

¹⁰. J.L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words, the Williams James Lecture Delivered at Harvard University in 1955* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962).

that nevertheless have a grammatical meaning which he called the locutionary. Second, a meaningful utterance has an illocution which refers to those acts the speaker does in saying something. The speaker might for instance report, assert, promise, declare, order, beg and so forth. The fact that the same propositional form can be issued to express promise, command, question etc. makes the illocutionary act a very important part of speech. A related notion is illocutionary force, which refers to how the utterance “is to be taken”. The third element is the perlocution which refers to the non-conventional or natural effect of speech, the effect that follows from the change in behaviour of the hearer due to utterance. It is the state of affairs the speaker brings about by saying something. Successful speech acts would have a conventional effect in its illocutionary form, while at the same time it might have perlocutionary effects when the hearer’s, or even the speaker’s, reactions are influenced by the speech.

According to Austin, like every form of action, the action to be undertaken in making an utterance, of course, may fail to achieve the intended act. Hence, the successful performance of an act in making utterances depends upon the fulfilment of certain conditions, including but not limited to, the existence of an accepted convention in which the utterance of certain words by an appropriate person in a certain context counts as undertaking a certain form of action. Hence, a speech act is an act undertaken according to convention and with a conventional effect, an effect that would be realised when audience uptake (the understanding of the force and meaning of an utterance) is secured. Austin made clear that the idea of effect in the illocutionary/conventional sense should be taken differently from the idea of effect achieved in natural ways. For example, christening a ship, undertaken according to a convention, can have the effect of the ship having a name and other names being ruled out. The illocutionary act of appointing, implemented as per convention, can have the effect of the appointee having a position. Likewise, the utterance “I do” in an appropriate setting by an appropriate actor enacted according to convention, brings about marriage. The natural way of achieving effects, on the other hand, is such that it brings about a change of thought, feeling or emotion on the part of either the listener or the speaker. A conventional effect is realised *in* making utterances whereas a natural effect is achieved *by* making utterances. Austin used this sense when identifying illocutionary acts as linguistic acts of a different kind and effect.

As to how this effect is secured, and the role of the audience thereof, Austin is not clear, though generally it can be inferred from subsequent debates that speech acts are a product of a combination of speaker’s intention and the social conventions (including linguistic

conventions) available to express that intention. The idea of “convention” is taken to mean social agreement, which, as Sbisà added, also implies reversibility (something that can be undone).¹¹ Thus, to make a promise, a declaration or an assertion there must be a linguistic convention in which certain expressions uttered in an appropriate context by the appropriate person is taken to be promising, declaring or asserting and so forth. However, the idea of “convention”, though not always necessary, goes beyond the availability of linguistic devices, it also includes extralinguistic conventions or agreements so that certain expression said in a certain context by the appropriate person is conventionally taken to have performed a specific act. In a marriage ceremony the expression “I do”, given that they are individuals of the appropriate age, could be taken to express the bringing about of marriage. The same expression in other contexts (let say in a stage production) would not normally be interpreted as signalling marriage. Thus, the expression of intention to marry in an appropriate context heralds the institution of marriage which the idea of conventional effect refers to in Wæver’s expression. Such a convention can be identified about a range of other convention-based speech acts with conventional effects such as christening, baptizing, jury declaration in a courtroom and so on. Translated to the securitisation discourse, the securitising actor, for instance, warns the audience about a threatening state of affairs only in so far as there is a convention in which the utterance of certain words/statements by a person, perceived to be legitimate and in an appropriate situation, counts as a warning. The audience thus needs to recognise what the speaker’s utterance is a warning, not an assertion or something else.

Drawing from the above theory, Wæver rightly argues that recognizing the illocutionary force of an utterance as a warning has the potential of transforming rights, obligations, licences, entitlements.¹² A successful speech act of warning, for instance, would free the actor from any moral responsibility for the outcomes that might follow from a failure to heed the warning. However, without taking all the conditions mentioned by Austin for the successful/felicitous performance of an act, Wæver insisted that an illocutionary act will be performed in so far as the audience accepts the speech acts. Thus, Austin’s idea of audience uptake, which essentially means recognizing/understanding what the securitising actor has intended in making an utterance, is changed into audience acceptance, which, as Balzacq rightly noted, is a perlocutionary effect.¹³ Two questions are involved in the manner Wæver adopted Austin’s

¹¹. Marina Sbisà, "How to Read Austin," *Pragmatics* 17, no. 3 (2007); Danilo Marcondes de Souza Filho, *Language and Action: A Reassessment of Speech Act Theory* (Amsterdam: John Benjamin Publishing, 1984).

¹². Wæver, "Politics Security and Theory."

¹³. Balzacq, "Three Faces of Securitisation."

idea to his securitisation work: whether all speech acts, including security speech acts, are conventional acts with conventional effect; and whether the audience needs to accept the speech act or just recognises what is being intended in making an utterance. Strawson and Filho's reformulation of Austin, clarified these points and thus help evaluate Wæver's idea.

According to Strawson and Filho, there are conventionally constituted speech acts with conventional effect (such as marriage and jury decisions) and those in which a convention cannot be pointed out beyond the linguistic agreement and speaker and hearer's mutual knowledge.¹⁴ In the case of the former, audience acceptance (understood as recognizing the force of an utterance) as such is not needed as the convention itself constitutes the effect.¹⁵ For example, in so far as there is the institution of marriage with a certain procedure for a marriage to come into effect, it does not require audience acceptance for a marriage to come into existence. The very institution constitutes the marriage. Hence, audience recognition/acceptance of the force of an utterance is needed only in those speech acts that are not conventionally constituted and without which they will have no conventional effect. The question, therefore, is whether security speech acts are of the first type, thus, with no need for audience acceptance or the second type? Wæver, along with Huysman,¹⁶ seems to argue that security speech acts are conventional acts with conventional effect while at the same time arguing that this effect takes place only when the audience accepts the speech acts. However, if the above extension of Austin is correct, logical consistency requires that either the requirement of audience acceptance or the brand of speech act Wæver draws from, has to be abandoned.

Revisionist scholars such as Vuori rightly abandoned the notion of conventionally constituted speech acts rather retaining the audience, sensibly so, because there is no conventionally constituted securitisation with a certain conventional effect.¹⁷ That is to say, there is no convention in which, when somebody even with the right authority using the right language declares "this is a security situation", it automatically becomes a situation of danger as Wæver argues. Relying on Searl's notion of speech acts,¹⁸ Vuori rather identifies five different strands

¹⁴. P. F. Strawson, "Intention and Convention in Speech Acts," *The Philosophical Review* 73, no. 4 (1964); Filho, *Language and Action*.

¹⁵. Strawson, "Intention and Convention."

¹⁶. Huysmans, "What's in an Act?"

¹⁷. Peter Mew, "Conventions on Thin Ice," *The Philosophical Quarterly* (1950-) 21, no. 85 (1971).

¹⁸. John R. Searle, *Making the Social World: The Structures of Human Civilizations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010). Searl reinterpreted Austin in such a way that the illocutionary act is nothing but what

of securitisation, based upon the illocutionary act performed and the perlocutionary effect sought. These are securitisation aimed at raising an issue to the political agenda; legitimising future acts; deterrence; legitimising past actions; and facilitating control.¹⁹ According to Vuori, a securitising move can be a sequence of different speech acts (the different aims of securitisation are realised through different sequences of lower-level/elementary speech acts). Though each strand has the same elementary speech act structure of *claiming* that something is a threat and *warning* that the threat is not in the interest of the audience, they differ in what the speaker performs in relation to the audience. Vuori maintains that to raise an issue into the political agenda, the speaker would *recommend* or *suggest* that the audience do something, to legitimise future action the speaker *requests* the audience to accept its future action, to deter the speaker has to *declare* to the threat that it is so defined, to legitimise past actions the speaker has to *explain* that the issue was of a security issue and to control the speaker has to *require* that the audience perform or cease to perform something.²⁰

Hence, Buzan, Wilde and Waever's logic of security is just one strand that is aimed at legitimising future acts workable in a democratic setting, and that security speeches perform more actions than envisioned by Buzan, Wilde and Waever. Vuori further argues that the felicitous performance of the speech acts does not necessarily generate real political effect (effect on what action is taken in relation to the issue or to handle it) while Buzan, Wilde and Waever seem to argue otherwise.²¹ In arguing this way, Vuori maintains that action performed in making an utterance is separate from extra-linguistic activities and that the first is not sufficient for the latter, a point this study maintains. Indeed, as the case study in the subsequent chapters demonstrates, acceptance of the existential nature of the quest for democracy and development did not by and large generate a democratic and developmental EPRDF that primarily pursue these two goals. Nearly all political actors accept that democracy and development have been existential issues for the country (Ethiopia) and yet the democratic and developmental measures of the country had not been on par with the securitisation discourse.

The fact that speaker successfully suggested that the audience should take action does not necessarily guarantee the performance of the suggested action and the fact that the speaker successfully requested the audience to accept a future action does not necessarily mean the

the speaker meant in making his utterance which could be different from the propositional meaning of the statement uttered.

¹⁹. Vuori, "Illocutionary Logic."

²⁰. Ibid.

²¹. Ibid.

audience indeed perform this action and so forth. These latter outcomes are dependent upon other extra-discursive factors noted below by other writers. Vuori also provides a nuanced analysis of audience that is restricted to the hearer to whom the speech act is made. Since what illocutionary action a security utterance *does* is in part determined by to whom it *does* what it *does*, it is important to even further widen the idea of “audience” beyond who the speaker aimed to speak. This extension is necessary because the same utterance might have been taken to have achieved different acts for different people/audience. As Widdowson noted, any text could be approached with a different purpose which, in the end, determines the illocutionary action a text is assumed to have performed.²² Hence, the audience need not be reduced to those for whom the securitising actor made the security speech acts; it should also include other actors that might have a stake in and give attention to securitising speech acts. The purpose of these actors in approaching the securitising act, in part, mediates what the securitising actor accomplished by way of speech acts.

Scholars such as Balzacq, on the other hand, recast the analysis to what Austin called the total speech situation (including all locution, illocution and perlocution) arguing that Wæver’s restriction of securitisation to the illocutionary act excludes other effects that follow from the deployment of security languages. Balzacq, therefore, considered the distinction between locution, illocution and perlocution irrelevant for understanding securitisation.²³ In arguing so Balzacq overlooked situations in which the audience accept the perlocution and yet disagree on the illocutionary act performed (see 3.4.). His preference for the total speech situation does not result in the consideration of both illocution and perlocution because it is a shift to perlocution, which is problematic. At any rate, this shift to the total speech situation leads to a different understanding of performativity. Security is not performative in the moment of audience understanding (there is nothing mysterious and magical in the word “security”); it requires audience acceptance like all other impactful linguistic representations. Security is performative only when it is deployed strategically to secure audience acceptance of a threat articulation. This fact also leads to a redefinition of securitisation which, Balzacq approached as the “contextual” mobilization of “heuristic artefacts” geared at convincing an audience about the “critical vulnerability of a referent object” and, thus, the need for an emergency measure.²⁴

²². H.G. Widdowson, *Text, Context, Pretext: Critical Issues in Discourse Analysis* (USA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004).

²³. Balzacq, "Enquiries into Methods."

²⁴.Ibid.p.3

Balzacq further maintains that audience acceptance is mediated by the power of the speaker, the nature of the threat statement and the context, thereby introducing extra-discursive elements. Since security is a very “structured field”, the argument affirms that those people who are authorized to speak security (e.g. state officials, members of the security apparatus) are more credible than others. In many of the authoritarian and semi-democratic settings, however, where trust in and legitimacy of officials has been eroded, other non-official speakers might command wider acceptance. In these arenas, the issue of who has the right to speak security on behalf of society, or a section thereof, is open for contestation. To turn to the Ethiopian case, discussed in greater detail in the later chapters of this study, the opposition viewed EPRDF’s securitisation of democracy and development as an act of regime legitimization that had little to do with a concern for democracy and development. They claimed that the securitising discourse was a propaganda tool of the EPRDF, not only to present itself as a force with an acceptable agenda, but also to castigate all other forces as antidemocratic and rent-seekers. If the 2005 electoral violence, the 2011-2013 Muslim protests and the 2014-2018 ethnic-based protests are taken as yardsticks, the EPRDF’s critics had a more legitimate reason than the EPRDF for speaking security or issuing security texts.

According to Balzacq, the more the securitising actor pragmatically deploys language that has resonance to the context, the higher the chances of audience acceptance. The audiences are likely to accept statements that reflect their fears and address their needs and aspirations. As Rytoven²⁵ noted, the effect of security articulation depends upon its success in “eliciting culturally-specific fears whose emergence hinges upon the appraisal of recognizable memory, identity, image, metaphor, and other tropes to construct a plausible yet anxiety-inducing future.” Effective securitisation ultimately attempts to direct the attention of the audience to events, persons or situations.²⁶ This fact notwithstanding, the notion of the audience, as noted below, is one of the most problematic elements of the securitisation framework, the very relevance of which might be context-dependent.

Similarly, Stritzel reformulates the performativity of security discourses by situating it in its discursive contexts, which, he claims, give security discourse its powerful effect.²⁷ The two elements of these contexts are the socio-linguistic elements of discourse, that is the “network

²⁵. Eric Van Rytoven, "Learning to Feel, Learning to Fear? Emotions, Imaginaries, and Limits in the Politics of Securitisation," *Security Dialogue* 46, no. 5 (2015).

²⁶. Balzacq, "Three Faces of Securitisation," p.182

²⁷. Stritzel, "Towards a Theory of Securitisation."

of constitutive rules and narratives that surround a single linguistic act”²⁸ and the socio-political dimension of discourse referring to “...the more sedimented social and political structure that put actors in positions of power to influence the process of constructing meaning.”²⁹ The former aspect is a source of the linguistic reservoir for the actors and, in part, constitutes the performative power of security utterances. The latter aspect captures the differential influence of threat construction associated with the different positional powers of the actors. The power of security utterances, thus, is mediated by the positional power of the securitising actor and the extent to which these utterances draw from existing discourses. Thus, revisionist scholars tend to emphasise background and contextual factors and the power of the speaker that mediates whether a given threat articulation gains traction. Similarly, Hansen re-read Buzan, Wilde and Waever by introducing the post-structuralist concept of structural incorporation (how the label security is attributed to the phenomenon), epistemic terrain (which regime of truth is asserted or denied), and substantial modalities (the societal sphere where an issue is located).³⁰

This shift towards a discursive approach to performativity downplays the speech act approach in two ways. First, securitisation does not have to be viewed through Buzan, Wilde and Waever’s grammar of security. It is possible (both empirically and theoretically) to discursively frame an issue as a security issue without indicating existential necessity, urgency and/or point of no return. Invoking security discourse does not have to be about existential issues in order to count as a security issue, which would include discourses of lesser danger and discourses of security as wellbeing. Second, a discursive approach would view securitisation as an iterative process rather than an act, a point upon which Buzan, Wilde and Waever vacillate. Hence, the last three authors eschewed the notion of the speech act and its distinction between illocution and perlocution at the cost of disregarding the rather powerful idea that language is a form of action; it is not simply a representation of one’s thought.

The idea of language being a form of action, however, should not be disregarded even if that means retaining the distinction between the illocutionary and perlocutionary effects of language. Retaining the idea of speech act is necessary for two reasons. First, potential audiences could accept the perlocution and yet dispute the illocutionary act performed. As will

²⁸. Ibid.p.369

²⁹. Ibid.p.369

³⁰.Hansen, "The Politics of Securitisation."

be discussed in chapter three (see section 3.4. below), democracy and development were taken as existential by the opposition parties (perlocution) who, at the same time, claimed that in using securitising discourse the EPRDF was not urging the populace to prioritise democracy and development; it was asking for legitimacy for itself while delegitimising them. This lack of fit between illocution and perlocution is a key issue in mediating whether securitisation wrought a shift in the way an issue is governed. Without agreement on what the securitising actor *does* in making security utterances, effective action to manage a threat might be difficult to implement.

Second, securitisation is a phenomenon common in organisational contexts (those people whose securitising move is listened to are those who are already leaders of an organisation, governmental or otherwise). In such a situation, there is always a possibility for an utterance to mean more than what the utterer meant, which would have perlocutionary effects that are not intended by the speaker. Since what a speech act achieves is mediated by how the utterance would be received (which in turn is mediated by the social and contextual conventions of society independent of, and yet connected with, language),³¹ there is always a possibility of performing an illocutionary act that is not intended by the speaker. In organisational settings, this deviation invariably has an action consequence since organisational agents act based upon their anticipation of what higher-level leaders expect from them. Nye provided a real-world example of this situation in which guards (at Abu Ghraib) who were ordered to “soften the detainees up for interrogation” ended up torturing them.³² Hence, especially in organisations characterized by authoritarian leadership in which lower-level officials are vulnerable for disciplinary measures against arbitrarily set infractions, misinterpretation of what higher-level leaders intended when making an utterance/issuing a text could have fatal consequences. These two factors necessitate retaining the speech act approach with its illocutionary and perlocutionary distinction.

When the distinction is maintained the two ways in which language can affect action become apparent. First, it mediates action through its illocutionary act which Wæver and Searl defined as the “deontic power that follows from the very speech act done” (see section 2.3.1 below). Second, it mediates action through its perlocutionary effect by generating certain physical, mental, attitudinal and emotional changes in the audience or the securitising actor or the

³¹. Filho, *Language and Action*.

³². Joseph Nye, *The Powers to Lead* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p.107.

audience. To analyse the outcome of securitisation, therefore, one has to analyse the working of both effects of language. Indeed, the idea of logics of action discussed in section 2.3.2.2. below, defined as the concern of the actor making the securitising speech acts and those implementing/translating them into practice, seeks to capture these two dimensions. It seeks to do this by analysing the logics informing (securitised) policy formulation and implementation. These concerns are reflected, in part, in what is accomplished through language and, thus, the need to view securitised discourses³³ manifested in speech acts as one element separate from how it is taken in the implantation processes.

In general, three arguments have been advanced so far. First, Wæver's idea of performativity is problematic because there is ambiguity and confusion as to how it captures the nuances and extensions of Austin's idea of the speech act. Second, due to this uncertainty, other scholars rejected the very theory of the speech act and opted for security discourses (representation) thereby shifting their focus to linguistic representation and how this process interacts with power, context and audience. Third, this emphasises on discourse in the sense of textual representation misses the illocutionary effects of language. Hence, the idea of a speech act has to be maintained and yet, at the same time, Wæver's version has to be modified. With this conclusion, the next section turns to the other key element of the theory of securitisation, namely its idea of the audience.

2.2.2. Audience and its Role

The second line of extension of Buzan, Wilde and Wæver's argument has been the audience which is one of the least elaborated elements of their framework.³⁴ Although there have been notable efforts to specify the audience by second-generation securitisation theorists,³⁵ there is limited consensus on who the audience is, why the audience is relevant, what constitutes acceptance and what it is that the audience accepts. Three criteria seem to dominate the identification of the audience: 1) it needs to be powerful enough to influence the securitising actor's behaviour without which the securitising actor does not have to appeal (the audience is needed because either it can take action to ensure security or obstruct the possibility of taking such measures); 2) it could be the actor who is required to change behaviour since addressing

³³. The notion of security discourse is used in the sense Widdowson used it, which essentially includes illocution and perlocution as an element of discourse.

³⁴. Stritzel, "Towards a Theory of Securitisation."

³⁵. Salter, "Securitisation and Desecuritisation," pp.334-342; Côté, "Agents without Agency."; Sarah and Christian, "Reconceptualizing the Audience."

some threats requires a change of audience behaviour;³⁶ 3) It may simply be the public at large.³⁷ Likewise, acceptance could range from minimally tolerating the securitising actor,³⁸ 'ritually chanting' a security phrase³⁹, or authorizing and/or legitimising the securitising actor.⁴⁰ What needs to be accepted is either the reality of the threat or both the threats and the measure(s) to be deployed to ward off the anticipated danger.⁴¹

Thus, almost all works that recentre the audience approached the concept in a way that is different from how the theory of the speech act approached the audience which, along with context, is constituted through speech. Theorization on the speech act is developed as part of communication study with its irreducible elements of speaker/listener or writer/reader. According to the speech act approach, to perform a securitising speech act, the audience (those for whom the speech is directed to, or possibly those who orient themselves to a speech/a text) need not accept the securitising move; only its recognition of what the securitising actor is trying to accomplish in making such a move would suffice.

However, when this idea of audience is adopted/adapted to study phenomena that are more than communication, it generates confusion. For communicative purposes the audience could be any competent language user, whereas a securitising speech act of meaningful effect (how an issue is handled) would have to consider factors more than competence in the use of language. To accommodate this requirement, the above works locate the audience in actors that can influence how an issue can be handled regardless of the actors for whom securitising speeches/texts are made. Accordingly, theorists approached audience acceptance as these key actors' acceptance of the threatening nature of the actor/issue defined as such. Even then, this emphasis on the audience is due to the assumption that audience acceptance would shape how an issue is handled, which is not always the case. Admittedly, shared understanding is a precondition for effective collective action. In democratic settings in which policies have to be in line with popular expectations, the audience, as understood by Buzan, Wilde and Waever,

³⁶.Bright, "Securitisation, Terror, and Control."

³⁷.Abrahamsen, "Blair's Africa,"p.181; Balzacq, "Three Faces of Securitisation"; Williams, "Securitisation."; Hughes, "Securitising Iraq."

³⁸. Buzan, Waeve, and Wilde, *Security*, p.25.

³⁹. Oren and Solomon, "WMd, WMD, WMD."

⁴⁰. Vuori, "Illocutionary Logic,"p.72;Balzacq, "Enquiries into Methods"; Côté, "Agents without Agency,"p.548.

⁴¹.Roe, "Actor, Audience(S) and Emergency," p.62; Jackson Richard, "Regime Security," in *Contemporary Security Studies*, ed. Aalan Collins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).p.313

thus, would be important. In such a context, the audience is significant not only because it can authorize security measures but also because it can freely ask for clarification for what the securitising actor's reason for making security utterances, which increases the securitising actor's chance of being understood as intended.

However, in other settings, the term "audience" will not be an appropriate category. Organised action on behalf of society can be effectively executed without requiring "audience" acquiescence, unless one considers lower-level members of an organisation as an audience. Where an effective social outcome is forged by a well-organised group that is run in a top-down manner, as was the case in Ethiopia under the EPRDF, the idea of audience acceptance of a securitising move would have limited utility. The securitisation process in such a setting would rather be studied in terms of the relationships among leaders located at different levels of the organisational hierarchy and the party-constituency interactions. Hence, the audience has to be retained only in the sense that the party, or more precisely, its leaders, communicate within and outside its hierarchy, not necessarily in their acceptance of the threat articulated by the securitising actor. This possibility of effective collective action without audience acceptance necessitates grounding the securitisation perspective in the context of the political order within which it is articulated.

Before deciding the audience and the meaning of securitisation, one first has to have a grasp of the nature of the political order one is dealing with. For understanding securitising moves with the potential for wider political ramifications, threat definitions need to be situated within the political order they emerge from. What is threatened, at least in authoritarian settings, is the nature of the order and in situations in which there are multiple conceptions of an appropriate way to organise and govern society, multiple securitisations are the likely outcome. This result is because, in the absence of agreed rules of the game, one form of order will be viewed as a threat to the other. Actors subscribing to different versions of organizing and governing society, therefore, would securitize each other. The referent object threatened is nevertheless the nature of the order.

In authoritarian systems characterized by top-down decision making, lower-level actors' understanding of the securitising move, thus, should not be equated with acceptance. They may understand the order from above as intended by the securitising actor, although they may not necessarily agree with the modes of rationality driving the processes. As the Ethiopian case seems to indicate, the process of audience acceptance might not be different from the practice

of indoctrination whereby the less suspecting was enticed, opportunists bought, and the hard to convince persecuted. This practice underscores the need to redefine securitisation adjusting it to the nature of the political order one seeks to analyse. In fact, dissatisfaction with the approaches that privilege the audience, as the next section shows, has already given way to definitions that zoom in on security practices.

2.2.3. When is an issue said to be securitised?

Since, as noted above, scholars' accounts of securitisation differ, their answer to the question of when is an issue securitised is also different. Buzan, Wilde and Waever, along with Balzacq, argue that an issue is securitised when the audience accepts that an issue/actor is indeed a threat. Once a sufficiently large audience accepts the securitising move, they implicitly assume it would herald the introduction of emergency measures. However, this assumption is problematic for two reasons. First, as noted earlier, who the audience is and whose acceptance matters is open for contestation. Second, the growing range of empirical works indicates that audience acceptance by itself does not guarantee the undertaking of measures to avoid a threat. Focusing on the securitisation of climate change in Australia, McDonald argues that even if climate change was securitised and accepted by the audience during Kevin Rudd's premiership, no concrete action followed thereafter.⁴² Roe, likewise, indicates that the audience could accept the security-ness of an issue without necessarily accepting the measures that should be deployed to address a threat and, thus, suggested a two-stage process of securitisation.⁴³ Work on the securitisation of organised crime by ASEAN makes a similar observation.⁴⁴ The practice of ASEAN states does not conform with their securitisation discourse. Hence, on the one hand, securitisation is presumed to have real-world political effects in the way an issue is governed; and on the other, audience acceptance does not seem to be sufficient to observe this effect. This latter fact raises doubt over the necessity of retaining audience acceptance as a criterion of securitisation.

Those theorists who are more interested in how threats are inter-subjectively constructed regardless of the effects following therefrom would still retain audience acceptance. This position, however, would be at cost of accepting the idea that securitisation may not always

⁴². Matt McDonald, "The Failed Securitisation of Climate Change in Australia," *Australian Journal of Political Science* 47, no. 4 (2012).

⁴³. Roe, "Actor, Audience(S) and Emergency."

⁴⁴. Emmers, "Asean and Securitisation."

have real-world effects (meaning that it heralds a change in the way an issue is governed). Scholars privileging the latter, as noted below, may entirely discard the idea of the “audience” at least when the securitising actor is a state. When a state securitizes, the division between the political level at which leaders have to legitimise their decision and define issue areas (securitising actor), and the administrative level (which can be hypothetically taken as the audience in a top-down system such as in Ethiopia)⁴⁵ that is concerned with policy implementation needs to be put under consideration.⁴⁶ The political and the administrative, however, cannot be reduced to the securitising actor and audience, which ultimately questions whether the criterion of audience acceptance as a yardstick for securitisation is immune from the political system within which securitisation is undertaken—an approach this study chose to follow. At the political level, leaders might have different motives for securitising an issue which will determine the extent to which the administration will be pressured to implement security policies. Indeed, the securitising actor might have at least one or a combination of any of the five purposes of securitisation identified by Vouri in section 2.2.1 above. Hence, the possibility of policy-practice disjuncture mediated by the purposes of securitisation calls for a different understanding of securitisation.

Aiming to avoid such a disjuncture, Floyd and Bigo redefined securitisation by incorporating security practices while de-emphasising audience acceptance. The so-called “Paris School”, mainly represented by Didier Bigo, approached securitisation as the practice of professionals of (in)security. These professionals of insecurity act according to their habitus acquired from the field of security that would inform their interest of enlarging their power and extending their areas of operation.⁴⁷ According to Watson, this understanding of securitisation is a manifestation of institutionalized securitisation (as opposed to an episodic one) whereby security actors are empowered to manage threats without legitimising their conduct in the political process.⁴⁸ However, reducing securitisation to the practice of the security sector

⁴⁵. A charitable application of the concept of audience in a political system that operates based on a top-down logic would consider the bureaucracy as the audience because in such organisation what is needed for an effective collective action is a system in which the bureaucracy obeys the command of its political principals. Needless to point that this type of principal-agent relations in which problems in governance, mainly in relation to corruption, are attributed to the unruly agent that does not execute the wishes of the principal is inapplicable in the Ethiopian context where the very problem is with the principal. Though this seems unrelated with the topic at hand, it gives insight to the fact that securitisation theory’s securitising actor-audience relation is problematic to the case at hand.

⁴⁶. Boswell Christina, "Migration Control in Europe after 9/11: Explaining the Absence of Securitisation," *Journal of Common Market Studies* 45, no. 3 (2007).

⁴⁷. Bigo, "The (in)Securitisation Practices of the Three Universes of EU Border Control: Military/Navy – Border Guards/Police – Database Analysts."; "Internal and External Aspects of Security," *European Security* 15, no. 4 (2006).

⁴⁸. Watson, *Securitisation of Humanitarian Migration*.

excludes security motivated behaviours of a range of non-security actors. Since, according to this perspective, security issues acquire their security character because of their connection with the security sector, the way issues are dealt with, or even the discursive meaning they are imbued with, would be problematically irrelevant.

Aiming to surpass these challenges and to tightly couple discourse and practice, Floyd approached securitisation as the materialization of securitising moves with security practices.⁴⁹ She approached security practices broadly including any behaviour that is justified by a securitising move which helped her overcome the weaknesses of the approach deployed by Bigo.⁵⁰ Moreover, her approach recentres the motives of the securitising actor and thus the actor's sincerity in making security enunciations. Floyd distinguishes referent object benefiting securitisation and agent (securitising actor) benefiting securitisation. The former refers to securitisation wherein the securitising actor acts as per its stated intention while the latter is a form of infelicitous⁵¹ securitisation.

The motive for securitisation is indeed important when viewed from the perspective of the translation of security discourses into practices, which is also a reason for maintaining the speech act approach in this study. If the motive of securitisation is insincere, security measures aimed at protecting the referent object may not be forthcoming. Moreover, recentring motive and, thereby, the securitising actor, also helps to connect the reasons for securitisation with the processes and its outcomes. Wæver tends to privilege the act of speaking security irrespective of the motive for doing so and the outcome as if the *speech act* (if successfully undertaken as per the grammar of security) is all that matters to study the "real-world" effects of security discourses. Her approach, on the other hand, zooms in on the securitising actor and its motive for doing so. In a sense, the securitising actor is not hostage to its utterances, what the actor seeks to realise with the securitising move mediates what follows from security enunciations. This, however, requires either discarding performativity as defined by Wæver or qualifying it in a way that security speech acts are just one (linguistic) element of the process of securitisation.

⁴⁹ Floyd, *Security and the Environment*. Since she retained the speech act approach, a securitising move that is not translated into practice as a form of infelicitous securitisation.

⁵⁰ Floyd, "Extraordinary or Ordinary?"

⁵¹ As statements can be evaluated as true and false, performatives are evaluated in term of their successful/felicitous performance or unsuccessful or infelicitous performance.

Notwithstanding the above strengths of Floyd's approach, a definition that includes security practice as part of securitisation selects only those security speech acts that translate into practices. This restriction limits its applicability to assess the ramifications of different security utterances. Her approach by default selects the successful ones. Moreover, such an approach would relegate security study in many African states to the study of infelicitous securitisation because many of these states are characterized by discourse-practice disjuncture. In these states, it is not uncommon to observe a transformative security policy remaining unimplemented. At any rate, both Bigo and, more directly Floyd, reject the audience as a relevant analytical concept that they claim has little relevance for judging the securitisation of an issue. Though the audience indeed might be irrelevant for the way an issue is governed, it is still relevant for the successful performance of a security speech act. Hence, Floyd's rejection of the idea of "audience", while retaining a speech act approach to security, is a venture into a theoretical impossibility.

So far, a review of the various debates and extensions of Buzan, Wilde and Waever's theory of securitisation has been discussed with commentary on each element. As would be apparent from the various comments, this study approaches securitisation in light of the nature of the Ethiopian political order that is characterized by top-down governance processes. Due to this fact, the audience is not used as a relevant category in the securitisation process and, thus, audience acceptance is not taken as a yardstick for securitisation. Moreover, since the securitising actor is the party-state, the division between policy formulation and implementation and, hence, the political and the administrative aspects, would be relevant.

2.2.4. Outcomes of securitisation

Anticipation of the outcomes that follow from securitising an issue has been at the core of the debates on how to define securitisation. There are two senses in which the outcomes of securitisation can be viewed. The first one is what Callabero-Anthony and Emmers⁵² called *outcome I* which refers to the effect securitisation has on the ways the securitising actor, or any other relevant actors, acted, and is the sense in which this study perceived outcome. The second view is the effect of securitisation in actually overcoming the security threat posed by an actor or issue so framed, an aspect with which this study is not directly concerned. This section

⁵². Mely Caballero Anthony and Emmers Ralf, "Understanding the Dynamics of Securitising Non-Traditional Security," in *Non-Traditional Security Threats in Asia: Dilemmas in Securitisation*, ed. Mely Caballero-Anthony, Ralf Emmers, and Amitav Acharya (United Kingdom: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2006).

analyses the theoretical and empirical debate on outcomes of securitisation with a focus on what kind of outcomes are identified and what framework is used to analyse these outcomes. This approach would ultimately inform the framework that is developed to analyse outcomes of securitisation of democracy and development in Ethiopia.

2.2.4.1. Emergency/Extraordinary Politics as an Outcome of Securitisation

In Buzan, Wilde and Waever's formulation, successful securitisation is almost always followed by emergency measures: it signals the transformation of an issue from ordinary politics to panic politics.⁵³ However, as subsequent works indicate, this practice does not always hold.⁵⁴ Not all securitisation ends in breaking rules (those rules that would have been broken with the introduction of emergency declarations) to the same degree;⁵⁵ there is even a rule for rule-breaking (meaning a law setting the conditions when an emergency measure is to be undertaken);⁵⁶ some forms of securitisation seek a mere change of behaviour while others seek to define what is legitimate and illegitimate behaviour without significant change in conduct.⁵⁷ In some authoritarian contexts, rule by exception is so banal that the normal-extraordinary dichotomy is meaningless for all intents and purposes.⁵⁸ In others, the dichotomy does not appear to be normatively acceptable and analytically useful.⁵⁹ Moreover, some securitisation merely calls for mundane measures related to establishing new institutions, allocating greater resources, mobilizing the population for unified goals. All these experiences seem to indicate outcomes of securitisation cannot be analysed by observing if there is a transformation from normal politics to emergency politics, which rather necessitates a new framework. Doubt over the extraordinary character of all the outcomes noted above⁶⁰ leads some researchers to

⁵³. Buzan, Wilde, and Waeve, *Security*.

⁵⁴. By those works that approached securitisation as a combination of discourse and practice or as a practice of 'professionals of insecurity', the outcome of securitisation is alternatively viewed as the degree of securitisation.

⁵⁵. The rules here refers to those that would have been broken by emergency measures. Bright, "Securitisation, Terror, and Control," p.869

⁵⁶. Floyd, "Extraordinary or Ordinary?" p.2

⁵⁷. Bright, "Securitisation, Terror, and Control," p.868.

⁵⁸. Greenwood et al., "Copenhagen-Cairo on a Roundtrip," p.501; McDonald, "Securitisation and the Construction of Security," p.576.

⁵⁹. Mac Donald "Securitisation and the Construction of Security." pp.578-579; Martin Holbraad and Morten Axel Pedersen, "Revolutionary Securitisation: An Anthropological Extension of Securitisation Theory," *International Theory* 4, no. 2 (2012).p.176.

⁶⁰. Williams, "Securitisation as Political Theory," p.115; Hanrieder and Kreuder-Sonnen, "Who Decides on the Exception?" p.332-333.

introduce a framework that differentiates what is a normal and what is an extraordinary way of handling an issue.

Focusing on the securitisation of migration, Watson develops a framework centred around three themes: the issue securitised, the normal relation of units (the idea of unit as used by Watson is the entities responsible for the handling of the issue securitised and those that are subject to its measure, whatever that be) in the issue-area, and the language in which the relations between units is described. With regard to the securitisation of migration, Watson notes that the unit is the relation between the securitising state and asylum seekers, and the normal relationship is a relationship that is free from security languages and metaphors. Though his approach is applicable in different contexts, which units and which aspect of their relationship matters cannot easily be identified. This difficulty arises because the unit is in part determined by the purposes of securitisation. Why an actor securitised an issue would mediate which unit will be impacted by the discourse and, thus, directly looking at the relationship between units may be problematic. His approach presupposes that units continue to deal with the same issue before and after securitisation. However, securitisation motivated by the desire to elevate the political status of an issue, for instance, might not result or may not even be aimed at reconfiguring relations between units. It may rather be aimed at creating a new unit that deals with the issue and shapes its conduct as the example of the securitisation of the environment noted below indicates.

Moreover, predetermining the units, the relation of which will be affected by securitisation, unnecessarily limits one's analytical gaze, which is problematic when the issues securitised are as complex as development and democracy. Developmental and governance endeavours entail the functioning of a cross-section of institutions (units in Watson's language) and thus assessing outcomes based on the relations between units would not yield any meaningful result. Hence, his approach for analysing outcomes aimed at salvaging the normal-extraordinary distinction would not be useful for analysing outcomes of securitisation at least in some sectors. Indeed, the frame of mind that approached outcome in terms of normal-extraordinary might have to be eschewed since it captures a fraction of outcomes of securitisation only in the context of some socio-political orders. The empirical works on the subject seem to make some progress in ignoring this normal-extraordinary distinction.

Those works on the securitisation of development, for instance, analysed outcomes of securitisation by examining the changes and ruptures that follow from securitisation. Stephen

and Jorn analyse the impact of securitisation of foreign aid in terms of the rationales, priorities, policies, and practices of the countries providing the aid.⁶¹ Hence, indicators of securitisation include practices such as “justifying aid in terms of security considerations; giving the highest level of aid for some countries based on security imperative; when the security sector provides aid or when new institutions or inter-departmental coordination is established based on security considerations.”⁶² Thus, the key issue to look at when assessing outcome is the reason for the action of the securitising actor. Based on this framework, Stephen and Jorn argue that the scholarly discourse on the securitisation of Western states` foreign aid provision overstated the case. Though development is discursively securitised, it did not necessarily inform practices due to countering measures. In the UK, for instance, the existence of “firewalls” that restrict the primary aim of development aid to be poverty reduction, prevented the appropriation of development aid for security purposes. Their finding nuanced the largely pessimistic assessment of outcomes of securitisation of development.⁶³

Other empirical works also provided an interesting discussion of outcomes of securitisation though the framework used is not explicit. These works argue that securitisation of development is a governmentality technology of the West that sustains the North-South divides.⁶⁴ It is viewed also as an anti-foreign policy where Western countries masquerade their lack of systematic foreign policy to the South.⁶⁵ This approach presumably enabled them to shift development aid to a few countries, measures, and sections of the population that, in some way, affect their security concerns. The outcome is the “high-jacking” of development resources and support for issues that have nothing to do with development.⁶⁶ Even when Western states and international organisations are driven by human security concerns, a favoured approach of the UNDP and Sweden,⁶⁷ the measures introduced are no more than

⁶¹. Grävingsholt, Security, Development and the Securitisation of Foreign Aid.

⁶². Ibid.p.3

⁶³. The idea of securitisation of development, as used by these authors, predominantly refers to the security concerns of the West driven by the under-development of the states and peoples of the South.

⁶⁴.Mark Duffield, "The Liberal Way of Development and the Development—Security Impasse: Exploring the Global Life-Chance Divide," *Security Dialogue* 41, no. 1 (2010).pp.56-57; Lazell, "Liberalism(s) and the Critical Securitisation,"p.370 53-76.

⁶⁵.David Chandler, "The Security–Development Nexus and the Rise of ‘Anti-Foreign Policy’," *Journal of International Relations and Development* 10, no. 4 (2007).p.364; Keukeleire and Raube, "The Security–Development Nexus and Securitisation"p.569.

⁶⁶. Erin Simpson, "From Inter-Dependence to Conflation: Security and Development in the Post-9/11 Era," *Canadian Journal of Development Studies / Revue canadienne d'études du développement* 28, no. 2 (2011).p.264; Ivica Petrikova and Melita Lazell, "Multilateral Donors and the Security-Development Nexus: Discourse and Practice in Conflict-Affected States," *Conflict, Security & Development* 17, no. 6 (2017).pp.505-507; Keukeleire and Raube, "The Security–Development Nexus,"pp.560-561.

⁶⁷.Lazell Melita "The Securitisation of Development Debate within the Global Governance Literature: A Critique. Phd Thesis University of Southampton.," (2011, p.98).

“poor relief” and “riot control”.⁶⁸ These critics confirm the relevance of the motive for securitisation to its outcomes, thus, providing empirical support for criticisms alluded to earlier in this study. Such censure not only reinforces the need to develop a new framework for analysing outcomes but also that this framework should encompass the conceptual tools necessary for capturing the motives of the securitising actor.

Moreover, outcomes of securitisation in arenas other than development also point to the need for a holistic assessment of outcomes and a framework suited to that end. According to Brown, the securitisation of Islam in Britain after 9/11 resulted in British Muslims being “policed and surveyed rather than served and protected.”⁶⁹ They are approached ostensibly as a “subversive”, “dangerous” and “threatening” force and thus have to be continuously monitored. The securitisation of migration in Europe has arguably led to a general reduction of civil liberties, limitation on immigrants’ rights, damage to the national macro-economic interests, compromised national security and democracy.⁷⁰ Likewise, the securitisation of water in Israel was followed by efforts that seek to prevent African migrants (who are dubbed environmental refugees) for fear that they would endanger the already scarce water resources. In the Mediterranean countries, on the other hand, securitisation leads to measures related to border closure and interdiction of migrants activating “countries under siege mentality.”⁷¹

The outcome of securitisation, however, is not always negative. The securitisation of climate change, for instance, legitimised new actors and institutions that seek to govern it by focusing on paradigms of prevention and timely intervention.⁷² Even the reluctant Bush administration was persuaded to negotiate on emission reduction; a number of roadmaps and protocols were issued, and the UN Security Council discussion on climate change and security was introduced.⁷³ This discourse is used in the UK to justify an increase in aid for climate change and served as a reason for the establishment of a new mechanism of governing climate change. These changes, however, remained under the control of DFID which adopted a developmental

⁶⁸. Robin Luckham, "Building Inclusive Peace and Security in Times of Unequal Development and Rising Violence," *Peacebuilding* 6, no. 2 (2018).p.95

⁶⁹. Katherine E. Brown, "Contesting the Securitisation of British Muslims," *Interventions* 12, no. 2 (2010).

⁷⁰. Anthony M. Messina, "Securitising Immigration in the Age of Terror," *World Politics* 66, no. 3 (2014).

⁷¹. Weinthal Erika, Zawahri Neda, and Sowers Jeannie, ""Securitising Water, Climate, and Migration in Israel, Jordan, and Syria," *International Environmental Agreements: Politics, Law and Economics*, Springer, Vol. 15(3), Pages 293-307, September.," (2015).

⁷². Maria Julia Trombetta, "Environmental Security and Climate Change: Analysing the Discourse," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 21, no. 4 (2008).

⁷³. Ibid.

lens.⁷⁴ Similarly, the securitisation of rape in Bosnia and Rwanda was helpful in the consideration of rape on a massive scale as a crime against humanity and the establishment of a tribunal dealing with such crimes.⁷⁵ Thus, broadly the ramifications of securitisation can be both negative and positive for human wellbeing as well as intended and unintended by the securitising actor.

In general, the above empirical works point to gaps and possible lines of extension of the research on the outcomes of securitisation. To begin with, it can be inferred from these works that the performativity of security articulations is not *sue generis* given. The implications of which in terms of the theories of securitisation is little appreciated. As recently as 2015, Wæver, for instance, expressed his commitment to the notion of the speech act whereby the utterance is the act. This commitment to the speech act continues even when it is clear that not all security utterances fulfilling Wæver's condition usher in a securitised way of dealing with an issue. The Ethiopian case discussed in the coming chapters also supports the conclusion that security speech acts were not performative in the sense of creating the reality they seek to represent. Reiteration of the existential nature of the quest for democracy was accompanied by widening democratic deficits. The audience, a debatable issue in the discussion of theories of securitisation, also does not seem to figure prominently while the securitising actor and its motive seem to be of prime importance. The desire of the EPRDF to entrench its political survival was the main factor why measures suggested by the securitisation of democracy and development were not pursued in practice. This deficiency points to the need to pre-figure this requirement in the development of the theory of securitisation and its outcome.

The discussions also indicate that this empirical literature (apart from very few exceptions)⁷⁶ has not sufficiently engaged the securitisation practices of African states. The examination of such cases would have enriched the discussion on securitisation not only by providing fresh empirical materials from states of different political order but also by challenging researchers to develop a new framework. While the analyses, noted above, are mostly based on the securitising practices of Western states, the securitisation perspective is widely held to be

⁷⁴. Katie and Leigh, "Securitisation of Climate Change."

⁷⁵. Hirschauer, *The Securitisation Rape*.

⁷⁶. Niklas Hultin, "Repositioning the Front Lines? Reflections on the Ethnography of African Securityscapes," *African Security* 3, no. 2 (2010); Paul D. Williams, "Regional Arrangements and Transnational Security Challenges: The African Union and the Limits of Securitisation Theory," *African Security* 1, no. 1 (2008); Edwin Ezeokafor and Christian Kaunert, "Securitisation Outside of the West: Conceptualizing the Securitisation–Neo-Patrimonialism Nexus in Africa," *Global Discourse* 8, no. 1 (2018).

inapplicable to non-western contexts⁷⁷ thus needing revision right from the very definition of securitisation. Moreover, since the frameworks used to assess outcomes of securitisation draw from a notion of securitisation perceived to be inapplicable for African contexts, a focus on “homegrown” securitisation could also necessitate a new framework as attempted below. Indeed, the works reviewed so far cumulatively suggest the need to develop a framework for analysing securitisation that incorporates the motive for securitisation and, thus, the reasons for the actions undertaken in the post-securitisation period.

2.3. Operationalisation of Securitisation and the Quest for a New Framework

Both drawing from and adapting the points made in the review undertaken so far to the securitisation of democracy and development in Ethiopia, this section redefines securitisation and develops a framework to analyse outcomes of the securitisation of democracy and development in Ethiopia.

2.3.1. Operational Definition of Securitisation

Securitisation, as noted earlier, has to be defined in relation to the nature of the political order one is scrutinizing so as to give emphasise to the relevant conceptual component of the securitisation perspective. Ethiopia under EPRDF (1991-2018), the focus of this study, operated based upon the principle of democratic centralism in which once the higher-level leaders decide in a (quasi)democratic way upon an action, it had to be implemented by lower-level agents with little deviation. Under this arrangement, the masses were to be persuaded and mobilized rather than consulted and empowered to shape policies. For many years, the key centre of power had been the higher-level leaders, which the definition of securitisation, therefore, should need to give greater emphasis to the securitising actor. Hence, securitisation is operationally defined as the public act of presenting an issue/actor as a security issue by the higher leaders of the party. Securitisation occurs when the higher-level leaders make a public securitising speech in the form of party-state public documents, such as training manuals, policies and strategies, and pamphlets.

This study not only retained the speech act approach to securitisation but also, unlike Floyd, restricted securitisation to the speech act of presenting an issue as a security issue. Since the

⁷⁷. Claire Wilkinson, "The Copenhagen School on Tour in Kyrgyzstan: Is Securitisation Theory Useable Outside Europe?," *Security Dialogue* 38, no. 1 (2007); Ezeokafor and Kaunert, "Securitisation Outside the West."

kind of, and success in, the performance of a speech act depends upon the audience and its uptake/recognition, the idea of “audience” is retained only for its function of identifying the speech act performed in the securitising move of the higher-level leaders. Throughout the analysis of the coming chapters, the audience is in the background because the speech acts performed in securitising development and democracy would be understood depending upon how the potential audience would interpret it. The audience is simply defined as the actor for whom security utterances are directed or who might have an interest in the security enunciation of the securitising actor. Depending upon the nature of the issue about which the speech acts are made, the audience, thus, could be party members, civil servants, lower-level administrators, the business elite, or the people at large. While using the audience in this sense, when a more specific expression is needed, other terms such as middle and lower-level leaders, and the bureaucracy (actors that are engaged in policy implementation) have been used. Depending upon the situation, these actors can be both the audience when they are the target of the securitising move of higher-level leaders, and the securitising actors when they seek to disseminate the views of the higher-level leaders down the organisational hierarchy.

Regarding the performativity of security languages, the study retains the speech act approach not because it subscribes to the idea that security speech/text has the magical character of changing social reality but rather because language is a form of action that nevertheless is different from and, in part, dependent upon extra-linguistic practices. As Searle argued the linguistic activity we undertake in making utterances, security or otherwise, would set deontic power on the speaker.⁷⁸ This deontic power refers to rights, obligations, entitlements, authorizations, commitment and so forth. Thus, in making an utterance of a certain force the speaker is already committed to what the force of the utterance entails. If the force is asserting, the speaker is committed to the truth of the utterance; if it is ordering, he/she has to wish that the order is fulfilled and the like. But language can also be deployed in a way that makes certain actions justifiable, certain values desirable and certain actors legitimate. For these reasons what is performed in and through language should be retained, which also necessitates a distinction between policy and practices.

At this juncture, one may ask whether redefining securitisation and developing a framework for assessing the outcomes of this new delineation of securitisation consequently leads to the study of something that is not securitisation as conventionally understood? How does such

⁷⁸. Searle, *Making the Social World*.

work converse with the literature on securitisation? Is this ‘new’ definition simply a reconceptualization of the theory to fit the new context, which in a sense is tailoring the extant definition to make it applicable to the context? I would make two comments in relation to such questions. First, a wholesale application of the concept of securitisation would have led me to focus on issues that are tangentially relevant while missing those that are critical. For example, it would have led me to focus on the audience as an essential component while ignoring the role of the leaders thereof (their intentions, goals and values) in the process of securitisation. Second, there is no single way of approaching securitisation even in the extant works and, hence, I feel justified to specify this concept within the context of my study although it is contrary with that of extant literature.

2.3.2. The Quest for a New Framework

As would be clear by now, operationalizing the definition of securitisation is a necessary but insufficient step to analyse the outcomes of the securitisation of democracy and development in Ethiopia. It is also necessary to develop a framework that can be deployed to analyse the said outcomes in that country. The framework used by extant works reviewed in section 2.2.4. above cannot simply be transposed to the case under study for various reasons.

First, many of the empirical works that analyse the outcomes of securitisation are not clear in their framework which is mostly implied rather than explicitly stated. Moreover, the approaches of those works that explicitly articulated their framework are not suited to the case under study. This incongruity is because there are a number of activities/measures that can be labelled development enhancing and democracy promoting, which the extant frameworks revisited above are unable to discriminate. Hence, the developmental and democratizing measure that follows as a result of securitisation cannot be singled out from the frameworks reviewed in the previous sections.

Second, the concept of development and democracy can be understood in different ways. Hence a framework developed based upon one scholar’s understanding of development and democracy may not explain how the regime defined and pursued these issues. This situation is particularly relevant for Ethiopia, because, unlike many African states, the EPRDF claimed to follow a different paradigm of development and democratization, an issue implied in the first chapter and further examined in the coming chapters. Since many of the frameworks developed

to analyse securitisation of development implicitly assume the nature of development, they may not fit this study's specific context.

Third, governance and developmental outcomes cannot simply be attributed to what the securitising actor does, as some extant works tend to presume. Extant discussion on the outcomes of securitisation in Ethiopia noted in chapter one above, for instance, implicitly presume securitisation of development by the observed developmental outcomes. However, this assumption is problematic. The securitising actor's measures would have intentionally sought to promote development and enhance democracy while such measures may not have achieved this goal. We cannot, therefore, infer the effect of securitisation from developmental and governance outcomes although the reviewed literature tends to presume so.⁷⁹ Hence, we cannot rely on observation of governance and developmental outcomes to analyse outcomes of the securitisation of democracy and development in Ethiopia. Rather, we need to focus on the securitising actors' reasons for action in its governance and developmental measures.

Fourth, when development and democracy are securitised, the issues that are securitised are those that lead to instability rather than the actors that might take part in violence and war. This fact begs an interesting question: does securitisation of drivers of instability lead to the same reaction as the securitisation of actors susceptible to violence? The extant frameworks are not well-fitted to answer such questions because they are not directly concerned with these issues. These factors, therefore, call for a new framework applicable to the case that is different from the common cases, both in the issue securitised (it is homegrown and the issue securitised appears to be beneficial for the masses) and the means through which these goals are to be realised.

Finally, and most importantly, as stated in chapter one above, this study's framework needs to address a critical shortcoming in the extant literature, which is the disconnect between why an actor initiates securitisation and what effect follows therefrom. The practical effect of security discourses is connected with the motive for securitisation since what the actor intends to achieve by securitising an issue would affect what action would follow. However, most of the empirical literature that assesses outcomes of securitisation do not have an explicit framework connecting these two factors. This deficiency might be due to the securitisation framework's attribution of much explanatory power, either for audience or speech acts, and overlooking the

⁷⁹. Floyd, *Security and the Environment*.

role of the securitising actor and its concern. As commented in chapter one above a complete account of the performativity of security discourses and the criticisms or extension of securitisation, however, has to connect the “why” of securitisation with its resultant effects. Guzzini, as commented in chapter one, indeed comes closer to this when he approached securitisation as a causal mechanism that is contingently triggered and has an indeterminate effect.⁸⁰

The point of departure of this study is the commitment to connect these two processes, for, as Floyd and Vuori noted,⁸¹ why an issue is securitised will invariably mediate what outcome securitisation produces. To this effect, a framework that gives greater emphasis to the concerns of the securitising actor would be needed. This framework, as this study suggests, could draw from and rely on the notion of the logics of action. The idea of the logics of action is not only a useful analytical tool to connect these two sides of the securitisation process (since the framework can be applied to identify the concerns behind the securitisation of an issue and subsequent actions) but also helpfully overcome the other weaknesses of the extant frameworks noted above. Before explicating the framework of this study drawing from the idea of the logics of action, the next section reviews the literature on this concept.

2.3.2.1. Logics of Action

The idea of the logics of action is often discussed in relation to institutional logic. Institutional logic refers to a state of affairs resulting from any combination of the three elements of institutions propounded by Scott: the regulative, the normative, and the symbolic (cognitive-cultural) aspects of life.⁸² The regulative aspect includes those rules, procedures and instruments through which adherents to rules are rewarded and violators sanctioned. The formal rules, regulations and standard operating procedures that are followed by sanctions when violated are part of the regulative components of an institution. The normative facet includes those elements that are presumed to be appropriate for a given role and which help develop loyalty for the principles underpinning the goals of a given job. Finally, those characteristics of institutions that refer to the shared meaning about social reality and relevant actors are the cultural-cognitive aspects. What constitutes reality, who are the relevant actors,

⁸⁰. Stefano Guzzini, "Securitisation as Causal Mechanism," *Security Dialogue* 42, no. 4-5 (2011).

⁸¹. Floyd, *Security and the Environment*; Vuori, "Illocutionary Logic."

⁸². What differentiates Scott's approach from those focusing on institutional logic is that proponents of institutional logic do not believe that such neat categorization is possible. They would rather seek to do away with such a compartmentalization. See W. Richard Scott, *Institutions and Organisations : Ideas, Interests, and Identities*, Fourth edition.. ed. (Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2014).

what are the main categories used to define reality are all mediated by institutions. According to scholars of institutional logic, society is constituted by an inter-institutional system whereby multiple institutional orders with different regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive elements inform social actors' logics of action. These institutional orders have their distinctive organizing principles of practices and norms of appropriate behaviour.⁸³ That is to say, they have different notions of what is appropriate, what is meaningful, and the material practices that are separate from, and yet connected with, the meaning members ascribe to these practices.⁸⁴

The logics of action, which presumably emanates from institutional logic, are viewed as schemas, scripts and norms that actors in organisational settings invoke in their ongoing businesses.⁸⁵ They are also considered as the “taken-for-granted” assumptions and orientations about the connection between the means and ends of policies, programmes and rules.⁸⁶ The logics of action can also be viewed as the ends and motivations informing how actors interpret situations and approach decision making.⁸⁷ Based on this later notion of the logics of action, Etienne and Schnyder, for instance, identified that an institution’s logics of action potentially oscillates along the three continuums of opportunism, enlightened self-interest and solidarity.⁸⁸

A slightly nuanced definition of the logics of action proffered by Dequech approaches the concept as domain-specific orientations with their own standards of appropriateness and desirability.⁸⁹ According to this understanding, what is deemed appropriate and desirable is measured differently in his three identified domains (the market, the family and the polity). The idea that standards of appropriateness and desirability vary in different arenas is unquestionable, although how the domain/sphere/arena could be identified and delineated is a question that cannot be lightly ignored. Information drawn from the theory of field developed

⁸³. R. Friedland and R. Alford, ". Bringing Society Back In: Symbols, Practices and Institutional Contradictions," in *The New Institutionalism in Organisational Analysis*, ed. W.W. Powell and P.J. Dimaggio (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1991).

⁸⁴. Thornton Patricia H. and Ocasio William, "Institutional Logics," in *The Sage Handbook of Organisational Institutionalism*, ed. Royston Greenwood, et al. (London: Sage 2008).

⁸⁵. David Dequech, "Logics of Action, Provisioning Domains, and Institutions: Provisioning Institutional Logics," *Journal of Economic Issues* 47, no. 1 (2014).

⁸⁶. Samuel B. Bacharach, Peter Bamberger, and William J. Sonnenstuhl, "The Organisational Transformation Process: The Micropolitics of Dissonance Reduction and the Alignment of Logics of Action," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 41, no. 3 (1996).

⁸⁷. Julien Etienne and Gerhard Schnyder, "Logics of Action and Models of Capitalism: Explaining Bottom-up Non-Liberal Change," *Swiss Political Science Review* 20, no. 3 (2014).

⁸⁸. Ibid.

⁸⁹. Dequech, "Logics of Action."

by Filgstien and McAdam would have extended the understanding provided by Dequech.⁹⁰ According to these authors, a field is an arena in which actors, located in different positions but with a common idea of the rules of the game, are competing for influence in the field of forces.⁹¹ Field theorists' understanding of the boundary of a field can be compared with Dequech's notion of "domain". According to Filgstien and McAdam, the boundary of a field is relative and, thus, a purely analytical concept: one field can be nested in a higher field, while other fields might be nested within it. The idea of domain is ambiguous on this point although both the idea of logics and field seek to capture patterns of behaviours apparent in a certain sphere.

At a general level, two critical points relevant for this study emerge from the discussion so far: namely that actors (1) are informed by norms and schemas available in society and (2) consider various options before making decisions and undertaking actions. Their reasons for action and the considerations informing it, constitute the actors' logics of action. Based on these contemplations four logics of actions are identified in the literature. These are the logic of consequence and appropriateness, the logic of argumentation and the logic of practice. Since actors, in practice, do not make such a distinction, the study uses the discussion of the logics of action to develop a generic framework, using aspects of their assumptions and assertions as a sensitizing tool. The conceptualization of the logics of action and the assumption of the study largely draws from the discussion below.

2.3.2.1.1. Logic of consequence and appropriateness

The logic of consequence and appropriateness, introduced by March and Olsen, juxtaposes norms and consequentialist considerations in informing human behaviour.⁹² Actors acting based on the logic of consequence consider the consequences of an action in relation to their effect, whereas those guided by the logic of appropriateness consider norms of appropriate behaviour in light of their role and identity. The logic of consequence is utilitarian in its reasoning whereas the logic of appropriateness is deontic. Translated in policy terms, the logic of consequence requires policymakers to consider the consequences of their action and the

⁹⁰. Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge : Polity Press, 1990); Fligstein Neil and McAdam Doug, *A Theory of Fields* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

⁹¹. Neil and Doug, *A Theory of Fields*.

⁹². March James and Johan O. Olsen, "The Logic of Appropriatness. Arena Working Paper 04/09 " (1989), https://www.sv.uio.no/arena/english/research/publications/arena-working-papers/2001-2010/2004/wp04_9.pdf.

logic of appropriateness essentially involves behaviour in light of rules and regulations irrespective of their consequence.

Three accounts are given to explain how the logic of appropriateness operates in shaping human conduct. First, actors may consider what is appropriate because they fear/expect the sanctioning effect of rules and norms. This approach, however, can easily be merged with the logic of consequence since the actor considers the social norm due to its sanctioning effects.⁹³ Second, drawing from the idea of constitutive rules propounded by Searle,⁹⁴ actors act based on their notion of what is appropriate because they internalize the norm and, thus, are already predisposed to act in an “appropriate” way. This version of the logic of appropriateness has been unjustifiably criticized for leaving little room for reflective action,⁹⁵ an unjustified criticism given the existence of competing rules/norms that give an expression for actors’ agency in choosing one or the other. Third, actors could identify with a particular group and, thus, would act according to how a typical person belonging to that group would have acted.

This approach is not without its shortcomings because it does not distinguish between motive for action and justification for action. The reasons that motivate action could be different from the post-hoc justification that might be provided.⁹⁶ For the purpose of this study, their mode of reasoning would be an interest in relation to a specific arena/domain of action related to the party-state and its practices. Hence, the focus is on the kind of consequences policy actors considered relevant and for whom and the kind of values deemed appropriate in making policy choices and decisions. Understanding this approach helps us scrutinise whether ushering in a democratic and developmental outcome is the consequence policy actors consider, and to assess whether developmental and democratic values are the moral principles these policy actors considered appropriate. Hence, the concern is not why actors use consequentialist or appropriateness standards—in fact, the distinction is untenable given that actors could use both logics to undertake a certain course of action over another. Actors might argue that a given course of action is the right one, while at the same time indicating that it had positive consequences for the referent group of concern. The assumptions and expectations discussed

⁹³. Sending Ole Jacob, "Constitution, Choice and Change: Problems with the 'Logic of Appropriateness' and Its Use in Constructivist Theory," *European Journal of International Relations* 8, no. 4 (2002).

⁹⁴. John R. Searle, *The Construction of Social Reality* (London: London : Penguin, 2007).

⁹⁵. Jacob, "Constitution, Choice and Change."

⁹⁶. Ibid.

in section 2.3.2.2.2. below draw from the insights gleaned from the discussion of the logics of consequence and appropriateness.

2.3.2.1.2. The logic of argumentation and the logic of practice

Two other logics are added to capture the full gamut of factors actors consider in making a decision and undertaking action: the logic of argumentation and the logic of practices. The logic of argumentation focuses more on the decision-making processes of actors than the logics of action *per se*. It argues that actors' logics of action are shaped through dialogue and argumentation in which the forces of the better argument inform decisions of an organisational actor.⁹⁷ Drawing from Habermas's idea of communicative rationality, political actors are presumed to inform their logics of action based upon the convincing and plausible character of the argument on offer. Habermas developed the condition for communicative action whereby the forces of the better argument prevail.⁹⁸ These stipulations are that: no party that would be affected by a discussion should be excluded, that everyone has an equal chance of expressing his/her views, that discourse participation should be undertaken in an empathetic way, that power differences must not be allowed to affect the discussion, and that participants must be sincere in their conversation.⁹⁹

While this ideal speech situation could indeed serve as an archetype to devise a decision-making context so that the forces of the better argument prevail, its actual applicability for situations of decision making is questionable. Rationality is implicated in power relations. The notion of field, as discussed earlier, indicates that the position of an actor is relative to the position that actor occupies in the field, precluding the possibility for a disinterested view transcending one's positions and interests.¹⁰⁰ This point is further buttressed by the Foucauldian literature which indicated the inextricable relation of knowledge and power, rationality and power, and truth and power whereby one implicates the other.¹⁰¹ In this sense, power is a feature of the process through which the regime of truth (the criteria through which some truths and falsehoods are differentiated and identified) are established and challenged. However, the issue may not be either knowledge or power but a continuum in which the weight of the two

⁹⁷.Markus Kornprobst, "The Agent's Logics of Action: Defining and Mapping Political Judgement," *International Theory* 3, no. 1 (2011).

⁹⁸. Bent Flyvbjerg, *Making Social Science Matter : Why Social Inquiry Fails and How It Can Succeed Again* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

⁹⁹. Ibid., 91.

¹⁰⁰. Neil and Doug, *A Theory of Fields*.

¹⁰¹. Flyvbjerg, *Making Social Science Matte*.

factors varies depending upon the issue area, the credibility and experiences of the carrier of the idea, the space of engagement and the power dynamics in that space.

The fourth concept of the logics of action introduced by Bourdieu and others is the logic of practice. Much of human action is embedded in the tacit knowledge that is different from representational forms of knowledge. According to its proponent, actors discern what to do based upon common sense and “taken-for-granted” knowledge.¹⁰² From this perspective, many of the practices that are based on conscious reflection are the result of actors' background capabilities and, hence, the logic of practice seeks to capture these background conditions, skills and dispositions that actors utilize without conscious reflection. Practice is “embodied, materially mediated arrays of human activity centrally organised around shared practical understanding.”¹⁰³ Practice is both “spatially-temporarily extended manifolds of actions” and the actual “carrying out of actions.”¹⁰⁴

A point this study draws from the above discussion is the importance of analysing how political actors form their opinion on defining problem-areas and developing policies and strategies. Indeed, asking what logic informs the regime`s actions and decisions has to first question how the regime reached its viewpoint. The logic of argumentation points to the conversation between leaders and policymakers, whereas the logic of practice points to their background dispositions. Knowledge of this difference would help in the process of analysing how securitisation of development and democracy in Ethiopia originated in the post-2001 period, and how the regime developed its notion of what constitutes a problem to be addressed and how it could be addressed. Some of the discussion on the regime`s logics of action as being different from an individual`s logics of action in section 2.3.2.2.1. below, thus, benefited from these observations.

A major problem of this four-fold classification is that policy practitioners combine a number of these logics because they find it expedient to do so. However, the fact that actors could use multiple logics is not a deterrent to this study since its goal is not to differentiate between these different types of logics of action. Rather, its goal is to ascertain whether, and how, concern for democracy and development led to the securitisation of democracy and development by the

¹⁰². Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*.

¹⁰³. Theodore R. Schatzki, "Introduction: Practice Theory," in *The Practice Turn in Contemporary Theory*, ed. Theodore R., et al. (London: Routledge, 2001), p. 12.

¹⁰⁴. Theodore R. Schatzki, "Practices and Actions a Wittgensteinian Critique of Bourdieu and Giddens," *Philosophy of the Social Sciences* 27, no. 3 (1997): p.285.

EPRDF and how this concern influenced its subsequent governance and development policies and practices. As such, a general concept that is inclusive of these issues and yet serves its purpose of dispelling the logics informing the regime's action is needed. Indeed Markus's effort at developing such an abstraction serves as a useful starting point although the approach this study chose relies on the idea of concern discussed in section 2.3.2.2.1. below.

Markus approached the logics of action by integrating the four logics under the label of actors' tool kit, their resonance circuit, and their configurational cycle.¹⁰⁵ Drawing from the work of philosophers such as Immanuel Kant, he argues that at the outset actors have certain taken-for-granted universal ideas and repertoires that they use to subsume any emergent particular, a process which he labelled the "actors' tool kit".¹⁰⁶ Since there are many and conflicting universals, actors have to draw the universal most suited to their purpose and, hence, the process has an element of creativity. The process of decision making in a political context begins when an actor claims that a certain situation constitutes a "problem". This situation definition comes to be shared or rejected by others depending upon the dynamics of interaction between procedural judgment (actors' engagement with others in defending or arguing their case and listening to others) and substantive judgement (the substance of the actors' judgment). These dynamics of interaction between procedural judgment-persuasion-substantive judgment is the actors' resonance circuit. When the problem definition achieves resonance, measures aimed at changing the problematic situation will be developed. These processes, in turn, generate a new situation and, thereby, necessitate reconsideration of the new situation in light of these developments.¹⁰⁷ This last point indicates the dynamics of interaction between judgement and situation: actors cannot just attach a label to any situation. The nature of "brute reality" somehow affects their judgment while their judgment, in turn, affects their definition of the situation and, thus, constitutes the actors' "configurational cycle".

As pointed out in the above review, a few key points are important to retain from the discussion on logics of action for this study. These facts include the meaning of logics of action, how political actors form their opinions, and which consequences and values they consider in making decisions and undertaking actions. That said, some shortcomings of this literature review need to be overcome by drawing from other literature. More specifically, the idea that what is appropriate and desirable is not wholly drawn from institutionally available schemas

¹⁰⁵. Kornprobst, "Agent's Logics of Action."

¹⁰⁶. Ibid.

¹⁰⁷. Ibid.

and that logics of action is not simply about what action to undertake but also how to approach the world in terms of describing it and identifying issues of concern need to be added. Moreover, given that the focus is the logics of action of the regime (not the individual as such) the idea has to be connected with the regime's practices in general and its policy formulation and implementation in particular. The framework developed below draws from the strengths identified in the discussion so far, while also supplementing these with the findings of other literature to reduce the shortcomings.

2.3.2.2. Framework of the Study

This section sets out the framework for analysing the origin and outcomes of the securitisation of development and democracy in Ethiopia, selectively drawing from the review provided in the previous sections and integrating it with other literature. It aims to do so by examining the logics of action of the EPRDF in relation to its framing of problem-issues, and the development and implementation of policies and strategies. The framework is then applied to the three themes chosen for the study (the definition of threats and the identification of "enemies", the governance of the party, and the fight against rent-seeking) in the subsequent chapters.

2.3.2.2.1. Operational definition of logics of action

In this study, logics of action is approached as being the concerns/preoccupations that informed the regime's framing of problem-issues, formulation and implementation of policies and programmes. The idea of concern refers to those elements/issues actors care about and thereby influence the aspect of reality they attend to. In a sense, it refers to all those issues that come to an actor's mind when contemplating a course of action to choose when making a decision.¹⁰⁸ It includes factors that an actor considers relevant in making decisions and undertaking actions. Concern includes the values and goals of actors. Values and goals, as the discussion of the logic of consequence and appropriateness, discussed in section 2.3.2.1.1. above indicates, shapes an actor's choice of action and the reasons why the actor chooses a certain action or makes a specific decision over others. Values, according to Blackburn, are deeply held motivational factors that actors do not wish to lose and feel difficult when losing them.¹⁰⁹ To have a value is "to have a relatively stable disposition to conduct practical life and practical discussion in a particular way: it is to be disposed or set in that way, and notably to be set against change in

¹⁰⁸. Simon Blackburn, *Ruling Passions: A Theory of Practical Reasoning* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998).

¹⁰⁹. Ibid.

this respect. This way of being set is such as to align values and motivations.’’¹¹⁰ Values and, thus, concerns, manifest themselves in the framing of issues, policy goals and implementation practices pursued by actors.¹¹¹

Goals are the ends actors aspire to achieve and the setting of goals is underpinned by the values of the actor and thus the two concepts are interconnected.¹¹² An actor would not have a goal that he/she would not have esteemed and, hence, there are values underpinning every goal. The interconnection between the two concepts undermines the notion of the logic of consequences and logic of appropriateness discussed earlier which assume a neat distinction between behaviour inspired by instrumental considerations and that which is driven by actor`s values, whereas in practical life, as noted by Markus and alluded to in section 2.3.2.1.2. above,¹¹³ action would be informed by both considerations. The approach chosen in this study, therefore, is to take the issue at the general level whereby actors` behaviour in a given area is taken to be an expression of what the actors consider important (what they care about) either for instrumental or non-instrumental, self-serving or altruistic reasons. Thus, behind every action and decision, there are concerns of various weight and value, giving rise to goals that are pursued with a deferent degree of urgency and priority.

To study outcomes of securitisation, therefore, is to analyse the concerns that underpinned the actions and decisions of the securitising actor. Without this primary analysis of the concern of actors in making decisions and taking action, it is impossible to proceed to the secondary analysis of whether or not securitisation helps to overcome the defined threat(s). These two entities are often merged due to the assumption that the securitising actor is sincere about the securitising speech acts and that speech acts are self-referential practice (meaning that once securitising speech acts are made, they would have a life of their own regardless of the intention of the securitising actor). The first notion is not necessarily true since the securitising actor might aim to use the securitisation framing for purposes other than protecting the referent object. Although the second assumption has elements of truth, it need not be taken too far because the securitising actor has a strong influence over what actions follow from securitisation. Hence, the intention of the securitising actor matters. In locating the centre of

¹¹⁰. Ibid.,p.67.

¹¹¹. Andrew Sayer, *Why Things Matter to People: Social Science, Values and Ethical Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

¹¹². Norman Fairclough and Fairclough Isabela, *Political Discourse Analysis a Method for Advanced Students*, ed. Isabela Fairclough (Hoboken: Taylor & Francis, 2012).

¹¹³. Kornprobst, "Agent's Logics of Action."

gravity of their theory, either in the speech act or the audience, extant theories of securitisation reinforced this perception that the intentions of the securitising actor do not matter.

Arguing that there are considerations in actions and decisions, this study, therefore, conceives our relation to the world as an essentially evaluative one, meaning that the very way of approaching an issue in one way rather than in another entails a form of evaluation.¹¹⁴ As Sayer argues “[b]ecause of our psychological and physical vulnerability, our dependence on others and our capacity for diverse actions, and because of contingency, we are necessarily evaluative beings, continually having to monitor and evaluate how we and the things we care about are faring and to decide what to do.”¹¹⁵ Two central ideas are embedded in Sayer’s argument. First, the idea that our evaluation is based upon considerations of human well-being and ill-being. Sayer, thus, adds an important complement to the discussion on the logics of action. We do not just have some personal consideration in making a decision and undertaking action; these considerations essentially have to do with their well or ill-being or the well-being of those whom they care about. This fact is an important complement to the discussion on the logics of action which presumes that logics of actions are drawn from institutional logic of society, overlooking human creativity in light of the effect of situations on their well-being. So, the study of the outcomes of securitisation through analysing the logics of action of the securitising actor (in this case the EPRDF) would necessarily entail an analysis of whose wellbeing is prioritised over whom. Presumably, the constituencies on which the regime was reliant would be the ones that command most attention and, hence, whose wellbeing guides the regime’s considerations. However, defining these constituencies would be as much the regime’s doing as it is the influence of these constituencies over the regime’s conduct. Identification of the concerns underpinning the regime’s framing of problem issues and policies and the implementation thereof would by extension shed light on its definition of core and peripheral constituencies. How this situation is translated into policy terms is elaborated in section 2.3.2.2.3. below.

The second point, which is also elaborated below, is the normative implication of the description of phenomena. As Blackburn argues how we understand the world or part thereof in one way or the other implies how “it is right to represent it in other terms, or how it is right to understand other parts of it.”¹¹⁶ This fact is so because at the very least the very description

¹¹⁴. Sayer, *Why Things Matter*.

¹¹⁵. *Ibid.*, p. 23.

¹¹⁶. Blackburn, *Ruling Passions*, p.82

of phenomena already commits us to the truth of the description precluding other ways of seeing the same reality.¹¹⁷ When translated to the context of this study, the very discourse of securitisation of development and democracy in Ethiopia and the regime's promise of what it would do in this regard, commit the regime for the truth of its assertion and the obligation to fulfil what it promises. Without expecting this commitment, the very idea of statement-making and promise-making would not have existed and, thus, these expectations and obligations are embedded in the very discourse.¹¹⁸

Though logics of action approached in this way could be used to describe both individual and group behaviour, the focus in this study is on the logics of action of the regime. When we talk of the logics of action of the regime it is not simply related to the isolated behaviour of individual leaders: it is about the general concerns, goals and values informing the nature of action the regime (as an organised group of actors) undertook and the reasons provided thereof as manifested in the party-state's public position on issues of concern and the policies it crafts. The logics of action of the regime, thus, is generally a shared disposition for action underpinned by shared (or at least recognizable/understandable) concerns, values and goals among its members in general and the higher-level leaders of the EPRDF in particular. We placed "recognizable/understandable" in parenthesis because not all members of the party, including some members of the higher-level leaders, might have similar concerns, values and goals. Rather what appears to be a shared concern and practice might be the outcome of a compromise among competing factions within the EPRDF that are bound by the binding principle of democratic centralism. According to this principle, once decisions are made through (quasi?) "democratic" deliberation, party members cannot express their reservations. Hence, shared concern, values and goals should not necessarily imply consensus and that the publicly expressed concerns that are supposed to inform issues definition, policy formulation and implementation, might be the idea of a few influential individuals within the higher-level leaders. That said, even if the influence comes from a few individuals, others have opted to recognise them as concerns legitimate enough to be publicly espoused. Hence, the logics of actions of the regime comprise the general concerns that guide the conduct of the party-state although some of the individual leaders may not have accepted them.

¹¹⁷. Searle, *Making the Social World*.

¹¹⁸. *Ibid.*

At this point, one may ask how these concerns arise and how different leaders might acquire different concerns requiring compromises. Needless to say, the leaders, at least formally, decided through committees and councils and that members of these committees and councils came to these forums having different concerns, values and goals. The sources of these concerns and values will be wide-ranging, including the experiences and worldviews of the person involved, the agendas of other competing actors, widely held perceptions of the societies from which the leaders emerged, and governing ideas of the period. However, the most dominant sources of these concerns are likely to be the idea and concerns held by the political contenders and the concerns of the support bases (often called veto-players in political science) upon which the regime was reliant. This latter factor is dominant because political survival is the main concern of politicians and, therefore, actors and factors that mediate this survival are more likely to garner the attention of leaders than those that do not.

Thus, having explained how the idea of the logics of action is used in this study, the next section turns to the assumptions and expectations of the study, including how these ways of approaching the issue help us understand the outcomes of securitisation. This discussion is followed by a section on how these concerns and reasons for action would be identified at the various stages of the policy formulation and implementation processes.

2.3.2.2. Assumptions and expectations

As the review section on the logics of action in section 2.3.2.1. above indicates, the choice of action and the making of decisions are informed by various considerations including consideration of the actor's goal, its consequence and appropriateness to the circumstance in which it is being undertaken, and its alignment with others' understanding and conception of reality. The actor's choice in general, as well as those of people in a leadership position, in particular, thus, is assumed to be informed by various considerations and that it is possible to identify these concerns. Provided that this assumption holds, the identification of the concerns of the regime that seem to underpin its conduct, both in defining problems (the rationale of which is elaborated below), together with the formulation and implementation of policies, would afford basic information on the extent to which development and democracy have been the defining concerns of the regime. So long as development and democracy are held to be concerns of national survival and stability, they would constitute the regime's logics of action at the highest level in the many steps and courses of action related to governance and development. The goals and values of the regime would be set in relation to development and

democracy, meaning that what would be considered as the regime's priority in devising policies and strategies would be those aimed at realizing development and democracy. Many of the practices of the regime would also be aimed at realizing development and instituting democracy. Acts that would undermine these processes of democratic developmentalism will be undertaken only under rare and justifiable circumstances. It could further be expected that many of the democratic and developmental measures would be undertaken not just because they are essential values of the regime but also, and most importantly, because they are expected to avert greater dangers related to the survival of the country and the prevention of atrocities.

This study also assumes a distinction between the regime's logic in framing issues and formulating policies and the practical application of these frames. The logics informing problem definition and policy formulation might be different from the one that informed the implementation process because the two may not always go together, and that the party may not act as per its stated goals and values. In fact, the two might be so far apart that it may only make sense to talk about two entirely different logics. Alternatively, this situation could mean that the logics of issue definition and policy formulation is rather a disguised strategy to advance the logics unveiled in the implementation process. Whether a specific instance is of the first type or the second would be an empirical matter to be captured by the framework elucidated below.

At the risk of oversimplification, it will be possible to develop three heuristic typologies of the regime's logics based upon the implementation of policies and the sincerity of the regime in propounding policies and defining issues: issue definition and policies are dearly implemented (coherent and sincere logics); policies and issue definition are not pursued in practice due to factors other than the sincerity of policymakers and issue definers (fragmented logics); and policies and issue definitions are a disguised form of advancing the logics unveiled in implementation (coherent and insincere logics). Depending upon which outcome, or a combination thereof, is prevalent, there could either be certain overriding logics of action or what we call the regime's logics of action might simply be a fragmented set of logics manifested in different political-institutional settings. How the regime's concern in the formulation and implementation of policies can be identified as the focus of the next section.

2.3.2.2.3. Party-state logic`s of issue definition and policy formulation

The tracing of how certain policy agendas are framed and the issues defined can be used to identify the concerns and values that underpin them, and the ends that they are designed to serve. Policy frames and issue definitions suggest certain actions and justify certain values. As noted in the earlier section, there is no other value-neutral description in the political arena that is dominated mainly by a concern for what to do.¹¹⁹ Rather, naming and categorizing in a policymaking context is a highly charged process. To name the world in one way rather than the other, and the process of categorizing a problem into this or that category would justify one action and preclude the possibility of taking others.¹²⁰ Hence, in each arena, the very processes of identifying what are relevant issues of attention should be taken as an indication of the matters that most concern the regime. As Tucker noted, political leaders identify and define problem issues and mobilize actions to that effect, based upon their concerns and goals.¹²¹ Hence, the very identification of certain issues rather than others would be part of the unarticulated and yet significant background conditions for action. The indication of what is brought forward is also an indication of what is left behind, which concern is foregrounded is also at the same time indicative of which concern is backgrounded. A discussion of the regime`s logics of action, therefore, needs to start with the very processes of identifying certain concerns rather than others.

This process of issue definition is a creative process that would nevertheless be influenced by the experiences of actors. It involves “noticing” and “bracketing” a certain stream of experience and labelling it with one label or the other.¹²² When people make sense of an issue in one way or the other, they are “read[ing] into things the meanings they wish to see; they vest objects, utterances, actions and so forth with subjective meaning which helps make their world intelligible for themselves.”¹²³

The identification of the concerns behind problem definition and policy formulation, therefore, constitutes the regime`s logics of problem definition. Identifying these logics of problem definition would help to glean the extent to which democratic and developmental concerns

¹¹⁹. Fairclough and Isabela, *Political Discourse Analysis*.

¹²⁰. Deborah Stone, *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making*, 3rd ed.. ed. (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2012).

¹²¹. Tucker, *Politics as Leadership*.

¹²². Karl E. Weick, Kathleen M. Sutcliffe, and David Obstfeld, "Organizing and the Process of Sensemaking," *Organisation Science* 16, no. 4 (2005).

¹²³. Karl E. Weick, *Sensemaking in Organisations* (Thousand Oaks, Calif. London : Sage, 1995).p.207

were the drivers of policy formulation and issue definition. This practice, in the end, contributes to answer the research question in two ways. First, it would help us identify the concerns that informed the securitisation of democracy and development. Second, it would be useful to analyse the concerns that informed the regime's conduct after the securitisation of democracy and development and, therefore, to make judgement on the outcomes of securitisation of democracy and development in the country.

Consideration of the following three factors would be necessary to identify what logics informed the definition of issues and the formulation of policies. First, one can look at the kind of action performed and/or justified by a given way of framing an issue or formulating a policy problem. This, in a sense, is to look at the illocutionary action conducted and the perlocutionary effect sought in framing a policy problem. It was suggested in this study's earlier discussion of the speech act approach to securitisation that language in general and security language in particular is a form of action. To use language is to act because it both indicates the actor's entitlement to make the speech act in the first place and to strive to bring about change in the deontic powers (entitlement, permission, commitment, obligation etc.) of the speaker or any other actor in the discourse community.¹²⁴ It was also suggested earlier that the frame justifies certain courses of actions and portrays a certain state of affairs as desirable, good, obligatory, rightful etc.¹²⁵ The combining of these two strands of the literature, to identify the kind of action done/or justified by a frame, is to identify the concern that informed the framing of an issue in a particular way.

Second, the logic of issue definitions can be gleaned by identifying potential beneficiaries and losers of a given way of framing an issue. This second criterion is necessary because some unacceptable ends would not be publicly invoked to justify issue definitions and policy choices. They may rather, as indeed the discussion in the subsequent chapter indicates, be camouflaged under policy frames and issue definitions that appear security enhancing. The beneficiaries and losers of problem definition and policy frame can be discerned by asking who would lose and gain if the issue definition and policy articulations are unfailingly implemented, and by observing the relevant political contestation of the day. Political actors that lose from the process indeed would not remain silent; they would rather seek to delegitimise the frame in

¹²⁴. Searle, *Making the Social World*; Marina Sbisa, "Communicating Citizenship in Verbal Interaction: Principles of Speech Act Oriented Discourse Analysis " in *Analyzing Citizenship Talk: Social Positioning in Political and Legal Decision Making Processes*, ed. Heiko Hausendorf and Alfons Bora (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2006), 151-180.

¹²⁵. Sayer, *Why Things Matter*.

various ways by making opposing speech acts. Hence, from these contestations, one can infer the beneficiaries and losers of policies. Finally, when competing logics of action are identified, the various logics that are relevant to the issue definition and policy development would also be juxtaposed against each other to infer tendencies within the party-state in which certain concerns might appear more plausible than others. This process entails analysing which concern appears to be the most plausible or the most dominant in light of all the available evidence about a phenomenon. If the identified concern seems to prevail in all three themes chosen for the study or if the concern seems to inform the same arena across time, the information would provide strong evidence for the regime's common inclinations of action.

2.3.2.2.4. The logic of policy implementation and party-state practices

As noted earlier, assessment of the logic informing issue definition and the formulation of policies and strategies would be insufficient without examining how this process was translated into practices. Hence, a closer observation of the relationship between issue definition, strategy development and implementation is needed to ensure a better sense of the regime's logics of action. In this regard, a point that is worthy of examination is the regime's sense of prioritization. First, whether the regime acted with an overriding focus on institutionalising democracy and realizing development or not needs to be at the core of the analysis of policy practices. This goal can be achieved by analysing the regime's practice in the areas chosen for one's analysis. In so far as the regime's practice conforms to its publicly stated goals and strategies the assessment is a straightforward matter: any problematics in the practice will have a direct effect of the way issues are framed and policy devised. When policy and practice conform one can talk of coherent logics driving policy formulation and implementation. However, policies are rarely implemented as expected by the policy framers.

When contestation over policy-practice synergy/disjuncture arises and when there is a gap between policy or issue frame and practice, it will be important to analyse the context of the regime's decision and the justifiability of its behaviour. This process is necessary because it could still be the case that the regime with a democratic and developmental logics of action was forced to limit these logics of action due to other pressing concerns. Such inhibitors include the outbreak of war/instability and conflict between democratic and developmental measures. When there is divergence between policy and practice, the explanation for the regime's deviation from its policies and the justifiability of such a deviation, in light of its securitisation of democracy and development have to be scrutinised. Identifying the logics informing

implementation in a case of policy and/or discourse/practice disjuncture, therefore, requires making a judgement on the regime's political judgement. To do so, one has to look at the situation, and analyse whether the situation is such that deviation would be plausibly expected, meaning that goals other than democracy and development should be prioritised (since in this context the concern is whether the regime acted reasonably, a fact-value distinction is not tenable and, hence, evaluation of the regime's judgement is defensible.). However, there is no hard and fast rule to judge which issue should be prioritised in which situation.

On the one hand theorists of justice including, but not limited to, John Rawls, Kant, Habermas, and other universalists and libertarian theorists provide a general blueprint for assessing judgment across time and contexts.¹²⁶ This scheme is based on the assumption of the existence of a rational way of making judgment that would be applied across contexts. However, this concept has been criticized both from a logical and substantial point of view. Philosophers such as MacIntyre and Toulmin criticized these universalistic inspired theories for their failure to identify multiple forms of rationality.¹²⁷ Criticizing the notion of a single rational solution for many of our social problems, Toulmin called for an emphasis on the reasonable which would take into consideration the contextual factors that mediate our decision.¹²⁸ Likewise, MacIntyre indicates that there are multiple criteria for identifying what is just¹²⁹. Many of the political theories of judgement that seek to advance a realistic notion of political ethics underscore the need for contextual acuity, often drawing from Aristotle's notion of phronesis wherein the uniqueness of individual instances is appreciated without glossing over general features.¹³⁰

The approach chosen in this study follows that of the later scholars. Accordingly, when a deviation from what is discursively articulated is observed, one has to closely examine the context and ascertain whether there are contextual factors that would have necessitated such a deviation for an actor who securitised democracy and development. Whether the particular instance is such that contextual necessities require deviations from democratic and developmental goals can be assessed by relying on academic works on political argumentation

¹²⁶. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, ed. Werner S. Pluhar (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2002); Jürgen Habermas, *Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action*, ed. C. Lenhardt and Shierry Weber Nicholson (Cambridge: Polity, 1990); John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, Original. ed. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009).

¹²⁷. Alasdair C. MacIntyre, *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988).

¹²⁸. Stephen Toulmin, *Return to Reason* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2001).

¹²⁹. MacIntyre, *Whose Justice?*

¹³⁰. Enzo Rossi and Matt Sleat, "Realism in Normative Political Theory," *Philosophy Compass* 9, no. 10 (2014).

and practical reasoning. Theorists of political argumentation and practical reasoning provide a range of sensitizing questions to determine the justifiability of the prioritization processes, hence the disjuncture between theory and practices. According to Walton, and Fairclough and Fairclough, some of the important questions one should raise to ascertain the reasonableness of a course of action are: Is the situation definition acceptable? Are the values underpinning the various goal rationally defensible? Is the proposed action sufficient to realise the goal? Does the proposed action have side effects? Are there better ways of addressing the issue? Are there goals that conflict with the action which nevertheless has to be prioritised? Is it possible to do the action? ¹³¹Answers to some of these sensitizing questions provide an entry point to establishing whether the logics of action informing policy implementation is something other than development and democracy or whether the regime faced difficult trade-offs from which there may not be an easy escape.

2.3.2.2.5. Evolutions of the regime`s logics of action

Finally, an assessment of whether the regime has been acting in a manner an actor securitising development and democracy would have justifiably acted, also requires tracing the genealogy of the regime`s logics of action. Tracing the evolution of these arrangements is important because many of the measures would have effects that are not intended, expected or wanted. Moreover, once a certain mode of thought and practice is set, it will have long term effects no matter what the interests of the actors instituting it might have been. Indeed, as the EPRDF experiences various frames and measures, its discourses and practices are likely to evolve. This evolution is also mediated by the EPRDF`s encounters with various path-shaping episodes, including the 2005 election, the various religious and ethnic-based protests and change of the leader, following the death of its long-time Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi. Hence, the logics of action of the regime is expected to evolve necessitating an approach that traces its evolution through time.

That said, this idea of change in logics should not be taken too far. The EPRDF has been using revolutionary democracy as a guide for its action from its ascent to power to the introduction of the current reform process. Hence, the concerns underpinning the practices of the regime remained essentially unchanged though there might be an evolution in the means and policy instruments used to realise these concerns. At any rate, a sincere securitisation of development

¹³¹. Fairclough and Isabela, *Political Discourse Analysis*; D. Walton, *Media Argumentation: Dialectic, Persuasion and Rhetoric* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

and democracy in the country would be followed by ruptures in the regime's logics of action whereby the primary concern would be the fast realization of developing and institutionalizing democracy. This concern for democracy and development would be reflected in the regime's issues definition, policy formulation and implementation in a range of sectors. Whether this situation is actually the case is an empirical matter the subsequent chapters seek to demonstrate.

2.4. Conclusions

The literature on securitisation has been expanding by accretion. During this expansion, two areas of analysis are dominant: (theoretical) works on what securitisation is and (empirical) works on what follows from the securitisation of an issue. Debates on the first focus on the performativity of security discourses/speech acts, their conditions of success, the role of the audience vis-a-vis the context and power of the securitising actor, and the place of security practices. These theoretical works offer a formulaic definition of securitisation that is dissociated from the context of the political order to which it gives expression. They also either failed to properly draw from extant theory of speech acts or entirely discard the idea of speech acts. Moreover, their application has been geographically and, at times, thematically limited. To remedy these shortfalls, the chapter operationalized securitisation as an iterative speech act of framing an issue as a security concern by the higher-level leaders of the party.

Empirical works on securitisation on the other hand focus mainly on the kind of outcomes that follow from the securitisation of issues, which can be variously categorized as positive and negative, intended and unintended, meaningful change and limited change. An element missing from these empirical works has been the limited attention given to homegrown securitisation practices in Africa and the bearing this lack of focus might have on the theorization of securitisation. One such implication, for example, is the extent to which such a focus re-centres the securitising actor as opposed to the speech act or the audience.

In general, these two strands of theoretical works on securitisation do not sufficiently reflect on the link between the conditions that trigger or make securitisation possible and the effects that follow it. The study laid out a logics of action framework to bridge these gaps by shifting the centre of gravity of the securitisation perspective to the concerns of the securitising actor. The study approached the notion of logics of action as the concerns/preoccupations that informed the regime's framing of problem-issues, formulation and implementation of policies and programmes. By tracing the logics of action of the regime in domains in which the

securitisation of development and democracy is reasonably expected to have greater effect, it would be possible to integrate works on securitisation that are compartmentalized into different categories. The process of tracing logics of actions can be approached first by examining how the party comes to constitute a category of a certain domain as a point of attention over others thereby discerning the concerns, ends and values underpinning its decisions in these domains. Second, analysing the logics underpinning the implementation of policies and strategies provides the extent to which a focus on the discourse of securitisation captures the real dynamics of the political processes of the country. When policy and its implementation diverge the study explains and evaluates the justifiability of the divergence, relying on the sensitizing question offered by works on practical reasoning and political argumentation. This approach ultimately helps to scrutinise whether the party-state`s lines of action prioritised development and democracy as per the party`s understanding of how these concepts should be defined and pursued, and the extent to which the regime`s understanding of democracy and development can be defended

Chapter Three

Securitisation of Development and Democracy in Ethiopia: Origins and Logics

3.1. Introduction

This chapter has two aims: demonstrating that the EPRDF had securitised democracy and development as per the operational definition given in chapter two above; and analysing the logics informing this securitisation. To demonstrate this fact, the chapter is structured into two major parts. The first part analyses the origin, policy articulation and evolution of the discursive securitisation of development and democracy in the country (Ethiopia). This part situates the origin of the securitisation of democracy and development within the history of and contestation among members of the Tigrayan Peoples' Liberation Front (TPLF). It also expounds upon the nature and scope of the discourse as articulated in key policy documents, training manuals and party pamphlets. It traces how the securitisation of democracy and development evolved over time—the first part also maintains that while the central rationale of securitising democracy and development remain unchanged, the discourse adaptively drew from new developments to justify its securitisation of democracy and development. The second part sketches the regime's logics of action in approaching the country's development and governance problem in security terms, using the framework developed in chapter two. This part indicates that the security discourse in, and of itself, tends to legitimise democratic and developmental practices and requires the regime to pursue democratic and developmental measures. This fact notwithstanding, what the securitisation discourse *does* (quo linguistic action) was a point of debate among contending actors whereby they viewed the securitising discourse as an instrument for legitimising the regime, delegitimising the opposition, and expressing the EPRDF's concern for, and commitment to, development and democracy.

This chapter, in general, maintains that securitisation practices are indeed contested although not in the way the conventional wisdom expects. Contrary to the commonly accepted wisdom on audience acceptance as a key determinant of successful securitisation, the key issue was not whether democracy and development were existential; but rather was contestation over what concerns motivate the securitisation of democracy and development and, therefore, what the

regime accomplished by way of security speech acts. The regime`s discursive move implies the existence of competing concerns in securitising democracy and development.

3.2. Origin, Policy Articulation and Evolution of the Securitisation Discourse

3.2.1. Origin of the Securitisation Discourse

The origin of the securitisation of development and democracy in post-2001 Ethiopia is intertwined with the ethnonationalist and leftist orientation of the TPLF, the soured relations it eventually came to have with Eritrea, and the division that broke out within the TPLF/EPRDF in the wake of the Ethio-Eritrea war. Until recently, those parties who dominated the political landscape of Ethiopia have been those who emerged from the 1960s generation. The Ethiopian Student Movement, one of the most radicalized student movements in Africa, was the primary arena of socialization of many of these leaders, including those of the TPLF.¹ In line with the spirit of the period, the TPLF adopted a Maoist ideology that was massaged with ethno-nationalistic claims.² Out of this ideological conviction but also due to pragmatic considerations, the TPLF was able to effectively embed itself in the rural population of Tigray. It mobilized and delivered governmental services for the peasantry; listened to their voices and gave organisational expression to them; and restructured its military doctrine to suit its peasant base.³ It helped organise the peasants into different associations (women, youth) and allowed their autonomous, if somewhat bounded, operation.⁴ These associations were encouraged to establish local councils run by individuals who were selected after rigorous evaluation. As autonomous self-administration units, these grassroots administrations introduced progressive laws, including measures that prohibit abuse of women and early marriage, and laws that entitled women the right to have access to land.⁵ They also promoted developmental measures including encouraging the peasants to plough their land repeatedly, providing educational and health services, and disbursing aid.

¹. Teshale Tibebe, "Modernity, Eurocentrism, and Radical Politics in Ethiopia, 1961–1991," *African Identities* 6, no. 4 (2008).

². Aregawi Berhe, *A Political History of the Tigray People's Liberation Front (1975-1991): Revolt, Ideology and Mobilisation in Ethiopia* (Los Angles, CA.: Tsehai Publisher, 2008).

³. Abebe Tekilehaymanot, *የኢትዮጵያ ፖለቲካ ክምችት ወይንት? የደህንነት ማስጠንቀቂያ ደወል (Ethiopian politics: From where to where? Security's alarm bell)* (Addis Ababa: Mankusa Publishing, 2011 EC); Berhe, *A Political History of the Tigray People's Liberation Front (1975-1991): Revolt, Ideology and Mobilisation in Ethiopia*.

⁴. EPRDF, *ኢህአዴግ ክምችት ለስነ 2002 (EPRDF from Establishment to 2010)* (Addis Ababa: Mega Printing Plc., 2002 EC).

⁵. EPRDF, *የተሰጠው መስመር (The renewal line)*.

The TPLF also reportedly adjusted its military science in such a way that the rebels' army was just "the sharpest edge" of the entire peasant army.⁶ What the military reportedly accomplished as part of this modification was to disrupt the command structure of the government's force, while leaving the remaining task to the local administrations.⁷ These measures, together with the innovativeness of leadership and the TPLF's synchronization of its struggle with other armed movements, enabled it to overthrow one of the most well-armed and repressive governments of Africa.⁸ Thus, by the time the TPLF overthrew the military regime, it had the experience of administering independent territories and was well-embedded in the rural society of Northern Ethiopia, an approach that was replicated in other parts of the country. As will be apparent soon, this achievement contributed to the introduction of the securitisation discourse by entrenching it in the rural society and making its political survival dependent upon rural support.

Due to its ethno-nationalist character representing a minority group, the TPLF, on the other hand, lacked a strong urban support base except in Tigray (its home region). Two unpopular measures that emanated from this character of the TPLF contributed to its lack of urban support: its position that the "ethnic question" has to be addressed through granting every ethnic group the rights to self-determination, including and up to secession; and its acceptance that the Eritrean question was a colonial question only to be solved through independence. Moreover, as a guerrilla movement reliant on rural insurgency, the TPLF neither had the experience of governing urban areas that are often ethnically mixed nor had good relations with political parties that had strong urban constituencies. While urban centres in the country emerged from and often symbolized the assimilation policies pursued by previous regimes, the TPLF's agenda and narratives were aimed at undoing these legacies. This fact exposed it to strong opposition in urban areas while also rendering its political survival reliant on rural support.

Hence, with a leftist ideology, a strong base in the peasantry, and with little urban support, the opportunity for articulating a policy that would be supported by the broad rural mass was the only strategy left for leaders who would like to pursue their enlightened self-interest. Indeed, this was the advice of one of the renowned American scholars, Samuel Huntington, when he

⁶. EPRDF, *ኢሃዲግ ከምስረታ (EPRDF from establishment)*; Tekilehaymanot, *የኢትዮጵያ ፖለቲካ (Ethiopian politics)*.

⁷. EPRDF, *ኢሃዲግ ከምስረታ (EPRDF from establishment)*.

⁸. Gebiru Tarek, *The Ethiopian Revolution: War in the Horn of Africa* (New Haven: Yale University press, 2009).

visited the country in 1993. He argued that Ethiopia had three governance options: some sort of authoritarian government which he argued was undesirable; a two-party or multiparty democracy which he foresaw was unlikely; and a dominant party democracy which he thought was both desirable and feasible.⁹ To materialize the latter option, he advised the TPLF/EPRDF to establish a broad coalition with the peasants. Notwithstanding these incentives and advice, the regime did not vigorously pursue democratic and developmental goals during these early years of its seizure of power. By its admission, what rather transpired in the first decade of the TPLF/EPRDF's seizure of power was a generalized sense of loss of direction, which, in large part, was due to the end of the Cold War and the collapse of communism. Hence, the result had been a lag in the democratization process and a less than satisfactory economic performance. While the regime ascribed these lags to the lack of proper assessment of the country's key challenges and the ways out,¹⁰ the hegemonic aspiration of the EPRDF in general and the TPLF in particular was certainly part of the reason.

At any rate, this loss of ideological direction set the context for increasing corruption that the TPLF/EPRDF claimed was manifested in various forms at different levels of the administrative hierarchy. At the lower level, it was manifested in giving unfair benefits for family members from the drought aid provided by donors, and at the highest level, it entailed the accumulation of excessive wealth.¹¹ The EPRDF claimed that though there were measures aimed at curbing this corruption through criticism and self-criticism, in the absence of an understanding of its deeper sources, its only effect was delaying the complete decadence of the EPRDF.¹² As it was not informed by a coherent ideological framework articulating what the EPRDF sought to build and the threats against that, measures to reverse these deteriorating governance practices were piecemeal, or so it claimed.

Thus, by the 1990s the EPRDF was in a dilemma acutely sensed by some of its leaders.¹³ On the one hand, driven by its leftist and pro-peasantry agenda, it wished to pursue a governance

⁹. Samuel Huntington, "Political Development in Ethiopia: A Peasant Based Dominant Party Democracy? Report to Usaid/Ethiopia on Consultation with Constitutional Commission, 28 March-1 April 1993.," (1993), <https://www.scribd.com/document/399433384/Huntington-a-Peasant-Based-Dominant-Party-Democracy>.

¹⁰. Bereket Simon, *ትንሳኤ ዘ ኢትዮጵያ መንታ መንገድ፡ ከተመጽዋችነት ወደ አፍሪካዊ ኩራት የተደረገ ሽግግር፤ መጻሕፊት ፈተናዎች እና መልካም እድሎች (Ethiopian renaissance from the cross-road: A transition from aid dependec to an African pride: Prospective challenges and opportunities)* (Uganda: Angkor Publisher Pvt. Ltd., 2010 EC); EPRDF, *ኢሃዲግ ከምስረታ (EPRDF from estblishment)*.

¹¹. EPRDF, *ኢሃዲግ ከምስረታ (EPRDF from estblishment)*.

¹². Ibid.

¹³. Gebru Asrat, *ዲሞክራሲና ሉዓላዊነት በኢትዮጵያ (Democracy and sovereignty in Ethiopia)* (USA: Signature Book Printing Press, 2011EC).

and development programme rooted in the peasantry. On the other hand, due to the global changes, this could not be realised through the pursuit of its Marxist economic and governance ideology. This lack of ideological and policy clarity increased corruption and dissociated it from its peasant base. The EPRDF was thus in urgent need of ideological and programmatic clarifications which were not introduced as an agenda of the regime due to fear of internal division. Amidst of this dilemma, the deteriorating relations with Eritrea turned into a full-blown military confrontation.

It was this invasion of Eritrea that led to discussion and reflection over what had happened in the first decade of the EPRDF's seizure of power and what should be done. The war generated some disagreements within the TPLF/EPRDF that led to reflection on what should be considered the main agenda of the regime and what should be of lesser importance. According to the narrative of the faction led by Meles (the then Prime Minister), the onset of the invasion accelerated the process of decadence while also showing the extent to which the party has lost its revolutionary and democratic character (see 6.3).¹⁴ To begin with, Meles argued that rather than adhering to the revolutionary democratic principles of the EPRDF (see section 6.3. below) which would require a well-calculated effort aimed at resolving the issue peacefully, the dissenting group opted for an adventurous course. He further maintained that even when a peaceful resolution fails, a revolutionary democrat would devise means through which the Eritrean Army would be repelled with minimum cost. Far from this, he argued, some leaders rather used the war as an opportunity to reconcile with the "chauvinist" forces (extensively discussed in chapter eight of this study) the TPLF had been fighting for 17 years. This rapprochement was to forcefully occupy the port of Assab.¹⁵ Though the EPRDF's nature was such that it protects and respects innocents under all circumstances, he complained that all Eritreans were deported in what amounts to a tit-for-tat action for Eritrea's deportation of Ethiopians.

The faction that was eventually excluded from the process, however, defended these measures accusing Meles for making historical blunders in the prelude to and during the war. According to Gebru, a member of the dissenting group, Meles initially downplayed intelligence reports

¹⁴. EPRDF, *ኢሃዲግ ከምስረታ (EPRDF from establishment)*.

¹⁵. Bereket Simon, *የሁለት ምርጫዎች ወግ፤ ናዳን የገታ አገራዊ ፍጭ* (*A conversation between two elections: A national quest that arrest an avalanche*) (Addis Ababa: Mega printing Plc., 2003 EC).; EPRDF, *ኢሃዲግ ከምስረታ (EPRDF from Establishment)*.

which warned that Eritrea was preparing for war.¹⁶ Once the war started, he set such a limited goal for the war that it was restricted to recontrolling the Ethiopian territory seized by Eritrea. While Meles criticized any further move beyond ensuring Ethiopia's territorial integrity as a form of adventurism, the dissidents viewed his position as a form of capitulation.¹⁷ They rather opted for a strategy in which the Ethiopian army (at whatever cost) had to control the port of Assab on which Ethiopia arguably has a legal right.¹⁸ Rejecting this option and against indications that the army can control the port,¹⁹ Meles declared the war over once the Ethiopian army decisively defeated Eritrea's forces.²⁰ All these issues had been a source of resentment by many of the dissidents who wished to hold Meles to account once the war was over.²¹

Probably anticipating that he would be accused of compromising Ethiopia's sovereignty, Meles had introduced a document focusing on what the main threat of the system was as an agenda in the post-war evaluation. Though the dissenting members initially wished to discuss something more pressing than this abstract problem of "Bonapartism", they eventually accepted this agenda on the assumption that the conduct of the war and the issues of national sovereignty would also be discussed.²² As expected, this issue became a point of division and the harbinger of the securitisation of development and democracy. In his new agenda, Meles argued that the main threat to the system EPRDF was building was neither Eritrea nor international pressure but *Bonapartis* decadence (see section 4.3. below). The dissenting members rejected this claim, indicating the incomparable nature of contexts in which Bonapartism historically emerged with the Ethiopian situation. However, this division over the

¹⁶. Milkias Paulos, "Ethiopia, the Tplf, and the Roots of the 2001 Political Tremor," *Northeast African Studies* 10, no. 2 (2003). Asrat, *ዲሞክራሲና ሉዓላዊነት በኢትዮጵያ (Democracy and sovereignty in Ethiopia)*.

¹⁷. *ዲሞክራሲና ሉዓላዊነት በኢትዮጵያ (Democracy and sovereignty in Ethiopia)*.

¹⁸. Tekilehaymanot, *የኢትዮጵያ ፖለቲካ (Ethiopian politics)* Eritrea was a colony of Italy until the second World War. When the fate of territories occupied by the defeated powers in World War II was decided, Eritrea was federated with Ethiopia. However, within ten years the federation was dismantled when the then Eritrean parliament under the support of the emperor dissolved itself making Eritrea a territory in unitary Ethiopia. This set the struggle for Eritrean independence leading to a 30 years civil war. During the civil war, the TPLF/EPRDF accepted that the Eritrean question is a colonial question to be resolved only through independence whereas other armed movements viewed the Eritrean question as a question of national liberation that can be addressed through some form of regional autonomy. Moreover, the federal arrangement that led to the federation of Eritrea with Ethiopia explicitly recognised Ethiopia's right to access to the sea which legal theorists argued that Ethiopia should retain the port of Assab even if Eritrea opted for independence. However, the EPRDF upon its seizure of power allowed Eritrea to become independent retaining the port of Assab for which it was heavily criticized. Thus, when the dissenters in the 1998-2000 war argued that the goal of the war should also include control over the port of Assab they were reconsidering their previous position now accepting Ethiopia indeed could claim the port using Eritrea's aggression as an opportunity to do so.

¹⁹. Tekilehaymanot, *የኢትዮጵያ ፖለቲካ (Ethiopian politics)*

²⁰. Asrat, *ዲሞክራሲና ሉዓላዊነት በኢትዮጵያ (Democracy and sovereignty in Ethiopia)*.

²¹. Ibid.

²². Ibid.

question of so called *Bonapartis* decadence was not to be addressed through “the forces of the better argument”, which rather led to a vigorous struggle to obtain the support of lower members of the TPLF and other EPRDF members, using threats and inducements.²³ Meles and his group eventually won with a narrow margin securing the support of 15 of the TPLF central committee members while opposed by 13.

Consequently, the position that the main threat against the system the EPRDF was building was dependent decadences that had to be overcome by an existential pursuit of democracy and development became the ruling idea of the government. Without fast realizing democracy and development, the EPRDF claimed that decadence would set in, the outcome of which, they claimed, was war, atrocity and disintegration. This securitised discourse was subsequently mainstreamed into government policy not because its logic was found compelling by the main protagonists but because Meles was able to tactically outmanoeuvre the dissenting groups.²⁴ At any rate, the leftist and ethno-nationalist character of the TPLF, its pro-peasant orientation and the Ethio-Eritrea conflict and the division it generated within the TPLF, set an enabling condition for the securitisation of democracy and development in Ethiopia through the EPRDF.

3.2.2. Policy Articulation of the Securitisation Discourse

With the ascendance of the Meles faction, the main danger against the survival of the country was presented to be the decadence of the party-state.²⁵ According to this faction, the manifestations of this decadence were antidemocracy and corruption, and its consequences were atrocity and disintegration. Hence, what it called *Bonapartist* decadence was another term for institutionalized corruption and anti-democratic practices of the ruling elites. This definition was later expanded to include such practices of different forces both within the state and the society at large when rent-seeking (see section 4.4. below) was used instead of *Bonapartist* decadence. Economists used the term “rent-seeking” to refer to resources expended to maximize individual benefit outside market competition, while imposing a cost on society which is wasteful expenditure.²⁶ However, other economists also argue that rent-seeking might be beneficial for growth because there are economic activities that would not be performed

²³ Flyvbjerg, *Making Social Science Matter*, p.101.

²⁴ A series of legal and extra-legal manoeuvre is narrated in the next chapter.

²⁵ Asrat, *ዲሞክራሲና ሉዓላዊነት በኢትዮጵያ (Democracy and sovereignty in Ethiopia)*.

²⁶ Pius Fischer, *Rent-Seeking, Institutions and Reforms in Africa: Theory and Empirical Evidence for Tanzania* (New York: Springer, 2006); Kurt von Seekamm, "A Note on the Modeling of Rent Seeking," *Review of Radical Political Economics* 49, no. 4 (2017); Christine Ngo and Vlad Tarko, "Economic Development in a Rent-Seeking Society: Socialism, State Capitalism and Crony Capitalism in Vietnam," *Canadian Journal of Development Studies / Revue canadienne d'études du développement* 39, no. 4 (2018).

without some form of “rent”.²⁷ What matters most, therefore, is how rent is allocated rather than the existence of rent-seeking *per se*.

According to the EPRDF, overcoming *Bonapartist* decadence/rent-seeking by heralding development and democracy has to be pursued as a matter of urgency because without such action the country would slide into anarchy and disintegration.²⁸ The urgency at which this policy has to be pursued is such that the 5th EPRDF Council meeting held in 2002 metaphorically equated the speed needed to overcome *Bonapartist* decadence with someone running away from an avalanche from which he/she can escape only if he/she outruns it.²⁹ One cannot escape just because he/she runs away but must run faster than the avalanche travels. Thus, party members were informed that the situation in the country was so dire that they had to pursue democratic and developmental measures with a level of urgency that would overcome war, anarchy and disintegration. *Bonapartist* decadence/rent-seeking thus was framed to be both the cause and manifestation of lack of democracy and development, which Meles claimed would only be overcome by pursuing democratic and developmental measures as a matter of national survival. Thus, properly speaking what was securitised was the absence of democracy and development and the presence of a decayed state afflicted with corruption and antidemocratic practices. Since the consequences of this state of affairs were defined as war, anarchy and disintegration, its antidotes – namely measures that realise democracy and development – had to be pursued as a matter of urgency. This narrative of securitising democracy and development (or more precisely the lack of them) has been repeated in many of the policy documents, party pamphlets, training documents and writings of top officials.

Three policy/party documents were critical in setting the scene for the early stage of securitisation of development and democracy and thus served as references for subsequent securitising speech acts. These critical documents were “የዲሞክራሲ ስረዓት ግንባታ ጉዳዮች በኢትዮጵያ” [Issues of building a democratic system in Ethiopia(unless otherwise stated all translations are mine)], the “*Foreign Policy and National Security Policy and Strategy of*

²⁷ John R. Boatright, “Rent Seeking in a Market with Morality: Solving a Puzzle About Corporate Social Responsibility.” *Journal of Business Ethics* no. 88 (2009),541-552; H. Khan Mushtaq, "Rent, Efficiency and Growth" in *Rent, Rent Seeking and Economic Development: Theory and Evidence in Asia*, ed. H. Khan and Jomo KS Mushtaq (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 21-66.

²⁸. EPRDF, *ልማት ዲሞክራሲ እና አብዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ (Development, democracy and revolutionary democracy)* (Addis Ababa: Birhan and Selam Printing Press 1999 EC).

²⁹. Simon, *የሁለት ምርጫዎች ወግ (Conversation between two elections)*

Ethiopia,” and the Party booklet titled “ፈጣን፣ዲሞክራሲና፣ አገዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ” [Development, Democracy and Revolutionary Democracy].³⁰ To start with the latter, this document explicates the regime’s understanding of the main threats to the country’s existence and the well-being of its peoples in terms of rent-seeking and why instituting a democratic and developmental political economy was the only way to overcome this decadent practice. The other two documents dwell more on what the pursuit of democracy and development means for the nation’s security. The “*Issues of building democratic system...*” document asserts in no uncertain terms what the pursuit of democracy and development means for the country, the urgency with which it should be pursued, and what kind of measures should be undertaken. It, along with the common-sense assumption, reasoned that “when people are immersed in poverty; when they have no hope; and when many are afflicted with hunger, they will opt for an irrelevant solution and destructive behaviours.”³¹ Hence... “[u]nless we start going out of the vicious circle of poverty immediately; if we do not show concretely that tomorrow will be better; if we do not create the conditions where hopelessness and fatalism will be overcome, senseless war and destruction is a matter of time.”³²

This destruction, it cautioned, would end the very survival of the country. In relation to the existential nature of the quest for democracy it argued that... “[i]n our context, a democratic system is not just a matter of choice; it is also a matter of survival...To ensure our survival we, therefore, do not have any option but to build our democratic system and ensure good governance.”³³According to the “*Issues of building democratic system...*” document “vacillating, retreating or failing” on the democratic and good governance agenda means “facing a danger that is difficult to think of, let alone actually experience.”³⁴

Because of this survival imperative, the above document urged that Ethiopians should fight for democracy and good governance; and that in order to do so they have to inculcate democratic cultures.³⁵ To this effect, devising policy directions on how to realise democracy and good governance through carefully selected strategies and policies and mobilizing the people to that effect is stated to be an agenda that could not be left for tomorrow. It also arguably maintained

³⁰. FDRE, *Foreign Affairs*. EPRDF, ፈጣን ዲሞክራሲ እና አገዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ (*Development, democracy and revolutionary democracy*); FDRE, *የዲሞክራሲ ስረዓት ግንባታ*(*Building democratic system*)

³¹. *Ibid.*, p.7.

³². *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

³³. *Ibid.*, p.12.

³⁴. *Ibid.*, p.13.

³⁵. *Ibid.*, p.9.

that the survival imperative of democracy and good governance necessitate a distinct form of democracy (though it is substantively similar to that of other democracies).³⁶ In line with all other democracies, institutions have to be built, corruption fought, a national consensus on the democratic “rules of the game” developed, the court system, the parliament and the media strengthened.³⁷ Notwithstanding these common features, the document claimed that the existential nature of the quest for democracy in Ethiopia necessitates direct participation of the people without sole reliance on representative institutions. It offers three reasons why this practice ought to be the case.

First, in addition to participation through representative institutions, the people had to directly participate in the democratization process.³⁸ The document identified several reasons why this should be the case. To begin with, democracy consolidates when consensus about the rules of “the game” is garnered; democratic culture is inculcated and democratic institutions are strengthened. In the developed world, these institutions were built in a lengthy gradual process through which the quest for the inclusion of various groups was recognised and respected. Since the Ethiopian quest for democracy is a matter of survival, it claimed, the country cannot afford to build these institutions and the underpinning democratic cultures through such a gradual process. It rather has to be institutionalized and the culture developed as quickly as possible given the dangers of failing to do so.³⁹ To this effect, it argued, wider and deeper participation of the people would be a key feature because it helps the people to identify the weakness and strengths of the governance process and, thus, strengthen its positive values.

A democratization process restricted to the urban middle class and their representative institutions, on the other hand, the document claimed, is likely to lead to unprincipled struggle that often leads to violence.⁴⁰ The people under such circumstances, the EPRDF claimed, would be either a “spectator” or “cannon fodder” of these middle-class actors. Consequently, the journey for democracy, as the historical experiences of some European countries indicate, would be characterized by reversal, vacillations and back-and-forth movements which, it claimed, is unacceptable in the Ethiopian case because reversal means descent to anarchy and disintegration.⁴¹

³⁶. Ibid., p.14.

³⁷. Ibid., pp. 18-19.

³⁸. Ibid., p.14.

³⁹. Ibid., p.17.

⁴⁰. Ibid.

⁴¹. Ibid., P. 20.

It should, however, be noted that in arguing along this line, the EPRDF was simply adding another reason for the continuation of its mass-based and participatory (rather than competition) oriented mode of governance that it had been practising since the armed struggle. Written before the renewal in 1999, an analyst indicated that the EPRDF's notion of democracy was based on an "undifferentiated general mass of peasantry and thus election tends to be measured based on the participation and turnout rather than competition and existence of competing policies."⁴² What was undertaken in the post-securitisation period, therefore, was more of an intensification of a practice that was common even before the discourse was introduced.

The second reason the regime provided for direct participation has to do with its relevance to quickly eradicating poverty. According to the EPRDF, population explosion, land scarcity, environmental change and technological obsolescence of subsistent farming rendered poverty unsustainable. Meles claimed that "[t]here are people who were born by drought aid, grew by drought aid and marry by drought aid."⁴³ Changing this reality requires mobilizing the poor so that they would commit to transforming their situation.⁴⁴ In this process, the people had to directly participate in the democratization process.⁴⁵

Finally, the "*Issues of building democratic system...*" document claimed that in less developed countries, representative institutions, mainly political parties but also NGO type of civil societies, cannot ensure the protection of the interests of the people. Whereas in mature democracies political parties represent the various social classes, in countries such as Ethiopia where there is no noticeable conflict of interest among the mass of the people, political parties reportedly cannot play the role of class representation.⁴⁶ Hence, the direct participation of the people would be important so that their interests would be represented and their voices heard. It also claimed that this agenda of direct participation of the people in the democratization process had to be reflected in the organisational and institutional arrangements of the EPRDF and the government.⁴⁷ According to this document, increasing the number of members of lower-

⁴². Patrick Gilkes, "Ethiopia: Perspectives of Conflict 1991-1999.," (Swiss Peace Foundation, 1999), https://www.swisspeace.ch/fileadmin/user_upload/Media/Projects/FAST/Africa/Ethiopia/Ethiopia_Case_Study_1999.pdf.

⁴³. Ethiopian TV, "Meles on Poverty," 1 September, 2012, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T17u05ENHnw&t=168s>.

⁴⁴. Ibid.

⁴⁵. FDRE, *የዲሞክራሲ ስረዓት ግንባታ (Building democratic system)* p.21.

⁴⁶. Ibid., p.20.

⁴⁷. Ibid., p.23.

level councils was one way of engaging a large number of people in the democratization processes while ensuring that local-level officials consult with the people before making a decision was another. This suggestion was indeed vigorously pursued in the post-2005 period though it was largely understood in the literature as a move driven by the regime`s authoritarian drift.

Though the securitisation discourses were dominantly about democracy and development, the regime also asserted that democracy without good governance would not address the existential challenges of the country. It argued that democracy, in the absence of good governance, would not save the country from anarchy and disintegration.⁴⁸The EPRDF thus approached the relationship between the two in a way that democracy is a necessity but not sufficient a condition for good governance. Indeed, a democratic system is not necessarily accompanied by an efficient government with a low rate of corruption and the pursuit of people-centred governance, qualities that are constitutive of the concept of good governance.⁴⁹ Hence, it claimed that in order to save the country from corruption and disintegration both democracy and good governance has to be instituted.

The other key policy document of the EPRDF in the immediate post-renewal period that has given impetus to the securitisation of development and democracy was the *Foreign Affairs and National Security Policy and Strategy*. According to Abebe, this policy is usually next to a constitution in the hierarchy of policies in the attention it commands.⁵⁰ In this document, the regime boldly asserted “[b]ringing about people-centred rapid development and ensuring democracy and good governance is what our national interest is all about. All other issues are secondary to, and based on, these fundamentals.”⁵¹A policy that does not target these twin goals was declared to be irrelevant because by failing to realise these goals, it claimed, the country will collapse, disintegration would follow and since this cannot happen peacefully, a crisis of a severe magnitude would ensue.⁵² Hence, democracy is essential not only for the citizens` safety but also for the continuous upkeep of the country.

⁴⁸. FDRE, *የዲሞክራሲ ስረዓት ግንባታ (Building democratic system)* P.82.

⁴⁹. Ibid.

⁵⁰. Tekilehaymanot, *የኢትዮጵያ ፖለቲካ (Ethiopian politics)*

⁵¹. Ibid.p.8

⁵². Ibid.p.6

The securitisation of development and democracy enunciated in these documents was reiterated time and again in subsequent EPRDF party pamphlets, training manuals, newspapers and other symbolic depictions, one of which is attached herewith.



The picture (taken from the compound of the Ministry of Defence) portrays the late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi seemingly pointing at someone probably participating in a large gathering. At the top of the image, a written phrase reads “our main enemy is poverty.” The fact that this picture is posted inside the compound of the Ministry of Defence reveals the cross-institutional nature of the securitisation discourse. This fact, along with other documents discussed below, indicate the regime’s aspiration to institutionalize the existential pursuit of democracy and development.

A training document titled “ዲሞክራሲ እና ዲሞክራሲያዊ አንድነት በኢትዮጵያ” (*Democracy and democratic unity in Ethiopia*),⁵³ likewise, provides a lengthy description of the journey of securitising democracy and development in the country that has been sketched above. The document was prepared to train university students in the wake of the post-2005 electoral crisis during which many of the EPRDF’s narratives were challenged by the opposition. Reiterating what was noted earlier, the regime argued that fighting rent-seeking and establishing a system that benefits the people proportional to their contribution to the economy was declared to be a matter of survival. This situation occurs because, it claimed, the structural sources of rent-

⁵³. EPRDF, *ዲሞክራሲ እና ዲሞክራሲያዊ አንድነት* (*Democracy and democratic unity*).

seeking are rooted in the political economy of the country. That is to say, the political and economic conditions of the country create incentives to act in a manner that entrenches rent-seeking. When the political economy of rent-seeking is dominant, it noted, the power struggle is zero-sum: when one gains the other loses. Political struggle, therefore, is a life and death struggle among rent-seekers who have no place for a democratic struggle for power based upon compromises and negotiation of conflicting interests. It indicated that even if, theoretically, it would be possible to undertake a free and fair election, the result would not be accepted for the stake is survival. Hence, it asserted, transforming this political economy by legally fighting rent-seeking and, at the same time, building a democratic and developmental political economy is an imperative of the highest priority.

Drawing from this analysis, the training booklet went further to declare that the struggle was between “dependent decadents” and “revolutionary democrats”; there is no neutral position.⁵⁴

...the choice for the Ethiopian people is simple and short. Either we choose the dependent [the rent-seekers] way and lead the country to anti-democracy, atrocities and disintegration or resist dependence and lead the country on the course to peace, development and democracy. There is no other choice. The choice is a matter of survival. Because of this, no Ethiopian can hold a middle position or can be a neutral spectator. Either he/she will line up in support of peace, development and democracy or, knowingly or unknowingly, will become a force of dependence and destruction. Since the intellectual is a leader of the country, it has to choose the better option and identify its role thereof.⁵⁵

This statement is more than an assertion of the existential nature of the quest for democracy and development. Going beyond this stance, it declared that there were two and only two forces: the dependent referring to the opposition and revolutionary democrat represented by the EPRDF. It also declared that the EPRDF was committed to development and democracy while being challenged by a range of dependent forces, thereby urging the trainee to support the struggle for development, peace and democracy. Granted that the rent-seekers include all those in the opposition camp, it projected an image of a party that confronts unruly oppositions that should have been repressed and emasculated if the EPRDF was not committed to democracy.

⁵⁴. Ibid.

⁵⁵. Ibid.

Another training booklet prepared by the EPRDF in 2010 further reiterated this securitised discourse, this time explicitly drawing from and emphasizing the experiences of the East Asian developmental states and the regime's experience up to that date.⁵⁶ It revisited the conclusions of the renewal⁵⁷: that without democracy and development an Armageddon would happen; and that the 2005 post-election violence was an indication of what was to come without a rapid rate of growth. The EPRDF, in this document, explained the existential nature of the quest for democracy by underscoring the need for democratically accommodate ethnic and religious diversity in the face of rising extremism.⁵⁸ The document succinctly summarized the rationale for the securitisation of democracy and development in the following ways:

Poverty generated grievance can lead the people to destruction; exposes them to backwardness; and consequently, makes them vulnerable to the manipulation of anti-peace forces. Therefore, it is a source of war and chaos. Considering our limited capacity emanating from our poverty, those foreign village bullies could dare to challenge us. Failure to manage our diversity through democracy and good governance could lead us to infighting opening opportunities for foreign village bullies to exploit this and challenge us. Therefore, if we want to dry out the deeper sources of war and chaos and ensure the continuation of the Ethiopian renaissance, we have to tackle poverty quickly and build a democratic system that can accommodate our diversity.⁵⁹

While the regime separates democracy and development for analytical purposes, it mostly approaches them as interconnected political economy issues. It argued that to realise development, the political and economic conditions of the country that are favourable for rent-seeking have to be transformed, which, if successful, would help to durably institute a democratic form of governance. A democratic form of governance, in turn, was argued to be one of the key instruments in the struggle to herald people-centred development: it equated the struggle for development without democracy with working with one hand while it is possible to work with both.⁶⁰

Other historical documents and writings of senior officials reiterated such a coherent line of reasoning. One narrating of the history of the EPRDF published in 2011, for instance, argued that making the current pace of change irreversible requires a struggle going for decades. If

⁵⁶. EPRDF, *የታላቋሰው መስመር* (*The renewal line*).

⁵⁷. What is dubbed the 'Renewal' is the debate in the aftermath of the Ethio-Eritrea war between Meles's faction and the others who had a different understanding of the country's problem. With Meles able to outmanoeuvre the other members of the Front, his line of reasoning was accepted as the official policy lines of the Ethiopian state.

⁵⁸. Ibid.

⁵⁹. Ibid. p.113

⁶⁰. FDRE, *Foreign Affairs*.

members forget this fact and somehow detract themselves, it warned its members, the avalanche (war, atrocity, disintegration) would surely catch them.⁶¹ On the other hand, it inspired members by claiming that “If we continue to outrun the avalanche our Front will be at the pinnacle of not only the history of oppressed people of the country but also the world.”⁶²

Similarly, a book by Bereket Simon (the top officer and close confidant of Meles) repeated the same narrative arguing that by the time the EPRDF presented its vision of systemic threats in terms of decadence into a rent-seeking government, signs of Armageddon were already in the making that would only be reversed by accelerating the development and governance agenda of the country.⁶³ According to Bereket, drought was becoming recurrent, violence was flaring up in various places and in various forms which would culminate in a national crisis unless sustained growth is realised and democratic governance instituted.⁶⁴ A training booklet on “አብዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲያዊ አመራር ጥያቄ” (*The Question of Revolutionary Democratic Leadership*) also argued that in a context of pervasive poverty and problems of bad governance durable peace is hard to come by and that descent to war and anarchy is simply a matter of time.⁶⁵ The only escape from this situation, it claimed, is replacing the political economy of rent-seeking with a developmental and democratic political economy.

3.2.3. Evolution of the Securitisation Discourse

Since the introduction of the securitisation discourse in the early 2000s, the political dynamics of Ethiopia has evolved significantly. In 2005 the country entertained the first-ever free and fair pre-election campaign that was nevertheless ended with post-election crisis: the political space of the country was constricted; the architect of the system, Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, died; and a political crisis broke out leading to two rounds of a state of emergency. Throughout the process, the securitisation of development and democracy had been reiterated continuously, taking relevant emerging examples and interpreting them in light of the securitisation agenda. This fact can be evidenced by tracing the points made about the issue of development and democracy in the party pamphlet አዲስ ራዕይ (New Vision).

⁶¹. EPRDF, *ኢሃዲግ ከምስረታ (EPRDF from establishment)*.

⁶². Ibid.

⁶³. Simon, *የሁለት ምርጫዎች ወግ (A conversation between two elections)*

⁶⁴. Ibid.

⁶⁵. EPRDF, *የአብዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲያዊ አመራር ጥያቄ (The question of revolutionary democratic leadership)* (Addis Ababa: Mega Printng Press, 1999 EC).

The 2007 edition of this party magazine argued that the regime had already considered democracy and development as a matter of survival in which the 2005 election points to the dangers looming large in this regard.⁶⁶ During this period, it argued, losing the election was not simply the replacement of one party by the other; it was the beginning of the disintegration of the country as all other political forces did not adequately grasp the sources of the country's problem and the solutions thereof.⁶⁷ In relation to the electoral crisis, the document noted that "[t]he higher leadership's anticipation that a huge avalanche would bury us happened from an unexpected source in unexpected ways."⁶⁸ It claimed that the EPRDF and the country survived the avalanche without serious damage, thanks to the developmental and democratic policies pursued, based upon an accurate analysis of the country's problem.⁶⁹ However, it also noted that from the election the party learned of the existence of deep grievances related to a lack of good governance that needed urgent solutions. Accordingly, the executive, the judiciary and the parliament were urged to fulfil their respective roles to advance democratic governance and enhance development with a sense of urgency.⁷⁰

In its next issue, the same magazine underscored the survival imperatives of democracy and development while also noting the limitations observed in the implementation process.⁷¹ It urged its members that since the causes of chaos and disorder are bad governance and poverty, the regime had to concertedly act against these two enemies.⁷² To this effect, the leaders of the EPRDF were urged to firmly grasp its mission and to not allow themselves to be detracted by other agendas. This fact was further reinforced in its next issue, which reminded its readers that poverty was challenging the people and government with all its force and, therefore, urged its members to focus their struggle for development, democracy and peace on those elements that were relatively lagging.⁷³ The July-August edition, in its discussion of the party's goal in the 2008 local election, straightforwardly indicated that so long as voters are confident that their

⁶⁶. Kibebew Zeleke, "መልካም አስተዳድር የሞት ሽረት ጉዳይ ነው" (Good governance is a life and death issue), *አዲስ ረዳይ (New Vision)* 1, no. 4 (1999 EC).

⁶⁷. EPRDF, "ዘጠነኛ ድርጅታዊ ጉባኤ እና ስትራቴጂያዊ ፋይዳወቅ (the Ninth EPRDF Congress and its strategic relevance)," *አዲስ ረዳይ (New Vision)* 4, no. 1 (2005 EC).

⁶⁸. EPRDF, *ኢሃዲግ ከምስረታ (EPRDF from establishment)*.

⁶⁹. Ibid.

⁷⁰. Zeleke, "መልካም አስተዳድር" (Good governance).

⁷¹. Kifle Moges, "ለዳበረ ለውጥ ብቁ አመራር" (Capable leadership for consolidating change), *አዲስ ረዳይ (New Vision)* 1, no. 5 (1999EC).

⁷². Ibid.

⁷³. Tilahun Zeleke, "የቅንጅት ነውጠኛ አመራር የይቅርታ ጥያቄና ህገመንግስታዊ ድላችን" (The pardon request of the rebellious colation for unity and democracy leadership and our constitutional success), *አዲስ ረዳይ (New Vision)* 1, no. 7 (1999EC).

vote matters and go to the voting station with such confidence, regardless of whom they support, they should be viewed favourably.⁷⁴ On the other hand, a citizen who lost interest in the democratic process, whatever his/her position, was viewed to be moving away from the EPRDF's lines of thinking.⁷⁵

A similar reiteration was made in the subsequent editions. In the 2008 edition, it argued that a developed market economy could be achieved only if rent-seeking is dismantled by building a developmental and democratic political economy.⁷⁶ To sustain the life and death struggle for a democratic developmental political economy, the party noted that it had introduced a leadership succession programme so that the next generation would take the necessary responsibility before the capacity of the previous one was exhausted. This pamphlet also urged its members in the prelude to the 2010 election to refrain from undemocratic practices given that democracy was an existential issue of the country.⁷⁷

In the 2009 edition, the magazine maintained that lower-level cadres violated democratic principles either because of self-interest or seeing the opposition engaged in illegal activity. Either way, it claimed, the rules of democratic government had to be respected so as not to lose the people's confidence.⁷⁸ Even if the party wins through corrupt election practices, it warned, that discontent would simmer and eventually challenge the party in a moment it is least prepared to cope with such eventuality.⁷⁹ These utterances were made in a period in which the authoritarian drift of the party had become indefensible, leading some people to allege that the EPRDF was transforming the country into a one party system. The next edition rather flatly rejected this accusation affirming the survival of democracy imperative and indicating that one party system is not in the EPRDF's interest.⁸⁰ To establish a one-party system the EPRDF has to change the constitution which would offend the security apparatus, an institution, it claimed, that was the guardian of the constitutional system.⁸¹

⁷⁴. EPRDF, "ምርጫ 2000 (Election 2000)," *አዲስ ረጅይ (New Vision)* 2, no. 1 (2000 EC).

⁷⁵. Ibid.

⁷⁶. EPRDF, "ማስፋት ወቅታዊ የግብርና እቅዳችን" (Scaling up: Our current agricultural development plan), *አዲስ ረጅይ* 2, no. 2 (2000EC).

⁷⁷. EPRDF, "የ2002 ምርጫ ስታራቴጂችን" (Our 2002 election strategy), *አዲስ ረጅይ (New Vision)* 3, no. 1 (2001EC).

⁷⁸. Ibid.

⁷⁹. Ibid.

⁸⁰. EPRDF, "የምርጫ 2002 ትራቴጂዋ ፍይዳ" (The strategic relevance of the 2002 election), *አዲስ ረጅይ (New Vision)* 3, no. 3 (2002 EC).

⁸¹. Ibid.

That said, the pamphlet viewed the 2010 decisive electoral victory as a welcome development. The opposition, it reasoned, would no longer use the parliament to preach their politics of hate. No longer they would agitate their followers by making provocative utterances such as “people who have nothing to eat will eat their leader.”⁸² It would rather open the space for moderate oppositions that were driven by policy consideration and were loyal to the constitutional system. It further indicated its commitment to build the Ethiopian democracy on a solid foundation by increasing the active mobilization and direct participation of the people.⁸³ In this regard, it urged its member not to be detracted by the electoral gains achieved in the 2010 election because they were voted into power not because the EPRDF achieved results but because the people believed it would address the governance problems of the country in the next term. As an element of a life and death struggle against rent-seeking, the EPRDF claimed that democracy building is first and foremost a political struggle. Therefore, the party had to convince the people about the significance of the various policies crafted to herald democracy and mobilize them in the fight against rent-seeking.⁸⁴

Though the late Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi, was at the centre of such a securitised way of approaching development and democracy, the framing outlived his death in 2012. The 2013 edition of the party pamphlet indicated the continuation of such a securitised narrative claiming that the source of the country`s security problems were poverty, backwardness and rent seeking.⁸⁵ After reiterating the existential nature of the quest for democracy and development, the 2016 edition, likewise, urged microfinance institutions to undertake a life and death struggle against factors that obstruct the effort to transform the economy.⁸⁶ Echoing a similar narrative noted earlier the EPRDF argued that though the people voted for this party in the 2015 election, they did so expecting it to address their governance discontents. Accordingly, it urged its members to commit to address these “discontents” and “bitter grievances” of the people.

⁸². EPRDF, "የ8ኛው ድርጅታዊ ጉባኤችን ወሳኔወች፣ አግራዊ ጉዳዮችና ቀጣይ ስራወች" (8th EPRDF congress decisions, national issues and subsequent Works), *አዲስ ራሕይ* (*New Vision*) 3, no. 4 (2003EC). This was a speech made in relation to the rising cost of living and the regime`s failure to take any meaningful measures. The 2005-2010 electoral cycle was characterized by an inflation level as high as 45% in 2008.

⁸³. Ibid.

⁸⁴. EPRDF, 8ኛው ድርጅታዊ ጉባኤ(Eighth congress); EPRDF, *ዲሞክራሲ እና ዲሞክራሲያዊ አንድነት* (*Democracy and democratic unity*).

⁸⁵. EPRDF, "የወሳኔወች ጠንካራ አፍጻጽም ከ9ኛ ድርጅታዊ ጉባኤችን ማግስት" (Strong implementation of decisions in the aftermath of our 9th congress), *አዲስ ራሕይ* (*New Vision*) 4, no. 3 (2005 EC).

⁸⁶. EPRDF, "የግንባታ 20 ስኬቶቻችንና ቀጣይ የትኩረት አቅጣጫወቻችን " (Achievements of may 20 and our next focus), *አዲስ ራሕይ* (*New Vision*) (2006 EC).

Without this, it warned, war, anarchy and disintegration would follow.⁸⁷ Responding to allegations that the EPRDF was pursuing an authoritarian developmental model, it claimed that the system the EPRDF builds “combines both democracy and development and that one without the other will not be realised. To ensure the participation of the people and bring about broad-based development, transforming the rent-seeking political economy with a developmental political economy and ensuring good governance is a matter of life and death.”⁸⁸ When rent-seeking dominates the political landscape, it argued, a development that benefits all the people as per their contribution to the economy and effort at value creation, would not be realised.⁸⁹ This fact, it reasoned, is because the wealth of rent-seekers is not acquired through free competition or making a productive contribution to the economy. Hence, it claimed, the fight against rent-seeking is a life and death struggle.

The pamphlet’s next edition extensively documented the social protests of the Amhara and the Oromo against the political repression and economic exploitation of the regime. The regime claimed that there was no way of addressing the demands of the protesters other than continuing the democratic and developmental agenda as a matter of urgency.⁹⁰ The EPRDF attributed the protest to the failure of governance and development in general and youth unemployment in particular. It further argued that when the EPRDF lately introduced some measures to address the youth unemployment problem, the implementation process was undermined by the weaknesses of the leadership and rising rent-seeking tendencies.⁹¹ According to the regime, land was expropriated from the peasantry without adequate compensation, and in some cases, it was re-sold to business actors outside the legal framework.⁹²

Moreover, the EPRDF claimed that it was so blinded by the development gains that it forgot rent-seeking had become pervasive in its scope and challenging in its financial and networking capacity.⁹³ The 2016 party document further warned that if this force became dominant, it would keep on amassing land and prey on state resources; organise its network to eliminate

⁸⁷. EPRDF, "የ10ኛው ድርጅታዊ ጉባኤዎችን ውሳኔዎችና ስትራቴጂያዊ ፋይዳ" (the Decisions of our 10th congress and its strategic relevance), *አዲስ ራሽይ(New Vision)* 5, no. 2 (2008 EC).

⁸⁸. Ibid.

⁸⁹. EPRDF, "የተሃድሶ መስመራችን፣ የፀረ-ኪራይ ሰብሳቢነት ትግሉና የወቅቱ ሁኔታ" (Our renewal policy, the fight against rent seeking and the current situation, *አዲስ ራሽይ(New Vision)*5, no.4 (2008 EC).

⁹⁰. Ibid.

⁹¹. Ibid.

⁹². Ibid.

⁹³. EPRDF, "የማሽቆልቆል ምዕራፍ" (Downward journey).

those who oppose it; and eventually lead the country along the path of state failure.⁹⁴ The more wealth was created, the regime argued, the more rent-seeking become a serious issue because a few people sought to monopolize these gains.⁹⁵ The edition directly quotes from the formative documents discussed earlier in this study to reaffirm its point that democracy and development had to be pursued as existential issues. Finally, the 2018 pamphlet introduced the idea of *deep renewal* to address the continuing political crisis of the country, taking these crises as an affirmation of the correctness of the party`s political philosophy. The protests were primarily attributed to either lagging development, bad governance or the party`s failure to address newly emerging problems.⁹⁶

In general, four essential points regarding the securitisation process emerge from the above discussion. First, the securitisation of development and democracy in Ethiopia was expressed through different modalities. The deployment of alarming languages that warn what would happen unless democracy and development were realised as fast as possible is the dominant mode of securitising. Justifying its demand for greater commitment to develop and democratize the country by a securitised justification, as well as suggesting novel approaches to advance these goals due to the existential nature of the quest for democracy and development were the other modality of securitisation. The deployment of security metaphors in the actions undertaken to herald development and institutionalize democracy and good governance constitutes yet another means of expressing securitising discourses. The idea of “transformational troop” discussed in chapter seven below is a typical example of this trait.

Second, the securitisation discourse adapted its narrative to new developments while retaining its core tenets. The 2005 post-election violence was taken to be indicative of what was to come if the regime failed to rapidly realise development and institutionalize democracy: scrupulous politicians capitalize on the “errors of our democracy” while the unemployed youth serve as their “cannon fodder”.⁹⁷ Similarly, although radicalism was not on the agenda in the pioneer securitising discourses, this time it was indicated that without democratic management of religious diversity, radicalism will thrive on the people`s grievances (this situation is further explored in chapter eight below).

⁹⁴. EPRDF, "የተሃድሶ መስመራችን" (Our renewal policy).

⁹⁵. Ibid.

⁹⁶. EPRDF, "እንደገና በጥልቀት የመታደስ ንቅናቄያችን አስፈላጊነት፣ ይዘትና ፋይዳ" (Our second deep renewal: its necessity, scope and relevance), *አዲስ ራእይ(New Vision)* 5, no. 6 (2009 EC).

⁹⁷. Simon, *የሁለት ምርጫዎች ወግ(A conversation between two elections)*

Third, the fact that the discourse was disseminated through the party magazine indicates the regime's aspiration to reach a larger audience. The EPRDF relied largely on popular mobilization which requires it to disseminate its vision down to the lowest level. With this aim, various policy documents and party pamphlets reminded readers of the existential nature of the democratic and developmental quest of the country.

Finally, the commonly held perception by observers of Ethiopian politics that the regime shifted its discourse towards an authoritarian developmental model in the post-2005 period is not correct.⁹⁸ There had not been a noticeable shift in the policy discourses during this period notwithstanding the fact that the regime's authoritarian backlash had become increasingly indefensible. The regime continued its discourse of the existential nature of the quest for both democracy and development. According to Meles, few developing countries were as committed as Ethiopia to institutionalize democracy and entrench the culture of respect for human rights.⁹⁹ The laws that were often raised to signal authoritarian shift were, according to Meles, simply aimed at creating the space within which democracy would organically develop.¹⁰⁰ The opposition, many of whom had an affiliation with the past regimes, on the other hand, were allegedly undemocratic at their core and bent on engaging in all-or-nothing politics. Even under the best of circumstances, the EPRDF claimed that they wished to ride on waves of grassroots populism that will ultimately deliver nothing of substance.¹⁰¹ This nature of the oppositions was then used to justify the regime's condescending approach in which no autonomous centres of power were allowed to emerge. The oppositions were too divided with an irreconcilable vision for the country that makes them prey for the regime's criticism. However, using this approach to justify the narrowing of the political space and widespread violation of human rights is to capitalize on their weakness.

Regardless of the above situation, the idea that the main threat to the system was rent-seeking both inside and outside the party and that fighting rent-seeking required a dual struggle of punishing the main rent-seekers and transforming the political economy of the country, plus the belief that democracy, development and good governance has to be pursued together as a matter of urgency to transform the political economy of the country, remained the main

⁹⁸. Fiseha, "Federalism, Development."

⁹⁹. WikiLeaks, "Prime Minister Meles on Balancing and Strengthening U.S. Relations.," 8 July 2009, https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09ADDISABABA1599_a.html.

¹⁰⁰. WikiLeaks, "Meles on New Cso/Ngo Law: Brace for Change".

¹⁰¹. WikiLeaks, "Revolutionary Democracy," 28 April 2008, https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08ADDISABABA1154_a.html.

narratives of the post-2001 period. Moreover, time and again, the party asserted that the struggle for these goals had to start within the party itself (this aspect is discussed in greater detail in chapter six).

3.3. EPRDF`s Logics of Securitised Problem Definition and Policy Formulation

To expound on the regime`s logics of defining the lack of democracy and development as existential threats, the discourse is analysed through the three criteria identified in chapter two section 2.3.2.2.3. above. These were the kind of actions performed through language, including action conducted *in* (as opposed to *by*) speaking security and actions justified and values held to be good, legitimate, rightful by this way of defining a problem; the losers and beneficiaries of these policies or problem definitions; and the juxtaposition of various potential logics of action.

3.3.1. What Was Done in Speaking Security and What Was Justified by the Security Frame?

Two clarifications are in order before discussing what has been undertaken through the very deployment of securitising discourses. First, what a (policy) text linguistically *did* can only be understood from the perspective of the audience¹⁰² (the (assumed) readers) who approached a security text. The same text might perform different acts depending upon the actor one considers as the text`s audience. This situation occurs because every text is approached in lieu of its context and pretext (the purpose and orientation with which a reader approaches a text).¹⁰³ The same text that can be taken as an expression of commitment for democracy and development, as viewed by the members of the party, can be a promise if viewed from the perspective of the people who were outside the system and beneficiaries of the democratization and development of the country. Second, in so far as the actions conducted through language can be authorizing, committing, prescribing, asserting, promising, warning, urging and so forth, there will be an actor/group in relation to which such actions are fulfilled. These (potential) actors can be identified when the various texts are viewed in relation to their context of use. Based on this assumption and drawing from the securitisation discourse discussed above, one can identify layers of actors that can be the audience of the policy text securitising democracy

¹⁰². The securitisation literature`s use of audience has different connotation than the people to whom a speech is addressed either explicitly ad implicitly.

¹⁰³. Widdowson, *Text, Context, Pretext*.

and development. These actors could include the middle and lower-level leaders of the party, civil servants, member and supporters of the party, and other members of the populace who might view the party as a legitimate actor. The identification of the action completed in articulating the policy texts in the next few paragraphs but also in the subsequent chapters too, therefore, is based upon my anticipation of the kinds of actions these actors would have thought the regime linguistically *did* in securitising democracy and development.

Approached with these caveats, the securitisation discourse, viewed in its totality, justifies measures that enhance democracy, promote development and advance good governance as desirable, rightful and justifiable causes. It accepts democratic and developmental demands as legitimate and rightful demands requiring governmental responses. While the discourse commits the regime for democratic and developmental goals, it promises and/or assures the masses that the government would act to realise their democratic and developmental aspirations. It also warned the party-state`s lower-level structures what they can legitimately do and should not do. The various measures that were suggested or implied as appropriate and necessary, and the different commitments and promises made in the previous sections confirm what the regime *did* in securitising development and democracy. The next few paragraphs, therefore, highlight how the above commitments/promises/authorizations etc. are indicated in the discursive schemes of the regime through which they were materialized.

Due to a securitised way of approaching the problems of the country, democratic and developmental goals were prescribed as the ultimate guide of party-state conduct. It was warned that detraction from these two goals was to allow oneself to be buried by an avalanche of disorder and chaos. Even the ultimate goal of the foreign and security policy of Ethiopia was defined as heralding broad-based development and promoting democracy. Democracy and development were considered key to prevent war and anarchy as well as avoid harassment by “foreign village bullies”. Any other goal beyond democracy and development was approached as less relevant. Moreover, commitment for a faster rate of growth, one even faster than that registered by the South-East Asian states, was argued to be necessary because popular expectation was rising rendering any result short of this goal risky.

Behaviours that were in line with democracy and values that were developmental were considered acceptable and legitimate whereas those that were contrary to these behaviours and values were repudiated. Accordingly, those judges who abused the justice system were condemned for undermining the survival imperative of democracy, whereas party officials who

thought of cheating in an election were delegitimised for compromising the twin goals of the country. On the other hand, measures that build the people's confidence in the democratic system were encouraged. Hence, voters who voted believing that their vote matters were considered favourably as active citizens whereas those who lost confidence in the system were disparaged for undermining the regime's programme.

In relation to the populace, the discourse commits the regime to develop and democratize the country because this process was made the overriding guide of the security, development and governance, and foreign policies of Ethiopia. The dissemination of these discourses in many of the EPRDF's policy documents, training manuals and party pamphlets also indicates the higher-level leaders' commitment to ensure that the structure of the entire party-state was guided by democratic and developmental goals. It is entirely justifiable, therefore, to argue that in securitising development and democracy, the regime assured or even promised the populace that the party-state was "out there" to spearhead the democratization and development of the country. The same discourse can also be taken as an order since party-state agents were required to adjust their conduct in a way that realised democracy and development. Members of the government and the party were reminded constantly that their primary mission was spearheading the democratization and developmental processes of Ethiopia. To this effect, while they were discursively empowered to take measures that would help realise development and institutionalize democracy, their other concerns were supposed to be of secondary importance.

This expectation, as expounded upon in chapter six of this study, was even boldly stated when the leaders committed themselves to govern and organise the party in a democratic and developmental way. It asserted that to herald development and democracy, maintaining the EPRDF's democratic and developmental character was of paramount importance. In asserting so, the discourse did not just promise the people that it was "out there" to spearhead democracy and development. It also set burdens on its manner of organizing and governing and pinpointed the values and principles its member would imbibe to this effect. The discourse also valued societal democratic and developmental movements when it claimed that the party would find it difficult to maintain its developmental and democratic character without popular movements for democracy and development (an issue discussed further in section 6.3.3. below). This claim would require the EPRDF to approach other democratic and developmental movements as forces supportive of its democratic and developmental agenda. Whether this practice was the

case need not detain us here in so far as the focus of this study is what the regime *did* (*by way of speech acts*) in attaching the security label to development and democracy.

Notwithstanding the above comments, the discourse also seems to project not only an image of a party that was democratic and developmental but also portrayed the opposition as non-democratic and non-developmental. Other forces, thus, were denied a potential contribution to addressing the two key security challenges of the country; they were rather considered as an unnecessary nuisance at best and “forces of destruction” at worst. The EPRDF maintained it was the only party that heralds development and democracy since it had the “correct philosophy and programme” about how development and democracy were to be realised. As time passed and the country registered a robust economic growth, the party further legitimised itself by indicating the correctness of its policies and strategies. When Prime Minister Meles was asked at Colombia University how his party won 99.6 per cent of the parliamentary seats, he claimed that the result of the election was unsurprising for a party that was registering double-digit growth.¹⁰⁴ On the other hand, since the opposition adopted a neoliberal policy (which by no means includes all opposition parties) and attempted to denigrate EPRDF’s successful model, the regime’s logic continued, the opposition parties were labelled rent-seekers. Through these discursive moves, the EPRDF not only aimed to legitimise itself but also delegitimised other political forces.

It is justifiable to question whether this way of framing the opposition amounts to backtracking from the regime’s commitments for democracy as manifested in the securitisation of democracy and development? On the one hand, the EPRDF asserted that the opposition parties are rent-seekers,¹⁰⁵ that they are “forces of destruction”,¹⁰⁶ that they combined legal and illegal means of waging struggle, that they are “neoliberal messengers”,¹⁰⁷ and that they are either “chauvinists” or “narrow nationalists”.¹⁰⁸ On the other hand, the EPRDF frequently asserted that the opposition has to be fought by respecting the democratic rules of the game.¹⁰⁹ The

¹⁰⁴. Meles, "Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Meles Zenawi at World Leaders Forum," (University of Colombia, 2010), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vWoEPK9njWY>

¹⁰⁵. EPRDF, "የቀለም አብዮትና አራተኛው አገራዊ ምርጫ" (Colour revolution and the 4th national election), *አዲስ ራሕይ* (*New Vision*) 3, no. 2 (2002EC).

¹⁰⁶. EPRDF, "የ10ኛው ድርጅታዊ ጉባኤያችን ውሳኔዎችና ስትራቴጂያዊ ፋይዳ" (The decisions of our 10th congress and its strategic relevance), *አዲስ ራሕይ* (*New Vision*) 3, no.4 (2003EC).

¹⁰⁷. EPRDF, *የአቢዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ ምንነት፣ ታሪካዊ አነሳስ፣ እድገትና የወደፊት አቅጣጫ* (*The meaning, historical emergence, development and future direction of revolutionary democracy*).

¹⁰⁸. EPRDF, *የታላቁ ልዩ ልዩ መስመር* (*The renewal line*).

¹⁰⁹. EPRDF, *የዲሞክራሲ ስርዓት ግንባታ ትግልና አብዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ* (*The struggle to build a democratic system and revolutionary democracy*) (Addis Ababa: Mega publishing enterprise, 1999EC).

EPRDF claimed that the best way to fight rent-seekers was to allow them express their opinion because repression would rather embolden them.¹¹⁰ At the same time, it feared that the pursuit of the democratic lines would risk losing election/power, thus, potentially aborting all the democratic and developmental achievements of the EPRDF.¹¹¹

Though such discourses did not amount to backtracking from the democratic agenda, there were possibilities in which lower-level self-interested party-state actors feel justified to repress or otherwise weaken their political opponents. They could justify their action through these discourses, while also overlooking the urge to fight them in a democratic way. This practice, no doubt, would potentially undo the EPRDF's democratic and developmental commitments and obligations. As noted in chapter two of this study, the assertion that humans make sense of phenomena partly by "reading into them the meaning they wish to see"¹¹² should be applicable in such circumstances. Hence, though the discourse seemed to be inspired by concern for development and democracy as per the enlightened self-interest of the party, and imposes commitments and obligations connected to this concern, it had other discursive articulations with the potential to undermine these commitments. As the subsequent chapters of this study indicate, the EPRDF indeed adopted the narratives that delegitimises the opposition, ignoring the urge to manage them in a democratic way. Hence, to an extent the opposition were right when they rejected the securitisation of democracy and development as an indication of the regime's commitment to democracy and development.

3.3.2. Losers and Beneficiaries of the Securitisation Frame

As suggested in chapter two (section 2.3.2.2.4.), analysing the losers and beneficiaries of the frame identified based upon the narrative of opposing actors would be useful in singling out the concerns that informed the securitisation of development and democracy. It not only indicates which actors have issue with the framing but also, and more importantly, reveals the contestation of the regime's actions when making securitising discourses. Hence, analysing the losers and beneficiaries of the frame has the added potential of modifying the literature on audience acceptance where acceptance is restricted to acknowledging the threatening nature of an issue labelled so. The issue may not simply be whether the audience accepts an issue so

¹¹⁰. EPRDF, *የታላቁ ሰው መስመር* (*The renewal line*); EPRDF, *የዲሞክራሲ ስርዓት ግንባታ ትግል* (*the Struggle to Build a Democratic System*)

¹¹¹. EPRDF, *የዲሞክራሲ ስርዓት ግንባታ ትግል* (*The struggle to build a democratic system*)

¹¹². Weick, Sutcliffe, and Obstfeld, "Organizing and the Process of Sensemaking," p.207.

framed; it also could be whether what the securitising actor *did* in securitising an issue is increasing the urgency with which the issue should be addressed. The debate could relate more to the question of what the securitising actor is doing in performing securitising speech acts. In other words, the relevant contestation could be on what concerns motivate such acts and, thus, what goal is sought when attaching the security label to an issue or problem. The narratives of competing actors as to why the discourse emerged at the time it did, as well as what seems to be the purpose of the framing, indicate such a scenario. Three major narratives are worthy of consideration in this regard: the narrative of the EPRDF, those of the political elites that were excluded due to differences over the framing of the country's problem in 2001, and the opposition in general.

3.3.2.1. The Narrative of the EPRDF

The EPRDF's narrative has been extendedly elaborated in the first section of this chapter. To recap, it is maintained that the EPRDF had always been both revolutionary and democratic, always having the interests of the masses at heart. This fact notwithstanding, the EPRDF was not in a position to pursue its Marxist ideology at the time it overthrew the military regime, generating confusion over how to frame the country's problems and, therefore, how to address them. In the absence of a shared understanding of the country's problems and their solutions, some leaders overlooked their public mission, pursuing rather their private interests. The EPRDF consequently began to be uprooted from its mass base and lost its revolutionary democratic character, a state of affairs that was further compounded by the social condition of Ethiopia that was not supportive of maintaining the revolutionary character of the party. While this degeneration continued and was even further accentuated with the Ethio-Eritrea war, the post-war renewal enabled the EPRDF to reclaim its true character through properly discussing its journey to *Bonapartist* decadence and the way out. This practice paved the way for the consideration of development and democracy as matters of national security because, without them, *Bonapartist* decadence would ensue, ultimately leading the country to anarchy, disintegration and "Armageddon".

Hence, in framing development and democracy as matters of survival, the EPRDF regime was preoccupied with nothing other than the realization of these two goals as urgently as possible before the country's existential challenges reached a point of no return. This self-explication of the concern behind the framing provides an image of a party that had always been behind the masses. As a party of such stature, it was able to adjust failures to serve the people through

addressing the deeper drivers of instability and disintegration. Other contending actors challenge this situation while providing their explanations of what was being performed in making the securitising discourse. Former members of the TPLF who were excluded from the governing party following the 2001 split, ascribe a different purpose to the introduction of the securitisation of development and democracy than is suggested by the above narrative.

3.3.2.2. The Narrative of the Splintered Group

According to this group of former TPLF members, the concern inspiring the introduction of the securitising discourse was not democracy or the need to fight corruption; it was rather introduced to shift the agenda of the party's evaluation away from the issues of national sovereignty and the conduct of the Ethio-Eritrea war, and garner support from the cadres through deploying an obscure Marxist concept. Gebru Asrat, one of the top members of the TPLF who was excluded from the EPRDF, argues that this discourse of Bonapartism and associated notions were introduced to achieve two goals simultaneously. First, Meles sought to confuse those cadres who would have otherwise supported the dissidents, with Marxist jargon and thus garner their support.¹¹³ Second, he wanted to divert the anger caused by his position during the war when he had adopted a soft-hearted approach to Eritrea even when Ethiopia's vital interest was threatened. Gebru claims that when Meles realised that he would be held accountable for his blunder in leading the war (see section 3.2. above), he introduced the discourse of *Bonapartist* decadence and the derivative discourse of securitisation of development and democracy to secure the purposes noted above.

The dissidents provide some evidence to support this claim. To begin with, when the agenda of the EPRDF's ten-year evaluation was introduced before the outbreak of the Ethio-Eritrea war, the issue of Bonapartism was not one of them. The introduction of this particular discourse after disagreement emerged among the leaders of the TPLF meant that Meles must have some sinister motive in articulating such a discourse. Second, the dissidents argued that Meles was not bothered by the absence of democracy. The main issues of the Bonapartism paper—anti-democratic governance practices and corruption within the party—would have easily been approached without the discourse of Bonapartism, had Meles really been concerned with the absence of democracy and the rise of corruption. Moreover, he would not have acted in undemocratic ways to side-line his opponents if he was saying what he meant in articulating

¹¹³. Asrat, ዲሞክራሲና ሉዓላዊነት በኢትዮጵያ (*Democracy and sovereignty in Ethiopia*).

the discourse.¹¹⁴ The discourse, they argued was rather opportunistically used to side-line dissenters rather than fighting corruption because many of Meles`s supporters who were tainted with corruption were left unscathed. Meles indeed penalized not only the dissenters but also their families by taking grossly undemocratic measures that violated their human and democratic rights.¹¹⁵

It can be argued, however, that the differences between Meles and the splinter group was paradigmatic. It seemed to entail how to make sense of the party`s degeneration into an anti-democratic and corruption-ridden organisation. Viewing it through a class lens, Meles attributed this decline to the attitudinal and practical corruption of the ruling elites that used its position to advance personal and familial concerns. His critics preferred the commonly accepted understanding of corruption. Using Bonapartism, he sought to connect this attitude with the nature and relations of the various social forces of the country, mainly the weakness of the peasantry; the petit bourgeoisie character of the leadership; and the incipient nature of the development of capitalism in the country. Viewed in this way, though many of the accusations against Meles were indeed correct, it is not sufficient to argue that his concern behind the introduction of the idea of Bonapartism was the outmanoeuvring of the dissenters who challenged his “inappropriate” order in the war. He might have acted the way he did (as the EPRDF`s booklet documenting the organisation`s history argues) towards Eritrea and the war simply because he had had the idea introduced later.¹¹⁶ Some indications pointed at this possibility.

In 1997, Meles reportedly presented a paper that calls for the dissolution of the TPLF, arguing that it had realised its goal of overthrowing the Derg and introducing a system that protects the rights of the nations, nationalities and peoples of Ethiopia.¹¹⁷ Moreover, the level of corruption within the TPLF and EPRDF had been rising during this period (as even dissenters admit) while the economy registered erratic growth.¹¹⁸ This fact might have worried Meles while his freedom of action, as he reportedly complained, was constrained by ideologically devout

¹¹⁴. Ibid.

¹¹⁵. Tekilehaymanot, *የኢትዮጵያ ፖለቲካ(Ethiopian politics)*

¹¹⁶. EPRDF, *ኢሃዲግ ከምስረታ(EPRDF from estblishment)*.

¹¹⁷.Paulos, "Ethiopia, the Tplf."

¹¹⁸. Asrat, *ዲሞክራሲና ሉዓላዊነት በኢትዮጵያ (Democracy and sovereignty in Ethiopia)*; EPRDF, *ኢሃዲግ ከምስረታ(EPRDF from Estblishment)*.

members of his party who limited his opportunities for policy experimentation.¹¹⁹ While Meles's pragmatic personality would have allowed such activities, his critics were reportedly hardcore ideologues who would resist any such move.¹²⁰ Moreover, he seemed to sincerely believe that to maintain the autonomy of the Ethiopian state, Ethiopia has to compete in the world market and avoid dependence upon foreign aid, both measures that demanded the prioritization of democracy and development.¹²¹ Meles, thus, might have been waiting for the right time to air such concerns. The securitisation discourse was also pursued even with greater vigour after the dissenting groups were expelled from the EPRDF and his position was secure, which challenges the dissenters' claim. Hence, there is room to interpret the Bonapartist discourse as his attempt at defending his position and that it was inspired by the need to re-focus the regime's efforts and resources on democratizing and developing Ethiopia. The difference between the two groups could thus be the prioritization of issues where Meles developed the discourse of Bonapartism as an argument to prioritise development and democracy, whereas his opponents prioritised Eritrea and the effect of foreign powers.

If Meles was indeed interested in promoting democracy and development more than retaining his grip on power, one may ask, why the subsequent practices of the regime turned out to be so authoritarian. This question informed the narrative of the opposition groups that, from the outset, were not members of the EPRDF.

3.3.2.3. The Oppositions' Narrative

According to this group, the securitisation of development and democracy was nothing but an instrument of domestic and international legitimization.¹²² The lack of any meaningful democratic practices in Ethiopia at that time and an exclusionary economy largely controlled by those who were connected with the EPRDF was taken as evidence of this. Merara, a veteran opposition leader, argues that the regime preached multiparty democracy and yet worked with all its forces to emasculate the emergence of strong opposition, independent institutions, and

¹¹⁹. Asrat, *ዲሞክራሲና ሉዓላዊነት በኢትዮጵያ (Democracy and sovereignty in Ethiopia)*; Sarah Vaughan, "Revolutionary Democratic State-Building: Party, State and People in the Eprdf's Ethiopia," *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 5, no. 4 (2011).

¹²⁰. WikiLeaks, "Biographic Note: Inferring Meles," 27 March 2009, https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09ADDIS_ABABA729_a.html.

¹²¹. ETV, "Meles on Poverty".

¹²². Berhanu Nega, "No Shortcut to Stability: Democratic Accountability and Sustainable Development in Ethiopia," *Social Research* 77, no. 4 (2010).

alternative civil society voices.¹²³ He also argues that the regime preached continuously about development and yet it was aimed more at creating a bourgeois class connected with the regime than durably transforming the life of the broad masses.¹²⁴ The regime was delegitimising the oppositions as “forces of destruction” and, therefore, claimed that without the EPRDF Ethiopia’s developmental gains would be reversed.¹²⁵ Similarly, Berhanu, a professor of economics and current leader of one of the opposition parties that was previously fighting the regime, argues that the regime’s aim was to legitimise its rule by delivering rapid growth and, thus, retaining its power through the democratic process. However, with an economy that failed to change the life of ordinary people and the resultant failure to secure democratic legitimacy, the EPRDF reverted to the strategy of deception.¹²⁶ Accordingly, an exaggerated rate of growth was widely disseminated; the country’s satisfactory journey towards the Millennium Development Goals was preached, and democracy was declared to be an existential question, while publicly violating human and democratic rights.¹²⁷ Hence, securitisation of development and democracy, Berhanu argues, was nothing but a manifestation of Meles’s “genius at deception” aimed at gaining the support of the donor community, silencing domestic opponents, and preying on the country’s resources in the name of development and democracy.¹²⁸

These critics have some valid points because the EPRDF was using the securitisation discourse to garner internal and external legitimacy. When the regime was criticized for its authoritarianism, it used to argue that as an actor that pursues democracy as an existential concern, it was not fair to accuse it of authoritarianism. When donors, for instance, raised concern over the narrowing of the political space, the EPRDF reacted against such criticism by indicating its commitment for democracy and development as manifested in its securitisation of democracy and development.¹²⁹ Likewise, when the oppositions complained against its

¹²³. Gudina Merera, *የኢትዮጵያ የታሪክ ፈተናዎች እና የሚጋጩ ህልሞች፣ የኢሃዲድ ቆርጦ ቀጥል ፖለቲካ (Challenges on ethiopia’s history and conflicting visions: EPRDF’s cut-and-paste politics)*, 2nd ed. (Addis Ababa: Grafic Publisher, 2008 EC).

¹²⁴. Ibid.

¹²⁵. Ibid.

¹²⁶. Nega, "No Shortcut to Stability."

¹²⁷. Berihanu Nega, *ዲሞክራሲና ሁለተኛው ልማት ኢትዮጵያ (Democracy and multidimensional development in Ethiopia)* (USA: Netsanet Publishin Company, 2013).

¹²⁸. Nega, *ዲሞክራሲና ሁለተኛው ልማት (Democracy and multidimensional development)*; Mulugeta Woldegebrel, *አንደመርገብ፣ የተከበሩ ወንጀለኞች (We will not synergise: The honourable criminals)* (Addis Ababa: Np, 2011 EC).

¹²⁹. WikiLeaks, "A Dialogue on Ethiopia's Democratization: Drl a/S Kramer Meets Prime Minister Meles," 29 July 2008, https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08ADDISABABA2078_a.html

undemocratic and repressive practices, it denied this claim and pointing out how the EPRDF considered democracy as an existential agenda. The discourse, thus, was used as an instrument to control the key agenda of the country. Contradicting the EPRDF's programmes and strategies was presented as contradicting the democratic and developmental aspirations of Ethiopians, thus, rendering their exclusion justifiable.¹³⁰ The EPRDF presented itself as a developmental and democratic force while other political forces were not committed to this process. The securitisation of democracy and development, thus, became the principal means for undemocratic behaviours.¹³¹

It must be noted, however, that since the framing also discursively delegitimises anti-democratic and rent-seeking tendencies within the EPRDF, the sole logics of securitisation of development and democracy could not be reduced to the desire to stay in power as the opposition parties claimed. Hence, one has to consider all the logics identified by the regime, the dissenting group, and the opposition parties because the EPRDF could be acting out of different concerns. To chart a developmental and democratic course, the EPRDF has to survive in power and its leaders must spearhead the process. Hence, the two may not be mutually exclusive. Because of these competing logics, and seen at its face value, the EPRDF, the opposition parties and other pro-democracy constituencies all could gain and lose from the securitised way of approaching democracy and development. The discourse set a burden on the EPRDF to commit itself to democracy and development, which, if followed, would be beneficial for the opposition and the society at large. On the other hand, the EPRDF's consideration of the opposition as rent-seekers and its claim that it was pursuing a democratic and developmental agenda would rather render the opposition the losers of the discourse. The EPRDF would simply evade the obligations set upon it by the securitisation discourse, while capitalizing on the benefits to be gained from the frame, a possibility that would be disadvantageous for the opposition parties. This possibility not only indicates the working of different and competing logics of action but also the need to juxtapose these logics.

3.3.3. Which Logic Dominates?

From the above discussion different logics informed a securitised way of approaching the quest for development and democracy in Ethiopia. According to the narrative of the EPRDF, the sole

¹³⁰. Woldegebrel, *አንደኛው ምርጫ፣ የተከበሩ ወንጀለኞች* (*We will not synergise: The honourable criminals*).

¹³¹. Asrat, *ዲሞክራሲና ሉዓላዊነት በኢትዮጵያ* (*Democracy and sovereignty in Ethiopia*).

concern was advancing democracy and development and acting in accordance with the enlightened self-interest of the leadership. This perspective glossed over the EPRDF's systemic repression and suffocation of the opposition and civil societies, which were either denied or attributed to an implementation problem that emanates from the incipient nature of the democratization process. These oppositions' conflation of legal and illegal activities was also statedly part of the problem, since they allegedly mask their illegal activities under the banner of legal opposition. Though this position does not deny the working of self-interest in the securitisation processes, it makes it secondary to the broader goal of transforming state and society along democratic and developmental lines.

According to the dissenters, far from having anything to do with developmental and democratic concerns, the origin and subsequent deployment of the securitisation discourse was inspired by the desire to strengthen the EPRDF's power. Thus, securitisation of democracy and development was a camouflage to entrench the EPRDF's grip in power. According to those critics who were initially within the party but eventually excluded, of major concern was Meles's aim to avoid responsibility for his misconduct in the Ethio-Eritrea war by crafting an agenda that would eliminate his responsibility. Other opposition parties thought that the Meles's concern was for garnering internal and external legitimacy for authoritarian practices. According to the opposition, even the development measures were undertaken to show off immediate legitimising results at the expense of long-term development. Consequently, neither the much-touted growth improved the lives of ordinary Ethiopians nor heralded the structural transformation of the economy.¹³²

Some of the opposition parties also claim that the EPRDF's first preference was democratically legitimising itself through delivering economic benefits. When that aim failed to materialise, it sought to somehow dilute discontent by registering robust growth that helped it frame victims of state repression as anti-developmental. The labels "rent-seekers", "anti-peace elements", "neo-liberal messengers", "anti-development forces" seem to be used to this effect. Unable to entrench its power in an atmosphere of open competition after the 2005 electoral crisis, the EPRDF allegedly pursued the second option whereby it combined repression and unfair competition with an effort aimed at fast-pacing economic growth.¹³³ Since the economic development model was designed to contribute to legitimising the regime, the model followed

¹³². Merera, *የኢትዮጵያ የታሪክ ፈተናዎች* (*Challenges on Ethiopia's history*); Nega, "No Shortcut to Stability."

¹³³. Nega, "No Shortcut to Stability."

was, of necessity, state-lead and investment-driven.¹³⁴ As the subsequent chapters of this study indicate, the political survival and economic predation of elites that coalesced around the TPLF and its affiliates was the dominant concern informing the introduction and the pursuit of the securitisation of democracy and development.

3.4. Conclusions

This chapter traces the origin of the securitisation of development and democracy in Ethiopia. It argues that the origin of the discourse was influenced by the leftist history of the EPRDF, its ethno-nationalist character, and its rural masses base. The chapter also demonstrates how the securitisation of development and democracy was inextricably connected with the dynamics within the TPLF and the episodic and yet path shaping events that reconfigured the relations among the leaders of the coalition. It is impossible to imagine a securitised way of understanding Ethiopia's development and governance problems without the outbreak of the Ethio-Eritrean war, and the subsequent division within the TPLF. No matter what Meles, the articulator of the idea, thought about the existential nature of the quest for development and democracy, it would not have been materialized without the outbreak of the Ethio-Eritrea war. Once introduced, the securitisation of development and democracy seemed to inform different issue-areas as reflected in various policy arenas of the EPRDF's regime ranging from the foreign policy, democracy-building institutions, developmental outlook, and defence and security establishment.

The chapter also identifies different logics that informed the definition of the country's democratic and developmental problems in a securitised way and the embedding of this process in policy documents. These logics range from commitment for development and democracy, legitimating the EPRDF and delegitimizing the opposition parties, and entrenching the regime's grip on power. Thus, the logics behind this securitised way of formulating the country's problem vacillated between heralding democratic and developmental transformation acting based on the leadership's enlightened self-interest, and entrenching the EPRDF's control over power when these long-term transformational goals are threatened—a point that is further elaborated in the subsequent chapters.

¹³⁴. Berhanu Abegaz, "A Pathway from Exclusionary to Inclusionary State and Market Institutions for Ethiopia," *International Journal of Ethiopian Studies* 9, no. 1 & 2 (2015).

Generally, this chapter makes several observations that extend the securitisation literature. First, a formal policy decision on whether or not to securitize an issue is often determined by the nature of, and contestation within, a political order. The process is often underpinned by different concerns that have implications on and, at the same time, are inferred from the subsequent practices of the securitising actor. Second, contestation over a securitising discourse, at least when the threat so defined is transformative, often is not whether an issue is considered a security issue but is rather about what the securitising actor is accomplishing when making security discourse.

Third, beyond the securitisation literature's understanding of the audience as those elements that influence the fate of a securitising move (a notion this dissertation eschewed from using), there are other actors (the audience proper) for whom a security discourse seeks to appeal, that can be identified by linking a text to its context. The term "audience" would be a proper expression to capture these kinds of actors because speech acts are actions conducted in speaking a language and, therefore, actors do not achieve their act without an actual or potential audience to whom they speak or who comprise their listeners. Behind the confusion on the notion of "audience" noted in chapter two of this study, has been the securitisation literature's appropriation of this notion of "audience" but with a different understanding of what it is. In doing so, this literature searches for the audience in the extra-discursive sphere rather than asking the question for whom a security discourse seeks to speak to (if explicit) or whom can legitimately infer meaning from it (if implicit).

Finally, the key centre of gravity of the theory of securitisation has to shift to the securitising actor and its concerns evidenced by the debate over what the regime was doing in securitising democracy and development. This focus on speech acts would not explain what securitisation does since their effect would be nullified by another speech act. Likewise, the audience, who are understood to be those people/parties who are the target of security utterances, does not seem to strongly influence what securitisation can achieve, whereas the securitising actor is influential. The very competing narratives regarding what the securitising actor achieves in making security speech acts is indicative of this condition, and thus raises the argument that foreshadows the findings of the subsequent chapter that suggests the test of securitisation needs to go beyond reliance on speech acts and audience acceptance.

Chapter Four

EPRDF`s Logics of Action in Defining Rent-Seeking as a Threat to Democracy and Development

4.1. Introduction

The concerns underpinning the securitisation of development and democracy have to be analysed in light of the measures taken to institutionalize democracy and realise development. Since the regime considered rent-seeking as a key threat to the democratization and development of the Ethiopian state, this chapter and chapter five focus respectively on the logics of issue definition and the policy implementation in the fight against rent-seeking. The purpose of this chapter is to analyse the extent to which the concern for democratizing and developing the country underpinned the regime`s consideration of rent-seeking as a systemic threat. This chapter argues that competing logics underpinned both the original formulation and subsequent applications of the label “rent-seeking” as the main systemic threat. These competing logics were reflected in the contestations that gave rise to the framing, the actions undertaken and justified by the use of the “rent-seeking” label and the beneficiaries and losers of this frame. To begin with, the origin of the rent-seeking discourse was inextricably connected with the power struggle within the TPLF which cast doubt on the regime`s sincerity in introducing this specific debate. Moreover, the TPLF warned members and leaders to shun rent-seeking while, at the same time, labelling any opposing actors as rent-seekers. The losers of this frame, therefore, were not just the conventionally understood rent-seekers but also other actors that are opposed the TPLF. Hence, competing logics of realizing democracy and development, and entrenching the political and economic dominance of key TPLF leaders and affiliated elites, constituted the two major logics of actions of the regime in approaching rent-seeking the ways it did. Since the debate on rent seeking had never been about its insecurity repercussion but the motive and purpose for which it was introduced, this chapter argues that the criteria of securitisation need to go beyond the speech act and audience acceptance.

This chapter is organised into five sections. The next section contextualizes the discussion by narrating the origin of the rent-seeking discourse in the party`s lexicon and measures that were suggested to manage this practice. The third section analyses the logics underpinning the definition of rent-seeking through the framework laid out in chapter two section 2.3.2.2.3. above. This section maintains that though the problem definition has elements that point to the

concern of fighting rent-seeking and corruption, there is also evidence of other non-democratic and non-developmental concerns. The final section comprises some concluding remarks.

4.2. EPRDF Framing of Rent-seeking as a Systemic Threat

As discussed in chapter three 3.2. above, the issue of rent-seeking emerged out of the debate Meles introduced following the end of the Ethio-Eritrea war. In this deliberation Meles argued that Ethiopia's main problem was not external manifested in the form of Eritrea's invasion or imperialism as his critics would have argued,¹ but rather was internal to the system arising from the degeneration of the EPRDF into a Bonapartist government bedevilled by corruption and undemocratic practices. Bonapartism arose when the major classes were weakened or were incapable of defeating each other, leading to the emergence of a corrupt authoritarian government that acted as an arbiter.² Meles further stated that the conditions in Ethiopia were conducive for the emergence of Bonapartism: the peasantry had withdrawn from the struggle; the other social forces of the country were weakened; the leaders of the country were *petit bourgeoisie*; and the EPRDF was losing direction.³ Since the state cannot be anything but the expression of the interest of powerful classes,⁴ Meles reasoned that when all the classes were weakened, the leaders would pursue their *petite bourgeoisie* interests. This situation eventually would create a ruling class that caters only for its own interests. He called this transformation *decadence* since it entails forsaking the revolutionary-democratic goals (these goals, which essentially involved the transformation of the conditions of the masses are discussed in chapter six 6.3. below).

This framing of the threat was not uniformly welcomed by other members of the TPLF and EPRDF. The main opponent to the position were the TPLF dissenters who rejected Meles's ideas, arguing that the condition in 20th century Ethiopia was different from contexts in which Bonapartism arose.⁵ ANDM, a member party of the EPRDF, on the other hand, concluded that, regardless of what it is labelled, the main threat to the system the EPRDF sought to build was

¹. Simon, *የሁለት ምርጫዎች ወግ*. (a Conversation between two elections).

². Paulos Milkias, "Ethiopia, the TPLF, and the Roots of the 2001 Political Tremor," *Northeast African Studies* 10, no. 2 (2--3).

³. EPRDF, *ኢሃዲግ ከምስረታ (EPRDF from establishment)*.

⁴. "የዲሞክራሲ ጉዳዮች በኢትዮጵያ፤ ለወይይት የቀረበ" (Issues of democracy in Ethiopia, a booklet submitted for discussion), (1992EC).

⁵. Asrat, *ዲሞክራሲና ሉዓላዊነት በኢትዮጵያ (Democracy and sovereignty in Ethiopia)*.

the practice of using state power to accumulate wealth and maintain a livelihood.⁶ Hence, it tilted towards the position of Meles. The other two member parties of the EPRDF, the Oromo People`s Democratic Organisation (OPDO) and the Southern People`s Democratic Organisation (SPDM), were not able to develop a common position because some of their members were sympathizers of the dissidents whereas others were pro-Meles.

As noted in chapter three above, the outcome of the debate was not determined by the strength of the argument on offer but the ability to manipulate and persuade those who did not support a particular standpoint. Accordingly, using manipulation, threat and other familial connections, Meles secured the support of 15 Central Committee members of the TPLF while still opposed by 13 members. He, subsequently, excluded the dissenters claiming that this measure was necessary to save the TPLF from disintegration.⁷ The expulsion of the TPLF dissidents was accompanied by the removal of their sympathizers in OPDO and SPDM. After removing the dissidents from the party structure, the main threat to development and democracy was conclusively identified as the decadence of the ruling group in a bid to turn itself into a “ruling-class”. Subsequent government policies and programmes were designed following this basic philosophy.

The idea of *Bonapartist* decadence itself was subtly metamorphosized into the economic concept of rent-seeking. Rent-seeking was defined as the effort to acquire wealth without engaging in value-creating activities and using political connections in a way that distorts market competition.⁸ In a rent-seeking system, the EPRDF claimed that business seeks to acquire wealth outside market competition by relying on a corrupt relationship with government officials. This approach captures those elements of rent-seeking that are generally agreed to be wasteful, including the more pervasive aspects related to corruption and patronage. The literature on rent-seeking, however, also argues that this wastefulness manifests itself not only in the forgone resources that would have been invested in productive activities but also in the struggle to control state-sanctioned rent, an aspect not considered by the EPRDF.⁹ Although

⁶. ANDM, *የኢህዴድ ንጉሥነት ታሪክ፣ ከ 1973-2008 ድረስ* (*The history of EPDM-ANDM, 1981-2016*) (Bahir Dar: ANDM Executive Committee Office, 2008 EC).

⁷. Asrat, *ዲሞክራሲና ሉዓላዊነት በኢትዮጵያ* (*Democracy and sovereignty in Ethiopia*).

⁸. EPRDF, *ፈጣን ዲሞክራሲ እና አቢዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ* (*Development, democracy and revolutionary democracy*)

⁹. Mushtaq, "Rent, Efficiency and Growth."

there is debate on whether corruption is a primitive conception of rent-seeking,¹⁰ the EPRDF considered corruption as a form of rent-seeking.

According to the EPRDF, the fight against rent-seeking is not solely about the individual who engages in rent-seeking practices; it has also political and economic roots that shape the incentives and constraints of individuals. Due to the structural features of the Ethiopian economy (such as a limited market, low productivity, low technology, unskilled labour and limited managerial skills), the private sector cannot compete in the international market. Business rather seeks to accumulate wealth only through corrupt transactions with government officials.¹¹ While businesses have an incentive to subvert rules, the weakening of all the social classes of the country and the *petite bourgeois* nature of the leadership, means that politicians too have an incentive to easily manipulate the system for their benefit.¹² In alignment with the Marxist literature, the EPRDF argued that had any class been strong, the leaders of the country would have been forced to serve that class interest. In the absence of a strong class and any other countervailing force, the political leaders could pursue self-serving ends unencumbered by popular pressure. Hence, the overall political and economic situation within Ethiopia was conducive to rent-seeking practices. The EPRDF dubbed this situation the “political economy of rent-seeking”.

To overcome the problem of rent-seeking, the EPRDF suggested mercilessly penalizing the main rent-seekers and transforming the existing political economy into a democratic and developmentalist system.¹³ The EPRDF claimed that punishing rent-seekers without the attendant democratic and developmental measures would simply create a more sophisticated form of rent-seeking and that changing Ethiopia’s political and economic conditions necessitated punishing the main rent-seekers.¹⁴ Hence, the EPRDF suggested a range of measures to transform the current rent-seeking political economy, including rewarding value

¹⁰. Paul D. Hutchcroft, "The Politics of Privilege: Rents and Corruption in East Asia," in *Political Corruption: Concept and Context*, ed. Arnold J. Heidenheimer and Michael Johnston (USA: Transaction Publisher, 2007); Peter B. Evans, *Embedded Autonomy States and Industrial Transformation*, Princeton Paperbacks (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1995).

¹¹. EPRDF, *ዲሞክራሲ እና ዲሞክራሲያዊ አንድነት* (Democracy and democratic unity).

¹². "የዲሞክራሲ ጉዳዮች በኢትዮጵያ" (Issues of Democracy in Ethiopia).

¹³. EPRDF, *ልማት ዲሞክራሲ እና አብዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ* (Development, democracy and revolutionary democracy)

¹⁴. EPRDF, *የአብዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ ምንነት፣ ታሪካዊ አነሳስ፣ እድገትና የወደፊት አቅጣጫ* (the historical emergence, development and future direction of revolutionary democracy).

creating businesses,¹⁵ expanding agricultural extensions and microfinance institutions and ensuring state ownership of land.

Rent-seeking, as approached by the EPRDF, resembles those works that emphasise the importance of rent allocation process (see section 3.2. above). On the one hand, the EPRDF argued that rent-seeking would be minimized if the economy operates according to the logic of the free market. Conversely, it also claimed that the market in developing countries is characterized by pervasive failures which necessitate state intervention in the economy. Consequently, the EPRDF made a distinction between productive and unproductive government intervention. It claimed that when the state allocates incentives for the most productive sectors and actors, rent-seeking would be discouraged and productivity enhanced.¹⁶ Rent-seeking and developmental businesses were to be identified based upon their ability to compete in the world market.¹⁷ Anticipating potential criticism that the state could misallocate resources/“rent”, the EPRDF suggested strategies of directly fighting the practice of rent-seeking within the party, the government and the society.¹⁸ Hence, the rent-seeker-developmental category permeates these three spheres of life.

To sum up, the origin of rent-seeking was connected with the struggle within the TPLF. However, the concept metamorphosed from an idea that expressed decay in the government to a mind-set and practice that afflicted the entire society. The next section expounds on the logics that underpinned this way of approaching the country’s political economy.

4.3. EPRDF’s Logics of Issue Definition

Relying on the framework developed in chapter two of this study, this section analyses the EPRDF’s logic of action in relation to issue definition and policy implementation of measures undertaken to reduce rent-seeking. As noted in the framework elaborated in chapter two (section 2.3.2.2.3. above) and applied in chapter three, the three issues to consider when analysing the logics of issue definition are the kinds of actions undertaken and actions/actors justified, rendered right, acceptable, authorizable etc.; the losers and beneficiary of the frame;

¹⁵. EPRDF, *ልማት ዲሞክራሲ እና አቢዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ (Development, democracy and devolutionary democracy)*

¹⁶. Ibid.

¹⁷. MFED, *የኢትዮጵያ ፌዴራላዊ ዲሞክራሲያዊ ሪፐብሊክ የኢንዱስትሪ ልማት ስትራቴጂ (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia: Industrial development strategy)*.

¹⁸. EPRDF, *ልማት ዲሞክራሲ እና አቢዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ (Development, democracy and revolutionary democracy)*

and the juxtaposition of various logics. This section, therefore, analyses the logics of issues definition based on these criteria.

4.3.1. Actions Done and Justified in Speaking/Writing about Rent-Seeking

Two major concerns expressed in the action undertaken and justified in framing rent-seeking as stated above were realizing democratic development through fighting rent-seeking and delegitimising the oppositions' aspiration for being an alternative centre of power and rent.

4.3.1.1. Realizing Democratic Development

The discourse of rent-seeking has the potential to repudiate any corrupt action aimed at maximizing private benefits at the expense of the public. It puts the responsibility for ensuring the continuing upkeep of the country on the commitment of the ruling coalition to fight rent-seeking and herald development. It requires the EPRDF to unfailingly fulfilling its vanguard role (see section 6.3. below). When the higher-level leaders urged their members to eschew rent-seeking and avoid any other non-deserving gifts and benefits,¹⁹ they were setting a limit to the extent to which the lower-level leaders could pursue their self-interests. The various party training documents also urged members of the party and the public to constantly struggle against mind-sent for and the practice of rent-seeking.²⁰ This directive indicates the EPRDF's effort to make the attitude and practice of rent-seeking morally reprehensible and included urging party members to undertake certain activities while eschewing others.

Accordingly, EPRDF party members were required to be "front-runner" development agents (DAs) taking benefits that are proportional to their development efforts.²¹ They were further urged to actively engage in the affairs of mass-based organisations, not only to advance their interests as members of these organisations, but also to chart the struggle of such bodies along democratic and developmental directions.²² The requirements of membership, as indicated in the constitutions and code of conduct of member parties, also included commitment to shun rent-seeking tendencies and to take measures that advance democracy and development. The

¹⁹. EPRDF, "የዲሞክራሲ ጉዳዮች በኢትዮጵያ" (Issues of democracy in Ethiopia).

²⁰. EPRDF, *የታላቋ ልማት መስመር* (*The renewal line*). EPRDF, *ልማት ዲሞክራሲ እና አብዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ* (*Development, democracy and revolutionary democracy*); EPRDF, "ያለንበት መድረክ እና የአመራር ጥያቄ" (*Our current forum and the leadership question*), (2011EC); EPRDF, *የአብዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲያዊ ድርጅት ግንባታ* (*Building revolutionary democratic organisation*) (Addis Ababa: Mega Printing 2009EC).

²¹. EPRDF, "ያለንበት መድረክ (Our current forum)"; EPRDF, *የአብዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲያዊ አመራር ጥያቄ* (*The question of a revolutionary democratic leadership*).

²². "ያለንበት መድረክ" (Our current forum).

constitution of the ANDM, for instance, obligated members to desist from measures that undermine development and democracy including corruption and corrupt working procedures.²³ One of the core pillars of the functions of the district party committee of ANDM, and those above them, was to fight rent-seeking. Likewise, the constitution of the SPDM included a commitment to fight against rent-seeking as one of the criteria of recruitment into the membership pool.²⁴ Hence, the issue definition delegitimised measures that enhance the mind-set for and practice of rent-seeking. Commitment to fight rent-seeking was also incorporated into the party documents which, therefore, had the potential for critical evaluation and possible demotion.

The leaders at the top of the EPRDF were urged to complement their professionalism by freeing themselves from rent-seeking and were urged not just to avoid rent-seeking tendencies but also to committedly fight the practice of rent-seeking.²⁵ Unreservedly committing themselves to developmental and democratic practices was defined as a key requirement of leadership. The code of conduct for the senior members of the central committee of the ANDM, for instance, required members to avoid corruption, refuse any kind of gift, refrain from actions that create a conflict of interest and fight rent-seeking both within the party and the government.²⁶ Moreover, these leaders and their families should avoid seeking inappropriate benefits, reject activities that would transform them into *petite bourgeoisie*, including participation in investment activities larger than micro and small enterprises.²⁷ All these obligations were imposed in addition to their expected unflinching engagement in democratic and developmental practices which were considered as essential as punishing rent-seekers. The leaders of ANDM were also urged to design operating rules and procedures that avoid rewarding clientelism, operating outside institutions and laws, opportunism and the formation of networks.²⁸

In a move that seemed to anticipate the possibility of abuse of the discourse of rent-seeking for self-serving ends, the party assured potential critiques by committing to democratically fighting

²³. ANDM, "የብአዴን መተዳደሪያ ደንብ፣ አደረጃጀትና የአሰራር መመሪያዎች" (The constitution of ANDM and its organisational and operational rules), (2006 EC).

²⁴. SNPM, "የደሀዴን ፕሮግራም እና መተዳደሪያ ደንብ" (The programme and constitution of SPDM), (Hawassa, Nd).

²⁵. EPRDF, "ያለንበት መድረክ" (Our current forum).

²⁶. ANDM, "የብአዴን መተዳደሪያ ደንብ" (The constitution of ANDM).

²⁷. Ibid.

²⁸. EPRDF, *የአቢዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ ምንነት፣ ታሪካዊ አነሳስ፣ እድገትና የወደፊት አቅጣጫ* (The historical emergence, development and future direction of revolutionary democracy).

rent-seeking. It rationalized this process by indicating that doing so was in its self-interest. The EPRDF asserted the futility of winning the fight against rent-seeking by suppressing the public expression of the attitude favourable to rent-seeking. Such a wrong attitudinal orientation, it claimed, rather has to be openly expressed and its defects exposed in an open debate. Suppressing attitudes and opinions that were manifestations of rent-seeking to prevent defeat in election was considered unacceptable²⁹ because it would quicken the degeneration of the party into a rent-seeking force.³⁰ Moreover, it argued that since people learn from their experiences, the strategies and programmes through which they gain knowledge and experience of the destructiveness of rent-seeking should enable them to freely express their opinion.³¹

These warnings and suggestions were reiterated continuously since the introduction of the securitisation of democracy and development through the various editions of the party's አዲስ ረዕይ (New Vision) magazine. The 2008 edition warned members that the people voted for the EPRDF in order to herald change and eradicate poverty not enrich themselves.³² It warned that the issue was not about being elected or not; it was being elected to perform or not.³³ The next edition noted that “we will build a developed market economy, only if the main enemy, rent-seeking, was effectively controlled.”³⁴ This situation, it argued, would be achieved by driving the party and the government into a self-feeding process of democracy and development. Warning against increasing rent-seeking tendencies within the EPRDF, it noted “a significant number of people within our structure are benefiting from rent-seeking and that significant others are waiting to benefit from this practice. Without uprooting such forces, the fight against rent-seeking will not be successful.”³⁵ To this effect, the EPRDF claimed, the state structure on which rent-seekers rely on for their predatory practices had to be tightened by incorporating those who were outside the tax system into the system of taxation, closing any legal loophole in the system, and establishing a “development troop” (see 7.2.4) for the taxation system.³⁶

²⁹. EPRDF, *የዲሞክራሲ ስርዓት ግንባታ ትግል* (*The struggle to build a democratic system*)

³⁰. Ibid.

³¹. Ibid.

³². EPRDF, "ምርጫ 2000" (Election 2000).

³³. Ibid.

³⁴. EPRDF, "ማስፋት" (Scaling Up).

³⁵. EPRDF, "የመሬት ፖሊሲያችንና የተሻሻለው የሊዝ አዋጅ" (Our land policy and the amended land lease proclamation), *አዲስ ረዕይ* (*New Vision*) 3, no. 8 (2004EC): PP. 28-29.

³⁶. EPRDF, "ልማታዊ የታክስ አስተዳደር ስርዓት" (Developmental taxation system), *አዲስ ረዕይ* (*New Vision*) 3, no. 7 (2004EC).

Rent-seekers, it asserted in its 2013 edition, waste society's productive capacity through their engagement in illegal land grab, illegal trade monopoly, tax avoidance, misappropriation of government revenue, and biased and corrupt behaviours.³⁷ When rent-seeking is dominant, the party warned that strengthening democracy and heralding inclusive development would not be possible.³⁸ In its 2016 edition, the EPRDF further noted that the more wealth that was created, the more the rent-seeking forces wished to increase their wealth without contributing to the development process.³⁹ Similar reiterations were made in other documents. According to the 2011 EPRDF training document, rent-seeking constituted a strategic enemy of the system and hence the leaders of the country should be preoccupied with fighting it.⁴⁰ It warned that overcoming rent-seeking was a matter of life and death and urged trainees to focus their attention on fighting rent-seeking. The EPRDF also committed to cleanse its structures of rent-seekers by anchoring membership and promotion within the party to this commitment.

The EPRDF's problem definition, thus, had the effect of denigrating rent-seekers and rent-seeking practices by warning potential rent-seekers, both within and outside the state, to desist from such attitudes and practices. Its members were urged not just to avoid rent-seeking but also committedly fight it. These reiterations can also be taken as an invitation of the public to join the fight against rent-seeking. The concern underlying this problem definition, therefore, was overcoming obstacles to Ethiopia's democratic and developmental journey. But a further look at the question of defining a rent-seeker indicates the working of the logic aimed at maintaining the system intact.

4.3.1.2. Limiting/Delegitimising Opposing Actors` Capacity to Mobilize Rent

The EPRDF approached the members of opposition parties as rent-seekers due to their neoliberal ideological persuasion and their identity-based politics. Neoliberalism was castigated as a “dead end” in Africa.⁴¹ Far from ushering in the desired development, the EPRDF argued that neoliberalism resulted in governments that were too dependent upon

³⁷. EPRDF, "ዘጠነኛ ድርጅታዊ ጉባኤችንና ስትራቴጂያዊ ፋይዳወቅ" (Our 9th congress and its strategic relevance), *አዲስ ራሽያ* (*New Vision*) 4, no. 1 (2005EC).

³⁸. ANDM, "ፈጽሞ ደግሞን አንዘቅጥም" (We will never decay again), (1994 EC).

³⁹. EPRDF, "የተሃድሶ መስመራችን" (Our renewal policy).

⁴⁰. EPRDF, "ያለንበት መድረክ" (Our current forum).

⁴¹. Meles Zenawi, "African Development: Dead Ends Andnew Beginings," (2006), https://www.africanidea.org/m_zenawi_aug_9_2006.pdf

foreign powers to be an agent of development.⁴² It claimed that neoliberalism entrenched competing patron-client networks that have no aim but to use the state as a tool of resource extraction and distribution.⁴³ Electoral competition in a neoliberal system, therefore, is argued to be nothing but elite competition for the control of “rent”. In addition to their neoliberal persuasion, the opposition members were presented as rent-seekers because they raised agendas that had little to do with concerns of the masses. According to the EPRDF, all they seek to do was select an agenda that helps them exploit sentiments and grievances emanating from the weakness of “our democracy”.⁴⁴ Opposition members based in the Oromo ethnic constituency, it claimed, inflamed groundless grievances claiming that the Oromo people do not benefit from the current dispensation in proportion to their population number. When they say “the Oromo”, the EPRDF argued, the complainants were referring to elites who were excluded from the democratization processes because of their “narrow” and “secessionist” agenda.⁴⁵ The EPRDF further maintained that the broad masses of Oromo peasants were not treated any worse than the peasants of other ethnic groups within Ethiopia.

Those opposition parties with a pan-Ethiopia agenda, on the other hand, allegedly inflamed grievances that the Amhara were unduly hurt and that Ethiopian-ness was downgraded by the new political dispensation introduced by the EPRDF.⁴⁶ Hence, the EPRDF claimed, both groups raised issues that had little to do with the concerns of the masses, which are the lack of democracy and development.⁴⁷ What the opposition parties sought, it alleged, was power by whatever means that they intended to use for wealth generation. Hence, the EPRDF claimed that it was the only democratic and developmental organisation and that Ethiopia’s electoral struggles were between rent-seekers and developmental forces.⁴⁸

As the theoretical discussion in section 4.2. above indicates, rent-seeking is primarily about the social costs of measures individuals take to advance their own interests which, therefore, can exist in countries of different ideological persuasion. This fact renders the EPRDF’s criticism of the opposition groundless. The criticism also hides the fact that its own model, in the main,

⁴². EPRDF, *ፈጣን ዲሞክራሲ እና አቢዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ (Development, democracy and revolutionary democracy)*

⁴³. Ibid.

⁴⁴. EPRDF, *ዲሞክራሲ እና ዲሞክራሲያዊ አንድነት (Democracy and democratic unity)*.

⁴⁵. *የዲሞክራሲ ስርዓት ግንባታ ትግል (the Struggle to build a democratic system)*.

⁴⁶. *ዲሞክራሲ እና ዲሞክራሲያዊ አንድነት (Democracy and democratic unity)*.

⁴⁷. EPRDF, *የዲሞክራሲ ስርዓት ግንባታ ትግል (the Struggle to build a democratic system)*

⁴⁸. EPRDF, *የታላቅ ልማት መስመር (The renewal line)*.

benefited the elites. Hence, the castigation of the opposition as rent-seekers was rather driven by the aim to delegitimise them as a candidate in the quest to gain control over the country's "rent-allocation" process. It sought to delegitimise and, ultimately, weaken alternative centres of power while legitimising itself as the only party that can successfully drive a democratic and developmental agenda. When critics point to the EPRDF's deviation from democratic norms, it claimed that it was because the incipient nature of the democracy it was trying to build could not be error-free.⁴⁹ The opposition parties' weaknesses, on the other hand, were framed to be inherent in their rent-seeking nature and not in the incipient nature of their party-building efforts. At any rate, this monopolization of "rent" was so successful that the country was, at some point, the third-highest in its public investment and the sixth lowest in the level of private investment. Indicative of the concentration of wealth amongst a few individuals was also the fact that the country registered the fastest growth of millionaires between 2007 and 2014.⁵⁰

Aklog concurs with the above conclusion when he views the discourse of rent-seeking as a camouflage for the EPRDF's own organised predation of every available "rent" source.⁵¹ Similarly, an informant who was the president of one of Ethiopia's regional states⁵² maintained that the discourse of rent-seeking was a deliberate strategy to detract the attention of the middle and lower-level leaders to focus on the petty issues of who takes extra *per diem* and had an extra house, while ignoring the strategic issues of how corrupt government-business relations was undermining the prospect for sustainable and broad-based growth.⁵³ Other informants presented similar arguments claiming that the discourse was a camouflage for the pursuit of a blatantly self-serving agenda of amassing wealth and power in the hands of a few well connected Tigrayan elites and their affiliates. An informant, who was a member of the central committee of ANDM, maintained that "as a member of the leadership we were misled by the reasonable nature of the frame; we were blinded from looking around to compare the discourse with practice. We did not listen to the oppositions' view because we were told that nothing useful comes out of them."⁵⁴

⁴⁹. EPRDF, *ዲሞክራሲ እና ዲሞክራሲያዊ አንድነት (Democracy and democratic unity)*.

⁵⁰. Aklog Birara, *ድርጅታዊ ምዝገባ፣ ኢትዮጵያ ህዚብን ያማክላል ልማት ያስፈልጋታል (Organisational predation: Ethiopia needs people centred development)* (USA: Clar Publisher, 2019).

⁵¹. Ibid.

⁵². Interview a former president of the SNNP region, April 2021, Addis Ababa.

⁵³. Ibid.

⁵⁴. Interview with a former central committee of ANDM, February 2021, Bahir Dar.

Another informant expressed the international dimension and arguing that an appearance of progressive policy was important to obtain sympathy from the donor community who otherwise would have undermined the government.⁵⁵ So, from the perspective of these informants, there was a sinister motive from the very introduction of the framing. The outcome of the discourse was not simply an otherwise reasonable framing going wrong in the process of implementation. The misdeeds in the implementation of the fight against rent-seeking discussed in the next chapter were not contravening the discourse but being supported by it. As noted in the previous chapter, the dissenting former members of the TPLF also attributed the origin of the discourse to Meles` s desire to delegitimise and eventually side-line them.⁵⁶ To be labelled a rent-seeker was to be identified as a strategic enemy.⁵⁷

Given the above facts, there was no guarantee that the behaviours justified by framing the opposition as rent-seekers would not have subjected them to repression. What followed the introduction of the frame was, as many of my informants indicate, the gross misapplication of the label “rent-seeker” for actors that are not considered loyal to the EPRDF.⁵⁸ It created a condition in which the same behaviour came to have different meanings when committed by opposition parties and the EPRDF: the latter action was nothing but implementation failure and the former emanated from their irremediable rent-seeking character.

Some informants, however, approached the discourse at its face value arguing that it was the right approach to fight corruption only if it was supported by an unflinching implementation of the commitments expressed thereby. For this group, the whole implementation problem was simply a progressive idea developed with good intention that had gone wrong in the process of its implementation. This group mentioned the EPRDF` s own anticipation that rent-seeking would be a difficult challenge for the EPRDF to overcome unless it fought it with all its forces. They maintained that a government with an insincere intention would not have gone to the extent of anticipating such a challenge and urging members to commit to the fight against rent-seeking. This view notwithstanding, the above account indicates that the concern behind both the introduction and the application of the rent-seeking frame and, by extension, the securitisation discourse, was not restricted to heralding democracy and development; it was

⁵⁵. Interview with an official of ANDM, February 2021, Bahir Dar.

⁵⁶. Asrat, *ዲሞክራሲና ሉዓላዊነት በኢትዮጵያ (Democracy and sovereignty in Ethiopia)*.

⁵⁷. Interview with a former president of the SNNP region, April 2021, Addis Ababa

⁵⁸. Interview with a former president of the SNNP region, April 2021, Addis Ababa.

also about maintaining the EPRDF's power. The analysis of the losers and beneficiaries of the frame below also substantiate this.

4.3.2. Losers and Beneficiaries

At its surface, the discourse of rent-seeking delegitimises corrupt actors and those who seek to acquire wealth without engaging in productive activity. Thus, unfailingly implemented, the main losers of the framing would have been those rent-seekers located both within the party-state, and society in general and the business community in particular. Within the government, the framing constituted a very powerful discursive tool to discourage officials from using their position to advance their personal or clientelistic interests. To be labelled a rent-seeker was to be condemned as a strategic enemy of the country because such a practice was considered the main threat to the existential pursuit of development and democracy. Likewise, an unproductive business that wished to thrive under the shadow of government protection would also be the other losers of the frame. The EPRDF, as noted earlier in this study, makes a distinction between developmental and rent-seeking business with the concomitant suggestion that the former should be encouraged while the latter had to be penalized. The labels "rent-seekers" and "developmental" were, therefore, categories with real consequences for the business labelled so (see section 5.2.3. below).

However, the inclusion of the opposition parties as rent-seekers, solely based on their ideology, rendered these organisations and their constituencies losers of the frame. It is one thing to claim that the ideology they were pursuing encourages a political economy of rent-seeking and yet it is another to claim that all the members of opposition parties are rent-seekers. This logical leap of the EPRDF rendered the opposition parties and any other actor who had sympathy for them as losers of the issue definition. In a sense, in addition to the conventional definition noted above, the EPRDF introduced a second definition of rent-seeking that was decided by the ideology of the organisation which was eventually used to label anybody that opposed the EPRDF's dogma as a rent-seeker and hence a loser of the frame.

The kind of behaviours labelled "rent-seeking" even within the EPRDF confirm the above assertion. According to informants, the label "rent-seeker" was used to refer to party members who act in a way that has little to do with the conventionally understood meaning of rent-seeking. They indicated that the label "rent-seeker" was used to attack the political deviant and

those who questioned the fairness of the system.⁵⁹ According to Getachew, the discourse of rent-seeking has been used to intimidate those individuals who raised legitimate yet politically challenging questions.

When you raise the concern that there is unfairness in the distribution of development gains, they will accuse you of chauvinism and therefore rent-seeking. When you raise that one group is dominant in the intelligence and security apparatus, they will accuse you of hating that group and by extension rent-seeking. When you complain that your zone is not developed as others, they will accuse you of provincialism and therefore rent-seeking.⁶⁰

As will be further elaborated in the eighth chapter of this study, chauvinism, narrow-ism, provincialism and factionalism were allegedly underpinned by the desire for rent-seeking. Hence, members of the opposition and any other actor who shares their narratives became the losers of the frame. The frame, therefore, at its very best would have the dual logic of discouraging corruption and other rent-seeking practices and suffocating the emergence of alternative centres of power.

4.3.3. Juxtaposition of Different Logics

The discussion so far has revealed that at least two logics were at work in defining and pursuing Ethiopia's problems in terms of rent-seeking. On the one hand, the EPRDF seemed to be inspired by the fear of the threat that rent-seeking posed to democracy and development. This fact which is further elaborated in chapter six below, can be evidenced by the inordinate attention given to the maintenance of the democratic and developmental character of the EPRDF.

Yet at the same time, some elements of this problem definition point to other logics related to ensuring the economic extraction and political domination of elites associated with the TPLF and their affiliates. First, the opposition parties as a whole were castigated as rent-seekers simply because they had an ideology different from revolutionary democracy. The theoretical discussion of rent-seeking emphasises that it is primarily an individual practice with negative social repercussions. Therefore, the concern underpinning categorizing all the opposition parties as rent-seekers was achieved by deviating from the conventional understanding of rent-seeking and undermining the consistency of EPRDF's approach to rent-seeking. One definition

⁵⁹. This view is shared by many of my informants.

⁶⁰. Interview with Getachew Jember, February 2021, Bahir Dar.

approached rent-seeking in terms of the behaviour of individual actors as per the conventional definition, and the other relates the practice to the ideology of a political party.

Moreover, the demonization of individuals who raised the issue of fairness in the distribution of development gains by labelling them “rent-seekers” would have no other logic than the desire to maintain ethnically skewed wealth and power distribution. The fact that the frame originated out of the internal division within the TPLF again indicates that the logic goes beyond making sure that rent-seeking would not obstruct the development of Ethiopia. Thus, though the aspiration to fight rent-seeking might not be absent, it was not the only concern informing the EPRDF’s behaviour. The dominant logic, as inferred from the discussion on the practice of fighting rent-seeking in the next chapter, was that of entrenching a regime dominated by a party emerging from and claiming to act on behalf of a minority ethnic group.

4.4. Conclusions

This chapter argues that the discourse of rent-seeking as a threat to the “democratic and developmental” system of the EPRDF emerged out of the power struggle within the TPLF in the wake of the Ethio-Eritrea war. The logics of actions informing the introduction of this concept and its subsequent utilization, therefore, was affected by this origin. These logics oscillate between realizing democracy and development by fighting rent-seeking and entrenching the EPRDF’s hold over political power by delegitimising alternative powers. To the extent that rent-seeking was considered the main threat to democratic developmentalism, the securitised logics of action was part of the issue definition. This fact is reflected both in the kind of actions done and justified by the problem definition and the losers and beneficiaries of the frame. The speech acts on rent-seeking warned leaders and any other actor in the country to desist from rent-seeking to avoid being castigated for being strategic enemy of the system. It also required the EPRDF and government agents not only to shun the attitudinal inclination towards and practice of rent-seeking but also to actively fight such attitudes and practices even when manifested in and practised by others. These requirements were incorporated into the laws and regulations of the EPRDF as will be further discussed in chapter six below. However, the EPRDF’s labelling of all other actors opposing its ideology as rent-seekers and thereby deviating from its definition of rent-seeking, points to the existence of an alternative logic to the issue definition. Because of this fact, the opposition parties and their constituencies became the losers of the frame, in addition to those who might have been engaged in rent-seeking practices.

The reasoning of the EPRDF on rent seeking also had element of circularity: rent-seeking was framed as a threat to democratic developmentalism, and yet the existential pursuit of democratic developmentalism was taken as a means to overcome rent-seeking. Looking at the narrative, the lack of democracy and development and the presence of rent-seeking were all securitised. However, since rent-seeking is taken as a form of anti-democratic and corrupt practice, it would suffice to approach the subject as the securitisation of democracy and development. Either way, the logics underpinning the framing of rent-seeking as a threat were a combination of the EPRDF's desire to advance democratic developmentalism and entrench its power by delegitimising contending actors. Observations of the extent to which these competing logics influenced the ways policy measures on rent-seeking were implemented are explored in the next chapter and provide an indication of the dominant logic entrenching the political survival and economic predation of elites associated with the TPLF and their affiliates. In general, this chapter along with the next, indicates the limitation of relying on speech acts and audience acceptance as a true test of securitisation. Speech acts and audience acceptance are not as effective as the concerns of the securitising actor in explaining the consequent of security articulation, a point that is not sufficiently acknowledged in the extant securitisation literature.

Chapter Five

EPRDF Logics of Policy Implementation in the Fight against Rent-Seeking

5.1. Introduction

This chapter is a continuation of chapter four in which the logics of defining rent-seeking as the main threat to the democratic and developmental journey of Ethiopia is examined. This chapter complements the previous chapter by analysing the logics of the implementation of measures suggested to reduce rent-seeking. These measures were transforming the political economy of rent-seeking and mercilessly penalizing the main rent-seekers. Analysing the implementation of these two measures, the chapter argues that the logics of policy implementation in the fight against rent-seeking had been dominantly, though not exclusively, driven by the need to entrench the TPLF and affiliated elites'¹ control over the political and economic powers of the country. Driven by this concern, the effort to transform the political economy of Ethiopia in which business-government relations were characterized by pervasive rent-seeking, and corruption was institutionalized, was pursued simultaneously with measures that emboldened the EPRDF/TPLF's power. Hence, the securitisation logic in which the government was to pursue development and democracy as an existential concern was relegated to the back burner. This chapter, as with the previous one, indicates the limitation of speech act oriented and audience centric works on securitisation in explaining the issues that political actor would pursue as a matter of priority. Rather, the concerns of the securitising actors more effectively elucidate what actors would pursue as a matter of urgency and, hence, the need to reorient the criteria of successful securitisation away from speech acts and audience acceptance issues.

This chapter is organised into five sections, including this introduction. The next section analyses the logics of policy implementation aimed at changing the political economy of rent-seeking. It does this by examining general patterns of government expenditure, the agricultural extension programme and the relation between businesses and the state. To the extent that

¹. This idea of 'key leaders of the TPLF and their affiliates' will be a recurring theme in the subsequent chapters because it signifies not only the disproportionate influence of leaders at the top but also their horizontal cohesion underpinned by common wartime experiences and familial relations. In 2007, out of TPLF's 45 central committee members 12 were husbands and wives which would include even more of them if those who are relatives are included. See Gebre yemane, "The Other Side of the Moon: Dead Beginnings and Dead Ends. Available [Http://Www.Tigraionline.Com/Other-Side-of-the-Moon.Html](http://www.tigraionline.com/Other-Side-of-the-Moon.html)," (2007).

securitisation logics informed the practices in these areas, the government patterns of expenditure would be pro-poor and pro-development, its agricultural extension programme would primarily be driven by developmental concerns, and state-business relations would be mediated by performance. This section maintains that developmentalism was subordinated to the logics of political survival and economic predation in these areas. Through its analysis of the measures (not) taken against corruption, the third section argues that the government lacked the commitment to instigate firm measures against corrupt actors and pervasive corruption. The subsequent section questions why there was a disjuncture between problem-definitions and practice and what implication this lack of cohesion had for the study of securitisation. The chapter ends with some concluding remarks.

5.2. Transforming the Political Economy of Rent-seeking

As noted earlier in this study, according to EPRDF, the fight against rent-seeking requires two concurrent measures: transforming the political economy of the country and penalizing the main rent-seekers. Changing the political economy of Ethiopia towards democratic developmentalism entails taking measures that would ensure people benefit from economic development, based upon their contributions to and their role in value creation.² This practice was to be achieved through a range of sector-wide and sector-specific measures. Investment in health, education and infrastructure, and widespread intervention in the provision of agricultural extension services to boost agricultural productivity were one set of measures. Tightening any working procedures and loopholes that create incentives for rent-seeking was another measure. Despite the diversity of these measures, this chapter analyses three key areas essential to transform the political economy of Ethiopia to dispel the logics of action of the EPRDF in its fight against rent-seeking. These key areas are general patterns of government expenditure, the agricultural extension system and the government`s relation with the business community.

The first area is important because the structural transformation of the economy would have required sustained spending in sectors crucial to that effect, including infrastructures, health and education. The second likewise is important because the EPRDF/government insisted that it had created a political economy of developmentalism in rural areas. It boldly asserted that in rural areas political power was controlled by developmental and democratic farmers who

². EPRDF, *ልማት ዲሞክራሲ እና አቢዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ (Development, democracy and revolutionary democracy)*

would invariably use the local state structure to achieve these twin goals of democracy and development.³ Finally, the third element is important because rent-seeking, first and foremost, comprises government-business interaction. Thus, scrutinizing the logics of policy implementation in these three areas would give a general picture of the logics of actions of the EPRDF in its efforts to change the political economy of Ethiopia towards one that favours democratic developmentalism.

5.2.1. Patterns of Government Expenditure

The EPRDF's practice with regard to government spending indicates that the party-state was driven by the logics of developmentalism in its expenditure decisions. This practice is reflected in the steady rise in capital expenditure, compared to a declining recurrent expenditure. According to the World Bank, the rate of public investment increased from 5% of the GDP in the 1990s to 18.6% in 2011, which was the third highest in the world.⁴ The key investment sector in this regard had been in infrastructure—roads, rail-lines and electricity. Between 1997 and 2014, Ethiopia's road network increased from 26,500 km to 60,000km, while electricity generation capacity increased from 473MW in 2002 to 2268MW in 2014.⁵ A rail-line connecting Addis Ababa and the port in Djibouti, another connecting Awash with Weldiya, as well as a light train system in Addis Ababa, were all constructed as part of this infrastructure expansion.

A large share of this increase in capital expenditure was in sectors that are usually considered pro-poor, that is agriculture, education, health, infrastructure and water and sanitation. According to an OECD report, between 2009 and 2016, these sectors accounted for 70% of the total government spending.⁶ The greatest increases in expenditure were registered in agriculture, of which the two key sub-sectors were food security and agricultural extension.⁷ The EPRDF, with the funding of donors, introduced the largest social protection programme in Sub-Saharan Africa amounting to an equivalent of 3% of the GDP.⁸ In 2011, this “safety-

³. EPRDF, "አገራዊ ለውጦች፣ ቀጣይ ፈተናዎች እና አብዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲያዊ መፍትሄዎች" ([National transformatin, next challenges and revolutionary-democratic solutions), (Addis Ababa: Birana Publisher, 2000 EC).

⁴. WB, "Ethiopia's Great Run: The Growth Acceleration and How to Pace It.," (Washington DC: World Bank, 2016).

⁵. Ibid.

⁶. OECD/PSI, *Rural Development Strategy Review of Ethiopia: Reaping the Benefits of Urbanization, Oecd Development Pathways* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2020).

⁷. WB, "Ethiopia Agriculture and Rural Development Public Expenditure Review 1997/98 – 2005/06," (Washington DC: World Bank, 2008).

⁸. "Ethiopia: Public Expenditure Review," (Washington DC: World Bank, 2016).

net” programme contributed to a 2% reduction in rural poverty.⁹ Similarly, since 2006, the expenditure on education was 20% of the total government expenditure. Even when general government expenditure was reduced, funding for education and roads was protected from this general decline in expenditure.¹⁰ Similarly, in nominal terms, the government outlay on health, and water and sanitation increased, although compared to the Sub-Saharan average, these two sectors seem to be underfunded. While the expenditure in the health sector was largely externally funded, the water and sanitation sector were covered dominantly by the government. The increase in government expenditure was helped by the generous support of funders under the Protection of Basic Services programme through which these funders initially underwrote almost the entire budget requirements. This conducive international environment helped the EPRDF run government effectively combine growth-enhancing measures with poverty reduction.

The EPRDF also financed these projects by centralizing rent, using state-owned enterprises, regulating the financial sector and using a network of party-owned conglomerates and private businesses connected with the party-state.¹¹ Lending for priority sectors was facilitated by Ethiopia’s state-owned commercial and development banks. Given these practices, the logic informing the EPRDF’s conduct seems to be facilitating a rapid and broad-based growth as articulated in the securitisation discourse. However, an assessment of how these expenditures were spent, together with the logics informing the EPRDF’s conduct in other arenas, indicate the existence of conflicting logics.

5.2.2. Agricultural Extension System

The EPRDF considered the rural population as its constituency and, therefore, was committed to transforming rural life by eradicating the sources of rural rent-seeking. Hence, scrutinizing the EPRDF’s logics of action in this area of proclaimed success would generally be indicative of its logics of action elsewhere. Two essential points concerning the logics informing the fight against rent-seeking can be discerned from the operational modalities of the agricultural extension system. First, the EPRDF committed unrivalled resources to transforming smallholder agriculture. Second, notwithstanding this expenditure, ensuring the legitimacy and power grip of the EPRDF were never compromised. Hence, there were competing logics in the

⁹. Ibid.

¹⁰. Ibid.

¹¹. Berhanu Abegaz, "Political Parties in Business: Rent Seekers, Developmentalists, or Both?," *Journal of Development Studies* 49, no. 11 (2013).

quest to transform agriculture through the extension system in which the developmental logics was adhered to when it emboldened or, at least, did not undermine the logics of political survival. This practice affected what measures would be undertaken in which areas.

5.2.2.1. Unrivalled Resources Allocated for Agricultural Transformation

As a possible means of confirming its pro-peasant bias, the EPRDF launched its measures to transform the agricultural sector in the early 1990s, well before the introduction of its securitisation discourse. A pilot extension service programme started in 1993 involving 160 farmers from four regions¹² and was further expanded to 1,600 farmers in 1994. From these programmes, the EPRDF concluded that with sufficient inputs, management and adequate oversight, maize and wheat production could be doubled or even tripled. Hence, a fully-fledged agricultural extension system funded entirely by the EPRDF government was introduced in 1995 under the Participatory Demonstration and Training Extension System. As the programme expanded, the number of extension agents and beneficiary farmers increased from 2,500 and 32,000 in 1995 to 15,000 and 4.2 million in 2002 respectively.¹³ Hence, by the time the securitisation of democracy and development practice was introduced, the extension programme had been significantly expanded.

In the post-2000 period, the delivery of extension services was further decentralized, accompanying the decentralization of power down to the Woreda/District level. In 2004, the EPRDF decided to further increase the number of extension agents and established 25 Agricultural Technical Vocational Training Collages. Between 2004/2005 and 2009/10, it trained 61,785 extension agents and established 9,265 framers' training centres (FTCs) which subsequently rose to 12,500 FTCs.¹⁴ By 2014/15 approximately 80,000 DAs were trained, which reduced the DA-Farmer ratio from 1:600 to just 1:200, one of the highest in the world.¹⁵ This extensive training was undertaken with the plan that every Kebele (the lowest level of administration) would have three extension agents specializing in livestock, crop cultivation

¹². Guush Berhane et al., "The State of Agricultural Extension Service in Ethiopia and Thier Contribution to Agricultural Productivity" (ESSP Working Paper 118, Washington DC: International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), 2018).

¹³. Kassahun Berhanu and Colin Poulton, "The Political Economy of Agricultural Extension Policy in Ethiopia: Economic Growth and Political Control," *Development Policy Review* 32, no. 2 (2014).

¹⁴. Amanda Lenhardt et al., "One Foot on the Ground, One Foot in the Air Ethiopia's Delivery on an Ambitious Development Agenda " (Lodon: Oversea Development Institute, 2015); Jaleta Debello Moti, "Strengthening Agricultural Extension Service in Ethiopia: Review of Micro-Data Based Research Findings, Linking Micro-Data to Policy Processes " (Capital Hotel and Spa, Addis Ababa 17th May 2016).

¹⁵. Moti, "Strengthening Agricultural Extension Service".

and resource management, while also having other specialized DAs working across Kebeles. According to Guush et al, between 2010 and 2016, Ethiopia had one of the most widespread extension systems in the world, based upon the DA-farmers ratio, which also reached 80 percent of the peasants.¹⁶ Parallel to this system, approximately 7,000 subject matter specialists and 4,000 supervisors were deployed at the Woreda/District and regional level.¹⁷ After 2010, the agricultural extension system was reconfigured with the introduction of farmers' development groups and "one-to-five organisations" that were meant to improve the efficiency of agricultural extension delivery. According to this reconfiguration, extension agents worked with model farmers who, in turn, share their knowledge and skills with other "follower" farmers. Model farmers were supposed to be those who were more receptive to the extension service provided by the DAs, and were greater risk-takers and early adopters of agricultural technologies.¹⁸

The extension programme was delivered in a standardized top-down manner focusing, mainly on the supply of inputs related to fertilizer, improved seed, credit and extension services.¹⁹ A quota on fertilizers, improved seeds and/or row planting was set by higher authority.²⁰ The DAs were expected to realise the set quotas in order to facilitate their promotion and career prospects.²¹ The system, thus, follows "the same rules, a single system of values, a set of top-down instructions and local authority practices that have more to do with administrative 'knowhow' than the specificities of a sector or a locality."²² This mode of delivery helped the regime to standardize the training of DAs and the modality for their evaluation.²³ Moreover, this sustained expansion of the extension services was complemented with measures that increased the political attention given to the agricultural sector. The starting salary of DAs was set three levels higher than other diploma holders.²⁴ The EPRDF government also organised national farmer awards for the best performing farmers and DAs. Moreover, the head of the

¹⁶. Berhane et al., "The State of Agricultural Extension Service in Ethiopia and Thier Contribution to Agricultural Productivity."

¹⁷. Ibid.

¹⁸. Interview with experts from the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, January 2021.

¹⁹. An extension expert based in the Oromo regional state differs on this point arguing that bottom-up feedback is incorporated by means of lessons learned even from other regions.

²⁰. Tewodaj Moguees et al., "Agricultural Extension in Ethiopia through a Gender and Governance Lens, Eesp2 Discussion Paper," (Washington DC: International Food Policy Research Institute 2009).

²¹ Terrence Lyons, *The puzzle of Ethiopian Politics* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publisher, 2019).

²². Sabine Planel, "A View of Abureaucratic Developmental State: Local Governance and Agricultural Extension in Rural Ethiopia," *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 8, no. 3 (2014).

²³. Berhane et al., "The State of Agricultural Extension Service in Ethiopia and Thier Contribution to Agricultural Productivity."

²⁴. Ibid.

Bureau of Agriculture and Rural Development at the regional, Zonal and Woreda levels, were designated as Deputy Administrator of the respective level.²⁵ In acknowledgement of these efforts, Ethiopia's extension system was lauded as the largest extension programme in Africa, making the country among the few African countries that fulfilled the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) requirement whereby at least 10 percent of the GDP was set to be allocated for the agricultural sector.²⁶ The agricultural transformation, however, was to be realised without compromising the EPRDF's power (as is discussed in the next section).

5.2.2.2. Political Control and Regime Survival

The logics of political survival in the delivery of agricultural extension services was reflected in two ways: through entrenching the state; and designing the system to realise the EPRDF's dual political and development goals. By realizing broad-based growth, the EPRDF sought to deny operational ground for hostile political forces. The very presence of institutions that seek to deliver extension services was envisioned to extend the party-state²⁷ since, for many rural dwellers, government and the party (in this case the EPRDF) are considered the same entity. The entrenchment of the state, therefore, would have the indirect benefit of securing the EPRDF's grip on power. So long as this goal was the anticipated effect of delivering the extension programme, without mediating the way extension services were delivered, it would not constitute a problem. However, in the face of the available evidence, one cannot be entirely confident that facilitating the EPRDF's control was a secondary consideration of the extension programmes, based upon the following reasons. To begin with, the institutions and structures put in place to deliver extension services were not entirely driven by the concern to realise development. They had other political concerns too.²⁸ The top-down and standardized supply-oriented nature of the programmes were pursued even when the EPRDF was advised that the diversity of Ethiopia's agroecological zones, together with the variety of crops cultivated, rendered a "one-size-fits-all" approach to extension provision unsuitable.

²⁵. Gerba Leta et al., "The Agricultural Extension System in Ethiopia: Operational Setup, Challenges and Opportunities" (Zef Working Paper Series, 2017), file:///C:/Users/Dell/Downloads/Leta%20et%20al%202017.pdf.

²⁶. Berhanu and Poulton, "Political Economy."

²⁷. Planel, "Abureaucratic Developmental State."

²⁸. Agricultural extension experts both at the federal and regional level are consistent on this point indicating that structure that was designed for agricultural extension service provision was also utilized to undertake other political works.

According to the Federal Office of the Auditor General, the Zonal administration of the Harargah zone repeatedly informed the regional government that the DAs and farmers' training programmes were not tailored to the local ecosystem. However, no measures were taken to offset this complaint.²⁹ This example, far from being an isolated incident, was symptomatic of a systemic feature of Ethiopia's agricultural extension system under the EPRDF. A regional extension system expert notes a tendency within the government to be seen as committed to the provision of extension services rather than actually fulfilling the technical requirements needed to transform the agricultural sector.³⁰ While this practice could be explained by the lack of capacity to adapt to the local situation, the behaviour of the EPRDF pointed to political concerns. For instance, while the EPRDF led government was receptive to liberalization in other arenas, in the area of distribution of fertilizers, the system was dominated by the state.³¹ Party-owned conglomerates monopolized the distribution of fertilizers, while rural cooperatives operated according to governmental concerns rather than local demands.³² Moreover, those DAs who sought to adapt the extension programme to the local context were not given adequate incentives. The EPRDF set targets for extension service delivery upon which DAs were evaluated.³³ Despite the expectation of committed measures to transform agriculture, as per the securitisation discourse, the output of the extension service was not given due attention.

Secondly, most of the DAs were both party members and state bureaucrats. Consequently, they undertook tasks required by these competing roles, thus, potentially undermining their legitimacy as development experts.³⁴ Their politicization began in the very process of recruitment into the agricultural technical vocational education training collages during which party members were favoured.³⁵ The recruiters were reportedly party members who, from the outset, knew which candidates were party members³⁶ Once recruited, the promotion process had the criteria labelled "attitude", which largely referred to the candidate's political

²⁹. Office of Federal Auditor, "የ2006/2007 አዲት አመት የፌዴራል ዋና አዲተር ሪፖርት(Federal auditor report on the 2006/2007 audit year)," (2007).

³⁰. Interview with an expert on agricultural extensions system, anonymous place and date.

³¹. Berhanu and Poulton, "Political Economy."

³². Ibid.

³³. Mogue et al., "Agricultural Extension in Ethiopia."

³⁴. Informal conversation with a director of an agricultural research institute. According to my conversant DAs have 13 functions some of which has little to do with their profession.

³⁵. Berhanu and Poulton, "Political Economy"

³⁶. Ibid.

orientation.³⁷ Hence, as party members, DAs were required to execute the party's political work, while also delivering an extension service to the peasantry. The "DAs may simultaneously play the role of extension agent, political campaigner, credit recovery officer, and community planner."³⁸ According to a Director of an Agricultural Research Institute, DAs undertook up to thirteen functions which would invariably affect their reputation as a development expert.³⁹ The fact that this practice was pursued even when it undermined the quality of extension services provided, indicates the political logic of control. The view of experts from the Ministry of Agriculture largely tallies with the literature cited above. According to these experts, no written regulation dictates that the authorities should recruit or promote those DAs who are party members.⁴⁰ However, there was a tendency for selecting DAs based upon their EPRDF party affiliations and other developmentally irrelevant criteria, unless the District Commissioner resisted such practices. Similarly, if a DA was not a EPRDF member, he/she would not be given opportunities to attend events that have *per diems* and other related benefits.

An informant who previously held a leadership position in the EPRDF argues that DAs party membership was not problematic because its agenda focused purely on development and democracy. According to this informant, if a "front-runner" DA was recruited to the EPRDF, he/she would be able to use the organisational capacity of both the state and the party to transform the lives of the community.⁴¹ However, when the DAs recruited to the party were not front-runners (natural leaders) and, consequently, sought to use their party membership as camouflage for their lack of a strong work ethic, the entire system would fail to deliver.⁴² This informant, therefore, argues that there was no other logic in the extension system than the pursuit of agricultural transformation. Any failure in the system was attributable to the system's failure to recruit front-runners. Even if one accepts the credibility of this account, the EPRDF, driven by the expediency of political survival after the 2005 election, recruited a large pool of unqualified members. The agricultural extension system, therefore, became a victim of measures taken to ensure the EPRDF's political dominance. Probably due to this low-quality of DA recruits, an extension expert indicates that a person who can be taken as a "model" from

³⁷. Interview with agricultural experts of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural development, Addis Ababa, January 2021.

³⁸. René Lefort, "Free Market Economy, 'Developmental State' and Party-State Hegemony in Ethiopia: The Case of the 'Model Farmers'," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 50, no. 4 (202).

³⁹. Informal conversation with a director of agricultural research institute, February 2021, Addis Ababa.

⁴⁰. Interview with extension experts of the Ministry of Agriculture, January 2021, Addis Ababa.

⁴¹. Interview with Getachew Jember, February 2021, Bahir Dar.

⁴². Ibid.

the political perspective was not necessarily a “model” from an agricultural perspective.⁴³ In short, what makes a person a model politician proved to be different from what makes him/her a model farmer. However, the two attributes have often been merged when so called “model” farmers were selected by privileging those who were categorized as “model” politicians rather than expert farmers.⁴⁴

The contradiction between the above two roles seem to go well beyond the recruitment of individuals who were not front-runners. It was also due to the EPRDF’s often misguided assumption that the measures it would need to take to stay in power did not require any other focus than heralding development and institutionalizing democracy. Beyond a single-minded focus on these two issues, the EPRDF undertook a whole host of other works necessary to stay in power, including political works of presenting itself as the best alternative among the plethora of competing political forces. Even worse, when the democratic and developmental goals conflicted with the other goals related to political survival, it appeared to make both theoretical and empirical sense to expect the prioritization of the latter. At a deeper level, the EPRDF’s thinking was based on a faulty understanding of human nature in which a devout ideologue of revolutionary democracy disregarded all his/her self- and familial interests for the existential cause of development and democracy. Contrary to this expectation, the operation of the agricultural extension system was inescapably driven by political concerns that went well beyond developmental ones.

Third, the way model farmers were selected, the privileges they received and their dual roles also point to a political logic embedded in economic calculations. With regard to the DAs’ selection, the system had an inbuilt structure that privileged the consideration of criteria other than those officially articulated. The DAs were accountable to the authorities at the Woreda/District level, who evaluated them based upon their implementation of governmental policies both technical and political.⁴⁵ DAs, in turn, relied on the expert farmers for the implementation of policies and programmes who accordingly used to select these “model” farmers based upon these technical and political considerations. This system incentivises the DA to select “...the most politically receptive [candidate], who takes [on] both the burden and the benefit of implementing government-initiated policies.”⁴⁶ Thus, though expert farmers

⁴³. Interview with a regional agricultural expert, February 2021, Bahir Dar.

⁴⁴. Ibid.

⁴⁵. Mogue et al., "Agricultural Extension in Ethiopia."

⁴⁶. Davide Chinigò, "Decentralization and Agrarian Transformation in Ethiopia: Extending the Power of the Federal State," *Critical African Studies* 6, no. 1 (2013).p.15

were supposed to be selected based on their receptiveness for new technology and willingness to innovate and experiment, the criteria were ultimately limited to wealth and political orientation.⁴⁷ Studies conducted in different districts, as well as the views of agricultural experts, confirm these selection criteria.⁴⁸ The wealthy farmers were capable of implementing the extension package promoted by the DAs (such as fertilisers and improved seeds) while their political allegiance was used for electoral mobilization and surveillance of the opposition.

These selectively recruited model farmers had the dual political role of serving as functionaries of the ruling coalition (EPRDF) and the developmental role of acting as a role-model to other farmers. Their former role was privileged when there is conflict between the two roles. In this regard, a DA claimed that “the members of the 1-to-5 groups are encouraged to keep an eye on each other, to identify those that oppose the ruling party and to shun them, to not go to their house, or be seen talking to them in public so that other people would not think that they too have started to support the opposition.”⁴⁹ Hailemichael and Huaug also argue that model farmers were encouraged by AES personnel to monitor anyone voting for the opposition.⁵⁰ As a return for their dual role, these farmers were granted preferential treatment in access to development projects, NGO support and other benefits. Given this, they argue that there is a risk that the very idea of a “model farmer” and the accompanying preferential benefit, could be considered as a form of elite capture of resources and, thus, an arena of inclusion and exclusion.⁵¹

While the above practice may not directly implicate the EPRDF’s central leadership, the fact that the bureaucracy was purposively politicized, together with the EPRDF’s belief in the political nature of development, indicates the tacit approval of the party’s higher authorities.⁵² Accounts received from extension experts, based both at the federal and regional levels, confirm this gross politicization of the structure delivering agricultural extension services. This practice notwithstanding, informants who were political leaders of the EPRDF disagreed on the issue of the politicization of the said extension system. They did not believe that the government was driven by political expediencies, thus, causing the EPRDF’s leadership to give less attention to agricultural extension. They rather argued that although the government should

⁴⁷.Selam Hailemichael and Ruth Haug, "The Use and Abuse of the ‘Model Farmer’ Approach in Agricultural Extension in Ethiopia," *The Journal of Agricultural Education and Extension* 26, no. 5 (2020).

⁴⁸. Interview with agricultural extension experts, February and March 2021, Addis Ababa and Bahir Dar.

⁴⁹. Hailemichael and Haug, "The Use and Abuse."

⁵⁰. Ibid.

⁵¹. Ibid.

⁵². Lefort, "Free Market Economy."

have done more to register even higher agricultural growth, its failure to do so was not due to the lack of political will or even the prioritization of other concerns. According to these informants, believing that its political survival depends on the satisfaction of the peasantry, the EPRDF's leadership had undertaken a number of measures to improve agricultural production. However, they admit, the results of such practices had not been as expected. Some of these informants are puzzled why sufficient positive results were not registered after all the efforts implemented to improve agricultural production. The following quote captures the puzzlement they experience.

Something that I cannot understand even today is why we were not able to bring change in agriculture. We did a lot of things to transform the agricultural sector. In comparison with other governments, we took massive efforts. Within one year, 29 [sic] agriculture colleges were established receiving thousands of students. We assigned three extension agents per Kebel and much of our discussion was about agriculture. After all these efforts, why it is not transformed requires research. The will and attention were there. But I do not think it was effective to the level expected.⁵³

The above sentiment dilutes the logics of political survival because it did not appear to be the core feature of the operation of the agricultural extension system.

One explanation for such a discrepancy between the opinion of political leaders and agricultural experts could be due to the operation of different systems of logics at different levels of the administration hierarchy. The political logic might operate in the concerns of those policy implementers, whereas the higher-level leaders might formulate policies driven by a different logic. Once informed that the peasantry was the source of political support and, in the face of enormous challenges to spearhead the required green revolution, the lower-level leaders might politicize the agricultural modernization effort by merging it with direct political work, aimed at recruiting cadres and sympathizers. These leaders admittedly fed the higher-level leaders with false reports on agricultural output and input distributed.⁵⁴ A combination of a faulty assumption at the stage of policy design, together with the privileging of political concern at the stage of implementation, therefore, might explain the actual state of agricultural successes/failures.

⁵³. Interview with former president of the SNNP region, April 2021, Addis Ababa

⁵⁴. EPRDF, "ሀገራዊ አንድነት ለሁለንተናዊ ብልጽግና፤ የኢሃዲግ 11ኛ ድርጅታዊ ጉባኤ ሪፖርት (National unity for all inclusive growth)" (September, 2011 EC).

However, the above explanation does not seem to capture the whole picture. For one thing, the higher-level leaders did little when suggestions and reports that challenged their assumptions were brought forward. The failure to equip the Farmer Training Centres, the need to design a system to evaluate farmers' satisfaction with the extension system, and the need to adjust training to ecological conditions, were brought to the attention of the EPRDF's leadership by the Auditor General, yet no remedial measures were taken. It is also inconceivable to assume that these leaders were unaware of the merging of professional and political functions and the negative effect of this practice on the effectiveness of the agricultural extension system. By the EPRDF's admission, the recruitment of party members was affected by the lack of quality members, which means the envisioned coupling between political membership and developmental commitment was not effective. The lack of a strong initiative to reverse this position confirms the EPRDF's higher-level leader supported the precedence of political survival over the logic of developmentalism.

We cannot, therefore, deny the inescapable fact that the EPRDF envisioned development in so far as it managed the entire process. Contrary to its stated vision, the operationalisation of the AES was realised by subordinating its successes to the political logic of ensuring regime legitimacy and survival. This practice is not surprising given that the EPRDF's commitment to transform agriculture was to rely on the peasantry as a political base. Improvement in the livelihood of the peasantry, therefore, was a secondary goal. When the EPRDF realised that the peasantry may not serve as its base, as was the case in the 2005 election in which the EPRDF lost a number of rural constituencies, it reverted to direct political coercion and co-option of the peasantry. Accordingly, the EPRDF recruited a large pool of rural cadres, thus, shaping incentives and constraints based upon political membership.

Generally, it emerges from the analysis presented in this section that the logics of policy implementation in the delivery of agricultural extension was driven by competing logics of improving the livelihood of the peasantry and securing regime legitimacy and survival. The latter logic tended to be privileged over the former when the two came into conflict. However, a test case against the EPRDF's commitment to fighting rent-seeking would be its relations with the business community and its commitment to fight corruption. The subsequent two sections examine these particular issues.

5.2.3. Government Business Relations

Since rent-seeking is quintessentially an issue of business-government relations, analysing this practice would be a litmus test of the EPRDF's commitment to fight rent-seeking. The EPRDF aspired to create a developmental state that utilizes rent (wealth accumulation) for developmental purposes. Ostensibly driven by this aspiration, the EPRDF made a number of key economic decisions; established a range of state and party-owned enterprises; resisted the IFI's call for unrestricted liberalization of the economy; controlled the financial sector through state-owned banks and micro-credited institutions; and continued the previous government's policy of state ownership of land. These institutions were supposed to be used to centralize rent which was promised to be channelled to value-creating businesses and sectors.⁵⁵ The endowments and state-owned enterprises, for instance, were supposed to invest in areas in which the private sector was not able or willing to invest, while the financial institutions would make loans available for prioritised projects. Packages of government interventions in the economy were also promised to be undertaken without undermining the long-term potential of the market and the private sector to correct market failure.⁵⁶

The above aspiration aside, the operation of the state and party-owned businesses was largely animated by the desire to ensure the political and economic dominance of key leaders of the TPLF and their affiliates.⁵⁷ From the outset, the TPLF/EPRDF systematically excluded social forces such as "professional bureaucrats, politically unlinked businesspeople, autonomous religious or traditional elders, and the uncaptured intelligentsia."⁵⁸ Concurrently, it positioned its cadres to be "managers, security personnel, customs officials, bankers, accountants, 'judges', mass organisation bosses, ecclesiastical persons, merchants, brokers, contractors, inspectors, peasant handlers and so on."⁵⁹ The above two measures, together with the TPLF's control of key security (the army, the intelligence, the police, and justice system), economic (the financial intelligence unit, the ministry of finance, the Banks etc) and political institutions,

⁵⁵. Clapham, "The Ethiopian Developmental State."

⁵⁶. MFED, *የኢትዮጵያ ፌዴራላዊ ዲሞክራሲያዊ ሪፐብሊክ የኢንዱስትሪ ልማት ስትራቴጂ* (*Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia: Industrial development strategy*).

⁵⁷. I did not come across any informant who denies the ethnic component of control over the commanding height of the economy.

⁵⁸. Abegaz, "Pathway," p.46.

⁵⁹. Negussay Ayele, "EPLF/TPLF and Ethiopia-Eritrea Today: Sow the Wind; Reap the Whirlwind," 2001, http://www.ethiopians.com/Views/Ethiopia_Eritrea_today.htm. Interview with an officer of the Amhara Regional state.

helped it control the creation, distribution and extraction of economic wealth.⁶⁰ Had these institutions operated to reward only productive businesses with state-sanctioned rent, it would have facilitated the initiation of a self-sustaining process of development. In reality, however, while the well-performing and yet unconnected private sector businesses and institutions were denied any financial and resource related privileges, those businesses related to, and owned by, the state, the TPLF/EPRDF, and individuals connected with these parties, were favoured, regardless of their performance.

Those businesses/institutions so endowed had preferential access to contracts, credit and services, as well as protection from external scrutiny.⁶¹ They were favourably allocated credit and helped to easily acquire a business licenses and customs clearance. They were also supported by displacing high profile private businesses to facilitate their control over profitable sectors and take advantage of the privatization processes.⁶² Governmental monopolies, systemic ownership of public assets and unfair competition allowed the owners of favoured businesses to accumulate wealth regardless of their role in value creation. Between 1991-2010 more than 40% of the loans disbursed by the Development Bank of Ethiopia were given to the Endowment Fund for the Rehabilitation of Tigray (EFFORT) and the Tigray region.⁶³ Alluding to an internal report, Ermias indicated that in 1998 EC, this bank had a total of 1.7 billion *Birr* owed it from numerous EFFORT companies.⁶⁴ For long, the higher-level leaders of Ethiopia's banks were elites from the Tigray ethnic group (and probably members of the TPLF). Until 2004, EFFORT was granted a 2.8 billion *Birr* loan by the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia without demanding any collateral.⁶⁵ When EFFORT was unable to repay its loan, it was transferred to the Development Bank of Ethiopia as a "non-performing loan" and, thus, the company was relieved of the debt burden without making any payment.

While this practice occurred in the first decade of the introduction of the securitisation discourse, there was no indication of this system changing in subsequent years. A former customs official reportedly commented that these companies imported their products without

⁶⁰. According to an informant, there were thousand people working from the palace yet in unofficial position managing all aspect of the governance of the country. Abiy Ahmed, *የመደመር መንገድ (A synergetic journey)* (Addis Ababa, 2012 EC).

⁶¹. ARC, "Arc Briefing Ethiopia," (Africa Risk Consulting, January 2015), Lexis Nexis.

⁶². Berhanu Abegaz, "Political Parties in Bussiness," Working Paper Number, (2011), https://economics.wm.edu/wp/cwm_wp113.pdf

⁶³. Tefera Negash Gebregziabher and Wil Hout, "The Rise of Oligarchy in Ethiopia: The Case of Wealth Creation since 1991," *Review of African Political Economy* 45, no. 157 (2018).

⁶⁴. Ermias Legesse, *የመለስ ልቃቅቻ (Meles's pandora box)* (USA: Netsanet Publishing, 2010 EC).

⁶⁵. Ibid.

paying the necessary tax and import duties.⁶⁶ They were also granted incentives beyond what the relevant laws permit.⁶⁷ Commenting upon their import-export privileges, the customs official said that “EFFORT trucks were known to be untouchable on their way to and from Djibouti port,” an accusation confirmed by other cadres.⁶⁸ The fact that these organisations received even greater preferences than state-owned enterprises,⁶⁹ indicates the dominance of an ethnic based clientelist consideration over a developmental one.

State-owned enterprises were also privileged in comparison to those in the private sectors. According to a 2011 World Bank study, public enterprises took 80% of the total money lent by banks.⁷⁰ While such practices made public investment in Ethiopia one of the highest in the world, private investment was one of the lowest.⁷¹ Though this fact does not seem to pose a problem for profit-making organisations such as Ethiopian Airlines and Ethio telecom, others that were bedevilled by corruption and inefficiency became a drain on public resources. A notorious case in this regard was the state-owned enterprise called the Metal and Engineering Corporation (MetEC). MetEC was established in 2010, combining nine businesses operating in the area of defence, plastic and vehicle spare parts, to strengthen the country’s quest for industrial development.⁷² Run by military generals, the corporation was tasked to imbue the business environment with the much-needed engineering capability, while also capitalizing on the efficiency and discipline military institutions are assumed to possess. The MetEC was contracted to build ten sugar factories, a fertilizer factory and the electromechanical part of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam without submitting a bid.⁷³

However, the MetEC delivered none of its contractual obligations while misappropriating a large proportion of the money it signed for in these contracts. It acquired 90% of the cost of the sugar factories and all money allocated for building the fertilizer factory, while it completed

⁶⁶. Befikadu Hailu, "Analysis: Inside the Controversial Effort," *Addis Standard* (16 January 2017), <http://addisstandard.com/analysis-inside-controversial-effort/>.

⁶⁷. Ibid.

⁶⁸. Ibid.

⁶⁹. WikiLeaks, "Party-Statals: How Ruling Parties Endowments` Operate," *WikiLeaks* (2009), https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09ADDISABABA677_a.html.

⁷⁰. Michael Geiger, Tobias; Moller, and Lars Christian, "Ethiopia Economic Update Two: Laying the Foundation for Achiving Middle Income Status," (Washington Dc: World Bank Group, 2013).

⁷¹. Rene Lefort, "The Ethiopian Economy: The Developmental State Vs the Free Market," in *Understanding Contemporary Ethiopia: Monarchy Revolution and the Legacy of Meles Zenawi*, ed. Gerard Prenuer and Eloi Ficquet (London: Hurst and company, 2015).

⁷². Solomon Goshu, "Recent Corruption Crackdown in Ethiopia: What Can We Learn From It,?" IACC Sries 28 January, 2019, <https://iaccseries.org/blog/recent-corruption-crackdown-in-ethiopia-what-can-we-learn-from-it/>.

⁷³. Ibid.

only 40% of the construction process of the latter contract.⁷⁴ It collected more than 65% of the cost needed to build the electromechanical component of the GERD, while completing no more than 25% of the project.⁷⁵ Between 2012 and 2018, MetEC made an international procurement amounting to 1.1 billion dollars without a bid and with a price 400% higher than the market price.⁷⁶ After monopolizing all of Ethiopia's construction projects, it sub-contracted many these ventures to TPLF business organisations that were engaged in similar corrupt practices.⁷⁷

These corrupt relations with businesses were also manifested in the private sectors' interaction with the state. According to its espoused development model, the ideological foundation of the EPRDF's government-private sector relations was the former's need to maintain its autonomy from the latter and yet embed itself in them to understand what they needed. A corollary of this model was the distinction between those businesses that were labelled "rent-seekers" and those that were "developmental". The rent-seekers accumulated wealth either illegally or immorally, guided by the sole principle of private profit regardless of the negative externality of this practice for society.⁷⁸ The developmental business, on the other hand, engages in socially productive businesses, benefiting both themselves and the populace at large.

Theoretically, as the experiences of the East Asian Developmental States indicate, the autonomy of the state enables it to penalize rent-seekers and reward developmental businesses. However, in practice, political affiliation, rather than business performance, proved to be the main criteria for reward and sanction.⁷⁹ Those businesses connected with the party (EPRDF) were labelled "developmental" regardless of their value-creating roles.⁸⁰ A good example, in this regard, was Hayat Real Estate. As narrated by Ermias, due to the organisation's close relationship with the wife of the late Prime Minister Meles, and its support for some developmental and social activities in Tigray, it was labelled "developmental". As a "developmental" business, it succeeded in convincing the government to delist a civil servant who was to be a candidate for EPRDF during the 2010 election due to the civil servant's

⁷⁴. Walta, "Documetary on METEC" 2019. EBC, "ምናባዊ" (Idealist, documentaries on Metec), 14 November 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gYs4pQX-6Ek&t=455s>

⁷⁵. "ምናባዊ" (Idealist, documentaries on METEC).

⁷⁶. Goshu, "Recent Corruption Crackdown?"

⁷⁷. Legesse, *የመላስ ልቃቀት (Meles's Pandora Box)*.

⁷⁸. EPRDF, *ልማት ዲሞክራሲ እና አቢዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ (Development, democracy and revolutionary democracy)*

⁷⁹. MFED, *የኢትዮጵያ ፌዴራላዊ ዲሞክራሲያዊ ሪፐብሊክ የኢንዱስትሪ ልማት ስትራቴጂ (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia: Industrial development strategy)*.

⁸⁰. A number of informants shared this idea.

resistance to Hayat Real Estate`s attempt at corrupting the process of land acquisition.⁸¹ Hayat was just one example of the EPRDF`s shoddy government-business relations affecting the real estate sector.

According to another insider report, a number of developers received land and transferred it to a third party while some of them even borrowed from banks using the same land as collateral. Yohannes, who was one of the leaders of the Addis Ababa Land Administration, was tasked to investigate malpractices in the real estate sector. According to his investigation, many developers, most of whom were of Tigrayan origin, used the land they were supposed to develop to borrow more than 150 million *Birr*, money that was not even used to develop the land.⁸² He also found out that many of these developers sold their land to other private actors, thus, contravening Ethiopia`s laws.⁸³

A similar issue was raised in relation to large-scale land leases in rural areas. According to Tefera and Hout, many of the local investors in the commercial agricultural sector were the politico-military elites originating from the Tigray ethnic group.⁸⁴ Aklong, likewise, indicates that more than 75% of the domestic land investors in the Gambella region were of Tigray origin.⁸⁵ The money to be used in this investment, as the report of the performance of the previously mentioned Development Bank of Ethiopia indicates, was borrowed from the government, most of which was not repaid.⁸⁶ Alluding to the report of the Cabinet Affairs Ministers regarding the performance of the Development Bank of Ethiopia, ARC reported that the Bank mismanaged 3.3 billion Ethiopian *Birr*⁸⁷—a large proportion of which was due to land investors` use of the agricultural loan for non-agricultural projects.⁸⁸ Members of this ethnically and politically affiliated elite took multiple loans for the same plot of land, and much of the agricultural machinery imported duty-free was not traceable.⁸⁹ Thus, preferential accesses had been granted, based upon developmentally irrelevant political and ethnic considerations.

⁸¹. Ermias Legesse, *ባሌቤት አልባ ከተማ (Ownerless City)* (No place of publication, 2006EC).

⁸². Yohannes Tadesse, *የተስፋው ነጻነት (Rays of hope)* (Germany, 2013?).

⁸³. Ibid.

⁸⁴. Gebregziabher and Hout, "The Rise of Oligarchy."

⁸⁵. Birara, *ድርጅታዊ ምዝባሪ (Organisational predation)*

⁸⁶. ARC, "Ethiopia Monthly Briefing," *ARC Briefing* (Lexis Nexis, January 2017).

⁸⁷. Ibid.

⁸⁸. Ibid.

⁸⁹. Ibid.

Some observers suggested that the fact that business-government relations were afflicted with insider deals and corruption was not developmentally counter-productive since such practices may be the best developing countries' governments can achieve. Arguably, this particular model rendered corruption less harmful for the development of a country.⁹⁰ It presumably facilitated long term planning and the allocation of resources in a developmentally beneficial way and ensured long term stability and regulatory predictability.⁹¹ Moreover, they argue that preferential access to and control over credit, land and other government-provided services by endowments should not be exaggerated.⁹² Pointing to regular internal (but never external) audits and EFFORT companies' strength in securing ISO certificates, Vaughan and Gebremichael opined that EFFORT may not be as corrupt as external observers assume. Although the companies competed in areas in which the private sector has already been an active player, they also invested in areas in which the private sector was neither ready or willing to invest.⁹³ Because of this situation, the Ethiopian state and its allied businesses were at once rent creator, rent-seeker, and rent allocator.⁹⁴

However, many observers argued that evidently the EPRDF privileges the state's rent-seeking character over its developmental goals. According to Hassen, this situation was nothing but the capture of the state by "organised (armed) groups of political accumulators in search of state-sanctioned economic rent"...that resulted in "the rigging of the economic game against uncaptured economic accumulators."⁹⁵ It created a bifurcated business environment in which, on the one hand, the state-owned, party-owned and politically connected private businesses thrived, due to the benefits they received from their connection with the state/EPRDF, and on the other hand, a range of small and medium enterprises that did not have a connection with the EPRDF government found it difficult to operate in Ethiopia.⁹⁶ Moreover, the privileged firms were also used to weaken political opponents.⁹⁷

⁹⁰. Hutchcroft, "The Politics of Privillage."

⁹¹. Sarah Vaughan and Mesfin Gebremichael, "Rethinking Business and Politics in Ethiopia the Role of Effort, the Endowment Fund for the Rehabilitation of Tigray " in *Africa Power and Politics* (UK: Overseas Development Institute 2012).

⁹². Ibid.

⁹³. Ibid.

⁹⁴. Abegaz, "Political Parties in Business?"

⁹⁵. Seid Y. Hassan, "Corruption, State Capture, and the Effectiveness of Anticorruption Agency in Post-Communist Ethiopia," *Economic and Political Studies* 6, no. 4 (2019).

⁹⁶. Abegaz, "Political Parties in Bussiness. "

⁹⁷.Abegaz, "Pathway."

Debates within the EPRDF party that were largely hidden from the public view also concur with this latter possibility. When the party discussed issues of government-business relations in 2013, some leaders of the EPRDF argued that the Ethiopian state was captured by organised interests.⁹⁸ Though the idea was eventually rejected by the majority of members who argued that the signs did not indicate complete capture, even this conclusion reveals how the EPRDF's government-business relations have been littered with pervasive corruption. Further strengthening this claim, a 2010 study by the anti-corruption commission identified a number of "loopholes" across many sectors and institutions and, in some instances, the use of these loopholes for private interests were identified.⁹⁹ Hence, the role of the endowments was not as developmental as the defenders of the EPRDF tried to suggest.

Informants' opinion generally concurs with those observers who accept the pervasiveness of rent-seeking and the EPRDF's lack of commitment to fight rent-seeking. Initially the discourse of "rent-seeker" was used to correct the political deviant rather than to arrest rent-seeking. Some informants argue that this discourse was used as a pretext to arrest and humiliate those individuals who raised legitimate and yet politically challenging questions. Other informants maintained that the TPLF appointed selected individuals in the strategic positions necessary for fighting or facilitating theft and, ultimately, used them for personal and partisan interests. According to many of these informants, the very system creates an incentive for rent-seeking due to the EPRDF government's increasing role in the economy, the lack of accountability in the financial system, the dearth of reporting and external auditing of the endowments, the absence of strong monitoring practices and the scarcity of discipline in government institutions. The EPRDF's control over endowments specifically created a conflict of interest making it difficult to minimize rent-seeking, while relying on the system that created it. According to these informants, the TPLF itself was at the pinnacle of rent-seeking; all the members accumulated wealth through rent-seeking—a process that made individuals and companies "millionaires" within a day. The financial intelligence unit controlled by the TPLF was primarily a means to smuggle out foreign currencies.¹⁰⁰ Figures indeed indicate that virtually all the foreign currency that has come into Ethiopia in the last 30 years was illicitly

⁹⁸. Birhane Tsigab, *የኢህአዴግ የቁልቁለት ጉዞ፣ የስብሰባዎቻቸው ወግ* (EPRDF's downward journey: A conversation of meetings) (Addis Ababa: Far East Trading, 2012 EC).

⁹⁹. Ethics and Commission Anti-corruption, "ሳይቃጠል በቅጠል (Extinguish before It Burns)," (Addis Ababa, 2002 EC).

¹⁰⁰. Ahmed, *የመደመር መንገድ* (A synergetic journey).

smuggled out.¹⁰¹ According to an informant, this illicit activity was not simply the result of corrupt acts of individuals but an act of an organised group resembling ethno-mafia whereby a section of the society was deliberately enriched while the rest were impoverished.¹⁰² There were no criteria for identifying who was a rent-seeker and who promoted development and, therefore, the label “rent-seeker” was applied arbitrarily, eventually leading to state capture.¹⁰³ This informant claimed that since state capture cannot be realised without crippling all other oversight institutions, the TPLF/EPRDF deliberately weakened and subverted the operation of these institutions.

Hence, some of the study informants concluded that limiting rent-seeking had never been the concern of the EPRDF which rather was using the discourse of development and democracy to camouflage its rent-seeking practices.¹⁰⁴ However, a closer observation of dynamics within the EPRDF (which is possible due to the current transition process) points to a need for nuance. The views expressed by Melaku Fanta in an interview with the *Reporter* (a local newspaper), together with those expressed by the current Prime Minister, Abiy Ahmed, in his recent book *የመደመር መንገድ* (*The Synergistic Way*) very much reveal this nuance. Melaku Fanta was the Director-General of the Ethiopian Customs and Revenue Authority (ECRA) until 2013. During his tenure, he was credited for introducing a number of tax reform measures and a crackdown on tax evasions that boosted the resource mobilizing capacity of the government. He was accused of corruption and imprisoned in 2013, only to be released without a verdict when the current reform was introduced in 2018. According to Melaku, the reforms he introduced, and the successes thereof, were the result of a team effort, not least of which the role of the late Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi, should not be underestimated. He maintains that he offered the Prime Minister three options: maintain the status quo by doing nothing; take our share while others steal; or make unpopular and yet necessary reforms. The Prime Minister, like Melaku himself, opted for the third option and urged the executive committee of the party to avoid interference in the operation of the ECRA.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹. David Steinman, "Ethiopia: Cruel Con Game," *Forbes Opion* 2017, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/realspin/2017/03/03/ethiopias-cruel-con-game/?sh=155ad44b29d0>.

¹⁰². Interview with an Official from the Amhara region office of the President, February 2021, Bahir Dar

¹⁰³. Interview with an anti-corruption officer, March 2021, Addis Ababa

¹⁰⁴. Birara, *ድርጅታዊ ምዝገባ* (*Organisational Predation*)

¹⁰⁵. Tamiru Tsige, "From the Officeto the Prison Cell: The Story of Melaku Fenta," *The Reporter* 28 July 2018.

Melaku noted that the main challenge he faced was the interference of high-level government and party officials seeking to bend the system in favour of the business community they are connected with. Until the death of Meles, these attempts were successfully resisted. However, after the death of Meles, it became difficult to resist these officials who finally threw Melaku into prison. According to Meleku, though the clique that wished to subvert the operation, the ERCA was operational even before the death of Meles, it only grew in strength after his death.¹⁰⁶ Ex-prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn was informed about this unwanted interference, but he did nothing to prevent this practice. He supported the arrest of Melaku, by intentionally or unintentionally collaborating with other customs officials and business people. Melaku noted that those who wished to interfere and manage the system in favour of the business community were a few well-connected cliques who essentially formed a “government within the government”.¹⁰⁷

Abiy Ahemed, the current Prime Minister, further extended public knowledge of the nature of the EPRDF’s corrupt network in his book *የመደመር መንገድ (The Synergistic Way)*.¹⁰⁸ According to Abiy, the greatest problem of the EPRDF was the emergence of a mafia group that ignored the goals and values of the party by transforming the state into an instrument of economic predation. This group accumulated wealth through various legal and illegal means, including contraband trade and weapon smuggling. He argues that though the group was initially entirely controlled by individuals originating from the TPLF, it eventually acquired a multi-ethnic and multi-regional character.¹⁰⁹ The mafia group developed the network and capacity that enabled it to appoint and remove individuals as desired, and subvert the justice system by threatening judges, prosecutors and investigative policies. It even had its “private prison” it used to arrest, remove and even kill individuals without taking them through the necessary legal processes.¹¹⁰ This group used to import products without fulfilling the necessary customs procedures and was engaged in arms smuggling, while also procuring government projects without making a bid. Before he joined the Information Network Security Agency (INSA), Abiy claims that he thought the problems of EPRDF could be corrected through the evaluation, censure and self-criticism programme of the EPRDF. However, after he joined INSA, which give him deep insight into the corrupt nature of the system, he

¹⁰⁶. Ibid.

¹⁰⁷. Ibid.

¹⁰⁸. Ahmed, *የመደመር መንገድ (A synergetic journey)*.

¹⁰⁹. Ibid.

¹¹⁰. Ibid.

concluded that this entrenched corrupt behaviour could not be transformed through these procedures.

The above narratives of Melaku and Abiy, together with the ideas from other informants discussed above provide a number of insights. First, there seems to be variation in the commitment of the EPRDF to fight rent-seeking before and after the time of Meles. While Meles was in power, there seems to be an effort to limit the corrupt networks' control. Consequently, the power of the network seemed to be somehow limited though this fact should not be taken for granted given that just within a year after Meles's death, the Executive Committee of the EPRDF debated the capture of the Ethiopian state by corrupt networks. After his death, the mafia network significantly expanded. Far from curtailing this group's conduct, Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn rather seemed to execute its agenda as manifested by his approval of the arrest of Melaku Fanta, without even fulfilling the rules of the party on such matters.¹¹¹

Second, in relation to policy implementation, the logics of action of the EPRDF was not simply the concern that informed the conduct of the majority of party members, but rather the concern of the key powerful individuals. This powerful network transformed their logics of action into the EPRDF's and the government's logics of action. One of ANDM's documents pointed to this transformation when it indicated the hijacking of the entire infrastructure development effort and related expenditure by corrupt officials and the lack of measures against these officials.¹¹² Hence, the EPRDF's logics of action was not simply the sum of the members' logics of action. Finally, both Melaku and Abiy opined that the mafia network that corrupted the party and the government was dominated by individuals from one ethnic-based party (the TPLF) although there used to be individuals from the other member parties of the EPRDF involved. Their account, combined with the discussion provided earlier in this study, therefore, indicate the dominance of logics other than democracy and development in the business-government relation even more than was the case for the agricultural extension programmes.

¹¹¹. Tsige, "From the Office." According the party's rule, somebody who is a member of the executive committee of the party cannot be arrested without first the committee approving, and that according to the government's rule relating to members of parliament to which Melaku was a member, they cannot be arrested before their immunity was revoked. Regarding Melaku both the party's and the government's rule were violated.

¹¹². ANDM, "ከራይ ሰብሳቢነትና ሙስና ላይ የተካሄዱ ትግሎች፣ ከሂደቱ የሚወሰዱ ትምህርቶች (Struggle against corruption and rent seeking and lessons learned)," *አገገዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ (Revolutionary Democracy)* 3, no. 9 (2010 EC).

In general, when the EPRDF's logics of action is assessed in relation to the effort aimed at changing the political economy of the country, the result is a mix of the logic of development and the logic of political survival and economic predation. While in some spheres such as the allocation of expenditure, the developmental logics were dominant, in others, especially in the government-business relations, the dominant concern was political domination and economic predation by a few well-connected elites who were primarily associated with the TPLF. Hence, the securitisation logic was pursued only to a limited extent that does not undermine the other logics of political domination and economic predation. The next section of this chapter analyses whether the EPRDF's agenda of punishing the main rent-seekers was anything but different from the above, focusing on the anti-corruption measures undertaken by the EPRDF.

5.3. Corruption

The evolution of corruption and anti-corruption measures throughout the close to three decades of the EPRDF rule indicates the pervasiveness of corruption, the limited commitment to fight it, and the use and abuse of the discourse of corruption for political ends.

5.3.1. Pervasive Corruption

The pervasiveness and institutionalization of corruption was widely accepted in Ethiopia although most international observers, including the World Bank, claimed that it was not as pervasive as other developing countries of comparable development.¹¹³ Public perception of corruption, statements of key political figures, and government reports, all pointed to the pervasiveness of corruption. It was not just pervasive; it was also institutionalized, as reflected in the concentration of political and economic decision-making in the hands of the same elite members of the TPLF and their affiliates.¹¹⁴ By Meles's own admission during his 2012 parliamentary speech, corruption in the country had become so pervasive that many of the top government officials had several real estate properties registered in the name of their spouses, their children, and even their pets.¹¹⁵ He further admitted that his government was fighting corruption with one hand fastened behind its back thanks to the corrupt officials. Similarly,

¹¹³. Janelle Plummer, "Diagnosing Corruption in Ethiopia: Perception, Reality, and the Way Forward for Key Sectors," in *Directions in Development--Public Sector Governance* (Washington DC: World Bank, 2012). This difference might be due to the nature of corruption in the country where, as many Ethiopian writers, argue grand corruption was the main problem of the country than petty corruption which the WB and other writers tend to focus on.

¹¹⁴. Lefort, "Free Market Economy."

¹¹⁵. Quoted in Hassan, "Corruption, State Capture."

Sibhat Nega, the “Godfather” of the TPLF, at one point was quoted warning the pervasiveness of corruption which he declared even permeated Ethiopia’s religious institutions.¹¹⁶

Many such iterations have been repeated frequently by different officials in the post-Meles era. According to Tsigab, who narrated the various discussions of the EPRDF’s council between 2013-2018, the pervasiveness of corruption was on the agenda with some high-level officials even arguing that the corruption problem was no less than state capture.¹¹⁷ For instance, Bereket Simon, who held various ministerial positions, argued that the Ethiopian state has essentially been captured. Instances in which a businessman mistreated by politicians, an anti-corruption chief complaint against pressure from ministers, and the forced removal of a minister because of his anticorruption measures, were taken as evidence of this practice.¹¹⁸

According to Birhane’s account alluded to above, Bereket, along with other high-level EPRDF leaders, continued to warn against the danger of rising corruption. In the 2014 meeting, Bereket again raised the issue of state capture to which the head of the Tigray Regional State sarcastically replied “is this state capture thingy still alive?” In the 2015 council meeting, Bereket claimed that the EPRDF higher-level leaders were enriching themselves, a practice which would be dangerous for both the EPRDF and the Ethiopian state. Another member of ANDM, Addisu Legese, supported this claim by arguing that the government structure from top to bottom had become corrupt. Birhan Hailu, another member, compared the situation of the EPRDF with the situation of the early 2000s during which time corruption and antidemocracy reportedly threatened the very existence of the EPRDF. He specifically pointed out the contraband trade undertaken by the army. According to Sintayehu, another member, the people believe that all EPRDF members are corrupt from top to bottom, a perception which, he suggested, could be overcome by registering all the wealth the EPRDF leaders had acquired in the last 20 years.¹¹⁹

Similarly, in the 2016 meeting, Bereket reiterated the prevailing state decadence and the EPRDF’s failure to overcome corruption. Addisu Legesse followed suit by narrating how the system created millionaires through the developmental business programme by cultivating close relations between businesses and government. This connection, he argued, was

¹¹⁶. Ibid.

¹¹⁷. Tsigab, *የኢህአዴግ የቁልቁለት ጉዞ (EPRDF’s downward journey)*.

¹¹⁸. Simon, *ትንሳኤ ዘኢትዮጵያ (Ethiopian renaissance)*.

¹¹⁹. Tsigab, *የኢህአዴግ የቁልቁለት ጉዞ (EPRDF’s downward journey)*.

eventually used to subvert the drive to eradicate rent-seeking. He noted that Tigrayan rent-seekers, claiming to be the “nephews” of the Tigrayan freedom fighters, together with the children of some state authorities, were engaged in contraband and other misdeeds. Along with his previous concern, Addisu Legesse warned that rent seeking was becoming entrenched right down to the lowest level of government structure.¹²⁰

Statistical figures produced by the current government and other researchers also confirmed this perception of pervasiveness. According to Alemayehu and Addis, a conservative estimate of the degree of illegal financial outflow from the country during the era of the EPRDF amounts to 30 billion dollars.¹²¹ Needless to say, this fact cannot be realised without pervasive corruption. The current Prime Minister, Abiy Ahemed, attributed part of the blame for illicit financial outflow to the government’s financial intelligence unit.¹²² According to the country’s anti-corruption body report, corruption has permeated every sector of society.¹²³ The yearly audit report of the Federal Auditor General also identified billions of *Birrs* that were not reconciled. Without a doubt, a significant portion of these missing funds were due to corruption. The table below indicates the level of financial mismanagement and, thus, corruption afflicting Ethiopia as reported by the Federal Auditor General between 2002/2003 EC and 2010 EC.

Table 1: Irregularities in the Audit Report in Ethiopian *Birr* in Millions From 2002/2003-2010/2011 Ethiopian Calander

	2002/ 2003	2003/ 2004	2004/ 2005	2005/ 2006	2006/ 2007	2007/ 2008	2008/ 2009	2009/ 2010	2010/ 2011
Unreconciled money		1.06	0.247	1.27	0.079	0.197	0.145	0.928	0.961
Unproven expenditure	2.37	79.53	13.80	3,821. 24	4,304. 36	139. 27	36.76	506.0 3	413.2 8

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹. Alemayehu Gedda and Addis Yimer, "Growth, Poverty and Inequality, 2000-2013: A Macroeconomic Appraisal," in *Reflections on Development in Ethiopia: New Trends, Sustainability and Challenges*, ed. Meheret Ayenew, Asnake Kefale, Birgit Habermann, and Dessalegn Rahmato (Addis Ababa: Forum of Social studies and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 2014).

¹²². Ahmed, *የመደመር መንገድ (A synergetic journey)*.

¹²³. Ethics and Anti-corruption Commission, "ሳይቃጠል በቅጠል (Extinguish before it burns)."

Expenditure without complete evidence	1,456.25	38.67	132.36	202.59	368.00	221.88	236.45		1,475.87
Expenditure outside rules and regulations	584.61	237.64	137.36	75.99	53.36	61.40	98.77	189.90	145.68
Procurement outside rules and regulations	83.38	313.26	353.57	165.89	956.70	546.06	324.95	193.90	956.82

Source: Compiled from the yearly audit report of the Office of the Federal Auditor General¹²⁴

Table two: Number of Organisations with a Record of Financial Mismanagement 2002/2003 to 2010/2011 Ethiopian Calander

Column1	2002 /200 3	2003 /200 4	2004 /200 5	2005 /200 6	2006 /200 7	2007 /200 8	2008 /200 9	2009 /201 0	2010 /201 1
Unreconciled money		3	3	5	4	3	1	4	3
Revenue that is not recorded as such		18	5	5	6	6	11	13	10
Unproven expenditure	1	22	23	23	20	25	15	68	27

¹²⁴ The annual audit report is available at the Federal Office of Auditor general website: <https://www.ofag.gov.et/ofag/audit-report/>

Expenditure without complete evidence	16	12	13	25	29	24	59		63
Expenditure outside rules and regulations	22	26	21	41	47	56	91	98	77
Procurement outside rules and regulations	33	33	22	43	62	77	79	97	100
Expenditure that cannot be proven		8	9	23	3		15	19	27
Revenue without receipt		9	6	10	3	13	14	9	20

Source: Compiled from the yearly audit report of the Office of the Federal Auditor General

As the above tables indicate, there had not been any noticeable improvement in the level of financial mismanagement of the country between 2002-2010 EC. Unaccounted expenses, for example, has increased from a little more than two million Ethiopian *Birr* in 2002/2003EC to more than 4 billion in four years. Though this amount was reduced in the next two years, it again rose in the subsequent years. Likewise, though government expenditures spent outside the allowed rules and laws was reduced from a little more than half a billion Ethiopian *Birr* in 2002/2003EC to about 50 million in 2006/07EC, it again rose in the subsequent years. The sources of this expenditure include paying for goods above the market prices, paying twice instead of only once, paying beyond what a contract requires, and paying for overtime, allowances and *per diems* more than was allowed by the law. Figures on procurement that did not follow the rules and regulations also show little progress in improving its efficiency by reducing financial mismanagement. It was well below 100 million Ethiopian *Birr* in the base year which rose close to one billion Ethiopian *Birr* within four years. Except for a couple of years where it was somehow reduced, the figure remained above a quarter of a billion Ethiopian *Birr*. The main irregularities in the procurement process include buying from the highest bidders while there were businesses that offer a lower price; buying goods without a

bid while the rule stipulates such a requirement; failing to buy through proforma of price competition; and buying only from one supplier. Other malpractices included failure to punish exporters and importers that found to over and under-invoice their exports and imports respectively, and the participation of foreign companies in areas that were restricted to Ethiopians. Though all these mismanagement examples cannot be attributed to corruption alone, a significant part of the wasted money was due to corruption which showed no sign of reduction.

Moreover, as shown in the second table above, there had also been a general increase in the number of public sector organisations that were identified as having mismanaged their finances. The Auditor General's report identified a number of organisations that did not take measures to address issues it has raised previously which is indicative of the lack of commitment to fight corruption. Given these figures, it is doubtful whether these institutions were concerned with eradicating rent-seeking in order to avoid the country's descent into a state of "Armageddon".

5.3.2. Less than Satisfying Anti-Corruption Measures

While both the perception and figures provided in the previous section indicate a high level of corruption, the EPRDF's anti-corruption measures had never been adequate. To begin with, the EPRDF was not committed to lay systems and rules for the operation of institutions even when the anti-corruption body and the Auditor General identified the lack of such systems. According to the former Auditor General of the country, Gemechu Dubiso, corrective measures were not taken for years even when loopholes were identified because the EPRDF's top leaders were not ready to hold officials to account for their failures.¹²⁵ Even when the rules and regulations existed, the EPRDF was not ready to hold to account those members who violated these rules. Measures against corruption were restricted to the occasional arrest of some civil servants and lower-level leaders, whereas the source of the corruption problem was mostly amongst the high-level leaders of the EPRDF who tolerated a level of corruption in exchange for political loyalty.¹²⁶ The accounts emerging from study informants largely concur with the EPRDF leadership's lack of commitment to fight corruption. They argue that the fight against corruption was restricted to lower-level civil servants though the EPRDF identified the

¹²⁵. EBC, "የልቦና ውቅር-ከአቶ ገመቹ ዱቢሳ የቀድሞ የፌዴራል ዋና አዲተር ጋር የተደረገ ቆይታ" (Yelibona wukir: interview with Mr Gemechu Dubiso), 11 April 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BVoB9dFSHKg>

¹²⁶. Bertelsmann Stiftung, "Ethiopia Country Report," (2008), Bertelsmann Stiftung

high-level leaders as the main source of corruption. High-level officials were rarely arrested and when they were detained it was mostly for political reasons. Admitting that corruption alone would not lead high level politicians to imprisonment, the EPRDF argued that it used to re-appoint corrupt officials when they became an embarrassment.¹²⁷The public, thus, was right when they argued “politicians become corrupt only after they have fallen out of love and out of favour with the power that be.”¹²⁸

Even worse, some observers argue that the EPRDF deliberately used corruption as a trapping mechanism. According to Hassan “the TPLF/EPRDF intentionally and repeatedly pushes members of the military officers, politicians, bankers, businessmen, tax collectors, potential future opponents, bureaucrats, and prominent individuals, and... even religious leaders, into repeated corruptive activities for the sole purpose of trapping them.”¹²⁹This deliberate trapping of politicians would then be used against those who become too powerful and popular enough to threaten the top leaderships` power or against those of questionable loyalty.¹³⁰ Otherwise, genuine cases of anti-corruption measures were directed either against those officials whose corruption was so open that it was an embarrassment for the EPRDF or lower-level civil servants who could serve as scapegoats against public anger.¹³¹

That said, following the outbreak of mass protests in 2015 in Oromia, and later in Amhara, the EPRDF began to take stronger measures against corrupt officials. These measures targeted not only an increasing number of lower-level officials but also mid-level leaders. Alarmed by the protests, the EPRDF ascribed the problem to bad governance and corruption, measures that can be taken while maintaining the ruling coalition intact. Accordingly, in 2015 alone 102 and 150 officials were arrested in Amhara Regional State and the Southern Nations Nationalities Regional State respectively.¹³² The Federal Revenue Authority on the other hand dismissed 52 employees for corruption and related offences.¹³³The following year, the Southern Nations and

¹²⁷. EPRDF, *የአቢዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ ምንነት፣ ታሪካዊ አነሳስ፣ እድገትና የወደፊት አቅጣጫ* (*The historical emergence, development and future direction of revolutionary demoracy*).

¹²⁸. Tsedale Lemma and Emnet Assefa, "Inside Ethiopia`s Institutionalized Corruption," *Addis Standard*, June 21, 2013, <https://addisstandard.com/inside-ethiopias-institutionalized-corruption/>.

¹²⁹. Hassan, "Corruption, State Capture."

¹³⁰.Junedien Sado interview with Tsion Girma, "Junedien Sado Reveal the Seceret of TPLF" *VOA Amaharic* 26 October 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZPdJCxwm1yE>.

¹³¹. Hassan, "Corruption, State Capture."

¹³². ARC, "Ethiopia Monthly Briefing " *ARC Briefing* (February 2016), Lexis Nexis.

¹³³. Ibid.

Nationalities and Peoples Regional State convicted 413 corrupt officials while other regions also undertook similar measures.¹³⁴

Moreover, the Oromia Regional States sacked thousands of employees while the Addis Ababa City Administration sacked hundreds.¹³⁵ The federal government also arrested 130 people on suspicion of corruption from public procurement, housing, land development, banking, commercial businesses.¹³⁶ Further, in 2017, officials from the Ministry of Finance and Economic Cooperation, the Addis Ababa Housing Development Agency, the Ethiopian Sugar Corporation and the Ethiopian Roads Authority were accused of corruption and arrested.¹³⁷ Thus the fight against rent-seeking seemed to be extended both downward to regional states and upward against the middle and high-level federal officials. These practices were complemented with the establishment of the intelligence-led Corruption Investigative Bureau within the federal police force and a democratic centre where “whistle-blowers” could give information about corrupt officials. The key areas targeted during this “purge” included land administration, public procurement, the justice system and the tax office. These measures were not, however, sufficient to curtail the pervasive corruption and rent-seeking prevalent in Ethiopia.

Generally, the political environment was not conducive for the anti-corruption body, the Ethics and Anti-corruption Commission, to be effective in the fight against corruption. This Commission in particular was not fitted to exposing and arresting cases of so termed “grand corruption” because its operational modalities, that was reliant on information from whistle-blowers, was not suitable such a massive task. Such corruption activities were undertaken in an organised way that cannot easily be controlled by information accessed from whistle-blowers, but rather needs empowering the said Anti-corruption Commission to have its own intelligence unit. Even in cases of petty corruption, much of the information provided by whistle-blowers was not sufficient to enable this body to take legal action. Much of the information was provided after a significant lapse of time and many of the whistle-blowers were part of the corruption network who only decided to testify when they disagreed with their colleagues on the distribution of the gains from corrupt activities.¹³⁸ The leaders of the Anti-

¹³⁴. Xinhua General News Service, "Ethiopia's Southern Regional State Convicts 413 of Corruption," 17 August 2017

¹³⁵. ARC, "Ethiopia Monthly Briefing ".

¹³⁶. "Ethiopia Monthly Briefing ".

¹³⁷. "Ethiopia Monthly Briefing " *ARC Briefing*, September 2017, Lexis Nexis.

¹³⁸. Interview with official from Amhara Region`s anticorruption office February 2021, Bahir Dar.

corruption Commission were under pressure to arrest or release the individuals Ethiopia's political leaders wanted arrested or released.¹³⁹Frustrated by the ineffectiveness of this particular commission, an observer labelled this oversight body as "a toothless, clawless and feckless, make-believe, do-nothing bureaucratic shell incapable of investigating corruption in its own offices, let alone systemic corruption in the country."¹⁴⁰

5.4. Summary

The discussion offered so far in this chapter indicates the existence of a discrepancy between the discourse framing rent-seeking as an existential threat and the measures taken to reduce it. According to the framework of this study, when there is a gap between policies and practice, we cannot simply attribute it to a lack of commitment to eradicate rent-seeking. We rather have to scrutinise if this disjuncture arises because of the pursuit of other justifiable priorities. In other words, we have to examine why this disjuncture occurred and whether it was justifiable for an actor that securitised development and democracy to act in a way that prioritised other issues. To this effect, certain sensitizing questions were proposed in chapter two (section 2.3.2.2.4. above) including the appropriateness of the issue definitions, the value underpinning the deviating actions, the necessity and sufficiency of the action to realise a goal and the possibility of conflict of goals. Deploying these sensitizing questions, the next section first examines why the EPRDF did not act the way its issue definition/policy suggests it should have acted and then derive some implications of this fact for the securitisation perspective.

5.5. Why Policy-Practice Disjuncture and What Does it Tell Us about the Securitisation Perspective?

One potential explanation to the above question would be the EPRDF's lack of awareness of the depth of the rent-seeking problem. The EPRDF seemed to take this deficiency as a reason when it argued that the EPRDF was so blinded by the development gains of the country that it did not realise rent-seeking has become so pervasive.¹⁴¹ However, countervailing evidence does not support this explanation. Both its formative document and subsequent intra-party debates, discussed in section 5.3.1. above, indicate awareness of the depth of the rent-seeking problem. The EPRDF's formative document anticipated the potential challenge of decadence

¹³⁹. Simon, *ትንሳኤ ዘ ኢትዮጵያ (Ethiopian renaissance)*.

¹⁴⁰. The reporter, "Ethiopia; Combating the Scourge of Corruption," *The Reporter*, 14 December 14, 2013, Lexis Nexis.

¹⁴¹. EPRDF, "የማሽቆልቆል ምዕራፍ ተዘግቶ" (Closed downward journey).

into pervasive rent-seeking to the quest for democracy and development.¹⁴² This consideration was always in the background of the EPRDF's subsequent discussions and reflections. As discussed in section 5.3.1. above, some members of the EPRDF were also warning the party against rising corruption and rent-seeking activities.¹⁴³ Hence, the disjuncture did not arise because the leaders of EPRDF unknowingly acted in a way that sustained rent-seeking, even when it thought it was fighting it.

To explain the disjuncture, one rather has to ask why the EPRDF failed to heed to the critical voices within its own party and reverse its descent into pervasive rent-seeking. The main reason for such lack of action has to do with the political cost of taking measures against rent-seeking by targeting the EPRDF's high-level leaders and powerful individuals. As the EPRDF rightly conceded, the country's problem squarely lies within the EPRDF and, more specifically, within its the top leaders. Fighting rent-seeking, therefore, would have essentially entailed targeting these top leaders. This practice, given the nature of the system dominated by the TPLF (discussed in greater detail in the next chapter), would have also entailed dismantling the dominance of the TPLF within the EPRDF and the government it controlled. Accomplishing this goal was not possible because the dominant force within the coalition, the TPLF, or at least key personalities within it, prioritised their political and economic dominance over the fight against rent-seeking.

This situation, however, did not seem simply a case of TPLF elites preferring political dominance and economic predation and outrightly rejecting the call for fighting rent-seeking. The fear of being held accountable for past human rights abuses and economic predation seemed to shape these leaders desire for political dominance. Their post-reform grievance that the EPRDF/Prosperity Party controlled government disproportionately targeted them for anti-corruption measures confirm this concern. Hence, one would not expect the TPLF elites to be supportive of the fight against rent-seeking. While democracy and development were taken as existential concern for Ethiopia, the loss of political and economic dominance was, at least implicitly, viewed as existential for key personalities within the TPLF and their associates.

¹⁴². EPRDF, *ልማት ዲሞክራሲ እና አብዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ (Development, democracy and revolutionary democracy)*

¹⁴³. EBC, "አራቱ የኢህአዴግ እህት ድርጅቶች የሰጡት መግለጫ ክፍል" (Press briefing of the four sisterly organisations of the EPRDF), (2018). Tsigab, *የኢህአዴግ የቁልፍ ገዛ (EPRDF's downward journey)*.

This situation was, therefore, a conflict of concerns. Though these powerful actors wanted development and democracy, at the same time, they did not want to endanger their survival or well-being. Indeed, as the debates within the TPLF/EPRDF government indicate, they were aware of this dilemma. In these debates, the majority agreed that rent-seeking practices would disintegrate the country and, thus, they must be committed to fighting it. On the other hand, rent-seeking practice continued unabated. Meles's creative solution to this situation was a leadership succession programme whereby these powerful and yet corrupt leaders were gradually driven out of the political process, while maintaining intact a system that would not threaten their sense of security. With his death this solution proved unworkable. Though for a while, the TPLF's powerful leaders adhered to Meles's leadership succession plan, the older leaders of the TPLF eventually found it difficult to give free rein to the younger leaders. They continued to raise critical questions against the way the younger leaders were running Ethiopia, including the TPLF's failure to fight rent-seeking. Since the younger leaders attributed self-centred motives to the older leaders, their criticisms were not taken at face value and no strong measures against rent-seeking were taken. This lack of action became another reason for the continuation of pervasive rent-seeking and the EPRDF's disjuncture between policy and practice¹⁴⁴.

Although some measures were initiated, they were bound to disproportionately target the Tigrayan elites who would invariably oppose them. The only entry point to herald such a transformation process was thus convincing these elites to see their loss of privilege as preferable to the grave danger rent-seeking posed to the survival of the EPRDF and Ethiopia. This position rendered the implementation of the securitisation agenda dependent upon the goodwill of these powerful individuals. The said disjuncture between rhetoric and practice was, therefore, due to the limited concern the most influential members of the EPRDF had given to the fight against rent-seeking, as opposed to other unjustifiable goals of political dominance and economic predation. The findings of this chapter, thus, have four implications for the securitisation perspective.

First, the centre of gravity of the theory of securitisation is neither the speech act, as the Copenhagen School claims, nor in audience acceptance as Balzacq and other theorists suggested.¹⁴⁵ It is rather in the concerns of the actor who securitizes democracy and

¹⁴⁴. Ibid.

¹⁴⁵. Stritzel, "Towards Theory of Securitisation."

development and designs policies and programmes stipulating how the securitised agenda will be pursued. This practice needs to be the case because the concern of the securitising actor better explains what the EPRDF pursues as a matter of urgency than the speech act and the audience approach. As discussed in the previous chapter, though many of the actions taken in speaking/writing against rent-seeking tended to delegitimise any actors immersed in rent-seeking, this practice did not help arrest the pervasiveness of rent-seeking. This continued pervasiveness of rent-seeking, in spite of a discourse that discourage it, also points to the limited influence language can have in shaping social reality. Hence, the centre of gravity of the securitisation perspective cannot be the speech act.

The consequentiality of security articulation cannot be determined by security speech acts, which, at least in this case, are not any different from other non-security speech acts. The hierarchies of concerns of the actor, on the other hand, influence not only whether an issue will be securitised but also what outcome might follow from it. Both the origin of the securitisation discourse and the subsequent pursuit of democracy and development by curtailing rent-seeking was not driven by the sole concern of realizing democracy and fast pacing the development processes of the country. Rather, there were other concerns related to political survival and economic predation. The prioritization of these other concerns of political survival and economic predation by influential actors within the TPLF and their affiliates, limited the possibility of translating the securitisation discourse into practice. Hence, the most important factor in both the introduction of the securitisation discourse and the subsequent pursuit of governance and development measures, or the lack thereof, was the concerns of these influential actors. Securitising discourses are not necessarily indicative of the securitising actors' prioritization of an issue above anything else.

Likewise, the placement of the audience and its acceptance at the centre of the theory of securitisation is also challenged by the findings of this chapter. As noted above, even members of the TPLF, and key personalities within it, seemed sincerely to believe that democracy and development were existential goals and that rent-seeking was the main hindrance to realising them. But, at the same time, they considered any aggressive measure against rent-seeking as a threat to their political and economic dominance and, ultimately, their security. Hence, audience acceptance needs not be at the centre of the theory of securitisation. What rather needs to be at its centre are the concerns of the securitising actor. This condition occurs because it

influences why an issue is securitised in the first place and whether measures inspired by the securitising discourse would be implemented subsequently.

Second, the centrality of the securitising actor's concerns also implies the fact that the reason an actor securitised an issue strongly shapes the effect such securitisation could have. In the case under study, the consideration of rent-seeking as a threat to the existential goals of democracy and development emerged from, and was driven by, the dual concerns of reducing its un-developmental effect and delegitimising the emergence of alternative centres of rent collection. Hence, the logics informing the fight against rent-seeking reflected these two goals whereby the former was subordinated to the goals of the latter. The speech act and audience centred approaches to securitisation do not give sufficient weight to the securitising actor and its concerns. Due to this fact, researchers are interested neither in exploring why actors securitize an issue nor the influence of this act upon what follows on from such securitisation. Over-emphasis on the power of securitisation, either because of the performativity of speech acts or the power of the audience, overlook the fact that securitisation would not emerge unless an actor for some reason makes the effort to securitize an issue. Thus, recentring the securitising actor helps to combine issues that would have been viewed separately when either the speech act or the audience are taken to be central to the securitisation theory.

Finally, the centrality of actors' concern also nuances the normative debates on securitisation. It indicates that whether securitisation is a force for good is at least in part influenced by the concerns of the securitising actor. Even when the issue securitised is an issue that would empower the most vulnerable and voiceless, securitisation may not have the emancipatory effect expected by the Welsh School of Critical Security Studies. It all depends upon what concern leads to such securitisation. In our case, part of the concern for considering the fight against rent-seeking as a threat to the existential issues of democracy and development in Ethiopia was avoiding war and anarchy by reducing pervasive rent-seeking. However, this concern did not necessarily lead to the reduction of rent-seeking because it was in contradiction with other concerns that the securitising actors unjustifiably prioritised. Hence, the normative utility of securitisation is influenced by the issue securitised and the concerns of the actor securitising an issue.

5.6. Conclusion

This chapter demonstrated how the main concern behind the application of the idea of rent-seeking was not the realization of democratic and developmental goals by fighting rent-seeking. The measures that were (not)taken in the name of fighting rent-seeking and as a solution to rent-seeking were rather driven by a varying mix of goals related to ensuring the political domination and economic predation of the key leaders and elites of the TPLF and their affiliates. The problem of rent-seeking, first and foremost, was driven by the higher-level leaders and the state-owned and party owned business-empires. Hence, the expectation of drastic measures against this pervasive rent-seeking practice by the very higher-level leaders who were already implicated in this corrupt system was a contradiction in terms. Without ignoring some potential exceptions, the most powerful members of the coalition were implicated in pervasive rent-seeking. The fact that the EPRDF's governing principle (see section 6.3. below) was democratic centralism whereby the higher-level leaders were the sole source of all important decisions, made it difficult to curb corruption of this nature. When the higher-level leaders prioritised political domination and economic predation, the lower-level leaders remained unconstrained in subordinating the quest for democratic developmentalism to its political and livelihood concerns.

Hence, though it is impossible to adamantly claim that the logics of action of the EPRDF was devoid of any trace of democratic developmentalism, neither was it the dominant concern. At the highest level of leadership, political survival was prioritised to sustain the political and economic dominance of an ethnically skewed order whereby key leaders of the TPLF and their affiliates continued to prey on the economy and took measures against forces that threatened this political order. Though they accept the existential nature of the quest for democracy and development, these elites found it difficult to offer a solution in which they would be able to pursue the fight against rent-seeking without being severely threatened by it. This fact explains why the EPRDF continued to warn of the danger posed by rent-seeking and yet no meaningful counter-measures were forthcoming.

Though the leadership-succession programme would have the effect of sustaining the political *status quo* without radically threatening the ruling elites, they were not even ready to accept such an arrangement. In a country such as Ethiopia with its ethnic-based federal arrangement in which power and resources are divided along ethnic lines, the success of this leadership succession was dependent upon undoing the dominance of the TPLF. However, the TPLF, or

more specifically its top leaders, vehemently opposed such a move. Hence, the opportunity to install a political order that would not take drastic measures against them and yet prevent any further decadence of state institutions was closed. When this was closed, the alternative was dismantling this leadership, which was indeed attempted with the rise of Abiy Ahmed leading to the current civil war. These findings point to the need to revisit the securitisation perspective that privileges either the speech act/discourse of security or the audience and its acceptance. As opposed to these approaches, the study results rather underscore the need to magnify the securitising actors and their concerns, factors that influence why an issue is securitised, what outcome it will have and what this effect entails for the normative debate on securitisation. The chapter along with the previous one has delineated the limitations of speech act oriented and audience centric work on securitisation in explaining the extraordinary pursuit of some goals over others.

Chapter Six

The EPRDF and Its Logic of Intra-party Governance and Mobilizational Issues Definition

6.1. Introduction

As argued in chapter two of this study, the very selection of issue-areas is indicative of what concerns actors most. I also argue the importance of identifying these concerns to analyse outcomes of securitisation of development and democracy in Ethiopia. These assertions informed the discussion on intra-party governance and the mobilizational system of the EPRDF in this chapter. Party governance and mobilization potentially poses a dilemma for an existential pursuit of democracy and development. On the one hand, the EPRDF believed that realizing development and instituting democracy was an existential concern, and on the other, political parties in general (to which the EPRDF is not an exception) aim to gain control over other parties and stay in power. Since there is a possibility of conflict between the two goals, analysing what concerns informed the very identification of issues related to intra-party governance and mobilization, and their implementation would help analyse outcomes of securitisation of development and democracy in Ethiopia.

Accordingly, this chapter analyses the logics of action informing the definition of governance and mobilizational issues of the EPRDF. By doing so, this chapter, together with the next chapter, aims to elucidate the extent to which the securitisation logics of realizing development and institutionalizing democracy underpinned intra-party governance and mobilizational principles and goals of the EPRDF. The chapter argues that the central logics of the EPRDF in identifying and defining the intra-party governance issues and mobilizational principles of the EPRDF was institutionalizing democracy and realizing development. This view is in line with the logic of securitisation of democracy and development. The question therefore, is, to what extent this problem definition was translated into practices.

The chapter is organised into five sections including this introduction. The next section revisits the theoretical debates on intra-party governance and polity level developmental and democratic outcomes. Drawing from the literature on the subject, it argues that the connection between the two is open to debate. The third section expounds on the way the EPRDF approached intra-party governance and mobilization issues. This section demonstrates that

maintaining the revolutionary-democratic and alternatively democratic developmental¹ character of the EPRDF was its key priority in framing issues and defining problems. After the 2001 renewal, the EPRDF identified intra-party struggle, party leadership development, engagement with societal movements for democracy and development, and mobilization of the people along democratic lines as the key priorities for maintaining these democratic and developmental characters of the EPRDF. The subsequent section scrutinises the logics underpinning the ways the EPRDF approached intra-party governance issues and mobilizational approaches whereby maintaining the democratic and developmental character of the EPRDF was the main rationale of this issue's frame. Finally, the last section makes some concluding remarks.

6.2. Intra-Party Dynamics and Polity Level Outcomes

In the reviewed literature on intraparty democracy, both its meaning and relevance for polity level democracy is controversial. It could mean any one of or a combination of the following elements: participation, inclusiveness, (de)centralization and accountability.² Some definitions emphasise the process of party governance, while others focus on the outcomes of intra-party governance.³ Process-based understandings of intra-party democracy tend to emphasise members' participation in the party's decision-making processes whereas outcome-based definitions examine whether the party approved policies have been approved by the majority of its members.⁴

The reviewed literature also exhibits divergence on the connection between democracy within political parties and polity level democracy.⁵ Some scholars argue that intraparty democracy broadens the power base of the party, builds the competence of party members, and makes party decisions fair and acceptable and, therefore, promote polity level democracy.⁶ Others

¹. While what constituted the revolutionary democratic character of the Front evolved, the latest incarnation denote that the Front would have democratic and developmental character if it believed that rent seeking was the main threat to the system, that it was to be overcome through the two categories of measures suggested in chapter four, and if it imbibed EPRDF values and adhere to its principles.

². Von Den Berge Benjamin and Poguntke Thomas, "Varieties of Intra-Party Democracy: Conceptualization and Index Construction," in *Organizing Political Parties: Representation, Participation and Power*, ed. Paul D. Webb Susan E. Scarrow, and Thomas Poguntke (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 136-157.

³.Ibid.

⁴. Anika Guaja, "Policy Development and Intraparty Democracy," in *The Challenges of Intra-Party Democracy*, ed. Williams P. Cross and Richard K. Katz (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 117-135.

⁵.Bolin Niklas et al., "Patterns of Intra-Party Democracy across the World," in *Organizing Political Parties: Representation, Participation and Power*, ed. Paul D. Webb Susan E. Scarrow, and Thomas Poguntke (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2017), 158-186.

⁶. Ibid.

argue that what parties can offer for democracy is alternative policies and programmes that are sufficiently clear for voters to choose and to hold the party accountable for delivering these promises thereafter.⁷ Therefore, intra-party democracy has little to do with polity level democracy. However, in countries, such as Ethiopia, with an authoritarian political culture whereby any democratizing party has to inculcate a democratic culture, intra-party democracy cannot be separated from polity level democratization.

The scanty literature available on intraparty dynamics and developmental outcomes maintains that parties that aim to usher in developmental change need to develop an extended organisational structure that connects the party with various groups in society.⁸ They need to institutionalize their interactions with actors inside and outside the party. This practice being the case, the purpose of this study is whether and how existential concerns about national-level democracy and development outcomes were factored into the internal governance of the EPRDF, including its recruitment and promotion of leaders, articulation of programmes, mobilization of the people and the overall internal dynamics of the party. The aim of the study is to examine the extent to which the definition and implementation of intraparty governance and mobilizational issues were underpinned by the EPRDF's existential concern to democratize and develop Ethiopia. Hence, the above analysis only aims to give background knowledge about intra-party governance and polity level democratic and developmental outcomes but not necessarily to suggest how the EPRDF thinks or should think about this issue. The next section examines elements of intra-party governance and mobilizational issues and principles as defined by the EPRDF.

6.3. Intra-Party Governance and Mobilization of the EPRDF

The main themes related to intra-party governance and mobilizational systems of the EPRDF constitute its ideologies, programmes and values and the means designed to realise these concepts. While the ideology of the EPRDF had been revolutionary democracy, the means envisioned (mainly after the 2001 so-called renewal) to realise its goals were an intra-party struggle, an effective leadership capacity-building programme, and principle-based popular mobilization. Hence, this section analyses the way the EPRDF approached these issues. The

⁷. Susan Scarrow, "Political Parties and Democracy in Theoretical and Practical Perspective: Implementing Intra-Party Democracy" (Washington: NDI, 2005), https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/1951_polpart_scarrow_110105_5.pdf.

⁸. Haugsgjerd Allern Elin and Tania Verge, "Still Connected with Society? Political Parties' Formal Link with Social Group in the 21st Century," in *Organizing Political Parties: Representation, Participation and Power*, ed. Paul D. Webb In Susan E. Scarrow, and Thomas Poguntke (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 136-157.

section maintains that the issue definition of the EPRDF was geared at advancing the interest of the EPRDF by ensuring its democratic and developmental character and, therefore, the EPRDF's issues definition/policy formulation was in sync with its securitisation logic.

6.3.1. Values, Programmes, and Decision-Making Procedures

The EPRDF was a Front of four parties that represented the four major ethno-regions of Ethiopia: the Tigray Region represented by the TPLF, the Amhara Region represented by the ANDM, the Oromia Region represented by the OPDO, and the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region represented by the SPDM. These four regions accounted for about 90% of Ethiopia's population. For reasons to be explained shortly, though the EPRDF comprised these four member parties, it operated as a monolithic entity. The top decision-making organ of the EPRDF was the General Assembly which was an elected body that meets every two to two and half years. This group was followed by a 180-member Council that meet every six months and acted on behalf of the Assembly when the latter was not in session. The Council of the EPRDF in turn choose the Executive Committee that meets every three months and undertakes the day-to-day operation of the EPRDF. The EPRDF's overall monitoring organ was the Inspection Committee. In addition to these bodies, the member parties of the EPRDF had their respective Executive Committee, Central Committee and other lower-level structures parallel to the administrative structure of Ethiopia. The member parties' grassroots structures were the *Cell* and the *Meseretawi Dirigit (Basic Organisation)*.⁹

The programmes, rules and operating procedures of the EPRDF were envisioned to hold member parties into a cohesive whole, without compromising their autonomy. As noted in chapter three of this study, the EPRDF follows the ideology of *Revolutionary Democracy* which, as claimed in a discussion paper prepared in 2002, is best understood when juxtaposed against liberal democracy.¹⁰ According to this document, while liberal democracy rests upon a developed capitalist class and protection of individual (property) rights, the social bases of revolutionary democracy were the peasantry, lower-class urban dwellers, workers and the *petite bourgeoisie*. The EPRDF argued that the social bases for a liberal democracy were non-existent in Ethiopia and hence the existing government's inappropriateness. Similarly, while liberal democracy is based on respect for individual rights, revolutionary democracy ostensibly aspired to protect both individual rights and the rights of nations, nationalities and peoples

⁹. Interview with Getachew Jember, February 2021, Bahir Dar

¹⁰. EPRDF, "የዲሞክራሲ ጉዳዮች በኢትዮጵያ (Issues of democracy in Ethiopia)."

(another name for Ethiopia's ethnic groups) of Ethiopia. According to EPRDF, in so far as the conflicts in Ethiopia were driven by ethno-nationalist groups' quest for self-determination, a durable peace would require respecting the rights of nations, nationalities and the peoples of Ethiopia.¹¹ Hence, an ideology tailored to the Ethiopian context arguably needed to go well beyond respecting the rights of citizens qua individuals. Drawing from this claim, some observers argue that the EPRDF privileged group rights over individual rights¹² although there was nothing in the policies of the EPRDF that indicates such a position. It was rather explicit that group rights cannot be protected while individual rights are violated.¹³

Moreover, while liberal democracy creates a system that protects the property rights and interests of business, revolutionary democracy, it claimed, sought to advance the interests of its base, that is the peasantry, the labourers, and the *petite bourgeoisie*.¹⁴ Since its social bases were assumed to have a number of weaknesses that prevent them from serving as an active support-base for the system, the EPRDF was to act as a vanguard.¹⁵ The aforementioned classes, therefore, were potential bases that would be transformed into actuality through the leaders of the EPRDF, by organizing and mobilizing them to achieve revolutionary-democratic goals. These goals replaced the reactionary relations of production with progressive ones, which, after the 2001 party renewal, were once again substituted by the goal of transforming the political economy of rent-seeking with a democratic and developmental political economy (an issue that was discussed at length in chapter four of this study). The challenge that arises when the party thinks it knows the best interests of its bases, as experienced in communist systems, is that it first creates an autocratic party and, eventually, one-man rule.¹⁶ In an apparent sign of recognizing this challenge, the EPRDF claimed to undertake an intra-party struggle to make sure that the party would not sidestep its ideological commitment.

The natural implication of the EPRDF claiming to be a vanguard party was its adoption of the principle of democratic centralism as a governing principle. According to this principle, the EPRDF, at the centre, decided issues in a (quasi) democratic debate, after which the decision would have to be implemented by the respective member parties with firm discipline and often

¹¹. EPRDF, *ዲሞክራሲ እና ዲሞክራሲያዊ አንድነት* (Democracy and democratic unity).

¹². Yohannes Gedamu, *The Politics of Contemporary Ethiopia: Ethnic Federalism and Authoritarian Survival* (London: Routledge 2021).

¹³. EPRDF, *የዲሞክራሲ ስርዓት ግንባታ ትግል* (The struggle to build a democratic system)

¹⁴. EPRDF, "የዲሞክራሲ ጉዳዮች በኢትዮጵያ (Issues of democracy in Ethiopia)."

¹⁵. Ibid.

¹⁶. Kolakowski Leszek, *Main Currents of Marxism: Its Origin, Growth and Dissolution*, trans. P.S. Falla, 3 vols., vol. 3 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978).

little deviations.¹⁷ In principle, member parties of the EPRDF can tailor decisions made at the centre to suit their context, although in practice the EPRDF has been resistant to such effort. Democratic centralism binds the diverse structure of the EPRDF into a cohesive whole, making the party monolithic both in thought and practice.¹⁸ However, this practice was achieved at the expense of the autonomy of member parties of the EPRDF (except for TPLF), and by extension the ethno-federal arrangement of Ethiopia.¹⁹ Moreover, any imbalance of influence at the EPRDF's centre was bound to have its effect felt at least in the four regions of the country. This imbalance of influence was also inevitable given the history of the member parties of the EPRDF. To explain these last two observations, a digression to the leadership and power literature is important.

According to theories of leadership and power articulated first by French and Raven and supplemented by others,²⁰ five sources of power can be deployed to influence agents' behaviour: coercive power based in the deployment of coercion; reward power based on the capacity to reward favourable behaviour; legitimate power based on the position one holds; expert power based on the expertise one (is perceived to) have; referent power based on one's likability and respectability; and informational power based on one's control over sources of information. This literature also maintains that except for expert and referent power that can be commanded by people without a position in an organisation, the other four sources of power are inextricably connected with the position of the power holders.²¹ Consequently, the other four sources of power are only partially available for those without a senior position in an organisation. Moreover, coercive and reward power depend upon surveillance in order to know whom to coerce or reward.²²

Synthesizing these insights from what we know about the origin and principles of the EPRDF, it would be reasonable to argue that party cadres located at the lower ladder of the EPRDF cannot influence the decisions made by the higher authority. This situation occurs because the instruments for upward influence was quite limited because decision-making power was reserved for the higher leadership. Subordinates lacked the position to exercise the power needed to influence the higher leadership, a fact that was further reinforced by democratic

¹⁷. Interview with Getachew Jember February 2021, Bahir Dar

¹⁸. Interview with an Informant from the Amhara Region president office, April 2021, Addis Ababa

¹⁹. Interview with former Youth League Leader of the EPRDF, February 2021, Bahir Dar

²⁰. World of Work Project, "French and Raven's Forms of Power: A Simple Summary" Accessed 28 May 2021, <https://worldofwork.io/2019/08/french-and-ravens-forms-of-power/>.

²¹. Ibid.

²². Ibid.

centralism and the hierarchical political culture of the Ethiopian state. Examining the sources of power that would potentially be possessed by individuals from the four-member parties of the EPRDF also indicates the inevitability of the TPLF's pre-eminence over the others. This situation occurs for several reasons.

First, right from its formation, the TPLF was run by individuals of independent thinking who, therefore, can influence the agenda and strategies of the EPRDF. After the expulsion of its dissenting members, Meles Zenawi became the "supreme leader" with an unmatched calibre compared to the leaders of the four parties. He not only singlehandedly prepared many of the policy positions of the EPRDF²³ but also debated with scholars of international stature. His presentation at the University of Colombia on the developmental state and his intellectual engagement at the World Leaders Forum were good examples of his intellectual capacity.²⁴ This attribute helped him secure international prestige, while also boosting his domestic image vis-à-vis other leaders. Hence, a TPLF leader monopolized both the expert and referent power in the discussion within the EPRDF. Second, the three member parties of the EPRDF were either created or were significantly influenced by the TPLF, right from their formation. The coalition in short was formed by the other three parties' acceptance of the TPLF's agenda and *modus operandi* rather than through compromise and synchronization of agenda.²⁵

Though one could assume that as these parties evolved more independent thinkers would emerge, this was not possible. The TPLF, as discussed in the next chapter (see section 7.2. below), suffocatingly monitored and prevented the emergence of such leaders from the other member parties. It practised this control by using its dominance in the intelligence and security apparatus, institutions that often used to conflate threats to TPLF dominance with a threat to the country (Ethiopia) (see section 8.4.1. below). Because of these factors, the six sources of power were disproportionately concentrated within individuals emerging from the TPLF. Therefore, any discussion within the EPRDF's higher-level leaders was bound to be strongly influenced by the TPLF and this influence was to be felt across the country.

²³. Various documents of the Front written after his death attribute many of the earlier documents to Meles. See also Lavers, "Social Protection"

²⁴. Meles Zenawi, "Meles Zenawi Speech at the University of Colombia" 18 January, 2011, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yXXLw33C2_M&t=25s; Meles, "Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Meles Zenawi at World Leaders Forum."

²⁵. S. Vaughan, "The Addis Ababa Transitional Conference of July 1991: Its Origin" Occasional Paper (University of Edinburgh, 1994), https://openlibrary.org/books/OL582554M/The_Addis_Ababa_transitional_conference_of_July_1991.

The issue, however, was not whether the TPLF was dominant within the EPRDF but rather was for what end did the TPLF or other key personalities use their disproportionate influence. If they considered institutionalizing democracy and realizing development as existential concerns, they would have used their influence to spearhead the democratic and developmental transformation of the EPRDF and Ethiopia. Such existential consideration would have also strengthened their commitment to the values of the EPRDF, that were strongly related to democratization and developmentalism. These values included people centredness, devotion to a cause, avoidance of any form of opportunism, commitment for intra-party democracy, developing the culture of self-correction, and class alliances.²⁶

According to the EPRDF, to materialize these values and spearhead democratic and developmental transformation, the party should first be democratic and developmental.²⁷ The post-2001 renewal, the EPRDF argued, was inspired by the need to maintain this revolutionary-democratic or democratic and developmental character of the EPRDF.²⁸ According to the EPRDF, its revolutionary-democratic stance is underpinned by its ostensible commitment to the revolutionary measures needed to uproot structural sources of undemocratic governance and obstacles to the progress of the broad masses.²⁹ This ideology, in the post-2001 period, as noted earlier, means a commitment for the transformation of the political economy of rent-seeking with democratic developmentalism. However, the idea that the “renewal” heralded a democratic and developmental EPRDF was more of a declaration that a democratic and developmental party had to emerge than an actual statement of fact. Whether the EPRDF succeeded in materializing its declaration is another question left for discussion in the next chapter (see section 7.2. below). In this section it suffices to state that this democratic and developmental character of the EPRDF was to be realised through intra-party struggle and principle-based popular mobilization discussed below.

6.3.2. Intra-Party Struggle

The idea of “constant struggle” both within and outside the party was very much an animating principle of the EPRDF. According to the EPRDF, any organisation that seeks to usher in

²⁶. ANDM, "የብአዴን መተዳደሪያ ደንብ(The constitution of ANDM)." EPRDF, *የህዳሴው መድረክና የአመራር ጥያቄ(The renaissance forum and the leadership question)* (Addis Ababa: Mega Publishing, 2011EC).

²⁷. EPRDF, *የአቢዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲያዊ (Revolutionary democratic)*.

²⁸. EPRDF, *ኢሃዲግ ከምስረታ (EPRDF from establishment)*.

²⁹. EPRDF, *የአቢዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ ምንነት፣ ታሪካዊ አነሳስ፣ እድገትና የወደፊት አቅጣጫ (The historical emergence, development and future direction of revolutionary democracy)*.

political and economic transformation would face three forces: those who benefit from a change, those who lose from it, and those who vacillate with regard to the transformation.³⁰ The EPRDF claimed that the first group, which includes the peasantry, the urban poor, students, the unemployed, small property owners, would be its support base when adequately led and organised.³¹ The second group constitutes those who believe they would lose from the pursuit of democratic developmentalism and, therefore, do whatever they can to maintain the political economy of rent-seeking that profits them without creating value for the country as a whole. These forces, the EPRDF argued, would not accept change through negotiation but only when defeated.³² The vacillators constituted the incipient developmental businesses and the senior intellectuals who benefit from democratic developmentalism and yet resist fundamental change because they fear that this would undermine their self-interest.³³ This group, the EPRDF claimed, therefore, sometimes supports the government while, at other times, it resists it or even supports the rent-seeking force.³⁴

Intra-party struggle, therefore, entails continuously monitoring and eliminating any infiltration of forces and agenda that does not support its base. The EPRDF thus wanted to retain its democratic and developmental character through continuous struggle both within itself and the society at large.³⁵ The struggle within the party was to be based on principles free from opportunism and other democratically and developmentally irrelevant criteria. The key principles and instruments of struggle, in this regard, are the principle of democratic centralism, intra-party democracy, evaluation, criticism and self-criticism.³⁶ Democratic centralism would help ensure that decisions made at the centre of the EPRDF were adhered to by the lower-level structure. Intra-party democracy, on the other hand, was argued to be necessary for free discussion within the party whereby members could freely debate issues unencumbered by fear, intimidation or any other harassment. Individuals were not to be held responsible for what

³⁰. EPRDF, *የህዳሴው መድረክና (The renaissance forum)*.

³¹. EPRDF, *ዲሞክራሲ እና ዲሞክራሲያዊ አንድነት (Democracy and democratic unity)*.

³². EPRDF, *የህዳሴው መድረክና (The renaissance forum)*.

³³. Ibid.

³⁴. Ibid.

³⁵. EPRDF, *የአቢዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲያዊ (Revolutionary democratic)*.

³⁶. ANDM, "አምስቱ ተላላፊ ገዳይ የፖለቲካ በሽታዎች ከነ መንኤ ወቻቸው በመዋጋት ድርጅታችንን እናድስ (Let us renew our organisation by fighting the five deadly communicable political diseases and thier causes)," *አቢዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ (Revolutionary Democracy)* 3, no. 7 (2009EC).

they thought but for what they do.³⁷ Such a policy also presumably facilitates principle-based relations between higher and lower officials in which lower officials would be answerable to the higher one without their interaction being a master/servant relationship.³⁸ Moreover, intra-party democracy would also help overcome working arrangements that reward clientelism, give the few undue control, generate opportunism, silence the majority, and allow operation outside institutions and laws.³⁹ It, therefore, would enhance the internalization of democratic and developmental values by party members. The democratic values of the EPRDF included adhering to the rule of law and compromising various interests, whereas developmental values included giving priority to the interests of the people and ensuring that the people benefit from the development processes.⁴⁰ These principles were the revolutionary-democratic values Meles claimed were violated by the dissidents in the early 2000s—a division that prompted the “renewal” (see sections 3.2.1. and 3.3.2.1. below).

The other principal instrument of intra-party struggle was evaluation, criticism and self-criticism—actions that were meant to bring unity of thought and practice. The EPRDF claimed that its approach to evaluation, criticism and self-criticism involved a series of sequential measures.⁴¹ The first was to evaluate successes and failures in realizing the goals of a given mission. During this stage, honest presentation of results was of utmost importance, which, the EPRDF claimed, would be possible when the process is participatory, and the leaders are free from rent-seeking tendencies. The second stage entailed evaluating the contribution, or lack thereof, of various stakeholders involved in the implementation process which again was claimed to be done appropriately only when rent-seeking and opportunism were controlled. The third step entailed undertaking self-criticism and criticism so that leaders would be able to correct each other. In this stage, the official identifies his/her weakness that contributed to failures in the implementation processes and points to what he/she would have done differently. If the other members of the evaluation team identify criticisms that he/she overlooked, they would seek for an explanation. Finally, based on the result emerging from the above, a ranking of the leaders of the EPRDF would be undertaken in which high, medium and low performers

³⁷.EPRDF, "አብዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ፣ አብዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲያዊነት መርሆችና እሴቶች (Revolutionary democracy: principles and values of revolutionary democracticness)," *አብዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ(Revolutionary Democracy)* 3, no. 5 (2008 EC).

³⁸. Ibid.

³⁹. EPRDF, *የአብዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ ምንነት፣ ታሪካዊ አነሳስ፣ እድገትና የወደፊት አቅጣጫ (The historical emergence, development and future direction of revolutionary democracy)*.

⁴⁰. EPRDF, *የአብዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲያዊ (Revolutionary democratic)*.

⁴¹. EPRDF, *የህዳሴወ መድረክ(The renaissance forum)*.

would be identified. While the high performers were to be promoted, the low performers would be given the necessary support so that they would improve their performance.

Generally, the aim of the evaluation, criticism and self-criticism, as argued by the EPRDF, was to take lessons from good performance and identify mistakes that should be avoided, fight rent-seeking in a sustained way, enhance transparency and accountability.⁴² According to the EPRDF, all these actions were insufficient to maintain the democratic and developmental character of the EPRDF.⁴³ Engineering societal movement for democracy and development, strengthening the lower-level structure of the EPRDF and the government, and mobilizing the people for a democratic and developmental practice were also important.

6.3.3. Engaging Societal Movement for Democracy and Development

Echoing the leftist literature on the state and class interests,⁴⁴ the EPRDF maintained that in the long term the party would remain democratic and developmental when the intra-party struggle was supplemented by societal pressure for democracy and development.⁴⁵ However, the challenge, as the EPRDF saw it, was the weakening of societal voices for democracy and development, which, it thought, limited the leadership's commitment to democracy and development. This, it claimed, undermines the EPRDF's revolutionary and democratic character because the leaders of the EPRDF used government power to pursue personal benefits unencumbered by any constraints.⁴⁶ Putting the tension between claiming to be a vanguard and accepting that the EPRDF's conduct would be mediated by societal pressure aside, the EPRDF's ostensible dilemma was how to maintain its democratic and developmental character in a context in which societal movements for development and democracy were weak and, therefore, greater incentives for self-serving leadership were offered. A suggested solution was to ignite a popular movement for democracy and development and recruit front-runner members of these movements into party membership.⁴⁷ Until such a social movement materializes, the EPRDF sought to avoid degeneration into self-serving leadership by waging

⁴². ANDM, "የተባባሪነት ማዘጋጀት ደንብ" (The constitution of ANDM).

⁴³. EPRDF, *የአቢዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲያዊ (Revolutionary democratic)*.

⁴⁴. Bob Jessop, *State Power* (Oxford: Polity Press, 2008).

⁴⁵. EPRDF, *የአቢዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲያዊ (Revolutionary democratic)*.

⁴⁶. Ibid.

⁴⁷. EPRDF, *የአቢዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ ምንነት፣ ታሪካዊ አነሳስ፣ እድገትና የወደፊት አቅጣጫ (The historical emergence, development and future direction of revolutionary democracy)*.

an intra-party struggle. In this way, it claimed, its ultimate goal of maintaining its democratic and developmental character would be assured.

The EPRDF underscored the importance of maintaining its democratic and developmental character by claiming that it has even removed half of the top leaders of the TPLF in 2001 when they deviated from this revolutionary democratic line.⁴⁸ As discussed in chapters three and four of this study, whether the division was solely about maintaining a revolutionary-democratic line and, therefore, ensuring that the EPRDF became more revolutionary-democratic after the division, is an open question. Hence, the above statement is more of a declaration of determination to make the EPRDF revolutionary-democratic rather than being a statement of fact. At any rate, for the EPRDF, the question was not whether the EPRDF became democratic and developmental after the renewal; it was how to sustain this state by igniting societal movement for development and democracy. Either way, the question is whether the EPRDF subsequently acted in a way that built a democratic and developmental EPRDF.

Ironically, a EPRDF that gave such a level of attention to the imperatives of societal movement for democracy and development were vague with regarding the constituting elements of these societal movements. The opposition would have been one element of this. However, the oppositions were castigated as rent-seekers that weakened the EPRDF's movement for development and democracy. Likewise, the NGOs and civil societies were also excluded from such considerations as will be apparent in the chapter eight (see section 8.2.3. below). Hence, the clarification of what the societal movement for democracy and development refers to was rather obscured. Notwithstanding this vagueness, if refined, the idea would have paved a fruitful avenue to democratize and develop the Ethiopian state and society by imbuing positive orientation to opposing and autonomous centres of power outside the party. To capitalize on this concept's potential, the leaders of EPRDF would have played a very critical role. The EPRDF's approach to leadership development, recruitment, promotion and placement seemed to indicate such an aspiration though it still did not approach the concept of societal movement for democracy and development in a way that was inclusive of the opposition parties.

6.3.4. Party-Leadership Development

The EPRDF introduced a leadership building programme in 2007 aimed at boosting the political and organisational capacity of its members. Before 2007, it claimed, the recruitment

⁴⁸. ኢ ሃዲግ ከምስረታ (EPRDF from establishment).

of leaders was largely based on the EPRDF's experience and procedures stated in different documents.⁴⁹ However, in 2007/1999EC, a leaders' recruitment, capacity building and placement programme was adopted. The goal of the programme was to strengthen the organisation, build the legitimacy of the leadership, effectively implement the development and good governance strategies of the country, and transform societal capacity into concrete development and governance outputs.⁵⁰ The programme was to be scientific in its approach while avoiding reliance on contents drawn from various fragments of the leadership literature.⁵¹ The foundation of this "science-based and contextually grounded" leadership-building programme was later articulated to be the goals of the organisation, its democratic and progressive values, and the nature and demands of the situation.⁵² The goals of the organisation, as noted previously in this study, were to replace the political economy of rent-seeking with democratic developmentalism. Concretely this process entailed registering sustainable growth in which the general public contributes to and benefits from this growth process; building a fully consolidated democratic society; and maintaining peace in a formerly turbulent region.⁵³ The EPRDF claimed that its values included the broad and organised participation of the people, support for progressive changes, avoidance of backward tendencies, and adherence to EPRDF's principles (such as the principles of integrity, people-centredness, courage and freedom to express one's opinion, and freeing oneself from bad habits) even during difficult times.⁵⁴ The nature of the situation confronting the EPRDF was the dominance of rent-seeking mind-sets and practices. The EPRDF's "science-based and contextually grounded" approach to leadership development, therefore, entailed tailoring the contents of the programme to the evolving goals and situations of Ethiopia. Implicit in this goal was a specific conception of leadership in which a leader pursues the interests of the masses, set goals and imbibes values useful to that effect, and devises and implements policies that can be used to realise these goals.

The leadership development programme was to combine the recruitment of party members, their promotion into leadership positions, capacity building of leaders at different levels, and measures used to assess leaders' performance.⁵⁵ It was envisioned that such a programme would include developing the knowledge and attitude of the trainees thus enabling them to

⁴⁹. EPRDF, *የአብዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲያዊ (Revolutionary democratic)*.

⁵⁰. Ibid.

⁵¹. Ibid.

⁵². EPRDF, *የህዳሴው መድረክና (The renaissance forum)*.

⁵³. Ibid.

⁵⁴. One can notice that these values slightly shift from document to document. Ibid.

⁵⁵. EPRDF, *የአብዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲያዊ (Revolutionary democratic)*.

understand the ideology, policies and strategies of the EPRDF as well as honing their professional competence in the areas of their specialization⁵⁶ and, finally, assigning these new leaders a position that best fits them.⁵⁷ This training programme would have a practical day-to-day capacity-building component and was aimed at inculcating democratic and developmental values and developing experience-based knowledge and skills. One of the key values in this regard was the people-centred orientation of the aspirant leaders in their decision-making processes, the quality of which was to be evaluated from the activities of these potential leaders.⁵⁸ This component of the programme entailed placing aspiring leaders in challenging situations in which there were heightened popular movements for democracy and development.⁵⁹ Although the key aim of the day-to-day capacity building was to systematically mentor and monitor these leaders on the job and identify potential obstacles and opportunities such practices could also be used to promote and demote leaders.⁶⁰ To this effect, each leader was to be given concrete activities and goals, and each was to be evaluated based upon his/her commitment and performance to democratize and develop Ethiopia, which entailed evaluating the extent to which a leader was free from rent-seeking, committed to fighting rent-seeking and creating conditions conducive to democratic developmentalism.⁶¹ The evaluation was expected to promote those who speak the truth, act with integrity and identify their own weaknesses, while correcting people who lie, satisfy themselves with little change, and implement policies in undemocratic ways.⁶² A third component of the leadership capacity building programme was assigning leaders to different positions based upon their fitness for the position. The EPRDF also suggested that leaders' roles should be constantly reshuffled to enable them to develop skills in different areas and avoid entrenchment within rent-seeking networks.⁶³

A well-trained leader was presumed to allow popular participation, use result as a measure of achievement and prioritise work.⁶⁴ The EPRDF believed that people have to learn from their experiences, thus, the leaders were also expected to implement policies through the direct participation of the people to enable them take appropriate lessons from their experience. The

⁵⁶. Ibid.

⁵⁷. Ibid.

⁵⁸. Ibid.

⁵⁹. Ibid.

⁶¹. Ibid.

⁶². EPRDF, *የአቢዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ ምንነት፣ ታሪካዊ አነሳስ፣ እድገትና የወደፊት አቅጣጫ* (*The historical emergence, development and future direction of revolutionary democracy*).

⁶³. EPRDF, *የአቢዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲያዊ* (*Revolutionary democratic*).

⁶⁴. Ibid.

key role of EPRDF leaders, therefore, was to facilitate conditions in which the people would draw the correct conclusion from a given experience.⁶⁵ This idea of “a correct conclusion” emanates from what Dagachew called the EPRDF’s mindset in which there was only one correct way of responding to a situation, which was the measure propounded by the EPRDF.⁶⁶

In addition to this leadership development programme, the EPRDF introduced a new discourse of leadership succession in 2010. The EPRDF claimed that this practice was different from EPRDF’s usual recruitment of younger leaders whereby every two to three years the EPRDF used to elect a number of younger leaders to replace those leaders who had vacated their positions for different reasons. The inspiration for this generational leadership succession was the goals of the party that were introduced in the wake of the renewal, which was aimed at replacing the political economy of rent-seeking with democratic developmentalism.⁶⁷ Since realizing that such a transformation takes time, a new generation of leaders had to be developed before the older leaders exhausted their capacity.⁶⁸ Since the EPRDF believed that leadership capacity and skills cannot be developed outside leadership practice, the older experienced leaders had to vacate their position while also being ready to mentor these new inexperienced leaders. Though in some quarters, this programme was taken to be indicative of EPRDF’s lack of readiness to lose power through election, the EPRDF maintained that it would continue to win the majority of votes provided that it did not commit fundamental errors and sustains its democratic and developmental characteristics.⁶⁹ It, therefore, found this commitment for generational leadership succession compatible with democratic politics. One of the key tasks of leaders who had been recruited, trained and placed according to the principles noted above, was to mobilize the people for democratic developmentalism.

6.3.5. Principle, Strategies and Structures of Popular Mobilization

As noted in chapter three of this study, the EPRDF pursued the existential issues of realizing development and institutionalizing democracy through the broad participation and mobilization of the public. It maintained that democratic and developmental goals would be realised only if the masses believe and actively take part in the realization of these goals.⁷⁰ A

⁶⁵. Ibid.

⁶⁶. Tefera Negash Gebregziabher, "Ideology and Power in Tplf’s Ethiopia: A Historic Reversal in the Making?," *African Affairs* 118, no. 472 (2019).

⁶⁷. EPRDF, *የህዳሴው መድረክ*(*the Renaissance forum*).

⁶⁸. EPRDF, *የአቢዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲያዊ* (*Revolutionary democratic*).

⁶⁹. EPRDF, *የታሃድሶው መስመር*(*The renewal line*).

⁷⁰. EPRDF, *የህዳሴው መድረክ*(*The renaissance forum*).

key consideration in mobilizing the people, therefore, was the need to deploy a “democratic approach” of mobilization, not just out of a normative commitment for democracy, but also out of practical expediency. As noted in chapter three (section 3.2.2. above), the EPRDF believed that the main source of the country’s developmental asset was its human resources (labour force). Since the labour force is under the control of the labourer, coercing people to deploy their labour the way the EPRDF saw appropriate was viewed as unviable.⁷¹ Rather the people have to be convinced to engage in developmental endeavours for their country as designed by the party-state. This practice was presumed to require the EPRDF to design development policies that benefit the people and deploy democratic ways of engaging with them. Moreover, there is no other option for implementing a labour-intensive development policy than mobilizing the wider section of the society around the programme and strategies designed by the EPRDF.⁷² Popular mobilization for development and democracy, therefore, EPRDF admitted, also requires a mobilization strategy that values and promotes two-way communication.⁷³

Along with the literature noted in section 6.2. above, the EPRDF rightly noted that a key requirement of such broad participation and mass mobilization was an extended network of presence across the spectrum of society.⁷⁴ To this effect, the organisational capacity of the party would have to be strengthened, its structure extended, and the operational arrangement of lower-level entities strengthened.⁷⁵ Moreover, a number of leaders had to be assigned and organised to perform specific tasks, and operational rules and organisational arrangements were to be developed.⁷⁶ A mid-level structure comprising leaders who connect the Woreda (district) and lower-level structures with the higher-level leaders was especially considered important. The EPRDF noted that if these structures were weak in scope, quality and organisational style, the reach of the developmental and democratic philosophy would be limited.⁷⁷ This situation, in turn, would not only limit the speed, scope and depth of popular mobilization for development and democracy but also the sustainability of this mobilization.⁷⁸

⁷¹. Ibid.

⁷². EPRDF, "ያለገበት ሙድርክ" (Our current forum).

⁷³. Ibid.

⁷⁴. EPRDF, *የአቢዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲያዊ (Revolutionary democratic)*.

⁷⁵. Ibid.

⁷⁶. Ibid.

⁷⁷. Ibid.

⁷⁸. Ibid.

In addition to strengthening its structure, the EPRDF proclaimed that it had to embed itself, and establish a presence in, every arena where there was a struggle for democracy and development (including areas/associations that are relevant for, and have implications for, democracy and development).⁷⁹ The EPRDF expected its members to be front-runners in every section of society and that their presence should not just be in terms of enrolling members but also ensuring they were well-organised. According to this conception, the EPRDF's presence in schools, for instance, should not simply be having students and teachers who were members of the party but who were well-organised. After the 2005 election, women and youth/s associations were regarded as being especially important for the EPRDF's engagement because it believed that such people constitute the majority of society and that an organisation that ascertains and serves their interests would find it easy to attend to the needs and interests of the majority of the population.⁸⁰ The EPRDF also argued that women and youth would act to realise what is expected of them as a group if they are organised into leagues.⁸¹ According to a study informant who was the President of the Youth League of the EPRDF, the party's women and youth were expected to be active participants of women and youth associations that were not formally part of the EPRDF.⁸²

In general, the goal of EPRDF members' organised presence in these associations was not statedly to suppress the question of the people or cover up government weaknesses but, the EPRDF claimed, was to enable its members to participate in and benefit from the development and governance process, to protect their interests, and to monitor and control the government.⁸³ Since it expected its members to be front-runners, EPRDF members of these mass associations were also expected to play a greater role than non-party members. Thus, a key element of the mobilization strategy of the EPRDF was incorporating into the EPRDF structures those actors and forces that could influence people outside the party. Being a front-runner essentially entailed demonstrating to others how beneficial the EPRDF's policies and actions were for society by first effectively and productively implementing policy measures that make them appear reasonable.

⁷⁹. Ibid.

⁸⁰. EPRDF, "ማስፋት"(Scaling up).

⁸¹. Ibid.

⁸². Interview with the former leader of the EPRDF Youth League, February 2021, Bahir Dar.

⁸³. EPRDF, "ያለንበት ሎድረክ(Our current forum) ".

Moreover, the EPRDF sought to use its “would-be” front-runner members to undertake one-to-one political work, which it identified to be the most important of all the political activities related to intra-party governance.⁸⁴ According to this method, each party member was to convince others about the EPRDF’s policies, lines and strategies. Each member was to be evaluated based upon the number of people who (1) join the development and democratic struggle,⁸⁵ (2) become front-runners and (3) become supporters of the EPRDF.⁸⁶ To achieve these aims, the EPRDF claimed that its members need to be knowledgeable about fundamental and current issues and actively take part in the governance and development agenda of the country/Ethiopia. To this effect and as per its promise, the EPRDF indeed produced quality party and policy issue documents and disseminated these for its members who then shared these ideas with other people, regardless of whether or not they themselves understood them.

Generally, the EPRDF believed that if it undertook an intra-party struggle to herald democracy and development, build its leaders and mobilize the people to that effect, it would win an election. Therefore, measures needed to advance democracy and development as an existential concern were presumed to be not only compatible with measures needed to ensure the political survival of the EPRDF but also to actually assist its quest for political hegemony. The application of the framework developed in chapter two of this study to analyse the logics underpinning issue definitions and policy formulation would help to clarify the extent to which this belief holds.

6.4. Logics of Issues Definition

As noted in chapter two (section 2.3.2.2.3. above) and applied in the subsequent chapters, the study analyses the logics of issues definition through three elements: the kind of action undertaken and rendered right, justifiable, authorizable etc.; the losers and beneficiaries of the problem definition; and the juxtaposition of logics. This section analyses the logics of intra-party governance and mobilizational issue definition of the EPRDF based on this framework.

⁸⁴. EPRDF, *የአቢዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲያዊ (Revolutionary democratic)*.

⁸⁵. This literary mean party members. The EPRDF used to call its member *Tagay* which means someone who is in a struggle. Members were assumed to be in a constant struggle against rent seeking and other backward ideas of others as well as their own.

⁸⁶. EPRDF, *የአቢዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲያዊ (Revolutionary democratic)*.

6.4.1. Actions Done and Actors/Actions and Values Justified through Problem Definition

Unlike the logics of problem definition themes discussed in chapters three and four above, the logics behind the EPRDF's intra-party governance and mobilization policies were geared at goals that were defined as complementary. These were ensuring the political survival of the EPRDF by maintaining its democratic and developmental character. Actions undertaken through the deployment of linguistic devices, as well as those that were rendered justified, values and measures portrayed and presented as legitimate, therefore, were aimed at enhancing the democratic and developmental character of the EPRDF and, by extension, its political survival.

This practice, as can be observed from the previous section, was manifested in many of the tenets of the EPRDF. Right from the outset when the EPRDF presented the “renewal” as a watershed event whereby it declared to have renewed its revolutionary democratic character in the form of democratic developmentalism, it was not just stating a fact or making an argument. It was a speech act that was aimed at encompassing democratic and developmental practices within EPRDF by declaring that it was actually democratic and developmental. As part of this process, the EPRDF was obliged to ignite democratic and developmental movements of the Ethiopian society, which, at least in theory, would render participation in societal movements for development and democracy less risky. Hence, to pressurise the EPRDF leaders to work for development while respecting democratic norms was justified and a leader who promoted such forces was not, as per the issue definition, a saboteur but a committed revolutionary democrat.

The EPRDF also declared that it would operate by enhancing internal democracy, preventing clientelism, reducing undue control of the few, fighting opportunism, promoting the voices of the masses, and penalizing those violating rules and institutions.⁸⁷ To this effect, members were urged to have revolutionary and democratic attitudes and values, to avoid rent-seeking, to become well organised, and develop the implementation capacity and leadership skills needed to achieve these goals.⁸⁸ To make sure that these commands would be heeded, leaders were to be assessed based upon their commitment to fight rent-seeking and promote development and

⁸⁷. EPRDF, *የአቢዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ ምንነት፣ ታሪካዊ አነሳስ፣ እድገትና የወደፊት አቅጣጫ* (*The historical emergence, development and future direction of revolutionary democracy*).

⁸⁸. EPRDF, *የአቢዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲያዊ* (*Revolutionary democratic*).

democracy as measured by results such as the number of people who join the development and democratic struggle, became front-runners and supporters of the party.⁸⁹ By arguing that those who were committed to the values of the EPRDF would be rewarded while those who lie, implement little change and implement policies in undemocratic ways were to be corrected,⁹⁰ it also created an incentive for its audience to heed such a directive. These declarations and assertions also justify actors and actions that potentially strengthen the democratic and developmental role of the EPRDF, while delegitimising measures that undermined these orientations.

The EPRDF also promised to extend its structure down to the lowest level and to increase the number of these lower-level structures to advance local-level democracy.⁹¹ This assurance again legitimises measures that seek to make this grassroots party-state structure democratic and responsive. By arguing that democratic norms of mobilization were necessary, not simply out of normative commitment but also out of practical consideration, the EPRDF sought to convince those people who did not have confidence in its commitment to democracy. It declared that it was in the EPRDF's interest to be democratic.⁹² In relation to mass associations, EPRDF members of these associations were urged to liaise with other like-minded individuals to advocate their interests, participate in the democratization process, and contribute to monitoring government work.⁹³ Party members were declared to be operating within society not to suppress people's demands or cover up the EPRDF's weaknesses but to correctly identify the government's problems. Their role was to prevent the "hijacking" of these weaknesses by rent-seekers who would distort them to suit their rent-seeking agenda.⁹⁴ In what appears to be a bid to justify the EPRDF's actions as being democratic, the party indicated strongly that the purpose of embedding its members in these mass associations was not to subvert the latter's operations, which was a constant accusation by the regime's critics.

Hence, this narration of the EPRDF can be seen in two ways: while for members of the EPRDF this directive could be taken as a plea to encourage them to act only in a democratic way, for critics of the regime it was an assurance that the EPRDF's structure would not be utilized for

⁸⁹. Ibid.

⁹⁰. Ibid.

⁹¹. EPRDF, *የዲሞክራሲ ስረዓት ግንባታ ጉዳዮች እና ቀጣይ ፈተናዎች በኢትዮጵያ (Issues and challenges of building democratic system in Ethiopia)* (Addis Ababa 2004 EC).

⁹². *የህዳሴው መድረክና (The renaissance forum)*.

⁹³. EPRDF, *የአቢዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲያዊ (Revolutionary democratic)*.

⁹⁴. Ibid.

non-democratic ends. Thus, although the party was to entrench its presence in every arena in which there were movements for development and democracy, the stated aim was to give revolutionary democratic direction to these movements. The aim was to increase the speed, scope and depth of popular mobilization for development and democracy.⁹⁵ Without an entrenched structure, it was felt that the reach of the EPRDF's developmental and democratic philosophy will be limited. These issue definitions again justify measures that aim to create a responsive organisation and strong associations that would monitor the party-state and mobilize the people to serve their interests. If the EPRDF acted contrary to what was provided with in these issue frames, it, therefore, was not because of the issue-frame but against it.

Finally, a key element of the EPRDF's approach to recruitment, organisation and promotion was the need to recruit and develop quality leaders across all levels. As has been explained earlier in this chapter, with this aim, the EPRDF laid down a leadership recruitment technique that would put a premium on performance. To begin with, front-runner members of the societal movement for development and democracy would be targeted for membership of the party.⁹⁶ Putting leaders into trying situations, giving education and training and above all on-the-job mentoring and monitoring was to provide a rigorous means through which leaders would be recruited and promoted.⁹⁷ An issue definition that seeks to equip leaders through training and day-to-day capacity building was also to empower those individuals with the necessary knowledge and skill to perform better in their mission. Hence, the issue frame justifies actions that potentially enhance development and democracy by recommending actions that create actors capable of advancing democratic and developmental causes. The measures would promote and value those who were capable and had the necessary disposition and commitment for development and democracy. Although the party indicated that the main purpose of the evaluation is not to punish low performers⁹⁸ but to identify lessons and best practices, this practice would not be taken as a retreat from the aforementioned commitment.

Likewise, the criteria for leaders' placement were appropriate knowledge and attitude, together with the requisite value for democracy and development.⁹⁹ The ultimate guides of performance were urged to be developmental and democratic results. In this process, EPRDF claimed,

⁹⁵. Ibid.

⁹⁶. EPRDF, "የዲሞክራሲ ጉዳዮች በኢትዮጵያ (Issues of democracy in Ethiopia)."

⁹⁷. EPRDF, *የአባዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲያዊ (Revolutionary democratic)*.

⁹⁸. Ibid.

⁹⁹. Ibid.

strengths and weaknesses had to be identified realistically, false reporting has to be monitored, implementing plans without convincing the people and in an inefficient way scrutinised, and rent-seeking concepts and practices reviewed.¹⁰⁰ These suggested measures, as with others noted above, enhance the pursuit of democracy and development as per the securitisation discourse. In arguing along this line, the framers were also promising that the EPRDF was determined to act in the ways stated and, therefore, were urging its members to follow suit. This promise was further substantiated in the leadership succession programme in which the EPRDF was ready to replace an entire generation of leaders to maintain and sustain the democratic and developmental feature of the EPRDF, hence, indicating that there was nothing self-serving in the issue-definition.

Generally, unlike the other issue-definitions discussed in chapters three and four of this study, there was no contradictory logics in the way the EPRDF approached its intra-party governance and mobilization. What the EPRDF was doing by framing issues in the way discussed above was one of, or a combination of, the following three linguistic actions. First, it was informing what measures were required to realise development and institutionalize democracy. In this sense, the issue frame clarifies the approach of the EPRDF on intra-party governance and mobilization to the wider party members and outside audiences. Second, it was promising and/or urging members not to compromise democracy and development for short term gains because these two agendas were existential, an issue explicated in chapter three above. It attempted to make this promise credible by even entertaining leadership succession in which an entire generation of leaders was to be replaced. For middle-level leadership aspirants, it was a promise that provided they excel in their performance, they will be the next in line. Third, it was declaring that the EPRDF was revolutionary-democratic or developmental and democratic. It was also suggesting measures as to how those who accept this the declaration should act to maintain the EPRDF's developmental and democratic character.

The action justified, measures legitimated and values rendered rightful comprised all those practices that enhance a developmental and democratic EPRDF by delegitimising measures such as opportunism, rent-seeking and low commitment and promoting democratic and developmental measures. Moreover, those actors with the necessary knowledge and skills, together with the appropriate values and attitude, were rendered the legitimate leaders who

¹⁰⁰ EPRDF, *የአቢዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ ምንነት፣ ታሪካዊ አነሳስ፣ እድገትና የወደፊት አቅጣጫ* (*The historical emergence, development and future direction of revolutionary democracy*).

would dominate the EPRDF. Those leaders who use these attributes to promote the democratic and developmental governance of the party and the country were to be promoted. The people that this particular framing legitimises, therefore, were those who considered the pursuit of democracy and development as their enlightened self-interest which must to be prioritised over the self-defeating short-term goals of immediate survival in power. The EPRDF probably believed that this declaration was a democratic and developmental approach, and, thus, regarded members of the opposition parties, as discussed in chapters three and four of this study, in a patronizing and suffocating way. Thus, seen in the light of this specific issue frame, one cannot help but appreciate the sophistication of the EPRDF that projected an image of democratic and developmental government confronting the frequently fragmented rent-seeking opposition parties that could not even hold regularly assemblies. An examination of the losers and beneficiaries of the frame also strengthens the above assertion.

6.4.2. Losers and Beneficiaries of the Frame

At the level of policy and programme pronouncement, the losers of the frame would be those individuals who did not imbibe democratic and developmental values and those with limited knowledge and inappropriate values and attitudes. Those leaders and party members who acted democratically and developmentally by shunning rent-seeking, following the principles and values of the EPRDF, and mobilizing the people according to democratic norms were supposed to benefit from the issue definition, whereas those who behaved otherwise would be the losers of the frame. Given that the criteria of leader recruitment and placement were to be based upon the knowledge and values needed for democratic developmentalism, people without these attributes would not be recruited. Since this evaluation process has a strong practical component in which performance in democratic and developmental activities was the key criteria, it favoured those who performed well in practice. The emphasis on the democratic and developmental character of the EPRDF, in theory would also constrain powerful party bosses from acting in a way that advances their self-interest at the expense of democratizing and developing Ethiopia.

The framework of the study laid out in chapter two above noted that the losers and beneficiaries of an issue definition were also to emerge from the controversies and narratives of different actors towards an issue frame. When I undertook my interviews with former leaders of the EPRDF, with very few exceptions, the controversy was not as much on the way issues were framed as it was on the lack of will to implement them or their abuse in the implementation

process. Hence, those who were presumed to lose from the issue-definition were those who did not have a justifiable ground not to lose.

The third criterion of identifying the logics of actions of the EPRDF was juxtaposing various concerns. However, since there had not been conflicting logics in the issue definition of the EPRDF, there is no need to juxtapose various logics. Although the EPRDF's mobilizational strategies would be assumed to have the self-serving logic of political survival by entrenching regime control regardless of democratic and developmental outcomes, in the face of the EPRDF's history of popular mobilization these practices cannot be interpreted as such. It would be more sensible to approach them as an ideological "hangover" from the past that shaped how the EPRDF governed. The issue to be explored, therefore, will be the extent to which EPRDF's intra-party governance and mobilization strategies were executed as stipulated in these issue definitions and, therefore, the logics that underpinned the implementation of policies that emerged from such a definition. The next chapter examines this issue in detail.

6.5. Conclusions

This chapter assessed the logics of action of the EPRDF in defining intra-party governance and mobilizational issues of the EPRDF. The chapter argued that the issues identified and the logics underpinning their identification and definition were dominantly inspired by logics of securitisation of development and democracy. That is to say, the overriding focus was creating and maintaining a democratic and developmental EPRDF. Each element of the intra-party governance and mobilizational strategies (be it within the party struggle, leadership development, igniting popular movements for development and democracy or principles of popular mobilization) were all aimed at ensuring that the EPRDF remained democratic and developmental. The process of making the party democratic and developmental, in turn, was expected to ensure the political survival of the EPRDF. Therefore, the contradictory logics underpinning the issue of rent-seeking in the previous chapter were not apparent.

Moreover, the logics of action of the regime analysed in terms of actions undertaken and justified, together with actors and values legitimated, were those that helped it create a democratic and developmental EPRDF. These speech acts not only asserted what the EPRDF would do to create and maintain a democratic developmental EPRDF but also warned its members not to deviate from courses of action leading to that. It also declared that the EPRDF was indeed democratic and developmental and, therefore, its members should act in accordance

with such a declaration. Likewise, the losers and beneficiaries of the issue definition were such that those who subvert a democratic and developmental quest lose, while those who strive to democratize and develop their country gain. Unlike the disparate issues discussed in chapters three and four, this chapter identified a single dominant logic animating the definition of intra-party governance and mobilizational issues of the EPRDF. Since the main audience of intra-party governance and mobilization were party members, this result was not surprising. In other issues in which the potential audiences include party members, the public and the opposition, conflicting messages and, thus, conflicting logics were to be expected. Since a single logic underpinned the issues definition, the practice of intra-party governance and mobilization would be expected to be strongly influenced by the issue frame. However, the existence of the policy-practice disjuncture indicated in the next chapter points to the limitation of speech acts to account for what actors pursue as a matter of priority. The implication of this position harkens back to the securitisation literature that focuses on the power of security languages either as a speech act, a discourse or both.

Chapter Seven

The Logics of the Practices of intra-party Governance and Mobilization

7.1. Introduction

This chapter is a continuation of the discussion in the previous chapter, which covers the EPRDF's logics of identification and definition of intra-party governance and mobilizational issues. This chapter analyses the logics of implementation of measures suggested (in the previous chapter) to ensure the democratic and developmental character of the EPRDF. These measures include intra-party struggle, party leadership development, engagement with the popular movement for democracy and development, and democratic mobilization of the population. The chapter argues that almost all suggested policy measures were either abused or not adequately implemented. The intra-party struggle was abused, an effort to tolerate, let alone initiate, societal pressure for democracy and development was side-tracked, the rigorous leadership development programme was not implemented, and the structures of popular mobilization were retooled for authoritarian control. Hence, the securitisation logic which necessitated a democratic and developmental EPRDF was subordinated to other logics ranging from political domination and survival, economic predation, and other livelihood concerns. Thus, this chapter, along with the previous one, demonstrates the limitation of speech acts and audience-centric works on securitisation to identify and account for issues that are pursued as a matter of urgency. Consequently, this chapter argues that the criteria of securitisation need to go beyond the articulation of security speech acts and audience acceptance to include the concern of the securitising actor as a key component of the securitisation process.

This chapter is organised into four sections, including this introduction. The next section covers how the measures needed to realise the democratic and developmental nature of the EPRDF were/were not implemented. By doing so, this section demonstrates the policy-practice disjuncture and, therefore, calls for an explanation for, and justification of, this gap and its implications for the securitisation perspective. The third section explains the policy-practice disjuncture in terms of the desire of key leaders of the TPLF and their affiliates for political domination and economic predation, and the regional leaders and lower-level cadres' subordination of democratic and developmental concerns to political survival and livelihood

concerns. This section also identifies a number of implications of these results for the securitisation literature. The final section makes some concluding remarks.

7.2. Maintaining EPRDF`s Democratic and Developmental Character

Since the EPRDF claimed that the key elements necessary to ensure its democratic and developmental character were intra-party struggle, party-leadership development, engagement with the popular movement for development and democracy, and mobilizational strategies and modalities, the assessment of the implementation of measures is also along these lines.

7.2.1. Intra-party Struggle and Intra-Party Democracy

Both informants and party documents indicate that the EPRDF hardly deployed an intra-party struggle to establish and maintain its democratic and developmental character. Almost all the instruments meant to ensure this character were either abused or not implemented.

7.2.1.1. Democratic Centralism

The principle of democratic centralism was applied in a way that undermined the democratic character of the EPRDF. According to most of the study informants, the principle was applied in such a way that order, policy and programme flowed from a few prominent individuals located at the highest level of power. Consequently, there was little room for lower-level party-state agents to raise concerns and problems, while remaining loyal to the higher-level authority. An example from the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State, was narrated by one of the informants who has served at various leadership positions, clearly indicates how this principle was (mis)implemented: a minister from the centre was to visit a model farmer who had successfully applied a new technology to improve his productivity.¹ When the minister went to the region, he was accompanied by leaders of the lower level Zonal, District and Kebele administrators. While visiting the farmland the minister cried for an unknown reason, thus, mesmerizing the other lower-level leaders. Noticing that the minister was crying, the Zonal Administrator (his immediate subordinate) followed suit and when the District Administrator noticed that his boss was crying, he also began to cry. Confused by the situation, the farmer asked the Kebele Administrator (the lowest one) what was causing the leaders to cry. The Kebele Administrator in turn asked the District Administrator why he was crying who responded that it was an order from above. This situation may be an extreme example, but it

¹. Interview with an official of the SNNP regional state, April, 2021, Awassa

highlights the fact that an order from above had to be implemented with as little deviation as possible. Actions taken by lower officials without the knowledge of the higher-level leaders would lead to bad evaluations for violating democratic centralism.

The above case was not an isolated incident, but a systemic feature of how the EPRDF operated. Another example from the Oromia Region also largely concurs with this dismal reality. According to Abiy, in 2011, some members of the OPDO requested their leadership to set an agenda on the governance and corruption problems of the party.² Although the agenda was approved after much resistance, members of the central committee who raised this new agenda were accused of trying to dismantle the organisation and were harassed and put under surveillance by the national intelligence. The reason for such treatment was because they had initiated an agenda that was not endorsed by the Executive Committee of the EPRDF. Democratic centralism was thus (ab)used to control the agenda of the party filtering them, depending upon the implication of such actions for the power at the top of the EPRDF.

A number of the study informants argue that the problem was not in the application of the principle of democratic centralism but the principle itself. They claimed that democratic centralism is an oxymoron in which the centralism aspect of the concept contradicts its democratic component. The principle, therefore, was undemocratic from the outset, which contradicts the decentralizing spirit of the constitution. One of these informants argues that the principle was against Ethiopia's constitution that allows extensive decentralization of power to regions to decide their affairs as they saw fit.³ A few others argue that there was nothing undemocratic in this principle. In any organisation, they claim, the majority vote should prevail after democratic discussion and that lower-level authorities should be answerable to higher-level authorities. Hence, it was the application of the principle of democratic centralism that was a cause of concern and, in particular, the undemocratic context within which it was applied. In so far as the party that decides at the centre was elected by the people in a free and fair election and decides democratically, the principle would not have been a cause of concern. The principle appeared problematic because prominent individuals largely from the party that represented just 6% Ethiopia's population, dominated decision making at the centre, which precluded any argumentation-based decision making that would inevitably balance different

². Ahmed, የሚከተለው ጉዞ (s Synergetic journey).

³. Interview with the former leader of the EPRDF Youth League, February 2021, Bahir Dar.

interests and concerns. This situation was largely due to the undemocratic nature of the government than the principle itself.

7.2.1.2. Intra-Party Democracy

The problem of maintaining the democratic and developmental character of the EPRDF was not limited to the abuse of the principle of democratic centralism. The behaviour of the higher-level leaders of the EPRDF was also undemocratic. The EPRDF seemed to have a measure of democracy during the immediate aftermath of its seizing power. Its members were, to a limit, free to express their dissenting opinions in an appropriate forum.⁴ One informant from the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region noted that intra-party democracy was so enviable in the early years of the EPRDF that he joined the EPRDF at the early age of his life.⁵ However, this practice was not sustained. The first milestone in the erosion of intra-party democracy was the measures taken following the split within the TPLF in 2001, an issue extensively covered in chapters three and four of this study. During this difficult time, the rules and procedures of the EPRDF were violated by Meles, the then prime minister of Ethiopia. Ironically, the EPRDF considered this incident as a watershed moment after which it “renewed” and “reinvigorated” itself to become democratic and developmental. In reality, the EPRDF did acquire a clear vision of what it wanted to realise and how to achieve this goal, however, this process did not necessarily entail a more democratic EPRDF. Rather, the EPRDF began to be dominated by a few strong personalities, making it difficult for others to think freely and contradict these individuals.

At the EPRDF level, Meles was a powerful figure. Almost all key party positions were crafted by Meles, a fact the EPRDF has also admitted on a number of occasions.⁶ Meles, if one notices his actions during the TPLF’s division, was obviously not concerned about violating the laws of the EPRDF to side-line his opponents. An observer argues that he would go to the extent of introducing a law to penalize just one person, of which the case relating to Siye, the former Defence Minister and party heavyweight, is illustrative.⁷ Given this fact, other party leaders

⁴. Interview with informant working in the Amhara region president Office, February 2021, Bahir Dar.

⁵. Interview with a former president of the SNNP region, April 2021, Addis Ababa.

⁶. Different documents of the party published after his death attribute previous documents to Meles. See for instance EPRDF, “የተሃድሶ መስመራችን” (Our renewal policy); EPRDF, *የአቢዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲያዊ ድርጅት ግንባታ (Building revolutionary democratic organisation)*; EPRDF, *የአቢዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ ምንነት፣ ታሪካዊ አነሳስ፣ እድገትና የወደፊት አቅጣጫ (The historical emergence, development and future direction of revolutionary democracy)*; Lavers, “Social Protection.”

⁷. Solomon Siyoum, *የኢሃዲግ ፍጻሜ (The end of EPRDF)* (No place of publication, 2013). Siye, a dissenting member of the TPLF, was arrested on suspicion of corruption. When the court released him with bail, which the

could not be expected to risk exclusion or even jail by speaking out against Meles. If they express their opinions, it would be in areas and sectors that would not lead them to confrontation with Meles. As was noted by Ermias, one of the former leaders of the party, who worked closely with many of the higher officials, middle-level leaders called Meles the *Organisation*.⁸ They used to say, “the organisation said this or the organisation ordered that” when they wanted to say Meles said this or ordered that.⁹ In this context of fear, it was hardly possible to talk about intra-party democracy.

However, the above situation did not mean Meles always achieved his wishes. At times, he listened to the views of other members and even acquiesced to their demands. Two instances can be taken as evidence of this scenario. First, Meles acquiesced to the demands of Bereket Simon, another dominant personality, often called the *Strategist* by middle-level leaders of the EPRDF, on at least two occasions.¹⁰ The first occasion was related to the post-2005 plan to increase party membership aimed at grounding the structure of the EPRDF down to the lowest level. According to Ermias, Meles ordered party leaders to recruit highly educated members of the society to organise the Kebele in Addis Ababa. Bereket, however, ordered them to recruit both educated and less-educated members. When Meles realised that what the middle-level leaders did was to focus on quantity than quality, he criticized Bereket, who later convinced Meles that quality would emerge from quantity. Accordingly, the party recruited a large pool of lower-level leaders rather than selecting a few well-educated and capable individuals. This proved a wrong move because it filled the party and state bureaucracy with mediocre officials who cannot implement the development policies of the EPRDF. The second incident when Meles’s authority was undermined was when the party introduced its leadership succession agenda in which Meles wished to be the first to leave power.¹¹ Bereket insisted that if Meles leave power he would also leave the organisation which again forced Meles to agree to stay in power for one more term, although his tenure was interrupted by his death.¹² Hence, Meles did not always achieve his wishes.

law allows him, the regime hold him back and introduced a new law that prohibit release on bail for high corruption cases.

⁸. Legesse, *ባሌቤት አልባ ከተማ* (Ownerless city).

⁹. Ibid.

¹⁰. Ibid.

¹¹. Legesse, *የመለስ ልቃቂት* (Meles’s pandora box).

¹². Legesse, *ባሌቤት አልባ ከተማ* (Ownerless city).

Moreover, Meles did not necessarily use his dominance to push for a self-serving agenda. His relations with Melaku Fanta, the former Director-General of the Ethiopian Revenue and Customs Authority is illustrative of this. In an interview with the *Reporter*,¹³ Melaku argues that by the time he became Director-General he relied on the backing of Meles when undertaking politically difficult measures. Accordingly, Melaku introduced innovative measures that expanded the tax base of the regime by increasing the number of taxpayers and incorporating the party endowments into the tax system. In accordance with Melaku's expectations, the business community pressured other leaders of the party, and even the EPRDF's intelligence and security apparatus to force Melaku to change course. The latter accused Melaku of taking measures that strain the relations between EPRDF and the business community.¹⁴ However, Meles, as promised, did not take any measure against Melaku, which indicates that power was effectively concentrated in Meles's hand but it was not necessarily used for his selfish personal interests. This fact also, at the same time, points to the prioritization of concerns other than maintaining the democratic and developmental character of the EPRDF by other leaders of the EPRDF. The democratic and developmental ideology, thus, was produced by, and was dependent upon, a very few personalities within the EPRDF. What happened after the death of Meles is generally indicative of this fact.

During this period, practices that reflected the party's democratic and developmental character continued to be eroded. Both EPRDF and its constituent member parties were afflicted with rent-seeking tendencies, network, factionalism, antidemocracy and opportunism, all of which point to logics other than democratic developmentalism.¹⁵ These problems certainly existed even before the death of Meles. However, he was able to manage them in a way that did not undermine the cohesion of the EPRDF and the stability of Ethiopia. Meles was successful in achieving these practices because he commanded respect as an intellectual and as a leader from all the member parties of the EPRDF. However, after his death, the intra-party struggle deteriorated further, undermining the principle-based intra-party struggle whereby the capacity and integrity of members was to supposed be built through criticism and self-criticism to advance democratic developmental goals. The inner debates of the EPRDF from 2013 to 2018, as documented by Birhan Tsigab (a former Central Committee member of the TPLF and EPRDF) in his book roughly translated as *EPRDF's downward journey: The dialogue of the*

¹³. Tsigab, "From the Office."

¹⁴. Ibid.

¹⁵. Tsigab, *የኢ.ሃ.ዲ.ግ የቁልፍ ጉዞ (EPRDF's downward journey)*.

meetings (2013-2018),¹⁶ clearly indicates that what concerned the higher-level leaders most was access to and control over power.

A closer reading of the agenda and positions of different individuals in these meetings was that these were largely divided along generations of leadership. Following the death of Meles, older leaders who should have been replaced as per the EPRDF's leadership succession plan, used Meles's death as an opportunity to remain in power. They claimed that the void left by Meles' demise could only be filled by them, whereas those people who were to replace them saw this practice as a betrayal of Meles's legacy. For the moment, the latter seems to be winning because the EPRDF agreed to continue the leadership succession process. However, the older leaders continued their trenchant criticism of the younger leaders and accused them of being satisfied with small changes and failing to arrest factionalism and opportunism. While accepting that problems exist in these areas, the younger leaders saw these "hypercritical" criticisms as an attempt to delegitimise them by capitalizing on their weakness and eventually regain power. Though the younger leaders interpreted these criticisms based upon how they affect the prospect of their losing power, the older leaders were not raising them out of democratic and developmental commitment either. The problems predated the rise to power of the younger leaders. As some members later admitted, they were rather dissatisfied by their exclusion from power, which they believed contributed to the souring relationship between the two generations of leaders. Hence, their critical position against the younger leaders was in part inspired by this situation. Either way, instituting democracy and realizing development was a secondary consideration and many of the problems of the EPRDF were left unaddressed.¹⁷

Consequently, intra-party democracy continued to deteriorate which can be inferred from the arguments made by leaders during meetings of the EPRDF. Relations between the EPRDF leaders from top to bottom ceased to be based on principles (or so was the view of study informants with which I have no reason to disagree). It rather began to be based on opportunism in which potential gains and losses determine positions on issues. Unless the issue under discussion was on sectors a leader was responsible for, most members of the Central Committee kept silent in these party debates fearing to take a principled position on other issues. The issues raised by the few outspoken members of the EPRDF leadership team were generally pessimistic of the prospect that the EPRDF would overcome its challenges, which indicates the

¹⁶. Ibid. The book is about who said what during the meetings of the TPLF and EPRDF leaders for five years which provides highlights of the agenda and positions of various leaders.

¹⁷. Ibid.

depth of the intra-party governance problems. These problems, as they indicated, included the repression of those who took principled positions, the lack of unity of thought and action, failure to address problems relating to the lack of good governance, continuance of rent-seeking, the lack of commitment to ensure the developmental character of the EPRDF, and increasing tendencies of narrow-ism, provincialism and chauvinism. The consensus in these debates was not just about the failure of the EPRDF to ensure intra-party democracy but also its lack of commitment to address it and, therefore, its prospects of renewing itself. After the reform was introduced, the EPRDF attributed the causes of these problems to the erosion of transparent struggle, lack of fair debate within the EPRDF, failure to entertain different ideas, revenge against those who spoke out, and failure to guide the struggle based on principle.¹⁸

The accounts of the study informants indicate the pervasiveness of the above problems and the working of logic other than that of democracy and development. These informants conclusively argue that what was guiding the conduct of the EPRDF was not democratic developmentalism enshrined in the securitisation discourse. Individuals who spoke against their boss used to be side-lined or even arrested and that intra-party democracy was simply for those who parrot the party`s discourse, not for those who challenge its basic philosophy.¹⁹ Influential members within each party made sure that those with different values and attitudes than what these personalities defined to be the party`s line would not progress to higher positions.²⁰ According to an informant from the Oromia Region, he was evaluated for eight hours for expressing suspicion that the evaluation processes might be used for purposes other than what it was envisioned for.²¹ He argues that “the TPLF would allow you to speak out using the pretext of intra-party democracy after which it used your speech to accuse you of charges that have grave repercussion.”²² Another informant who worked at various levels of government structure in the Amhara Region also captures the general lack of intra-party democracy replying to the question of how democratic the EPRDF was in the following way:

It is a very open issue; there has never been intra-party democracy. It was a party manipulated and controlled by key personalities. If you raise an idea opposing them, there

¹⁸. EPRDF, "ሀገራዊ አንድነት ለሁለንተናዊ ብልጽግና(National Unity for inclusive growth)."

¹⁹. Interview with Walelign Embibil, February 2021, phone interview.

²⁰. Interview with Getachew Jember, February 2021, Bahir Dar.

²¹. Interview with a former high-level official of the Oromia Regional State, April 2021, Addis Ababa.

²². Ibid.

is no way you will continue as a leader in the organisation. People live by fear. Those who struggled were intimidated but also even fired.²³

Similarly, an informant from the Southern, Nations, Nationalities and Peoples region maintained that after the 2005 election, the party recruited a large number of members which led to the gradual detachment of the leaders from its ordinary members.²⁴ Consistent with other evidence of increasing corruption discussed in chapter four of this study, he maintains that corruption began to increase and speaking against those corrupt officials became risky, culminating in a stage during which individuals could not speak out without anticipating the sacrifices they would have to make for doing so. This dominance of key personalities and their detachment from the wider members, confirm what is indicated in chapters three and four above, namely that the problem definition of the EPRDF was the work of key personalities who evaluated and decided the extent to which other members acted the way they were supposed to. Acting outside the party's line as defined by these personalities meant that such members risked exclusion even when the issues they raised appeared legitimate. Hence, the logic of issue definition was the logic of those few individuals who also strongly influenced the way the implementation process unfolds. The lack of intra-party democracy and the abuse of the principle of democratic centralism, to a greater extent, was influenced by this practice.

7.2.1.3. Evaluation, Criticism and Self-criticism

Though the evaluation, criticism and self-criticism were meant to usher in the unity of thought and practice, it was not used to this effect. Rather, it was abused in two ways. First, it was used to attack those individuals who were regarded as expressing disloyal political views. The very criteria of evaluation, which includes within organisational work performance, commitment to fighting rent-seeking and antidemocracy, opportunism and groupism, chauvinism and narrowism can easily be used to blackmail anybody, including those who raised justified questions that nevertheless were against the interest of the top leaders (this issue is discussed in detail in the next chapter).²⁵ The evaluation, criticism and self-criticism were designed to make sure that individuals with opinions that differed from the key personalities would not be promoted to the higher level of leadership.²⁶

²³. Interview with Walelign Embibil, February 2021, phone interview.

²⁴. Interview with a leader of EPRDF leadership Institute, April 2021, Addis Ababa.

²⁵. Interview with a former executive committee member of ANDM, February 2021, Bahir Dar; Ahmed, *የመደመር መንገድ (a Synergetic Journey)*.

²⁶. Interview with Getachew Jember, February 2021, Bahir Dar.

Second, the evaluation process was also abused for reasons that have little to do with political orientations. Individuals from both the high level and the lower levels of leadership often formed groups and networks, eventually using the evaluation, criticism and self-criticism for their sectional interest inappropriately by evaluating certain individuals who might be a threat to their interest while praising others.²⁷ Those victimized individuals quite often tended to be people who acted based upon principle.²⁸ In a situation of widespread poverty and a lack of opportunities for self-improvement, party members often find it difficult to separate their personal interests from their organisational interests. Organisational forums, thus, became arenas for the pursuit of personal interests. This practice points to the larger issue of how the concern of the individuals constituting a group could be reconciled with the concerns of the organisation.

There is, thus, widespread consensus that the semblance of tolerance of different opinions that were prevalent in the EPRDF was lost for all intent and purposes. This loss of ethics was in part due to the EPRDF's deployment of numerous incentives to attract party members after the 2005 election. Once the recruit joined the party, anticipating these incentives, the party evaluation forum became an arena of struggle to legitimise those with the "right connections" while delegitimising others. If the organisation was constituted by selfless individuals who were committed only to democratic and developmental outcomes, the evaluation process would have imbued some sort of self-reflectivity in the implementation of policies. However, members were neither recruited for their commitment to a cause nor was their evaluation designed to overcome its abuse. Thus, a combination of abuse of the principle of democratic centralism, lack of commitment for intra-party democracy, abuse of the evaluation programme – all point to a EPRDF that failed to establish and maintain its democratic and developmental character. This result was largely due to the high-level leaders' failure both to abide by the vision of the organisation and to develop lower-level leaders with a similar commitment.

7.2.2. EPRDF Leadership Building Programme

Although, in theory, the EPRDF recognised the centrality of leadership development for establishing and maintaining its democratic and developmental character, in practice, it abysmally failed to build leaders. Party membership recruitment did not follow the regulations of the EPRDF. Prospective recruits were not front-runners in their areas of engagement largely

²⁷. A number of informants agree on this point which is also supported by party documents.

²⁸. Interview with Getachew Jember, February 2021, Bahir Dar

because of the massive recruitment measure introduced after 2005 using government-provided membership incentives.²⁹ Rather than recruiting front-runners, Yohannes, a former official of the party, argued that the EPRDF practically used political loyalty as evidence of leadership quality.³⁰ In so far as a person was evaluated as having a good political attitude, which means having a good orientation to both the TPLF and the EPRDF in general, then s/he would be assumed to be fit to lead.³¹ Yohannes further argues that many of the individuals who came to hold leadership positions initially joined the EPRDF for extrinsic motives related to a job, better position, survival, Arkebe shops, kebele houses, condominiums, and small and microenterprises. The few committed individuals that joined the EPRDF on ideological grounds were either expelled or eventually demoted or even arrested.³² Those members who were promoted were usually those who praised their immediate superiors rather than those who criticized populating the EPRDF with opportunists.³³

Initially, the EPRDF did not seem to anticipate the pitfalls of incentive-based mass party membership. Officials thought that quality would emerge from quantity because the most qualified members of these large pools of members would climb the leadership ladder. The EPRDF expected the evaluation programme to filter out less qualified members, while in fact, its abuse made it a blunt tool for identifying good performance. The EPRDF only recognised the failures of its leadership development programme when the 2014-2018 protests forced it to re-examine the reasons for these demonstrations. Amidst popular protests, one member party after another diagnosed failure of leadership and the lack of implementation of the leadership development programme of the EPRDF. ANDM, for instance, argued that the leaders of EPRDF fundamentally failed in understanding and protecting the political philosophy of the EPRDF or grasping its nuances and details.³⁴ It argued also that the leadership had failed to commit itself to the realization of its democracy and developmental goals. Rules and regulations of ANDM and members building programme, it admitted, were not adhered to and leaders were not recruited based upon their performance.³⁵ Leaders, also, were not placed in

²⁹. Wendimu Asaminew, *ከአደባባይ በሻገር የኢትዮጵያ ፖለቲካ ተስፋና ስጋቶች* (*Beyond what is public: Opportunities and challenges of Ethiopian politics*) (Mekelle: Np, 2011 EC).

³⁰. Tadesse, *የተስፋው ነጻብረቅ* (*Rays of hope*).

³¹. Ibid.

³². Ibid.

³³. Interview with an official of the SNNP regional state, April 2021, Awassa

³⁴. ANDM, "አምስቱ ተላላፊ ገዳይ የፖለቲካ በሽታዎች (Five deadly communicable political diseases)."

³⁵. EPRDF, "የሀዳሴ አመራር ምልመላና ግንባታ ጉዳዮች (Renaissance leadership recruitment and development issues)," *አገሮቻዊ ዲሞክራሲ* (*Revolutionary Democracy*) 3, no. 8 (2009 EC).

trying situations and monitored and mentored accordingly.³⁶ The result of all these omissions, as this party report noted, was the failure to promote those with greater capacity and people-centred value, while filtering weaker members.

The cause of the above failure was correctly diagnosed as being the result of the leaders' considering their position as a means of livelihood.³⁷ This interpretation indicates how conflicting concerns could emerge when an organised group securitised a threat that eventually underpinned policy-practice disjuncture. When conflicting concern arises, effective leaders and competent followers would have to prioritise organisational interests over personal ones, which regrettably was not the case. Rather, this existential consideration rendered the evaluation programme a forum for infighting in order to have access to or remain in leadership positions. To lose a leadership position was to lose one's livelihood. This position would have been averted had these leaders had the necessary qualifications before they joined the EPRDF. In this case, they would have simply shifted to other businesses once removed from a leadership position. However, as I observed during my term as a student from 2004 to 2007, many members joined the EPRDF opportunistically to compensate for their lack of academic qualifications and, therefore, were not sufficiently qualified to compete in a meritocratic system. When the member parties of EPRDF were recruited from universities, for instance, those with low academic results would join the party so that they could compensate their inability to compete in the job market through clientelistic benefits received from the party. This practice was more common amongst the ANDM and OPDO, two member parties of EPRDF that were widely perceived to be instruments of the TPLF established to control the Amhara and the Oromo people respectively, the two largest ethnic groups of the country.

When leadership positions were taken as a means of livelihood, leaders' placement would not be based on developmentally and democratically relevant criteria. As admitted by ANDM, it even did not have a complete folder for all its leaders, a fact which it claimed hindered systematic assessment of the leaders' performance.³⁸ Hence, the placement of leaders was based upon the immediate past performance of potential leaders and other known performances.³⁹ The ANDM also admitted that although, as a policy, potential leaders were

³⁶. ANDM, "አምስቱ ተላላፊ ገዳይ የፖለቲካ በሽታዎች(Five deadly communicable political diseases)."

³⁷. EPRDF, "የህዳሴ አመራር" (Renaissance leadership).

³⁸. ANDM, "አምስቱ ተላላፊ ገዳይ የፖለቲካ በሽታዎች" (Five deadly communicable political diseases); EPRDF, "የህዳሴ አመራር" (Renaissance leadership).

³⁹. EPRDF, "የህዳሴ አመራር" (Renaissance leadership).

first to be vetted at the level of *meseratawi dirigit* (basic organisation), this process was not practised.⁴⁰ A study informant who occupied a leadership position in ANDM argues that the problems with the leadership development programme of ANDM were also connected with the (ab)use of democratic centralism. He argues that:

When you say that Mr X, Y or Z should not be there, you would be told that you are violating centralism. Those top leaders who struggled [criticize, work for change, act based on principles] were either marginalized or removed. Especially in the Amhara region, if there was a politician with the capacity to perform well, he would be dealt with [removed, demoted, demoralized, or even arrested] The implementation of democratic centralism forced individuals to accept what they would not have accepted. You have to accept decisions at the top that are made with the majority vote. If you violated the constitution and rules of the party including the principle of democratic centralism you would be dealt with in the evaluation session. The system was very centralized that was run by TPLF. Anything that the TPLF wished would be executed whereas those it did not like will not be executed. They were ruling indirectly. The other organisations were simply satellites, they were the mouthpiece and executor of the TPLF agenda. They use us as a symbol; they assign into leadership position only those that ally with them.⁴¹

Another study informant nuanced this fact, arguing that prospective leaders were rigorously scrutinised to make sure that they would not pose a challenge to the system that was identified and defined by the top leaders.⁴² The root of such practice was TPLF's wartime experiences, in which, due to the risks of infiltration, the democratic procedures of the organisation were clandestinely (ab)used by key personalities of the TPLF during the election of leaders.⁴³ This practice continued even after the TPLF overthrew the government. According to the above informant, leaders' promotion was also mediated by networks that potentially ostracise well-performing members if they were not part of the network. These failures were not restricted to ANDM, they were representative of the EPRDF and its member parties.

The SPDM, likewise, indicated that its leadership committees, *meseretawi dirigit* (basic organisations), and the *Cell* were all afflicted with opportunism, narrow-ism, antidemocracy, radicalism and groupism.⁴⁴ According to another study informant from the SPDM, this practice occurred because those in higher positions recruit to positions of lower leadership individuals

⁴⁰. "አምስቱ ተላላፊ ገዳይ የፖለቲካ በሽታዎች" (Five deadly communicable political diseases).

⁴¹. Interview with the former leader of EPRDF's Youth League, February 2021, Bahir Dar.

⁴². Interview with Getachew Jember, Bahir Dar, April 2021

⁴³. Tsigab, *የኢህአዴግ የቁልቁለት ጉዞ (EPRDF's downward journey)*.

⁴⁴. SPDM, "የድርጅትና የመንግስት ተግባራት አፈጻጸም ሪፖርትና ቀጣይ አቅጣጫዎች፤ ለደሀዴን 9ኛ ጉባኤ የቀረበ" (Implementation report of organisational and governmental activities and future directions: A report submitted to SPDM's council 9th Meeting), (August 2007 EC).

who were easily assailable and receptive to manipulation.⁴⁵ Another study informant, who had been in a high leadership position of the same organisation, argues that the EPRDF failed to recruit quality leaders because the top leaders happened to have different agenda they used to entrap potential leaders.⁴⁶ He added, if you want to engage in corruption then you have to recruit people without capacity who will be easy to control. Thus, though there was room to argue that filtering potential leaders based on their political opinion was necessary to maintain party cohesion, this procedure, in practice, degenerated into the recruitment of pliant members who uncritically followed the higher-level leaders.

In this context, even when an attempt was made to implement some element of the leadership development programme, it was bound to fail. The EPRDF, for instance, provided training for leaders by establishing one federal leadership training centre and a range of other regional management institutes. These bodies, however, were poorly designed and trained party members who were recruited by motives other than realizing development and institutionalizing democracy. An official who was in a position of authority and currently managing the federal leadership institute argues that:

The main reason for the failure of the system was the leadership building programme. Though there was a desire to recruit based on science, evaluate based on performance and design the promotion process accordingly, it was not practised. This was a failure. The institution I am leading trains leaders for 30 to 40 days. But you cannot create a leader based on this type of training that is not tailored for the individual needs and limitations. Many countries such as China first created leaders. The science put that by creating leaders with the necessary capacity, it is possible to herald change. This was not practised in our country. Ours relied more on personal connections and ethnic quota.⁴⁷

In line with the recruitment and promotion of leaders, their placement did not follow the stipulated policy narratives. A second quote from the above study informant once again indicates that the EPRDF had been acting in complete disregard of its leadership placement policies because he argues that:

At times, a leader would suddenly be transferred from Zonal Leadership [which is an administrative hierarchy below the Region] to a ministerial position while others with the capacity would not be promoted to a leadership position. The filtering mechanism was not there as per the aspiration. The main fact about EPRDF was that there was everything as a policy, but you do not see these written principles translated into practice. Sometimes, when a leader failed, he will be sent as Ambassador

⁴⁵. Interview with a former president of the SNNP regional state, April 2021, Awassa

⁴⁶. Interview with a leader of EPRDF's Leadership Institute, April 2021, Addis Ababa.

⁴⁷. Ibid.

and after that without evaluating his performance he/she would come home and take another position. Somebody, who did not do well at the regional level will be assigned to the federal level. To put leaders in a trying position and then filter out bad performers applies to countries like China.⁴⁸

As is the case with the recruitment and placement processes, the leaders ranking process introduced in the last years of EPRDF reign was undermined by operational and political problems. It was undermined by the lack of sufficient information for ranking leaders and the abuse of the system by using criteria that are opposite to those stipulated in the policy document.⁴⁹ Moreover, the higher authorities continued to assign individuals who did not have the requisite training for a leadership position.⁵⁰

In 2016, realizing the failure of its leadership building programme, The EPRDF assigned a number of technocrats who were not members of the EPRDF to leadership positions. Throughout the history of EPRDF, it had been difficult to hold a government position without at least being a Central Committee member of the EPRDF. Progressing along the party ladder, therefore, was necessary for progressing along the government ladder—a practice that increased the competition for party leadership positions.⁵¹ A party member was assumed to be more committed to the implementation of government policies than a mere technocrat.⁵² The side-effects of this approach were recognised only when the EPRDF was forced by the 2014-2018 protests to examine itself. During this introspection, the EPRDF concluded that the relationship between the party and the government promoted opportunism, a fact which necessitated a radical overhaul by introducing a second “deep renewal”.⁵³ However, in 2018, not long before the effect of this second renewal was implemented, the EPRDF launched far-reaching reforms that widened the political space by releasing prisoners, scrapping repressive laws, launching economic reform measures and discarding the ideology of revolutionary democracy. The above account once again demonstrates that not only did the EPRDF fail to implement

⁴⁸. Ibid.

⁴⁹. ANDM, "አምስቱ ተላላፊ ገዳይ የፖለቲካ በሽታዎች" (The five deadly communicable political diseases); SPDM, "የደሀዴን 10ኛ ድርጅታዊ ጉባኤ ሪፖርትና ቀጣይ አቅጣጫ" (Report of the SPDM council's 10th conference, September 2018)..

⁵⁰. Interview with a former leader of EPRDF's Youth League, February 2021, Bahir Dar.

⁵¹. EPRDF, "ከስረመሰረታቸው ይነቀሉ ያልናቸው ጠባብነትና ትምክህተኝነት የተ ደረሱ? (Where do chauvinism and narrow-ism, the issues we declared to be uprooted, get)," *አዲስ ራዥያ*(*New Vision*) 5, no. 7 (2009 EC).

⁵². Tadesse, *የተሰፋው ነጻነት* (*Rays of Hope*).

⁵³. EPRDF, "ከስረመሰረታቸው ይነቀሉ ያልናቸው (The issues we declared to be uprooted)."

its leadership development programme as per its pronouncement, but also failed to guide its leadership recruitment, promotion and placement based upon the principle of democratic developmentalism. Hence, the way the EPRDF organised its leadership affairs did not consider democracy and development as existential concerns of Ethiopia.

7.2.3. Engaging the Societal Movement for Development and Democracy

The implementation problems noted above were also apparent in initiating the societal movement for democracy and development. The EPRDF did not initiate societal movement for democracy and development. In fact, most of the study informants, including senior party officials, were confused when asked to clarify this idea of igniting societal movement for democracy and development. Those who were willing to comment have a contradictory understanding of the issue. One informant argued that there was confusion regarding this issue because, on the one hand the EPRDF wanted associations and movements to be autonomous and, on the other, it wished to control their agendas.⁵⁴ However, another study informant did not experience any problems with this ostensibly contradictory moves of the regime. In theory, he argued that EPRDF members' dominance of other associations and movements would not be a problem since the EPRDF's agenda was focused on promoting democracy and development.⁵⁵ However, as he also agreed, in practice since the EPRDF was not fully committed to democracy and development, its control of associational life outside the state was problematic. This control over associational life had two broad dimensions.

The first entailed creating and controlling the leaders of associations and professional societies. Its youth and women's leagues were one such means of control. In principle, the aims of these leagues were to advance the specific interests of the youth and women but only within the bounds of the EPRDF programme. However, it used them to indirectly control the Youth Federation that brought together all youth-related associations.⁵⁶ The leaders of this federation were controlled by the leaders of the EPRDF youth league and, therefore, the EPRDF indirectly controlled these youth-related associations.⁵⁷

⁵⁴. Interview with a former president of the SNNP regional state, April 2021, Addis Ababa.

⁵⁵. Interview with Getachew Jember, February 2021, Bahir Dar.

⁵⁶. Interview with a former leader of EPRDF's Youth League, February 2021, Bahir Dar.

⁵⁷. Ibid.

Second, when other associations became resistant to the penetration of the EPRDF, the EPRDF's strategy was to divide their leaders and create a splintered association that was pro-EPRDF. After creating a splintered group, the EPRDF would deny legal recognition to those that were not associated with the EPRDF. This process was applied to the Ethiopian Teachers Association. The association was given an indefinite registration since the era of Haile Selassie and was authorized to automatically deduct from the salaries of teachers. When the EPRDF seized power, it realised that it had no strong support amongst teachers. Hence, it sought to overcome this deficiency by initiating the establishment of a new Ethiopian Teachers Associations with leaders who were friendly to its agenda.⁵⁸ Though the original Ethiopian Teacher Association complained about the new association's use of its name, the court ruled in favour of the new association. The court gave access to and control over the bank accounts and offices of the former ETA to the new association. The financial deduction that was automatically taken from teachers' salaries was directly transferred into the new association's bank account. During the ensuing confrontation between the EPRDF and the old association, one of their leaders was killed while another was arrested. When the arrested leader of the old association later sought to continue leading his association, the government denied legal recognition for his association, while legitimising a regime friendly splinter association.⁵⁹ Concerning NGOs, the EPRDF adopted a draconian law discussed in the next chapter.

The EPRDF also vacillated in its understanding of societal movement for democracy and development. A 2007 manual of the EPRDF identified societal movement for democracy and development as any pressure coming from the society. However, another document prepared at the end of 2010, described this concept as organised societal actors through which the EPRDF implements its development and democracy policies.⁶⁰ This approach transformed these movements from pro-democracy and pro-development pressure groups to instruments for implementing EPRDF policy. These stakeholders include the various Development and Government Groups organised and controlled by the EPRDF, excluding voices and actors that did not "buy-into" the EPRDF's ideology. Yet, when the EPRDF faced widespread protests between 2014 and 2018, it made an assessment that implies a return to a widened understanding of societal movement for democracy

⁵⁸. Merera, *የኢትዮጵያ የታሪክ ፈተናዎች* (Challenges on Ethiopia's history).

⁵⁹. Ibid.

⁶⁰. EPRDF, *የህዳሴው መድረክ* (the Renaissance forum).

and development. It maintained that the EPRDF was working to create a demanding society and, therefore, the protests were the manifestations of the success of this policy.⁶¹ Since the protestors' agenda went well beyond what can be entertained through the EPRDF's policy, the EPRDF, thus, must have considered any movement that called for greater democracy and people-centred development as an ally in its cause. However, even then, rather than enticing the most outspoken and organizing members of these protestors into party membership, the EPRDF rather intimidated, imprisoned, tortured and/or killed, them.⁶² An otherwise empowering idea that would legitimise and protect those who challenged the EPRDF was rather ignored in the conduct of the party. In the absence of this tolerance, mobilization of society by setting up extended structures and embedding the front into associational life, as discussed below, would remain machinery of control and exclusion.

7.2.4. Principles and Modes of Popular Mobilization

As per its mobilizational strategy, the EPRDF extended its government and party machinery of mobilization to the lowest level. As indicated previously in this study, immediately after the 2005 election, a massive increase in membership was accompanied with a parallel increase in the number of members of local government councils. The party significantly increased the number of *Woreda/District* and *Kebele* Councils⁶³ and strengthened its *Woreda/District* and *Kebele* level organisations and operational arrangements.⁶⁴ It also established Governmental and Development Groups as well as 1 to 5 structures. A Governmental Group was the sub-*Kebele* level state structure which was justified by the need to be efficient in service delivery.⁶⁵ The *Kebele* constituted 500 to 2000 households, whereas the Governmental Groups were composed of 30 to 40 households.⁶⁶ The Development Group, on the other hand, consisted of 5 to 10 households and was meant to be a local vehicle for development work.⁶⁷ The lowest level of the EPRDF's structure of mobilization was the 1 to 5 organisation in which an individual who was a good performer in a given profession was organised with 4 others who were to benefit from his/her guidance.

⁶¹. EPRDF, "የተሃድሶ መስመራችን" (Our renewal line).

⁶². Fana Television, "የፍትህ ሰቆቃ - በኢትዮጵያ ሲፈጸሙ በነበሩ የሰብዓዊ መብት ጥሰቶች ዙሪያ ተሰራ ዶክመንተሪ" (Thrust for justice: A documentary on human rights violation in Ethiopia), (2018).

⁶³. These are the lowest level of the governments administrative structure.

⁶⁴. Vaughan, "Revolutionary Democratic State-Building."

⁶⁵. Aalen and Tronvoll, "The End of Democracy?"

⁶⁶. Ibid.

⁶⁷. Ibid.

Though critics argue that these measures were devised to entrench the EPRDF's structure of control after the 2005 election,⁶⁸ they also were a continuation of a decision made earlier. In its 2000 party document, the EPRDF already noted that the expansion and strengthening of lower-level structures were to be carried out because of the survival imperative of democracy and development.⁶⁹ Likewise, when the EPRDF expanded the number of *Kebel Council*'s in the immediate aftermath of the 2005 election, it justified such expansion as being necessary to save Ethiopia's rural development strategy from its reliance on a narrow base,⁷⁰ which undermined good governance because lower-level leaders, believing they are irreplaceable, abused their position for personal gains.⁷¹ By recruiting and training a larger pool of local-level leaders, the EPRDF, therefore, sought to reduce this sense of irreplaceability. The voluntary nature of the initial participation in the Government and Development Groups also supports the position that the inspiration for extending these structures might have been a concern for local democracy.⁷²

At any rate, the increase in the number of local councils did not achieve the intended goal of reducing bad governance at the local level. Two transformations contributed to this. First, participation in these groups became compulsory.⁷³ In the immediate aftermath of the 2005 electoral debacle, the EPRDF undertook a series of local community dialogues aimed at listening to the voice of the community. Based on these dialogues a rural good governance package was designed and the implementation process was launched. However, by the time the 2010 election approached the implementation of the package was losing momentum and participation in the various Development and Government Groups was becoming compulsory. Second, the Development and Government Groups were eventually subordinated to the party structure whereby the lower-level party structure of the *Cell* and the *meseretawi dirigit* began to control them.⁷⁴ Through the subordination of the two groups to the party structure and compulsory participation, the EPRDF dashed the idea of democratically engaging with grassroots actors. Bereft of their democratic character, the conflated party and government structures were transformed into instruments of control and compulsory mobilization. These structures were converted from being a vehicle to spearhead political and economic change to

⁶⁸. Ibid.

⁶⁹. EPRDF, *የዲሞክራሲ ስረዓት ግንባታ ጉዳዮች* (*Issues of building democratic system*).

⁷⁰. *ኢህአዴግ ከምስረታ (EPRDF from establishment)*.

⁷¹. Ibid.

⁷². Aalen and Tronvoll, "The End of Democracy?"

⁷³. Lefort, "Free Market ."

⁷⁴. Ibid.

an organisational tool for implementing policies. They were eventually used as instruments to implement the growth and transformation plan of the country through the notion of the “development/transformation troop”.

This development/transformation troop was introduced by the end of 2010 as a principal tool for implementing Ethiopia’s growth and transformation plan (2010-2015). Its starting assumption was that development and democratic policy packages would be implemented by making the people an effective force of implementation through organizing them in different forms and through different structures.⁷⁵ In addition to the people, all levels of the party and the government were also part of the team of implementers. These three forces form a transformational troop when they had the necessary attitudinal orientation, organisational arrangement, operational procedures and skills that make them act in unison.⁷⁶ In terms of attitude, all the members were needed to believe that Ethiopia’s strategic goal was transforming the political economy of rent-seeking into democratic developmentalism. They were also needed to embrace the idea that, in the then strategic field of struggle, there were forces that would benefit from democratic developmentalism, that would lose from democratic developmentalism (the rent-seekers), and vacillating forces.⁷⁷ Building a transformational troop, therefore, entails creating an implementation force that has these attitudes and was ready to implement policies following such orientations. The aim of this strategy was to create a force that was unified both in thought and practice, a goal which would be possible only when members of this force develop similar attitudes on policy issues, have a strong operational procedure and organisational arrangement, and possess similar levels of implementation skills.⁷⁸ The EPRDF further noted that these transformational troops would be formed in a sustained struggle in which the thinking and skills they had while starting the implementation processes, would be further boosted as they struggle to implement policies.⁷⁹

Despite the intentions described above, the mobilization of the people in the course of policy implementation significantly deviated from what was articulated in the EPRDF’s discourse. While the mobilizational arrangements were to democratically mobilize social forces, the operation of the EPRDF was largely top-down and often backed by coercion. The transformational troop discourse, thus, was reduced to the organisational structures noted

⁷⁵. EPRDF, *የህዳሴው መድረክ* (*The renaissance forum*).

⁷⁶. Ibid.

⁷⁷. Ibid.

⁷⁸. Ibid.

⁷⁹. Ibid.

above. Though the key attitudinal criteria comprised a belief in democratic developmentalism and the identification of alignment of forces depending upon their position vis-à-vis this democratic and developmental agenda; in practice, as further explained in the next chapter, anyone who opposed the EPRDF's ideology was castigated as a strategic enemy. The essence of this democratic and developmental goal was not understood by both the people nor by many of the leaders within the development/transformation troop. A document from the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region noted that in some places, party members did not know how they had become a member of the EPRDF, and had no understanding of its mission.⁸⁰ Similar observations were made about members of rural cooperatives. Even worse, these structures became instruments of party control and surveillance, suffocating the emergence of alternative centres of power—issues that are further expounded in the next chapter.

The EPRDF, however, facilitated some measures of developmental achievements in areas that can easily be executed in a top-down manner. A good example in this practice were measures taken as part of the watershed management programme of Ethiopia whereby barren areas of land were re-forested. The compulsory distribution of fertilizer also seemed to have helped improve agricultural production, notwithstanding its occasional failure. Similarly, the health extension system that relied largely on this grassroots structure was successful in improving the health of the rural population.⁸¹

7.2.5. Intra-party Governance Dynamics of Member Parties of the EPRDF

The account proffered so far in this study indicates that the EPRDF did not unflinchingly act according to its principles, value and standards that were aimed at establishing and sustaining its developmental and democratic character. The next section highlights how the failures of the EPRDF to establish and maintain a democratic and developmental policy was also a failure of its member parties. It also highlights the main factors that are responsible for this failure in each member party of the EPRDF.

⁸⁰.SPDM, "የደህሴን 10ኛ ድርጅታዊ ጉባኤ ሪፖርትና ቀጣይ አቅጣጫ (Report of the SPDM council's 10th conference, September 2018)."

⁸¹. Huihui Wang et al., "Ethiopia Health Extension Programme: An Institutionalized Community Approach for Universal Health Coverage," in *World Bank Studies* (Washington, DC2016).

7.2.5.1. A Democratic Developmental TPLF?

Due to the crisis that broke out in the Tigray Region of Ethiopia in November 2020, it was not possible to collect primary data from the TPLF and the Tigray Region. However, Birhane Tsigab's book titled “የኢሃዲግ የቁልቁለት ጉዞ...”[*EPRDF's downward journey: The dialogues of the meetings (2013-2018)*] provides sufficient information on the inner debates of the TPLF for the 2013-2018 period.⁸² This book mainly comprises a summary of “who” said “what” on “which” agenda “when” and “where”. As a member of the executive committee of the TPLF and a member of the EPRDF council, the author had sufficient information on the positions of the various committee members. A few works that were written by external observers, though shallow in depth, largely concur with the ideas of the book.⁸³ Moreover, another leader of the TPLF, Azeb Mesfin (the widow of the late Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi), who read part of Birhane's book confirmed that it reflected what was happening within the TPLF and EPRDF.⁸⁴ The book, therefore, is a more or less accurate narration of what occurred in the party. Hence, this section of this study assesses the dynamics of the intra-party governance of the TPLF by relying on the information extracted from the book.

Birhane Tsigab's narration of the debates of the leaders of the TPLF indicate that the TPLF was afflicted by a range of problems, including factionalism, power struggles, networks and cliques, anti-democracy, opportunism, and rent-seeking. Throughout the five years period narrated by Birhane, leaders of the TPLF continued to identify a range of problems of intra-party governance, including failure to commit equally in the fight against rent-seeking, failure to evaluate the leaders based only on performance, and the increasing trend of opportunism, networking and groupism. Factionalism was so pervasive that there was not even communication between Beyene Mekiru (the Vice President of the Regional State of Tigray) and some members of the TPLF, including the President of the Regional State. Beyene was rumoured to have been aspiring for the Presidency while the then President of the region, Abay

⁸². Tsigab, *የኢሃዲግ የቁልቁለት ጉዞ* (EPRDF's downward journey).

⁸³. Jonathan Fisher and Meressa Tsehaye Gebrewahd, "‘Game Over’? Abiy Ahmed, the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front and Ethiopia's Political Crisis," *African Affairs* 118, no. 470 (2019).; Rene Lefort, "Ethiopia Crisis: Things Fall Apart: Will the Centre Hold?," (2016), <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/ethiopia-s-crisis/>.

⁸⁴. Walta Interview with Azeb Mesfin, "ከፌዴራሉ ፓርላማ እንድወጣ ተጠይቄ ወጥቻለሁ" (I was unexpectedly asked to leave the federal parliament and I left), 6 November 2019), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GDSshq3cUJ4>

Woldu, was thought to be struggling to maintain his position. Both were organizing supporters within the TPLF.⁸⁵

Though these problems were raised frequently during party meetings, no meaningful action was taken. Rather, as the debate within the party continued, differences over the previously agreed agenda of what constituted the main threat to the system began to surface. Some members claimed it was the accumulation of too much wealth by the leaders while others argued that it was the lack of intra-party democracy. Yet others maintained that the main problem was a power struggle between the older and the younger leaders. To the extent that the five years debates were informative, the difference between the younger and older leaders was the main driver of intra-party governance challenges. According to Birhane, most of those who constituted the top leaders of the TPLF were leaders who were involved in the armed struggle. As leaders who had sacrificed a good part of their life during the armed struggle, they were not ready to be replaced by younger members, as per the leadership succession programme. Initially, this lack of readiness was inferred from their actions, though eventually one of these older leaders openly expressed it. When the EPRDF evaluated its performance, they tended to be hypercritical arguing that the situation was worsening; that the younger leaders were becoming satisfied with small changes; that the party was not addressing the problems of antidemocracy, opportunism and networking; and that the evaluation programme had to focus only on weaknesses. The older leaders expressed views that the younger leaders were incompetent, lacking even unity of purpose in running Ethiopia. They also criticized the younger leaders for repressing those who courageously challenged their leadership, for fearing to make decisions, for reporting exaggerated achievements, for undertaking unethical actions, and for considering their positions as a means of livelihood rather than a revolutionary-democratic struggle.

The younger leaders accepted the existence of problems in the aforementioned areas though they also claimed that these problems predated their rise to power. Hence, they ascribed the hypercritical position of the older leaders as being due to dissatisfaction over their removal from power. For instance, in the 2015 meeting, Mr Tewdros, who was the Secretary for Organisational Affairs within the TPLF, argued that after the death of Meles, those members of the party who had been side-lined still wanted to stay in power and, consequently, revealed their displeasure by “painting” the younger leaders’ as incompetent. Thus, though the problem

⁸⁵. Tsigab, *የኢ.ሃ.ዲ.ግ የቁልቁለት ጉዞ (EPRDF's downward journey)*.

of intra-party governance raised by the critics existed, the focus of the leaders was on maintaining or regaining leadership positions. Owing to this situation, the TPLF failed to establish and maintain its democratic and developmental character.

One secretive practice related to the selection of leaders of the TPLF generally reveals the lack of intra-party democracy and the abuse of the evaluation programme. As Birhane noted, in the 2013 council meeting, members of the TPLF's Central Committee were secretly pre-selected by a few high-level leaders. When someone who was not pre-listed was nominated all kinds of weaknesses were identified (pp.21-24). Most members of the Central Committee, the Executive Committee and the TPLF's members of the EPRDF's Executive Committee were thus pre-selected by the most influential secretive group within the TPLF. This was also confirmed by another member of the TPLF who narrated what happened in the selection of the executive committee of the TPLF back in 2013 (p.494). This practice was an extension of the wartime practice of the EPRDF alluded to in the section above. According to Birhane, in the TPLF evaluation session, it was agreed that except the 2001 and 2015 election of Members of the TPLF executive committee, in all other election cycles only pre-selected individuals were elected to the committee (p.508). This practice, therefore, indicates how the TPLF failed to establish and maintain a democratic and developmental orientation.

7.2.5.2. A Democratic and Developmental ANDM?

Similar to the TPLF, ANDM was not able to acquire a democratic and developmental character. The ANDM was in fact dominated by two individuals, Addisu Legese and Bereket Simon.⁸⁶ Addisu Legesse was once Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Amhara Regional State, and Bereket Simon held many of the federal positions, in addition to being part of the leadership team of Tired Corporate, an endowment company of the party. According to study informants from the region, it was extremely difficult to entertain opinions that were against the position of these prominent individuals. Addisu and Bereket were perceived to be excessively accommodative of the TPLF's concerns at the expense of the Amhara cause,⁸⁷ and, as a result, some ANDM leaders later expressed frustration over their organisation's lack of influence within the EPRDF. They felt ANDM was too pliant to the TPLF to have any influence in the

⁸⁶. Interview with Walegn Embibil, February 2021, phone interview; Interview with a former leader of EPRDF's Youth League, February 2021, Bahir Dar.

⁸⁷. A number of informants from the Amhara region agree on this point.

EPRDF.⁸⁸ The late Ambachew, for instance, argued that the position of ANDM both in the region and at the federal level was not sufficiently influential.⁸⁹ He argued that ANDM did very little to increase its influence over other members of the EPRDF, and its representation in federal institutions was nominal.⁹⁰ Ambachew lamented ANDM's inability to stop Tigrayan business peoples' use of Tigrayan military generals to arrest and torture their opponents.⁹¹ He, along with a few others, also criticized the marginalization of the Amhara Region for which they were labelled as being "anti-peace".

Chuchu Alebachew was another member of the central committee of ANDM with a dissenting voice. His expectation of what he would face for his dissenting position generally indicates the lack of democratic and developmental orientation within ANDM. When he, together with Shambel, decided to adopt a critical position against the party, they feared that they could be removed from their position or even arrested and tortured.⁹² As Chuchu noted, anybody who raised an ethno-nationalist agenda would be accused of chauvinism and "anti-people-ness".⁹³ Hence, when individuals with a different opinion from the ruling party felt intimidated, one cannot talk about the existence of meaningful intra-party democracy. Indeed, these dissenters were removed from their position as soon as they expressed their dissent on the following points:⁹⁴

- There was Tigrayan dominance in the security sector;
- There was unfair development within Ethiopia whereby some regions were deliberately privileged;
- TPLF's expansionist and hegemonic ambition was at the source of Ethiopia's problem in general and the Amhara-Tigray regions tension in particular;
- The ANDM made a mistake in allowing the regions of Wolkait and Tegede to be administered by the Tigray region;

⁸⁸. Chuchu Alebachew, *ዳገት ያበረታው የአማራ ጉዞ* (*Hardship tested Amharas' journey*) (Bahir Dar, 2011 EC).

⁸⁹. Alebachew, *ዳገት ያበረታው* (*Hardship tested*).

⁹⁰. Ibid.

⁹¹. Ibid.

⁹². Ibid.

⁹³. Ibid.

⁹⁴. Ibid.

- The Tigray region produced an incorrect map and that was frequently displayed on the Ethiopian Television which includes part of the Amhara Region within the Tigray Regional State.

The above issues were typical of the complaints of Amhara nationalists who accused the TPLF of unfairly incorporating territories, monopolizing development benefits and harbouring expansionist agendas.

Informants concur with the idea expressed by these dissenting members of ANDM. They argue that those who raised issues that were critical to the TPLF and the higher-level leaders of ANDM were not tolerated. A former municipal administrator of Gondar city was reported to have been removed from his position and subjected to hardships just because he accused Bereket of lying.⁹⁵ According to this informant, Bereket was the most feared person within ANDM. Concurring with this accusation, another study informant maintained that raising critical issues against Bereket would at very least result in removal from a position. This, he argued, happened to Chuchu and Shambe as noted earlier in this study while he was exempted with a warning.⁹⁶

These democratic drawbacks were not isolated incidents but rather were elements of the systematic process that rewarded self-serving opportunists as opposed to well-meaning individuals.⁹⁷ The most sympathetic account received regarding ANDM procedural aspects were related to the election of a member of the Central Committee by majority vote and the regular meetings of the council undertaken as per schedule.⁹⁸ However, these procedural elements were overshadowed by other undemocratic practices of forming networks, ridiculing opponents and marginalizing outspoken leaders. Moreover, leaders such as Bereket would almost always make sure that those with a different political opinion would not progress on the leadership ladder, and the evaluation process was abused at all levels by various actors.⁹⁹

Bereket, whom the above study informant blamed for the problems within ANDM, admitted that ANDM had lost its democratic and developmental orientation. However, he did not think that Bereket alone was responsible for this decline and that the democratic deficit has to be

⁹⁵. Interview with an official of Amhara region office of the president, February 2021, Bahir Dar.

⁹⁶. Ibid.

⁹⁷. Interview with an official of Amhara region office of the president, February 2021, Bahir Dar.

⁹⁸. Interview with Getachew Jember, February 2021, Bahir Dar.

⁹⁹. Ibid.

balanced by the economic successes of the regime.¹⁰⁰ Indeed, Bereket had criticized the EPRDF's decadence, though this opinion was expressed mostly when he was about to retire from his high level position as part of the leadership succession programme of the EPRDF.¹⁰¹ Another study informant asked why Bereket had kept silent while in power and suddenly turned into an advocate of democracy when about to retire?¹⁰² Moreover, Bereket was against any grievances of TPLF dominance of the EPRDF which he viewed as an attempt to evade responsibility. He is currently serving in prison charged with mismanaging Tiret, the ANDM's endowment fund. It is obvious, however, from the above accounts from the study informants that the leaders of ANDM were not preoccupied with maintaining the democratic and developmental character of the movement.

7.2.5.3. Democratic and Developmental OPDO?

Faced with a potent ethno-nationalist group that was driven out of the 1990s transition process, the OPDO's prospects for democratic developmentalism was doomed from the outset. Fearful of potential Oromo Liberation Front infiltration, the TPLF did not give the OPDO the space to institutionalize intra-party democracy and develop developmental orientation. The 1997 mass removal of OPDO leaders and members is taken as an early manifestation of TPLF interference in the affairs of the OPDO.¹⁰³ Though these members were removed after evaluation, their rejection was not due to their weaknesses but was decided by the "evaluators" who reportedly set a quota on the number of OPDO members they would remove.¹⁰⁴ According to Abadula, the former President of the region, the action by these "professional evaluators", was part of the desire to see a weak and dependent OPDO.¹⁰⁵ Abadula also noted that a large number of actors used to interfere in the affairs of OPDO, especially in the selection and placement of leaders.¹⁰⁶ This unnecessary interference constituted part of the grievances that pushed a high-level member of the OPDO to ally with the TPLF dissenters when division broke out within the latter in 2001. Aiming to support the dissenters, they declared the withdrawal of the OPDO from the EPRDF.¹⁰⁷ The decision was eventually reversed with the leverage of some pro-Meles group within the OPDO. When the faction that was allied with Meles won the struggle within

¹⁰⁰. Simon, ትንሳኤ ዘ ኢትዮጵያ (*Ethiopian renaissance*).

¹⁰¹. Tsigab, የኢህአዴግ የቁልቁለት ጉዞ (*EPRDF's downward journey*).

¹⁰². Interview with a former leader of EPRDF's Youth League, February 2021, Bahir Dar.

¹⁰³. Abadula Gameda, ስልሳ አመታት (*Sixty years*) (Addis Ababa: Eclipse Printing Press, 2019).

¹⁰⁴. Ibid.

¹⁰⁵. Ibid.

¹⁰⁶. Ibid.

¹⁰⁷. Ibid.

the TPLF, members of the OPDO who sympathised with TPLF dissenters were removed from power or were demoted from their position.

In the aftermath of the renewal, the OPDO elected Abadula, a man of relatively better influence, as their President. However, he was not free from the pressures of the TPLF dominated EPRDF. The TPLF, in particular, viewed Abadula's effort at listening to the people of Oromia and strengthening the OPDO very suspiciously.¹⁰⁸ Accordingly, the TPLF, or individuals from the TPLF, frequently intervened to weaken the OPDO leadership. Abadula argues that since early 2009, the OPDO began to be afflicted with internal turmoil and pressures arising from these external actors that developed a corrupt patron-client relationship with some leaders of the OPDO.¹⁰⁹ Although the regional administration, led by OPDO, initiated an economic revolution of Oromia in 2015, aimed at benefiting the youth, it angered influential individuals outside the region who rejected any projects they did not take part in and, thus, benefitted from.¹¹⁰ They intimidated the business people who were to be involved in the envisioned projects.¹¹¹ In this context of external interference in the affairs of the party, it was not possible to maintain a democratic and developmental OPDO. The above account is based upon an opinion expressed by Abadula after the 2018 reform was launched and, therefore, might have been biased. However, the accounts of other prominent personalities within the OPDO concur with Abadula's view.

According to these individuals, the party was an organisational machinery for the implementation of policies and decisions made by the TPLF dominated Executive Committee of the EPRDF. Leaders who introduced agenda outside those presented by the Executive Committee would be harassed and possibly even arrested. When in 2011, some leaders of the OPDO raised governance issues to the agenda of the OPDO, as narrated by the current Prime Minister, but also complemented by Abadula Gemedo, individuals who raised these issues were accused of working to dismantle the organisation,¹¹² and, thereafter, were put under security surveillance.¹¹³

¹⁰⁸. Ibid.

¹⁰⁹. Ibid.

¹¹⁰. Ibid.

¹¹¹. Ibid.

¹¹². Ahmed, *የመደመር መንገድ (A synergetic journey)*.

¹¹³. Ibid.

Junedin Sado, who held different positions, including the President of the Oromia Regional State, also argues that being an Oromo nationalist would lead one to being accused of OLF membership.¹¹⁴ According to Junedin, there was no way in which somebody became an Oromo nationalist without being labelled OLF. If an OPDO leader or member wanted to support the questions that have broad appeal in the Oromo community, he argued, he/she would be labelled “narrow”. Junedin also argues that speaking about one’s region, raising questions about the Oromo people benefitting from the region’s wealth, standing for the development of the Oromo language, were taken as a manifestation of narrow nationalism.¹¹⁵ Individuals who spoke out against this fact were harassed, intimidated and subjected to inhuman evaluation/criticism.¹¹⁶

Junedin’s ideas as expressed above contain some elements of truth. When a question about making the Oromiffa language, a federal working language, was raised by a certain OPDO member of the EPRDF’s Central Committee, two individuals who were the top members of OPDO countered this argument by stating that this issue would misdirect the EPRDF from its political lines and, therefore, may not benefit even the Oromo people.¹¹⁷ Their quick rebuttal indicates the success of the TPLF in making the top members of the OPDO loyal to its agenda. Other prominent OPDO members and informants also indicated the lack of the principle-based struggle within OPDO that was needed to ensure the democratic and developmental character of the party. This external interference resulted in an organisation that was dominated by mostly self-serving individuals. It harassed members of the Oromo intelligentsia who displayed independent thinking by sympathizing with the OLF.¹¹⁸ Some of its leaders were opportunistic enough to be willing to serve as a client for powerful actors at the federal level (mostly TPLF leaders).

As the Oromo protest gained momentum, the leaders of the OPDO were eventually divided in two. While one group accepted the issues raised by protestors, the other wished to rule the old way. The dissenting members embraced the agenda of the protestors which included the biased nature of the federal system, a skewed division of federal power, problems in the division of revenue, and exploitative land use and land investment in Oromia.¹¹⁹ Eventually, intra-party struggle ceased to be along the line introduced by the EPRDF (rent-seekers vs developmental),

¹¹⁴. Sado, "Junedien Sado Reveal the Seceret of TPLF".

¹¹⁵. Ibid.

¹¹⁶. Ibid.

¹¹⁷. Tsigab, *የኢህአዴግ የቁልቁለት ጉዞ (EPRDF’s downward journey)*.

¹¹⁸. Asaminew, *ከአደገባይ በሻገር (Beyond what is public)*.

¹¹⁹. Interview with an official of the Oromia regional state, March 2021, Addis Ababa.

which rather became between those who bought into the idea of the protestors and those who de-emphasised ethno-nationalism. In 2016, the former group prevailed over the latter, thus controlling the dominant position in the OPDO Central and Executive Committee.¹²⁰

Thus, like all other member parties, the OPDO had not been democratic and developmental. The study informants largely concur with this opinion, while ascribing many of the problems of the party to the domination and interferences of the TPLF and the security apparatus it executed. Hence, a securitised logics of action in which development and democracy were taken to be existential for the EPRDF and Ethiopia had not been the dominant concern of the OPDO.

7.2.5.4. Democratic and Developmental SPDM?

As with the other member parties of the EPRDF, the SPDM was deficient in intra-party democracy, afflicted with opportunism, and run by incompetent leaders and, therefore, was unable to establish and maintain a democratic and developmental movement.¹²¹ According to a study informant who was a member of the SPDM leadership, one aspect of the failure to institute a democratic and developmental SPDM was the application of the principle of democratic centralism in a way that made the higher-level leaders unresponsive to the lower ones.¹²² According to this informant, initially, the SPDM was tightly controlled by Tigrayans who were embedded within the regional administration as an “advisor”. These “advisors” made decisions but the regional leaders took the responsibility for failure. Although their role was gradually reduced and the regional leaders were strengthened, the top leaders of the SPDM remained autocratic. They were not ready to listen to complaints and suggestions coming from the lower-level party structures.¹²³ This study informant also maintains that failing to perform effectively was not as problematic as failing to appear to be performing well.¹²⁴ This situation was invariably against the principles and spirit of the EPRDF’s evaluation programme. The leaders allegedly did not scrutinise false reporting of successes that were more valued than genuine reports of failure.¹²⁵ Moreover, the evaluation, criticism and self-criticism sessions were abused by members organizing themselves into networks to demean whoever is not a

¹²⁰. Ahmed, *የመደመር መንገድ (A synergetic journey)*.

¹²¹. SPDM, "የድርጅትና የመንግስት ተግባራት አፈጻጸም ሪፖርት(Implementation report of organisational and governmental activities)."

¹²². Interview with an official of the SNNP regional state, April 2021, Awassa.

¹²³. Ibid.

¹²⁴. Ibid.

¹²⁵. Interview with an official of the SNNP regional state, April 2021, Awassa.

member of their network.¹²⁶ Those members who struggled to perform effectively based upon EPRDF principles were marginalized. A study informant who was once in the top position of the region noted that he was relieved of his position after he initiated an anti-corruption measure targeting corrupt officials.¹²⁷

Concurring with the view of study informants is also the account of the party which admitted the lack of principle based upon intra-party struggles, especially in the later years of the party's history. According to its 2011 report, the leaders not only amassed urban housing lands in more than one town but also did not consider this action misguided.¹²⁸ Likewise, the 2015 report warned that the leaders of the movement from the top leadership committees to the *meseretawi dirigit* and *Cell* were all afflicted with rent-seeking and its manifestations such as narrow-ism, love of power, radicalism, groupism and gossip.¹²⁹ Their action, therefore, was not guided by the concern to realise development and democracy by forging a democratic and developmental movement. Likewise, the evaluation process was rather an arena in which individuals were criticized and supported based upon criteria that have nothing to do with their performance. Consequently, the movement failed to operationalize a system in which good performers were promoted and weak performers supported as per the EPRDF leadership development programme. The leaders admittedly had difficulty understanding the party's line and acting according to revolutionary democratic precepts.¹³⁰

The 2016 report openly stated the SPDM and other members' lack of revolutionary democratic capacity.¹³¹ Indicative of this deficiency was the lack of attendance at many of the party meetings which no more than half of the members attended.¹³² Even those who attended, it argued, did not take part out of democratic and developmental concern, free of fear and

¹²⁶. Ibid.

¹²⁷. Interview with a former president of the SNNP regional state, April 2021, Addis Ababa.

¹²⁸. SPDM, "የ 2003 ዓም የልማትና መልካም አስተዳደር ስራወች አፈጻጸም፤ ለደህደን ማእከላዊ ኮሚቴ መደበኛ ስብሰባ የቀረበ ነፃሴ 2003" (Development and good governance activities implementation report submitted to SPDM Central Committee regular meeting, August 2011), (August 2003 EC).

¹²⁹. SPDM, "የድርጅትና የመንግስት ተግባራት አፈጻጸም ሪፖርት" (Implementation report of organisational and governmental activities).

¹³⁰. SPDM, "የመንግስትን የድርጅት ተግባራት አፈጻጸም ሪፖርት እና ቀጣይ አቅጣጫዎች፤ ለደህደን 9ኛ ጉባኤ የቀረበ" (Governmental and party activities implementation report and next steps, submitted to SPDM's 9th congress), (2007).

¹³¹. SPDM, "የደቡብ ኢትዮጵያ ህዝቦች ዲሞክራሲያዊ ንቅናቄ ያለፉት ሀያ አምስት አመታት የትግልና የድል እና የመጫወጫ ፍብ ምዕት አመት ስትራቴጂያዊ አቅጣጫ" (Southern Ethiopia Peoples Movement's 25 Years of struggle and successes, and the next quarters' strategic direction], (2008 EC).

¹³². Ibid.

intimidation.¹³³The lack of intra-party democracy was so deep that, a report noted, a party member, who during his attendance of a leadership training programme, criticized his organisation, was fired from his job.¹³⁴The cumulative result of all these problems, as the movement's 2019 council admitted, was an outbreak of a security crisis leading to the 2018 reform process. In common with the other member organisations of the EPRDF, the SPDM, therefore, failed to ensure that the movement remained democratic and developmental.

7.2.6. Summary

Generally, maintaining the developmental and democratic character of the EPRDF was not in practice pursued in governing the party and mobilizing the people. The intra-party struggle was abused, an effort to tolerate let alone initiate societal pressure for democracy and development was side-tracked, the rigorous leadership development programme was not implemented and the structures of popular mobilization were retooled for authoritarian control. Although the EPRDF registered robust growth, this cannot be seen as evidence of its developmental character because it continued to be immersed in pervasive rent-seeking. Hence, the securitisation logic which necessitated a developmental and democratic EPRDF was subordinated to other logics ranging from ethnic domination, personal enrichment, provincial and other clientelist connections. These practices constituted a gap between what was articulated in the issue frame in chapter six of this study and what was carried out in practice as recorded in this chapter.

According to the framework developed in chapter two (section 2.3.2.2.4. above), whenever there is a disjuncture between issue frame/policy and practice, further analysis has to be undertaken. This practice is to ensure that this disjuncture was due to the lesser attention given to democracy and development rather than driven by other expediencies that necessitate compromising the EPRDF's democratic and developmental commitment. The factors that might necessitate this procedure could be the outbreak of violence/war with the potential to dismantle the system, and cause conflict between democratic and developmental goals. Hence, the sources of this deviation have to be explained and the EPRDF's prospect of acting otherwise scrutinised. The asking of a range of sanitizing questions was suggested to answer such questions. This interrogation includes the acceptability of the issue-definition that was prioritised, the defensibility of the values underpinning the issue definition, the sufficiency and

¹³³. Ibid.

¹³⁴. Ibid.

side-effects of the action undertaken to realise a goal, the existence of alternative courses of action to reach a goal, the possibility of executing the action. Since the EPRDF, as discussed above, was driven by other concerns than democratic developmentalism, it is necessary to analyse whether these concerns should have been prioritised by asking some of these sensitizing questions. The next section turns to this issue.

7.3. Explaining and Justifying the Policy-Practice Disjuncture: Implications for the Securitisation Perspective

The primary reason for the policy-practice disjuncture was the subversion of the “rules of the game” in and outside the party by key leaders of the TPLF and their affiliates to amass wealth and power.¹³⁵ When necessary, these TPLF leaders and their affiliates meddled in the affairs of other member parties by abusing the principle of democratic centralism but also through utilizing clientelistic connections. While they directly interfere in some parties, in others, such as the ANDM, their affiliates were well-positioned to prevent any decisions that may undermine the TPLF’s interest. To sustain their political dominance and economic privilege these TPLF leaders and their affiliates also capitalized on the division between the Amhara and Oromo wing of the EPRDF, parties that represent the two major ethnic groups of Ethiopia. They used the opposing narratives of the constituencies of these two parties to limit the possibility of cooperation between them to ensure the democratic and developmental character of the EPRDF. When the OPDO and ANDM began to coordinate their pressure against the TPLF amidst of the 2014-2018 popular protests, one of the leaders of the TPLF criticized what he called unprincipled relations metaphorically equating their cooperation with the coexistence of a fire and a straw. This comment, together with other scholarly accounts, indicate the divisive strategy used by the TPLF leaders and their affiliates to sustain their political dominance and economic predation.¹³⁶

The above recorded actions have been a key hindrance against democratic intra-party governance. As a result of this interference and manipulation, raising issues that challenge the power of the TPLF, both in the party and the TPLF dominated government were not possible. When someone dared to speak against this group or supported the grievances of their constituency, they were forced to make sacrifices for speaking up. The security apparatus,

¹³⁵. Hassan, "Corruption, State Capture."

¹³⁶. Merera Gudina, "Elections and Democratization in Ethiopia, 1991–2010," *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 5, no. 4 (2011).

which was the key instrument of intimidating and harassing dissenters, was dominated by members of the TPLF. The institution conflated the threat to the dominance of the key leaders of the TPLF and their affiliates as being a threat to Ethiopia (see section 8.4.1. below).¹³⁷ Hence, though the EPRDF, in principle, emphasised the democratic and developmental character of the EPRDF, in practice, democratic and developmental measures were tolerated only when they did not undermine the political dominance and economic predation of the TPLF leaders and their affiliate. This position was reflected even in the division within the TPLF itself between the older leaders and the younger ones whereby the former undermined the democratic governance of the party aggrieved by their loss of leadership position, following the succession programme. Hence, the subordination of the democratic and developmental agenda to the goals of political dominance and economic predation of these TPLF leaders and their affiliate were the main factor of policy-practice disjuncture.

The possible reason why these TPLF leaders and their affiliates privileged political dominance and economic predation, while at the same time believing in the existential necessity of democracy and development, has to do with their ideology. They thought that any other way outside revolutionary-democratic/democratic developmental ideology was a way of destruction. In essence, the revolutionary democratic ideology entailed acceptance of democratic centralism and the vanguard role of the EPRDF, which they thought represented the progressive force of Ethiopian society. Hence, these leaders seemed to reason that since Ethiopia would descend into crisis without revolutionary democracy, they were justified to violate even democratic and developmental principles of the party to prevent the rise of other forces. To challenge their dominance by raising agenda outside what they considered legitimate was considered as opening the gate for disintegration. Granting greater autonomy to the member parties of EPRDF, they feared, would allow these parties to introduce the agendas of the opposition that were antithetical to their dominance and revolutionary democracy. Hence, the ideology offered them a self-serving justification for their political dominance and economic predation.

The prioritization of their material and livelihood concerns by the lower-level EPRDF leaders and party members constitute a secondary explanation for the disjuncture. Driven by these two concerns, these party leaders and members prioritised their interests over those of both the EPRDF and Ethiopia. They recruited new members *en masse* even when they knew that the

¹³⁷. Ahmed, የመደመር መንገድ (A synergetic journey).

quality of these recruits was very low and such a procedure was against the regulations of their party. Moreover, as mentioned earlier, the regional leaders tolerated false reporting, corruption and other misdeeds of the lower-level party agents while focusing the premium on political loyalty. Since the party became a means of livelihood and job security, these lower-level leaders and their affiliates prioritised the political survival of the EPRDF above ensuring its democratic and developmental character. Their cost and benefit calculation changed only when their personal survival was threatened by the mass protests, thus, forcing them to align their agenda with the grievances of the protestors.

These key leaders of the TPLF and their affiliates' subordination of democratic developmentalism for political dominance and economic predation was not a justified move. By espousing their commitment to the existential quest of democracy and development, while taking measures that undermined both democracy and development, what they actually sought to realise was self-contradictory. As stated previously in the framework of this thesis, such deviation would only be justifiable when it is implemented to avoid greater harm (and usually for short-term ends) until the EPRDF reverts to its democratic and developmental journey. Likewise, the prioritization of political survival and livelihood concerns over the democratic and developmental quest of Ethiopia by regional and other lower-level leaders of the EPRDF was unjustifiable. There was no greater harm averted by their choice of political survival. If the EPRDF acted in a way that disregards the need to establish and maintain its democratic and developmental character, it, therefore, was because the aforementioned leaders gave the issue secondary consideration. Aspirations notwithstanding, the EPRDF failed to act in a way its securitising discourse would have required it to act. Its logics of action as applied to the arena of intra-party governance and mobilization was rather bifurcated. The issue definition of intra-party governance and mobilization was geared at ensuring the democratic and developmental character of the EPRDF according to the securitisation logic. However, the implementation of policies and measures related to intra-party governance and mobilization had little to do with the logics of securitisation of democracy and development.

The above findings have a number of implications for the securitisation perspective and the revision to it suggested in the introduction to this chapter. First, it underscores that speech acts are not sufficient to manage an issue through security lenses. Speech acts are not self-referential, meaning that they do not bring-about the issue they represent through language. As the previous chapter indicates, the main logic that had informed the intra-party governance and

mobilizational principles of the EPRDF was making sure that the party/government was an agent of democracy and development. This concern was implied in the kind of actions justified and the measures suggested to herald the EPRDF's democratic and developmental agenda. However, this chapter indicates that these democratic and developmental measures were not implemented as per the declarations and promises of the EPRDF. The issues that dominantly informed the conduct of the EPRDF were the political dominance and economic predation of key leaders within the TPLF and their affiliates, and the logic of political survival of regional-level party leaders and their affiliates. Hence, if a successful performance of a speech act of security was all that is needed to obtain democracy and development, the logic of the practice of intra-party governance and mobilization would have been democratic developmentalism.

Since the EPRDF accepted the securitisation of democracy and development, audience acceptance also does not have a strong explanatory power in mediating whether and how security speech acts would be transformed into practice. These leaders of the TPLF and their affiliates thought that democracy and development were existential for Ethiopia. However, they did not want this democratic developmentalism to be realised at their expense. Hence, a key factor on how securitising moves have a real-world political effect is the concerns of the various actors involved in the intra-party governance and mobilization processes. In its issue definition, the EPRDF envisioned it could secure its political survival by ensuring the democratic and developmental character of the EPRDF. Hence, at least tacitly, it accepted the complementarity of the different concerns. However, in the implementation process, the EPRDF found it difficult to reconcile its democratic and developmental agenda and the desire for political survival and its associated privileges. This practice became even more challenging after the death of Meles who was the ideologue of the EPRDF and had the capacity to constrain the conduct of other powerful actors. Succeeding leaders largely privileged their political dominance and economic licence by neglecting the democratic and developmental character of the EPRDF. Put more concisely, this practice was not about accepting whether democracy and development were existential, it was about which concern to prioritise. By shifting the analytical gaze to the securitising actors and their concerns, this study provides insights regarding the securitisation perspective that would not have been possible with an approach that emphasises the speech acts and the audience. Hence, the need to shift the centre of gravity of the concept of securitisation towards the securitising actors and their concerns, because such an approach better explains why some issues are pursued more urgently than others.

Second, the study results points to the need to nuance the relation between why an issue is securitised and what securitisation of an issue would achieve. The reason why intra-party governance and mobilization were defined in a specific way by the EPRDF was to realise democratic developmentalism and, thereby, ensure the political survival of the EPRDF. Hence, political survival was to become the result of the democratic developmental measures of the EPRDF. In practice, however, the latter agenda was ignored because it did not help the leaders of the TPLF and their affiliates to retain their power within the EPRDF. This situation was reflected when repressive measures increased after the 2005 election during which the EPRDF was severely challenged. At one level, why an issue was securitised was not sufficient to gauge what would happen after its securitisation because the envisioned logic in which securitisation achieves its end goal may not be working. Hence, there are contingencies or potential intervening variables to consider in scrutinizing the linkage between why an issue is securitised and what follows from such action. In the situation being studied, such variables are the other competing concerns of the EPRDF and the possibilities of their reconciliation. Hence, the securitisation literature is not entirely at fault when it brought to the fore discursive and extra-discursive contextual factors in the study of securitisation although such factors do not seem to be the dominant ones to be considered.

Third, the idea that the normative utility of securitisation is mediated by the concern of the securitising actor/ruling coalition became more obvious in this chapter. Securitisation of democracy and development was not pursued in the areas of intra-party governance and mobilization (which, if pursued, would have had positive outcomes for society) because it contradicted the concerns of the powerful members of the ruling coalition (TPLF). Hence, whether securitisation would have a desirable outcome depends not only upon what was defined as a threat but also upon what other concerns the securitising actor might have. This fact points to the need to situate the securitising actor within its context without which its concerns might not be easily discernible. Even when the issue securitised gives voice to the voiceless and ensured the security of the most vulnerable, it would not still be possible to argue that securitisation is normatively desirable, because, at the very least, securitisation may not be implemented.

Finally, the translation of threat articulation into practice was to a large extent influenced by key personalities within the TPLF and their affiliates. Until the death of Meles Zenawi, the EPRDF was managed in a way that somehow managed the pervasive corruption and its

consequent abuse of power. However, after Meles's death, intra-party governance and mobilization was pursued in a way that undermined the quest for a democratic and developmental EPRDF. The reason for this outcome, as noted above, was due to the subordination of this democratic and developmental goal to the political domination and economic predation of key leaders of the TPLF and their affiliates.

7.4. Conclusions

This chapter has analysed the extent to which the intra-party governance and mobilizational schemes of the EPRDF were informed by the logics of securitisation of development and democracy, a logic that pursues democracy and development as existential goals. It argues that the practice of intra-party governance and mobilization was far removed from the existential concern of ensuring democracy and realizing development. The principle of intra-party struggle, party leadership development or the mobilization of, and relation with, social forces were all implemented in a way that deviates from the EPRDF's democracy and development policy's articulation. Since the concern of the issue definition discussed in chapter six of this study was informed by democratic and developmental concerns, this situation raises the question of whether a bifurcated logic had informed the conduct of the EPRDF.

Indeed, a reasonable explanation of the policy-practice disjuncture indicates such a bifurcated logic. The issue definition was an effort to chart a pathway in which the pursuit of democratic and developmental goals was to be reconciled with the political survival of the EPRDF. The logics of this pathway render political survival dependent upon the establishment of a democratic and developmental EPRDF agenda. However, in practice, this linkage was challenged, forcing the leaders of the TPLF/EPRDF to prioritise political domination and economic predation over democratic and developmental courses. Hence, the disjuncture was a conflict of logics due to the difficulty of pursuing democratic and developmental goals, while ensuring political survival and economic benefits for the ruling coalition. The ramification of this behaviour, as discussed in both chapter four above and this chapter, has been an increase in unbridled rent-seeking, opportunism, antidemocracy, networking, and other undemocratic and un-developmental practices.

This chapter, along with the previous one, in general, indicates that the speech act and audience acceptance theories have limitations in explaining which issue would be pursued in an extraordinary way and which would not. Issues and agenda that were not imbued with security

speech acts were pursued as a matter of greater urgency than issues that were not only imbued with security speech acts but also were accepted by the audience. Hence, the test of the securitisation of an issue needs to go well beyond that of speech acts and audience acceptance.

Chapter Eight

EPRDF and Its Logics of Threat Definition and Enemy Identification

8.1. Introduction

This chapter completes the analysis of outcomes of securitisation of development and democracy by examining the EPRDF's logics of threat definition and enemy identification. Concern for democracy and development would be reflected when the threat definition and enemy identification of the EPRDF was driven by the danger the "would be threats" posed to democracy and development. Since the threat posed by rent-seeking was analysed in chapters four and five above, this chapter completes the discussion of threat/enemy definition and identification by expounding on three other threats identified by the EPRDF. These are chauvinism/narrow-ism, religious radicalism and neoliberalism. This chapter analyses how the EPRDF defined these "threats/enemies" and the logics that underpinned their definition, and the implementation of measures needed to overcome them. Based upon these delineations, this chapter analyses the extent to which concern for democracy and development was a determining factor in defining threats, identifying enemies, and the measures taken to manage such "threats" and "enemies". The chapter, further, argues that the dominant logic informing threat definition and enemy identification was the short-term political survival of a party/government dominated by the TPLF.

This chapter substantiates this argument with four subsidiary arguments. First, the use of the label chauvinism/narrow-ism and religious radicalism predates the introduction of the securitisation discourse. Hence, these labels were introduced for reasons that had little to do with fast-pacing the democratization and development of Ethiopia. Second, the EPRDF's definition of chauvinists/narrow nationalist and religious radical forces was so broad that it precluded the possibility of raising legitimate grievances that should have been addressed to consolidate the democratization process and sustain the developmental gains that had been achieved in Ethiopia. Third, issue definitions that weakened the opposition parties and their sympathizers were aggressively implemented, whereas policy suggestions that require the EPRDF to democratically manage these threats were ignored. Finally, the EPRDF's threat definition was based on the faulty presumption that other forces outside the EPRDF were destructive forces. Drawing upon these arguments, this chapter indicates that an issue (political

survival) that was not imbued with a discourse of security was pursued as a matter of greater urgency than democracy and development, which were defined as existential issues. Hence, the belief that speech acts and audience acceptance cannot discriminate between issues that would be practically pursued in an extraordinary way, over those that were not pursued as such, is a process which necessitates the identification and consideration of other criteria of securitisation that go beyond the speech act and audience acceptance.

The chapter is organised into eight sections, including this introduction. The next three consecutive sections examine how chauvinism/narrow-ism, religious radicalism and neoliberalism respectively, were approached by the EPRDF as threats to democracy and development. The fifth section examines the logics informing EPRDF's threat definitions and enemy identifications, paving the way for analysis of the logics of policy implementation. The penultimate section examines the discrepancy between policy position on the handling of threats and the actual practice. The final section presents some concluding observations.

8.2. Definition of Threats and Identification of Enemies

This section expounds on the three threats commonly identified by the EPRDF as manifested in its discourse, namely chauvinism and narrow-ism, religious radicalism, and neoliberalism.

8.2.1. National Chauvinists and Narrow Nationalism

The EPRDF's consideration of chauvinism and narrow-ism as threats to its system predates the introduction of the securitisation discourse. According to this study informant, the sources of narrow-ism and chauvinism are grounded in the 1960s Ethiopian Students Movement's ideas of an oppressor nation and oppressed nations.¹ The 1960s Students Movement argued that Ethiopia was a "prison house of nations and nationalities" whereby the Amhara ruling class oppressed other nations and nationalities imposing its identity as the Ethiopian identity.² Although almost all members of this movement accepted this fact, some emphasised class contradiction over ethnic ones and, therefore, advocated the formation of a multinational Marxist organisation. By the time the imperial system was overthrown in 1974, two multinational parties had been formed: the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP) and the All-Ethiopian Socialist Movement (Meison). However, these political groupings were

¹. Interview with an official of the Amhara regional state office of the president, February 2021, Bahir Dar.

². Gebru Tareke, *The Ethiopian Revolution : War in the Horn of Africa*, Yale Library of Military History (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

largely defeated by the military regime at the centre and by ethnonationalists on the periphery, leading to the lasting dominance of ethnonationalist forces.³

Ethnonationalist groups viewed the national/ethnic contradiction of the period as being the main problem facing Ethiopia and advocated ethnic-based mobilization before cross-ethnic/national alliances were established. Hence, they preferred to mobilize along ethnic lines, demanding multinational groupings of the period to desist from operating in what they considered their “ethnic homeland”. Some within this group viewed imperial Ethiopia as no less than a colonial power that forcefully incorporated nationalities outside its historic control.⁴ These ethnonationalist groups accused the pan-ethnic groups of chauvinism while the latter accused the former of narrow nationalism. This controversy was the birth of the idea of chauvinism and narrow-ism in the political milieu of Ethiopia, which continued thereafter. The TPLF, the main force in the EPRDF, continued to use these labels for political forces that challenged it in the post-1991 period.

In the post-1991 period, the EPRDF faced two categories of political forces that traced their origin to the 1960s Ethiopian Students Movement. The first included political forces that de-emphasise ethnicity while advocating a pan-ethnic political system. This group stressed the integrative and assimilationist elements of Ethiopian history whereby significant overlapping identities were developed in the long *durée* of the country’s history. They sought to use these social forces to envision an Ethiopia as a fully forged nation-state. This group has a sizable constituency in urban areas and across other communities that mostly prioritise their Ethiopian identity over their ethnicity. The second category constituted a range of ethnonationalist political forces calling for greater ethnic autonomy and self-determination, including secession. The most extremist of these forces regard the historical Ethiopian state a colonial state that forcefully incorporated and humiliated other groups—a position that magnifies and capitalizes on the disintegrative and oppressive elements of Ethiopian history.⁵ Accordingly, this group sought to reverse the outcomes of the process of assimilation by deconstructing the Ethiopian state into its ethnic components. In the post-1995 era, this group called for the unfailing implementation of the constitution, alleging that the EPRDF was using this charter to entrench

³. Medhane Tadesse, Alagaw Ababu Kifle, and Dade Desta, "Evolving State Building Conversations and Political Settlement in Ethiopia," *Conflict, Security & Development* (2021).

⁴. Asafa Jalata, "Struggling for Social Justice in the Capitalist World System: The Cases of African Americans, Oromos, and Southern and Western Sudanese," *Social Identities* 14, no. 3 (2008).

⁵. *Ibid.*

Tigrayan hegemony.⁶ Throughout its history, Ethiopia has been neither a fully-formed nation-state nor a simple conglomerate of different ethnic groups,⁷ thus, both political orientations were essentially partial and selective in their historical readings.

The EPRDF claimed to position itself in the middle of this political spectrum, stating that it effectively reconciled unity with diversity by incorporating some arguments from both camps.⁸ Along with the ethnonationalists, it stood for what it called “multinational federalism”, in which each nation and nationality was to administer itself and having the unconditional right to secede from the federation. On the other hand, it also claimed that it was committed to the formation of a single political and economic community. It is hard to see how ethnic groups that are granted the unconditional right for self-determination, including secession, could constitute a single political and economic community without compromising this latter right. Ethnic self-determination rights mean that different regions can pursue different policies whereas commitment to a single political and economic community requires unified policies and standards. Thus, notwithstanding its claiming to represent a middle way, the EPRDF castigated the pan-Ethiopian groups for chauvinism, while accusing ethnonationalists of narrow-ism.⁹

With the introduction of the securitisation discourse, additional rationales as to why chauvinism and narrow-ism were serious threats to the proposed political system were introduced. Henceforth, the EPRDF claimed, the definition of threats, including chauvinism and narrow-ism, was grounded in the ideology of revolutionary democracy/democratic developmentalism that juxtaposed “revolutionary democratic forces” against “dependents/rent-seekers”.¹⁰ The revolutionary democrats, it claimed, would identify their friends and enemies based upon the class position of a person and the political attitudes of and actions undertaken by an agent.¹¹ Accordingly, peasants, poor urban dwellers, workers and petty traders were friends of revolutionary democracy whereas dependents/rent-seekers were its enemies.¹² Moreover, anybody who was committed to democracy and stood up against corruption was a friend,

⁶. Gudina Merera, "The Elite and the Quest for Peace, Democracy, and Development in Ethiopia: Lessons to Be Learnt," *Northeast African Studies* 10, no. 2 (2008).

⁷. Maimire Mennasemay, "Ethiopian Political Theory, Democracy, and Surplus History," *International Journal of Ethiopian Studies* 2, no. 1/2 (2005).

⁸. EPRDF, *ዲሞክራሲ እና ዲሞክራሲያዊ አንድነት* (Democracy and democratic unity).

⁹. Ibid.

¹⁰. Simon, *የሁለት ምርጫዎች ወግ* (a Conversation between two elections)

¹¹. EPRDF, "ከስረመሰረታቸው ይነቀሉ ያልናቸው" (The issues we declared to be uprooted)."

¹². Ibid.

whereas those people who had vested interest in antidemocracy and oppression were enemies.¹³ The EPRDF claimed that, contrary to revolutionary democracy, chauvinists and narrow nationalists identify friends and enemies based upon the ethnicity of the person and not his/her class position or political opinion and actions.¹⁴ These groups, it claimed, reject democratic unity and the “new Ethiopia” envisioned by the EPRDF, which, it believed, was the only way to spearhead a peaceful, democratic and developmental Ethiopia.¹⁵

Chauvinists and narrow nationalists, the EPRDF claimed, likewise rejected the “new Ethiopia” envisioned by the EPRDF but for opposite reasons. The “chauvinists”, which it claimed includes Amhara dependent businesses, intellectuals and remnants of the previous government, failed to acknowledge the oppressive nature of the country’s imperial past, while criticizing the current system as a divisive one that stands against Ethiopian unity.¹⁶ These groups, the EPRDF alleged, wished to reinstate a centralized system with all its oppressive elements. The “chauvinists”, it also bitterly complained, unjustly claimed that there was Tigrayan dominance in the government just because, for unavoidable reasons, there were a number of Tigrayan officials in the top government.¹⁷ The “narrow nationalists”, on the other hand, the EPRDF alleged, wanted a separate ethnic enclave disconnected from the larger goal of building a single political and economic community.¹⁸ This group, the EPRDF further argued, wanted the present generation “to settle” for past repression and exploitation, and equating the Amhara ruling class of the past with the present Amhara people.¹⁹ This group aimed to create distrust and conflict between communities, break the social fabrics that hold Ethiopians together, and sustain the perception that the oppression of the past is still prevalent.²⁰ In common with chauvinists, the EPRDF claimed that the narrow nationalists complained of Tigrayan dominance. Hence, though for opposite reasons, the EPRDF argued that chauvinists and narrow nationalists posed a threat to their democratic and developmental quest for Ethiopia.

¹³. Ibid.

¹⁴. Ibid.

¹⁵. EPRDF, *ዲሞክራሲ እና ዲሞክራሲያዊ አንድነት* (Democracy and democratic unity).

¹⁶. Federal Government Communication Affairs Bureau, "ሀያ ሰባተኛውን የግንቦት ሃያ በዓል ምክናያት በማድረግ የተዘጋጀ ሰነድ" (A document prepared in lieu of the 27th anniversary of the fall of the Derg), (2010 EC).

¹⁷. EPRDF, *ዲሞክራሲ እና ዲሞክራሲያዊ አንድነት* (Democracy and democratic unity).

¹⁸. Federal Government Communication Affairs Bureau, "ሀያ ሰባተኛውን የግንቦት ሃያ በዓል" (In lieu of the 27th Anniversary).

¹⁹. Ibid.

²⁰. Ibid.

The EPRDF also claimed that should narrow-ism and chauvinism become dominant, society would descend into civil war and disintegration.²¹ When these two ideologies are dominant, it would not even be possible to peacefully dissolve the Ethiopian state, let alone develop it. Chauvinists and narrow nationalists allegedly entertain such anti-democratic ideas, not because they have a vision for Ethiopia or their ethnic group, but because they want to use chauvinism and narrow-ism as a cover for their rent-seeking goals.²² As manifestations of rent-seeking, both narrow-ism and chauvinism, therefore, were threats to democracy and development. It, thus, did not matter whether one was castigated as practising either narrow-ism or chauvinism since both were considered a cover for rent-seeking.

Almost all the questions and critical issues raised by the Amhara or other pan-Ethiopians, legitimate or otherwise, were considered manifestations of chauvinism. Those raised by Oromo opposition political forces, on the other hand, were considered a manifestation of narrow-ism. Such criticisms included the lack of ethnic proportion in the federal cabinet, the Tigrayan dominance of the intelligence and security apparatus, the lack of fair distribution of infrastructural investment, complaints over aspects of the budget support system, problematic inter-regional border demarcation, and the economic role of TPLF's endowments.²³ While the higher-level leaders of the EPRDF challenged the factual accuracy of some of these accusations, they sought to justify others. The lower-level officials, however, simply applied the label of chauvinism and narrow-ism to their opponents when they found it difficult to defend their position against criticisms from these groups.

The EPRDF sought to defend grievances of inequality in infrastructure investment by justifying it in terms of economic viability.²⁴ It declared Tigrayan dominance of the security and intelligence sector was unavoidable in the face of their pre-eminent role in overthrowing the previous regime.²⁵ The fact that three decades were sufficient time to establish the desired ethnic balance was rather muted. Likewise, the EPRDF defended the dominant roles of the endowments of the TPLF by the necessity of creating them to manage the wealth it accumulated as an insurgent. Their subsequent privileged access to credit, leases, contracts, and foreign exchanges was left undefended. Anybody, within or outside the EPRDF who raised these issues was accused of either chauvinism or narrow-ism. When a certain Dr. Sintayehu, who was a

²¹. EPRDF, "ከስረጦሰረታቸው ይነቀሉ ያልናቸው (the Issues we declared to be uprooted)."

²². Ibid.

²³. Ibid.

²⁴. Ibid.

²⁵. Ibid.

member of the EPRDF Council, raised the issue of the Tigrayan dominance of the security apparatus, some members lambasted at him for raising the agenda of “the enemies”.²⁶

The EPRDF was logical in questioning how the pan-Ethiopianists would achieve their goal of removing the ethnic federal system without the use of force against the defenders of the system. It was also reasonable when the EPRDF criticized what it called “narrow nationalists” for their pursuit of an exclusionary agenda that “tears apart the social fabric”. However, its model was also as flawed as was its opponents. First, it ignored the overlapping identities of the country that emerged from its long history, violent or otherwise. To reduce Ethiopia to a conglomerate of ethnic groups that had never had a history of integration was grossly problematic. Second, it failed to envision (or wilfully declined to do so) that an approach that side-lined both the pan-ethnic and ethnonationalist narratives by a government dominated by Tigrayans was another ethnocratic project. When, as discussed above, even the legitimate questions of the two groups were repressed, the deployment of the discourse of chauvinism and narrow-ism would simply be an instrument for advancing the interests of the TPLF/EPRDF. Thus, many informants were right in viewing chauvinism and narrow-ism as an instrument to instil fear with the Amhara and the Oromos communities.

This claim is further substantiated when one observes that the actors identified as “chauvinist” or “narrow” included all those people who embraced the narratives of the two categories of political forces discussed above. Almost all forces that think outside EPRDF’s notion of revolutionary democracy were castigated to either of these two camps. These oppositions were alleged to have been masquerading their rent-seeking agenda in the form of chauvinism and narrow-ism.²⁷ Driven by these chauvinistic and narrow concerns, they were argued to be “out there” to disrupt the peaceful and democratic elections undertaken by the EPRDF by calling for various forms of colour revolution.²⁸ With regard to the 2005 election, for instance, the EPRDF argued that two major forces were facing each other: a democratic and developmental one led by the EPRDF; and a force of destruction that wished to seize power in an undemocratic way by inciting electoral violence, on the other.²⁹ The latter force, the EPRDF claimed, supported the political economy of rent-seeking and, therefore, favoured zero-sum politics. Since their end goal was undemocratic, the EPRDF claimed that they wished to advance this

²⁶. Tsigab, *የኢህአዴግ የቁልፍለት ጉዞ (EPRDF’s downward journey)*.

²⁷. EPRDF, *ዲሞክራሲ እና ዲሞክራሲያዊ አንድነት (Democracy and democratic unity)*.

²⁸. EPRDF, *ልማት ዲሞክራሲ እና አብዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ (Development, democracy and revolutionary democracy)*.

²⁹. EPRDF, “የቀለም አብዮት (Colour Revolution).”

goal through violent and rebellious ways.³⁰ Even when this force followed a democratic course of action, the EPRDF suspected that they aimed to use such a practice for undemocratic ends.³¹ According to EPRDF, the main goal of the opposition parties was seizing state power and using that power for rent-seeking purposes via their main strategy of confusing the people through their implementation of chauvinism and narrow nationalism. Because of this belief, the EPRDF claimed that forces that benefit from revolutionary democracy could not solve their difference through political parties.³²

These above criticisms notwithstanding, the EPRDF also cautioned the populace that chauvinism and narrow-ism had to be fought democratically. Since chauvinism and narrow-ism were primarily attitudinal issues, the EPRDF argued that they could only be fought by replacing them with a revolutionary-democratic orientation.³³ These practices could be eliminated only through a sustained struggle in which an chauvinism/narrow-ism inspired analyses are constantly interrogated and their motives explained to the people.³⁴ According to the EPRDF, the fight against chauvinism and narrow-ism needed to be waged, together with a fight against dependents/rent-seeking forces, antidemocracy and corruption because the latter measures are necessary for the successes of the former.³⁵ It followed from this strategy that the opposition, whether of the narrow or the chauvinist variant, had to be fought legally respecting their democratic rights.³⁶ The best means of fighting rent-seekers the EPRDF proclaimed was to democratically expose their lies and false ideas.³⁷ Fighting these rent-seeking forces in undemocratic ways would only facilitate the degeneration of the EPRDF.³⁸

Three central issues emerge from the discussion presented in the above section. First, by relying upon broad definitions of chauvinism and narrow-ism, the EPRDF considered dissent as a threat to democracy and development. Second, though the existential consideration of democracy and development would have led to the repression of dissent, the EPRDF also underscored the need to manage the two factions democratically. Third, although the EPRDF had been using the two labels before the securitisation discourse was introduced, the rationale

³⁰. Ibid.

³¹. EPRDF, *ፈጣን ዲሞክራሲ እና አቢዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ (Development, democracy and revolutionary democracy)*

³². Ibid.

³³. EPRDF, "ከስረመሰረታቸው ይነቀሉ ያልናቸው" (The Issues we declared to be uprooted)."

³⁴. Ibid.

³⁵. Ibid.

³⁶. EPRDF, *የዲሞክራሲ ስርዓት ግንባታ ትግል (The struggle to build a democratic system)*

³⁷. EPRDF, "ከስረመሰረታቸው ይነቀሉ ያልናቸው" (The issues we declared to be uprooted).

³⁸. EPRDF, *የዲሞክራሲ ስርዓት ግንባታ ትግል (The struggle to build a democratic system)*

as to why these practices were threats shifted with the securitisation of development and democracy.

8.2.2. Religious Radicals

The other threat the EPRDF frequently reiterated was that of religious radicals/extremists. In common with chauvinism and narrow-ism, the EPRDF's engagement with forces that were later considered radical, predated its introduction of the securitisation of development and democracy. Since the 1995 assassination attempt against Hosni Mubarak of Egypt in Addis Ababa, the EPRDF had been concerned with the spread of Islam in this region. With the introduction of the securitisation discourse, as was the case with chauvinism and narrow-ism, the EPRDF's stance on radicalism began to be justified along the lines of the securitisation logic. Accordingly, it maintained that religious radicalism had to be defined in relation to the democratic and developmental agenda of the government.³⁹ Accordingly, the EPRDF defined radicalism as an anti-developmental and antidemocratic movement undertaken in the name of religion.⁴⁰ While democracy grants all people freedom of religion, the EPRDF claimed, people with a radical religious stance oppose the religious rights of others` in the name of their faith.⁴¹ Radicalism was also approached in terms of the EPRDF's discourse on rent-seeking. Though each religion requires their members to work to fulfil their daily needs, the EPRDF argued, religion-based rent-seekers sought to make a living out of their religion.⁴² This religion-based rent-seeking was a form of radicalism, due to its anti-developmental character.⁴³

According to EPRDF, religious radicalism would not have been a grave problem in and of itself because it claimed that radically orientated individuals and groups could not be a significant force. What made radicalism a challenge was rather the existence of political forces that were seeking to deploy religious ideologies for their political ends.⁴⁴ The EPRDF claimed that these political forces opposed development and democracy because of their rent-seeking interest that would only be realised in the absence of democracy and development. Therefore, the more the developmental and democratic measures progress the more these radicals' rent-seeking interests are undermined and the more they struggle against democratic and developmental

³⁹. EPRDF, "ልማት ዲሞክራሲና የሃይማኖት አክራሪነት (Development, democracy and religious radicalism)," *አዲስ ረጅይ (New Vision)* 2, no. 6 (2001 EC).

⁴⁰. Ibid.

⁴¹. Ibid.

⁴². Ibid.

⁴³. Ibid.

⁴⁴. Ibid.

measures.⁴⁵ Though the main instrument these opposing political forces rely on was narrow nationalism and chauvinism, they also allegedly used religion whenever that was more convenient.⁴⁶ A good example of such a practice, the EPRDF claimed, was the Islamic sect called *Kawarja*, which was primarily mobilized by the Oromo Liberation Front or individuals who used to be members of the OLF.⁴⁷ Similarly, those who wanted to create trouble within Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church were, the EPRDF again claimed, those remnants of the *Derg* or similar chauvinist forces.⁴⁸ Therefore, the EPRDF concluded that behind each radicalist movement, there were political forces that wished to use religion to advance their political ends. As with chauvinism and narrow-ism, the EPRDF claimed that it could not fight radicalism separately from its fight against the rent-seeking interests of these forces.⁴⁹

By focusing on those political forces that sought to use religion as a political weapon, the EPRDF claimed that at the basic level these opposition's political forces and their constituencies were either narrow nationalists or national chauvinists. These forces, the EPRDF claimed, ranged from the Coalition for Unity and Democracy (CUD) to the Ethiopian Democratic Forces Union (EDFU), from VOA to TV Africa, from German Voice to Bilal radio, from Jihadwi Haraket to Ginbot Sebat, from the Ethiopian Muslims International Forum to its exiled synod.⁵⁰ The Coalition for Unity and Democracy was an opposition force that swept all the seats of Addis Ababa's City Administration and registered strong results throughout the country in the 2005 election. Its main political agenda was citizenship-oriented territory-based (rather than ethnic-based) federalism and a more liberal-leaning economic policy. Despite the electoral gains, due to the post-election violence, its top leaders were arrested and only released after they requested a pardon. Some top members of the CUD eventually went into exile to establish a multi-pronged movement called, Gibot 7, which used both peaceful means and a violent struggle. Likewise, the Ethiopian Democratic Forces Union was an opposition party coalition of ethnonationalist nature which, next to CUD, registered a strong showing in the 2005 election. Its main agenda was the unfailing implementation of the ethnic-based federal arrangement. Other enemies mentioned above were foreign media that the government criticized for producing critical reports of its conduct towards the careers of radicalistic

⁴⁵. Ibid.

⁴⁶. Ibid.

⁴⁷. Ibid.

⁴⁸. Ibid.

⁴⁹. Ibid.

⁵⁰. EPRDF, "የዉሳኔወች ጠንካራ አፍጻጽም (Strong implementation of decisions)."

currents. All these forces, the EPRDF argued, tried to enforce their agenda outside the constitutional framework of democracy and development.

Thus, the label “radical” might not necessarily be applied because the ideology a group holds was extremist/fundamental, which is the common understanding of radicalism, but also because the group opposed the EPRDF government. Since the EPRDF thought that its revolutionary democratic agenda was the only way to achieve development and democracy, any other force that opposed it by extension was deemed to be antidemocratic and anti-developmental. The label “radical”, therefore, was applied to any forces that had religious orientation while chauvinism and narrow-ism was applied to opposing forces with ethnic orientation. However, in Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa, religious extremism has been a concern for long, a practice that the EPRDF, as the ruling party, had to grapple with. Partly driven by such currents in the mid-2000s, an increase in inter-religious conflict flared up in many parts of Ethiopia generating a popular outcry for the EPRDF to take action against such events.

As a result, the same political forces and their constituencies who were accused of chauvinism and narrow-ism were accused also of exploiting religion for their political ends. This allegation was in part due to the EPRDF’s definition of radicalism in which any religiously oriented actor that challenged revolutionary democracy would be castigated as being against democracy and development and, thereby, radical. The issues that were securitised, thus, was a version of democracy and development dubbed “revolutionary democracy”. In common with chauvinism and narrow-ism, the securitisation of democracy and development, thus, introduced/clarified the rationale for how the EPRDF defined religious radicals.

8.2.3. Neoliberal Forces

The other ideological force that was defined as a threat to the EPRDF’s democratic and developmental agenda was neoliberalism. As noted in the previous chapters of this study the EPRDF maintained that neoliberalism neither heralds sustained development nor helps institutionalize democracy.⁵¹ The EPRDF seems to have reached this conclusion after a series of fractious interactions with the International Monetary Fund, an institution that introduced an Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility (ESAF) for poor countries in the 1990s. These

⁵¹. EPRDF, *ፈጣን ዲሞክራሲ እና አቢዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ (Development, democracy and revolutionary democracy)*

fractious negotiations, as narrated by both Wade and Stiglitz, were about Ethiopia's political autonomy in managing its macro-economy in relation to its foreign reserves, liberalization of the financial sector, and the expenditure and revenue accounting system.⁵² According to these accounts, the position of the IMF was deeply unfair for Ethiopia. Probably shaped by these experiences and its former Marxist orientation, the EPRDF maintained that neoliberalism misdiagnosed the sources of, and solutions to, pervasive rent-seeking in Africa.⁵³ Neoliberalism, it argued, considered a "bloated" government that excessively intervene in the economy as a problem, thus, suggesting downsizing the government and limiting its intervention in the economy as a solution.⁵⁴ While accepting that African states' affliction with neopatrimonialism posed a developmental problem, the EPRDF rejected the solution advocated by neoliberals. It rightly claimed, along with the other literature on Structural Adjustment in Africa, that the proposed retrenchment weakened the bureaucracy and, therefore, the states' capacity to address the sources of rent-seeking.⁵⁵ According to EPRDF, the problem of rent-seeking in Africa was due to the existence of economic and political conditions conducive for rent-seeking, including firms' lack of competitiveness in the international market.⁵⁶ Far from addressing these conditions, the EPRDF argued that neoliberalism rather rendered Africa's economy dependent upon external assistance.⁵⁷ It also claimed that by making African states dependent upon external assistance, neoliberalism foreclosed the emergence of conditions conducive for democracy. Democracy, the EPRDF claimed, requires ensuring the sovereignty of the people while in neoliberal Africa political parties heavily rely upon external finance. Whenever a party contravened the interest of neoliberal forces, the EPRDF claimed, its financial source will be drained and it will be defeated in the electoral processes.⁵⁸ Neoliberalism, as seen by the EPRDF, thus neither laid the conditions for structural transformation of the economy nor heralded the factors relevant for a durable democracy.

⁵². Robert Hunter Wade, "Capital and Revenge: The IMF and Ethiopia," *Challenge* 44, no. 5 (2001).; Joseph Stiglitz, *Globalization and Its Discontents* (USA: W.W. Norton, Incorporated, 2002).

⁵³. EPRDF, *ፈጣን ዲሞክራሲ እና አብዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ (Development, democracy and revolutionary democracy)*

⁵⁴. EPRDF, *የታላቋሪብ መስመር (The renewal line)*.

⁵⁵. EPRDF, *ፈጣን ዲሞክራሲ እና አብዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ (Development, democracy and revolutionary democracy)*.

⁵⁶. Ibid.

⁵⁷. EPRDF, *የታላቋሪብ መስመር (The renewal line)*.

⁵⁸. Ibid.

In the face of the securitisation of democracy and development, neoliberalism, thus, was a threat to the system and neoliberal forces were seen as working to weaken the developmental regime it was espousing. The EPRDF accused these neoliberalistic forces of doing everything possible, including coercion and incitement of colour revolution (referring to the Ukraine Orange revolution), against countries that pursue an autonomous path of development.⁵⁹ From the EPRDF's discourse, one can see that these forces include political parties with a liberal-leaning economic policy, international NGOs, especially those working on human rights and democracy, as well as the Western governments and the financial institutions they controlled. Thus, the consideration of neoliberalism as a threat was in part connected with the securitisation discourse though, once again, its suspicion of these forces predated the introduction of the securitisation discourse.

8.2.4. Summary

Generally, three points are worth reiterating about the threats discussed in the previous three sections. First, long before it introduced the securitisation discourse, the EPRDF led government had been in an encounter with the forces it labelled as chauvinist/narrow, religious radicals and neoliberals. Second and following this former observation, nothing substantial was changed as a result of the introduction of the securitisation discourse except the justifications the EPRDF offered for its consideration of these above three forces as threats. Hence, there is room to scrutinise whether what was changed after the introduction of the securitisation discourse was the logic of action of the EPEDF or its logic of justification. The securitisation discourse seemed to be used to better justify measures that targeted forces labelled chauvinist, narrow and/or radical. Third, when the EPEDF declared this trio as threats to democracy and development, it was referring to its model of development and democracy, not the liberal use of democracy and development. It considered actors that opposed revolutionary democracy as threats to the existential issues of democracy and development. This belief generated suspicion as to the democratic and developmental commitment of the EPEDF. A commentator on Ethiopian politics, for instance, argued that be it revolutionary democracy or ethnic federalism, all the ideologies were all meant to entrench the ethnic hegemony of the TPLF.⁶⁰ This comment

⁵⁹. EPRDF, "ዮቅለም አብዮት" (Colour revolution).

⁶⁰. Assefa Mehretu, "Ethnic Federalism and Its Potential to Dismember the Ethiopian State," *Progress in Development Studies* 12, no. 2-3 (2012). Gedamu, *Politics of Contemporary Ethiopia*.

raised the question of whether what was securitised was regime survival rather than democracy and development—a matter which will be further clarified below.

8.3. The Logics of issue definition

As per the framework of this study, this section analyses the action undertaken, the actors/actions justified, the measures legitimated and values rendered acceptable, as well as the losers and beneficiaries of the problem definitions. It also juxtaposes the various logics of actions implied in the problem definitions of the EPRDF. The aim of such discussions is to scrutinise whether the concern inspiring the issue definitions were aimed at a single-handed pursuit of democracy and development as per the securitisation discourse.

8.3.1. Actions Done/Actions/Actors Justified Through the Issue Definition

Since language is taken as a form of action, what was accomplished by the issue definition, what kind of governmental measures were justified to be undertaken by it, and by whom, constituted an entry point to scrutinise the EPRDF government's logic of action in defining threats the ways it did. Approached accordingly, this section makes three observations. First, to label actors/forces “chauvinist/narrow”, “radical” and “neoliberal” was to delegitimise these actors. Second, when the EPRDF defined threats in terms of chauvinism, narrow-ism, radicalism and/or neoliberalism, it was warning its audience about the threatening nature of such orientations. The EPRDF, thus, was urging its audience not only to eschew such orientations but also committing itself to fight anyone with such orientations. Third, since these labels were defined in broad terms, as explored earlier in this study, extra-discursive measures justified by such labelling would suffocate any forces and voices outside the EPRDF. Hence, the main concern in introducing these labels was the EPRDF's survival.

When the EPRDF presented chauvinism/narrow-ism, religious radicalism and/or neoliberalism as threats to its democratic and developmental agenda, it was not simply transmitting information about the threatening nature of these ideologies. It also was delegitimising actors previously labelled as actors of democratization. A glance at the scholarly debates both within Ethiopia and outside indicates that whether an arrangement that institutionalizes group identity or encourages superordinate identity is the best mechanism to manage diversity, is open to debate.⁶¹ Often, plausible arguments are made by both supporters and detractors of such

⁶¹. Liam D. Anderson, *Federal Solutions to Ethnic Problems : Accommodating Diversity* (London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2012).

arrangements.⁶² Hence, to label those who criticized the ethnic-based federal arrangement as “chauvinist” and those who wanted it implemented unfailingly as “narrow”, serves no plausible aims other than to delegitimise these actors.

Such scholars also warned how chauvinistic and narrow attitudinal orientations were dangerous for anybody who had concern for the stability of Ethiopia. This labelling process, for instance, was reflected when the regime hinged the prospect of peace, democracy and development in Ethiopia with the successes of the fight against these forces.⁶³ In other words, the claim that without weakening these forces, peace, democracy and development would not be realised was meant to warn Ethiopians to desist from supporting such forces. In claiming so, the EPRDF was also urging party members to abhor and fight such orientations both within the party and outside. It was portraying an ideal revolutionary democrat as one who would not simply detest these orientations, but also actively fight against forces that embraced them. That said, whether this message would be understood by its audience in the way the EPRDF intended depends upon which audience one was imagining. Those members of the EPRDF who were ideologically persuaded by revolutionary democracy, no doubt, would understand it in a way intended by the EPRDF. However, the same understanding cannot be claimed for those members of the EPRDF who were not convinced by the basic principle of revolutionary democracy.

Likewise, the extra-discursive actions justified and the actors legitimated by such issue definition were those that discourage behaviours defined as manifestations of chauvinism/narrow-ism, radicalism and/or neoliberalism. These include actions and thoughts that were contrary to the EPRDF’s philosophy as defined by its top leadership. Raising issues that were identified as manifestations of chauvinism/narrow-ism, radicalism and/or neoliberalism was considered tantamount to supporting these enemies of peace, democracy and development. Referrals to matters such as the unfair distribution of wealth, the ethnic disparity in the security and intelligence apparatus, the formula for budget allocation, the role of TPLF’s endowments, for instance, would mean one was entertaining either chauvinistic or narrow nationalistic ideas.⁶⁴ Similarly, urging the government to respect the constitutional clause dealing with the separation of church and state, challenging its interference in religious matters, and demanding adequate representation in the public space would castigate one as being a

⁶². Ibid.

⁶³. EPRDF, “ከስረሞሰረታቸው ይነቀሉ ያልናቸው (The issues we declared to be uprooted).”

⁶⁴. Ibid.

religious radical. The contesting of issues related to economic policies that emphasise the need to give greater space to the private sector would have castigated one as a “neoliberal messenger”.⁶⁵ Hence, all such contentious topics were discouraged by the threat definitions.

These issue-definitions also justify measure that would limit the operational space for the opposition and their constituencies. As noted in the previous sections of this chapter, the grievances of the oppositions were castigated as manifestations of chauvinism, narrow-ism, radicalism and/or neoliberalism. Consequently, any member of the Oromo community who opposed the EPRDF or raised Oromo grievances could easily be accused of narrowness. Likewise, any member of the Amhara community who opposed the regime or any other supporter of pan-Ethiopianism, would be accused of chauvinism. The study informants indeed think that this was the way the discourses of chauvinism, narrow-ism and radicalism were applied. A statement from an informant from the Amhara region, who was also a member of the executive committee of the EPRDF, generally indicates the view of all the study informants on the issue. He argued that “Narrow-ism, chauvinism, and radicalism all were not used based on principles. They were primarily meant to attack the opposition. It was meant to silence those regions that are more populous and multi-religious. It was also, in part, created to generate conflict between the Oromo and the Amhara.”⁶⁶ Another informant adds that by using chauvinism against those who raised ethnic grievances, the EPRDF removed more than 20,000 Amhara members from the government and the security apparatus in the post-2005 period.⁶⁷ Likewise, an informant from the Southern Region bluntly stated that the members the EPRDF labelled “chauvinists” were the Amhara while “narrow-ists” were the Oromo.⁶⁸

By the same logic, any religiously oriented actor or a member of a religious organisation that criticized or opposed the EPRDF would be labelled a “religious radical”. As discussed above and further elaborated below, the EPRDF indeed considered religiously affiliated forces that opposed its agenda as radical, and whether or not they harboured a violent agenda was not considered. Likewise, liberal-leaning political actors and other advocacy groups would be labelled either “neoliberal” or their messengers.⁶⁹ Therefore, these threat definitions and enemy

⁶⁵. EPRDF, *የአቢዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ ምንነት፣ ታሪካዊ አነሳስ፣ እድገትና የወደፊት አቅጣጫ* (*The historical emergence, development and future direction of revolutionary democracy*).

⁶⁶. Interview with a former executive committee of ANDM and EPRDF, February, 2021, Bahir Dar

⁶⁷. Interview with an official of the Amhara Regional State office of the president, February 2021, Bahir Dar

⁶⁸. Interview with former president of the SNNP Regional state, April 2021, Addis Ababa

⁶⁹. EPRDF, *የአቢዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ ምንነት፣ ታሪካዊ አነሳስ፣ እድገትና የወደፊት አቅጣጫ* (*The historical emergence, development and future direction of revolutionary democracy*).

identification, ultimately, justify the EPRDF's suffocating measures against the opposition and their constituencies.

Given all the above facts, it is possible to deduce that the concern of approaching threats in these ways was nothing but an attempt at political survival. However, three potential counter-arguments preclude such a conclusive statement. First, there were chauvinists in the Amhara and Tigray community and narrow nationalists in the Oromo community when the concept of "chauvinism" is understood as a feeling of superiority and that of "narrow-ism" as ethnic grievances driving hatred against other groups. These chauvinist and narrow forces would generally be against peace and stability because they have opposite and polarizing agendas. Moreover, religious radicalism posed a challenge to a peaceful Muslim-Christian relationship and, therefore, required some measures to arrest it. Likewise, international financial institutions and donors, at times, demanded actions and policy measures that would undermine the country's quest for development and democracy. Owing to all these stated challenges, the issue definition may not be devoid of democratic and developmental concerns.

Second, the most ideologically devout leaders of the EPRDF seemed sincerely to think that any ideology outside revolutionary democracy was destructive. According to a study informant from the Southern Region, labelling others was not something that was started by the EPRDF but rather is a pervasive practice in the world of politics. However, he argues that the EPRDF went to extremes to assert that it was the only one with the correct solution for Ethiopia's problems; while all other options were wrong.⁷⁰ The actions of individuals who believed in this ideology, therefore, could not simply be due to a concern for political survival but also ideologically driven. Finally, the EPRDF's proposal that chauvinism/narrow-ism, religious radicalism, and neoliberalism should be fought in a democratic way implies the possibility that political survival may not be the only concern of the EPRDF. Why would the regime advocate democratic actions if its concern was nothing but political survival? Hence the concerns underpinning the consideration of chauvinism/narrow-ism, religious radicalism, and neoliberalism as threats may not be the goal of political survival alone.

Political survival, however, was clearly privileged by the EPRDF over democratic and developmental goals. These labels were defined in such a way that any actor outside the EPRDF would be designated any one of these labels and, once labelled so, repressive measures would

⁷⁰. Ibid.

ensue. This practice invariably subordinated the EPRDF's concern for democracy and development to the logic of political survival. Hence, though political survival was not discursively securitised, it was practically handled as a securitised issue. It was pursued with greater attention than that given to democracy and development. An examination of the beneficiaries and losers of the problem definitions also leads to the same conclusion.

8.3.2. Losers and Beneficiaries of the Issue definition

It is obvious that the losers of the issue definitions were those people who are ethnonationalists and pan-Ethiopianists, the civil societies, and the media. All forces outside the EPRDF were castigated as rent-seekers, thus delegitimising them as actors of democratization, a practice which made them losers of the frame. Those groups labelled religious radicals, which basically, were religious movements that sought to assert some sort of autonomy from the EPRDF, as well as some religious reformist movements, were also the losers of the frame. Thus, all the political and religious groups, and even civil society and media organisations critical of the EPRDF, are all losers of the framing of Ethiopia's threat in terms of chauvinism/narrow-ism, religious radicalism and neoliberalism and were presented as having posed challenges to Ethiopia's developmental and democratic aspirations through such alignments.

In what appeared to confirm the above perception, in the post-2018 period, one former TPLF official argued that the chauvinist and narrow forces that were a fringe voice in the "high-days" of the EPRDF turned into a governing force in the post-2018 period.⁷¹ The narratives of the study informants largely conform to this allegation. Almost all of them agree that "labelling" was an instrument to repress legitimate questions related to the distribution of political power, economic resources and, ultimately, narratives of statehood. This labelling did not just discourage the opposition but also sought to silence the narratives and criticisms of the two categories of political groupings within Ethiopia. When an Amhara raised such issues, he/she would be silenced through the accusation of chauvinism, and an Oromo who raised such criticisms would be silenced through the accusation of narrow nationalism.⁷² Hence, at the very least, the Amhara and Oromo elites were the losers of the threat definition and enemy identification as exercised by the EPRDF.

⁷¹. Asaminew, *ከአደገገይ በሻገር(beyond what is public)*.

⁷². Many of the informants reiterate this point.

The EPRDF government and its constituencies, on the other hand, were beneficiaries of the frame. They were portrayed as the only actors that grasped the “miracle” of how development and democracy could be realised and what obstacles had to be overcome. This depiction would justify them to take at least administrative measures against the opposition parties and any other dissenting voices. This delineation ultimately helped them monopolize the political and economic resources of the country. Even within the government, however, the Amhara and the Oromo members of the EPRDF who were sympathetic to the narratives of the opposition were losers of the issue-definition. They were readily castigated either as chauvinists or narrow nationalists whenever they raised ethnic grievances. Hence, the claim that the EPRDF was the beneficiary of the issue definition refers specifically to those members of the EPRDF who enthusiastically embraced its narratives. The narratives of the study informants about these notions generally reflect the perception that they were a discursive tool for repressing legitimate actors by the TPLF/EPRDF.

8.3.3. Juxtaposition of Logics

From the above discussion, the dominant concern in the problem definition related to what was a threat, who was an enemy, and how to deal with such actors, was the political survival of the EPRDF, dominated by the TPLF. The framing seeks to realise such political survival by delegitimising its opponents and the narratives they espoused. Concern for democratization and development of Ethiopia, to the extent it was present, was secondary to the political survival of the EPRDF. Since the EPRDF was dominated by the TPLF, the main concern was maintaining its hegemonic rule over other ethnic groups. Indicative of this practice, when the interest of the TPLF or key personalities within it, was threatened, even the precepts of revolutionary democracy were violated. Hence, though threat designation was given an ideological camouflage, it was mainly inspired by economic and political interests.

Hence, the way threats were defined and enemies identified by the EPRDF has little to do with democracy and development. The securitisation logic whereby threats were defined and enemies identified, based upon the danger they posed to democratize and develop the country, was not followed in the issue-definition. This practice challenges the idea that the very use of security languages/discourses in relation to an issue would increase the attention and urgency with which the issue will be handled does not hold true at least in this case.

8.4. The Logics of Policy Implementation in the Fight Against these “Threats/Enemies”

This section examines whether the EPRDF has acted as per its definitions of threats and enemies and how it claimed it would handle these threats. Three points are central to this section. First, the EPRDF followed its broad definitions of chauvinism/narrow-ism and religious radicalism in identifying enemies. Second, notwithstanding its commitment to a democratic way of managing threats, it deployed a repressive approach against these “enemies”. Third, the logics of issue/policy implementation in the management of threats was entrenching the TPLF-dominated EPRDF’s hold on power. Hence, the securitisation of development and democracy did not have the intended effect of reorienting the party-state to focus on threats to democracy and development. The securitisation of democracy and development was rather abused to castigate innocent actors as threats to democracy and development.

8.4.1. EPRDF and Chauvinist and Narrow Nationalist Forces

The EPRDF’s reaction to the legal opposition parties, opposition-leaning journalists, government critics and those within the EPRDF party labelled as chauvinist/narrow or radical, would be sufficient to dispel the logics of policy implementations of the EPRDF. According to a study informant, until the Ethio-Eritrea conflict, the EPRDF used the chauvinist and narrow labels against the Amhara and pan-Ethiopian oppositions on the one hand, and the Oromo oppositions and the OLF on the other, respectively.⁷³ Following the outbreak of the Ethio-Eritrea war, he argues, the EPRDF came to terms with the idea of Ethiopian-ness tolerating those forces it castigated as chauvinists. This practice, he argues, continued until the 2005 election when Ethiopia implemented the first-ever free and fair pre-election contestation. Introduced after bitter division, the securitisation discourse, thus, influenced the government in a way it demonstrates commitment to maintaining an open political environment. Meles admitted this practice when he argued that the existential consideration of democracy and development was part of the reason why the EPRDF opened the political space for the 2005 electoral competition.⁷⁴ The subsequent post-election violence, however, reversed all the EPRDF’s gains. The EPRDF’s fear of electoral loss and the myopia of the opposition parties, led to the reversal of the limited gains registered until then. The EPRDF declared victory even

⁷³. Interview with an official of the Amhara region office of the president, February 2021, Bahir Dar

⁷⁴. EPRDF, *ኢህአዴግ ከምስረታ (EPRDF from establishment)*.

before the count on votes was concluded and banned any form of demonstration against this decision. Some disgruntled members of the opposition parties, proclaimed “property to the *kebele*, Tigrayan to Mekelle” and “we will send the *Woyane* (TPLF) where they came from”.⁷⁵

Threatened by this threat, the TPLF/EPRDF coalition took drastic measures against what it labelled “chauvinists” and “narrow nationalists”, both within the party and the society at large.⁷⁶ It shifted to large-scale repression, arrests and even torture, contradicting its strategy of how it was to deal with chauvinists and narrow nationalists. Stringent legislation relating to the media, civil society organisations, political parties and terrorism were introduced. The media law set the penalty for the slightest infringement so high that journalists were pressured to self-censor. The civil society law prohibits those NGOs who received more than 10% of their expenses from overseas funders from taking part in rights advocacy works. The terrorism law not only defined terrorism in broad and ambiguous ways but also legalized measures that violate basic principles of due processes.⁷⁷ The revised political parties registration law required political parties to disclose the identity of their donors, making citizens reluctant to donate.⁷⁸

The TPLF/EPRDF coalition used the securitisation discourse to defend these draconian laws. It claimed that the laws were meant to widen the political space by discouraging violent actors, mainly referring to the members of opposition parties.⁷⁹ As per its broad definition of chauvinism and narrow-ism, it claimed that these parties were the undemocratic remnants of the previous regime. Meles, for instance, accused the CUD leaders of previous membership in the military regime and of wanting to change the constitution through violence.⁸⁰ Getachew Assefa, the former chief of the National Intelligence and Security Agency, also urged the US to not support the opposition parties, alleging that they were undemocratic and extremists.⁸¹ Likewise, Bereket, one of the top officials and ideologue of the EPRDF, maintained that the opposition parties were undemocratic and were trying to use the constitutional processes for

⁷⁵. Daniel Birhane, "A Review of a Tale of Two Elections, by Bereket Simon" *Horn Affairs*, 2012.

⁷⁶. Interview with an official of the Amhara region office of the president, February, 2021, Bahir Dar

⁷⁷. FDRE, "Charities and Societies Proclamation."

⁷⁸. "The Revised Political Parties Registration Proclamation No 573/2008," (Addis Ababa: Federal Negarit Gazeta, 2008).

⁷⁹. WikiLeaks, "A/S Kramer Presses Prime Minister Meles on Cso Law, Political Space," 28 October 2008, https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08ADDISABABA2945_a.html.

⁸⁰. Wikileaks, "A Dialogue on Ethiopia's Democratization: Drl a/S Kramer Meets Prime Minister Meles".

⁸¹. Wikileaks, "Understanding the Ethiopian Hardliners" 8 June 2009, https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09AD DISABABA1318_a.html.

unconstitutional ends.⁸² The new legislation, therefore, was meant to guard the constitution from the opposition parties, “terrorists” and other forces bent on using the democratic processes for their undemocratic ends.⁸³

However, in practice the EPRDF used these laws to victimize its opponents, at times even fabricating charges and crimes when there were none. A snapshot of some of these measures as documented by Abbink⁸⁴ but also corroborated by a number of human rights reports⁸⁵ generally indicates the EPRDF’s disregard for a democratic way of managing these opposing forces. In 2005, a newly elected parliament member of the Coalition for Unity and Democracy was killed by government militia, while close to 18,000 people, including the top leaders of the CUD, were arrested. In 2006 Wondosen Gutu, a CUD youth activist, was killed in addition to a number of others who were arrested, abused and tortured. In 2007 Degaga Gebisa, A united Ethiopian Democratic Front sympathizer and Tsegaye Ayele, an Ethiopian Democratic Party member were killed. In 2008 journalist Mahtemework was arrested while the Managing Director of the Reporter, Amare Aregawi, was beaten while collecting his son from school. In 2009, the opposition parties indicated that about 450 of their members were arrested. In the same year, another 40 people were arrested on the accusation that they had plotted to overthrow the constitutional order. In 2010, prospective candidates of *Medirek* (an opposition party) were threatened at gun point in an attempt to force them change their minds about their candidature. In 2011, a number of journalists were arrested, including Reeyot Alemu and Wubshet Taye of the *Awramba Times*, Sileshe Hagos and the award-winning journalist, Eskinder Nega. In the same year, more than 200 members of the opposition party, *Medirek*, were arrested in the Oromia region, as were Legesse Deti Dhaba, former Secretary-General of the *Mecha-Tulema* self-help association and Debebe Eshetu, a popular actor. Other opposition leaders arrested during 2011 include Andualem Arage, Natnael Mekonen, and Asaminew Birhanu, executive committee members of the Unity for Justice and Democracy Party, and Zemenu Mola the Secretary-General of the All-Ethiopian Unity Party. Some of these arrestees were charged with the anti-terrorism proclamation. In 2012, Yesuf Getachew, the editor of the magazine *Yemuslimoch Guday*, was arrested and accused of supporting the Muslim protest during that

⁸². Wikileaks, "Acting a/S Carter Raises the Issue of Political Space," 2 February 2009, https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09ADDISABABA258_a.html.

⁸³. Ibid.

⁸⁴. Jon Abbink, *Decade of Ethiopia: Politics, Economics and Society (2004-2016)* (Boston: Brill, 2016).

⁸⁵. Human Rights Watch, "'One Hundred Ways of Putting Pressure': Violations of Freedom of Expressions and Associatins Inethiopia," (USA, 2010).; Amnesty International, "'Because I Am Oromo': Sweeping Repression in the Oromia Region of Ethiopia," (UK, 2014).; US State Department, "Ethiopia: Human Rights Reports " (Yearly).

year. In 2013, *Addis Times* and *Lehilena*, two of the newspapers that circulated throughout Ethiopia, were closed while many journalists, including *Zone 9* bloggers, were either arrested or forced to flee Ethiopia.⁸⁶

In 2014, Woynishet Molla, Head of Financial Affairs of the Blue Party was arrested after joining the Muslim protest against the government. Other activists, as well as leaders of the opposition parties such as the Oromo Federalist Congress, All Ethiopia Unity Party, Unity for Democracy and Justice, the Blue Party, the Ethiopian Democratic Party and Arena Tigray were repeatedly arrested. In 2015, more than 500 members of the *Medirek* coalition were arrested, while two were killed and six wounded during a shooting. During the same year, 18 Muslim activists arrested for coordinating the 2012-2014 Muslim protest were sentenced based upon a clumsy terrorism charge. As the protest intensified through the following two years, the number of arrests and killings increased. While not exhaustive, the above practices are indicative of the nature of EPRDF's repressive activities that systematically targeted individuals and leaders who acted as a voice for their community. Most of the victims of such repression were either opposition party leaders, journalists or independent bloggers who were critical of the EPRDF.⁸⁷

Accounts emerging since the post-2018 power reshuffle also indicate that the above list is extremely limited. There were a significant number of people who were accused of membership in armed movements, arrested, tortured and killed. These victims were subjected to untold suffering by the National Intelligence and Security Agency that operated six private prisons unknown to the public.⁸⁸ The victims of such treatment, as well as observers of the legal process, argues that accusations relating to their membership of armed movements within Ethiopia were primarily based upon fabricated charges. Any dissenting voice was easily labelled as either member of OLF or *Ginbot 7*, two of the armed movements of the period. According to the anti-terrorism law, when a person was accused of membership in such forces, the charge of terrorism would apply which fell under the jurisdiction of the TPLF dominated federal government.⁸⁹ Although these "dissidents" were not brought to court on charges of chauvinism and narrow-ism, they were singled out ostensibly for their chauvinistic or narrow political orientations and attitudes. In terms of the EPRDF's political agenda, armed movements and some religion-based social movements, as noted above, were castigated as

⁸⁶. Abbink, *Decade of Ethiopia*.

⁸⁷. *Ibid.*

⁸⁸. Fana, "የፍትህ ሰቆቃ" (Thust for justice).

⁸⁹. FDRE, "Antiterrorism Proclamation."

being chauvinistic, narrowly nationalistic or religiously extremist. Hence, these labels were used to politically justify repressive measures targeted at such dissidents, journalists and leaders of the opposition parties.

However, the main reason for the repression of dissidents was to ensure the political survival and economic predation of the TPLF and its affiliated elites. Three factors are indicative of this practice. First, the leaders of Ethiopia's security apparatus, including the military, national security agency and the information network security agency were overwhelmingly dominated by members of the TPLF. In the management of some sensitive issues, this dominance also occurred with the party's lower structure. The case of Andargachew Tsige, the Secretary of the *Ginbot 7* party, who was kidnapped from Yemen and imprisoned in Addis, was indicative of this fact. He reported that throughout his more than one year of arrest under the National Intelligence and Security Agency, all the people who contacted him, including the guards, the nurse and the janitor, were all Tigrayans.⁹⁰ Second, members of the EPRDF's security apparatus did not think that they were "out there" to protect Ethiopians by democratically fighting chauvinist and narrow nationalists. They rather used to insult dissidents under their control with ethnic slurs and distrusted non-Tigrayan members of the EPRDF. A person called Yonas Gashaw, who was paralyzed when tortured, stated that a woman investigator urinated in his presence, telling him that the TPLF urinate on the Amhara people like the way she did.⁹¹ Another victim of abuse stated that his torturers asked him what support he received from the leaders of Amhara Region.⁹² Hence, the EPRDF's security apparatus appeared to be dominated by the members of one ethnic group who felt they were "out there" to protect the political survival and ethnic and organisational interests of the TPLF.

Finally, the way the EPRDF applied the "chauvinist" and "narrow" labels, even against some members of the EPRDF, indicates the use of these labels to entrench and sustain the TPLF and its affiliated elites' dominance in power. According to informants, the two notions were used as discursive tools to side-line members of the EPRDF and its leaders who threaten TPLF dominance. A number of promising members of ANDM and OPDO either were demoted or removed from leadership on the accusation of chauvinism and narrow-ism respectively. Using the label of chauvinism, for instance, ANDM, as noted in chapter seven of this study, removed

⁹⁰. Andargachew tsigie, *የታሩኙ ማስታወሻ (The memeory of the kidenapped)* (UK: Independent Publishing Network, 2013 EC).

⁹¹. Fana, "የፍትህ ሰቆቃ" (Thust for justice).

⁹². Ibid.

some of its dissenting members. The same chapter also indicated how it was impossible to be an Oromo nationalist and yet avoid being labelled “narrow nationalist”.⁹³ Thus, chauvinism and narrow-ism were instruments of intimidating outspoken members of the EPRDF who raised legitimate questions related to a fair distribution of resources, power and other ethnic grievances.⁹⁴ Hence, what was securitised by the EPRDF was its survival rather than democratic developmentalism which would pose a number of questions in relation to the securitisation perspective reviewed in chapter two of this study and further reflected upon below

8.4.2. EPRDF and Religious Radicals

Though initially welcoming the Muslim community’s religious revivalism, the EPRDF soon began to be worried this movement. This change in attitude was triggered by some events of an extremist nature. In 1994, the Muslim youth in Addis Ababa attended a demonstration calling for the inclusion of Sharia in the soon-to-be approved constitution. The next year, differences within the Supreme Islamic Affairs Council (*Mejlis*) led to the intervention of the police leading to a number of deaths. This incident was followed by an assassination attempt targeted at Hosni Mubarek of Egypt in Addis Ababa. In reprisal for these occurrences, the EPRDF began to deploy the same repressive approach used against those people as labelled “chauvinist” and “narrow nationalists”. It expelled Muslim NGOs that were sponsored by Saudi *Whabbists*, and strengthen its effort to enable the Sufi sheikhs’ control over the Supreme Islamic Affairs Council.⁹⁵ The Council was eventually given the power to de-register Islamic NGOs that were deemed radical, thereby serving as an instrument of control.⁹⁶

In the subsequent years, the EPRDF continued its efforts to discourage the Salafi version of Islam by empowering the *Mejlis* and introducing rules and regulations governing the public conduct of believers and religious preachers.⁹⁷ To this effect, the EPRDF ensured that the Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs was controlled by individuals sympathetic to the EPRDF. The *Mejlis* was tasked with discouraging the radical interpretation of Islam. Preachers were

⁹³. Sado, "Junedien Sado Reveal the Seceret of TPLF".

⁹⁴. Tsigab, *የኢህአዴግ የቁልቁለት ጉዞ* (EPRDF’s downward journey).

⁹⁵. Jon Abbink, "Religious Freedom and the Political Order: The Ethiopian ‘Secular State’ and the Containment of Muslim Identity Politics," *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 8, no. 3 (2014).

⁹⁶. Haileyesus Muluken, "State-Religion and Inter-Religious Interactions in Post 1991 Ethiopia: The Case of Addis Ababa" (PhD Thesis, Addis Ababa University, 2019).

⁹⁷. Jörg Haustein and Terje Østebø, "EPRDF's Revolutionary Democracy and Religious Plurality: Islam and Christianity in Post-Dergethiopia," *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 5, no. 4 (2011).

pressured to preach in a way that does not provoke religious confrontation. Islamic NGOs, and in particular the Saudi Muslim League, were closed, and the financial sources of religious institutions were scrutinised.⁹⁸

Following its obligation of discouraging radicalism, in 2011, the Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs expelled foreign religious teachers that teach the Salafist version of Islam from the Awliya school, while inviting teachers from Lebanon to teach the mainstream version of Islam. This practice, however, led to a protest by a section of the Muslim community who were aggrieved by the EPRDF's interference in their religion. The protestors established the Muslim Question Coordinating Committee that coordinated the protest. The group was readily labelled "radical" and its leaders accused of engaging in terroristic acts and imprisoned, only to be released when Prime Minister Abiy came to power in 2018. Even before the court made its judgment, the EPRDF aired a number of documentaries implicating the Muslim Question Coordinating Committee for acts of terrorism, thus furnishing the way to apply one of the repressive laws noted earlier.⁹⁹ However, many of the accusations were groundless because most Muslims, even the followers of Salafism, had not been advocating violence to advance their faith.¹⁰⁰ Thus, though radicalism posed a genuine challenge, the EPRDF's response had been the repression of followers of *Salafism*.

In relation to Orthodox Christianity, the EPRDF implicated the *Mahbere Kidusan* (an association of primarily educated Christians) for radicalism. According to Haileyesus, four factors contributed to this charge.¹⁰¹ First, when a presumed member of the association was observed wearing a T-shirt that read "*Ethiopia is the Island of Christianity*", the government took this to be reflective of the general sentiment of the members of this association. Second, the EPRDF suspected that the association had been politicized and was allied with the opposition. It argued that the *Mahbere Kidusan* is a hiding place for opposition political parties. During the 2005 election, some members of the *Mahbere Kidusan* indeed called for non-violent civil disobedience against the EPRDF led government. However, the association argues that its members are free to entertain any political opinions, for which it would not be liable.¹⁰²

⁹⁸. Ibid.

⁹⁹. ETV, "Jihadawi Harekat Partii" 7 February 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NSUSebNpy3s>.

¹⁰⁰. Haustein and Østebø, "EPRDF's Revolutionary Democracy and Religious Plurality: Islam and Christianity in Post-Derg Ethiopia," *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 5, no.4 (2011); Abbink, "Religious Freedom and the Political Order: The Ethiopian 'Secular State' and the Containment of Muslim Identity Politics," *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 8, no.3 (2014).

¹⁰¹. Muluken, "State-Religion."

¹⁰². Ibid.

Third, the *Mahbere Kidusan*'s strong criticism of the quality of the 2007 census that substantially reduced the size of Ethiopia's Christian population, compared to the number it would have been when calculated based on a projection from the past census, was another issue of discontent. Finally, raising claims of discrimination by the EPRDF in relation to other religions, comparing religions in terms of the number of followers, and capitalizing on the EPRDF's mistake to claim a lack of state-religion separation, were all considered a form of radicalism.¹⁰³ The *Mahbere Kidusan* was accused of holding some of these attitudes and, as a result, was constantly harassed by the EPRDF by setting up different challenges.

Thus, the broad application of the definition of radicalism discussed earlier in this study was applied by the EPRDF to identify radical organisations and individuals. Moreover, contrary to the issue definition, those labelled "radical" were not fought through democratic processes, rather various repressive tactics were deployed. To the extent the religious extremism posed a challenge to the EPRDF in terms of the stability essential for both democracy and development, the securitisation logic was in operation. However, this logic was pursued by also taking measures that were unconnected to fighting radicalism but aimed at emasculating political opponents. Hence, the securitisation of regime survival pointed out in the previous section was pursued even in relation to the fight against religious radicalism. This practice, challenge the securitisation perspective's use of security discourses as an entry point for identifying securitisation.

8.4.3. EPRDF and the Neoliberals

In common with its treatment of chauvinism/narrow-ism and radicalism, the EPRDF sought to restrain the ascendancy of neoliberalism largely through the use of repressive laws. The civil society law and the political party registration law were two such legal instruments meant to discourage neoliberalism. The political party registration law prohibited diaspora financing of opposition parties, and action which it claimed was necessary to reduce foreign influence.¹⁰⁴ The NGO law barred international NGOs from working on rights issues, including democracy promotion, human rights advocacy and even conflict resolution and the promotion of the rights of women and the disabled.¹⁰⁵ As mentioned previously, an NGO was labelled foreign if it generated more than 10% of its revenue from abroad, even if it was entirely run by Ethiopian

¹⁰³. Ibid.

¹⁰⁴. FDRE, "The Revised Political Parties Registration Proclamation."

¹⁰⁵. "Charities and Societies Proclamation."

nationals.¹⁰⁶ Although there was much criticism that these laws constricted the political space, the EPRDF insisted that democracy had to emerge organically, it should not be spoon-fed.¹⁰⁷ It argued that democracy would be viable only when local ownership is ensured, and people would own it only when they dearly paid for it.¹⁰⁸ The EPRDF rejected the kind of democracy Western actors promoted, claiming that the attempt to promote “Western-style” democracy in Africa has failed, from which the EPRDF took lessons.¹⁰⁹ Accordingly, the EPRDF argued that all the (repressive) laws and policies noted above were introduced to address obstacles to the democratization of the country and, therefore, foreign assistance that would undermine this approach to democratization would not be welcomed.¹¹⁰ Following this line of thinking, the EPRDF indeed restricted the political influences of foreign NGOs, the IFIs, donor countries, and the diaspora to areas and agendas it considered legitimate.

Moreover, the EPRDF used the label “neoliberal messenger” to delegitimise local political actors that might have been sympathetic to the ideology of neoliberalism.¹¹¹ The local private sector that was not politically well disposed to the EPRDF was readily labelled “rent-seekers” and were discouraged by administrative measures. Although, as was the case with the other “dissident” forces discussed above, neoliberal forces were to be managed in a democratic manner, however, relying upon an argumentative refutation of their ideology, they were rather managed by introducing repressive laws and regulations. Hence, the existence of disjuncture between measures suggested in the issue definition and the practice implemented occurred. As was the case with chauvinism/narrow-ism and religious radicalism, the measures introduced to fight neoliberalism were geared more at EPRDF survival than the existential pursuit of democratic developmentalism. When neoliberal measures advanced its interest, the EPRDF embraced them and when such measures undermined its interests, the EPRDF rejected them. Foreign direct investment, for instance, was warmly welcomed, whereas the domestic private sector was constantly harassed.

¹⁰⁶. Ibid.

¹⁰⁷. WikiLeaks, “[Africa] Ethiopia/Kenya/Wiki - Meles Sounds Off on “Jubaland Initiative,” 06 December 2010, https://wikileaks.org/gifiles/docs/49/4993119_-africa-ethiopia-kenya-wiki-meles-sounds-off-on-jubaland.html.

¹⁰⁸. Ibid.

¹⁰⁹. WikiLeaks, “Ambassador Sets Democratic Space Marker with Tigray’s Central Committee Members,” 11 June 2008, https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08ADDISABABA1592_a.html.

¹¹⁰. Ibid.

¹¹¹. Interview with an official of the Oromia Regional state, March, 2021

8.5. Summary

The way the EPRDF managed those people and groups it labelled “chauvinists”, “narrow nationalists”, “religious radicals” and “neoliberals”, in some respects, conform with how the EPRDF sought to manage them. The broad definition of these threats was followed in the identification of forces that were “chauvinist”, “narrow nationalist”, “religious radicals”, which included almost all actors that were opposed to the EPRDF. However, in some respects, the EPRDF’s management was contrary to its suggested strategy for handling these issues. Though the key to winning these dissenting forces was supposed to be ensuring the ideational hegemony of revolutionary democracy, the practical measures pursued by the EPRDF were rather geared at repressing them through stifling laws and “trumped-up” charges. In general, measures that tended to strengthen the EPRDF’s immediate hold onto power, in the name of fighting these forces, were unfailingly implemented: dissidents were arrested and tortured, the media decimated, opposition groups harassed and generally weakened. Other measures to be deployed in fighting these forces that nevertheless required the EPRDF to respect democratic standards were mainly ignored. Contrary to the very spirit of fighting chauvinism and narrowism, ethnic slurs, for instance, were used against these forces. Hence, the logics of policy implementation was primarily driven by the need to maintain the immediate political survival of the TPLF dominated EPRDF even when these measures, in the long-term, endangered the party’s stability.

According to the framework developed in chapter two (section 3.2.2.2.4. above), when there is a deviation between an issue definition and practice, a further question has to be answered. Thus, it is necessary to ask why the EPRDF failed to act according to its issue definitions? Answering this question is essential for discriminating whether this failure was due to a lack of concern for democracy and development or other justifiable practical expediencies without which even democratic and developmental goals would be compromised. These practical expediencies, as noted in the framework chapter of this study, would include the outbreak or the possibility of imminent civil war, and the resultant conflict between the democratic and developmental goals. Indeed, conflict between the democratic and developmental goals and the prospect of simultaneously pursuing the two, while maintaining Ethiopia’s stability is an important factor to consider. This problem arises because the development model required the EPRDF’s survival in power, whereas the democratic agenda would have to entertain loss of power. Clapham concurred with this explanation when he ponders whether the EPRDF would

have combined democratization with peace and development.¹¹² Hence, it is imperative to ask whether the EPRDF would indeed have simultaneously pursued these two goals while maintaining peace and order (peace and order is a background condition that makes the pursuit of the two goals possible and yet, at the same time, would be the result of the successful realization of democracy and development). To answer this conundrum, a range of sensitizing questions were suggested in chapter two of this study, including the acceptability of the issue definition, the defensibility of the values underpinning the goals, the sufficiency of the action to realise a goal, the side effects of the action taken to realise a goal, the existence of alternative ways of accomplishing a goal, the possibility of implementing an action, and the justifiability of the prioritization of goals. Drawing from these sensitizing issues, the next section, therefore, seeks to answer the questions raised earlier in this study.

8.6. Why Did the EPRDF Fail to Act as Per Its Issue-definition? Implication for Securitisation Perspective

The scrutiny of EPRDF's discourse and conduct indicate that it was not in a position to pursue both democracy and development simultaneously. Hence it would have to choose between either a liberal democratic or authoritarian developmental political economy. A democratic way of managing the forces defined as chauvinists, narrowists, and radicals would have enabled these forces, as happened in post-2018 Ethiopia, to disseminate their diametrically opposite narratives with the risk of leading the country into civil war. Even when one argues that opposing narratives would have been managed peacefully through managed transition, political instability and low-intensity conflicts was the most likely scenario for two main reasons. First, the narratives of the Oromo nationalists, and the Amhara and (other) pan-Ethiopianists, were polarized with little chance of compromise. Second, the TPLF, with its significant political, organisational and economic capability, would not simply accept a division of power that was proportional to the population number it represents (Tigrayan people constituted just 7% of Ethiopia's more than 100 million people). The TPLF's post-2018 behaviour is a clear indication of this fact. During this period, the TPLF/EPRDF supported forces that generate inter-communal conflicts and undermined state institutions. It also ignored decisions made by Ethiopia's federal government and escalated a political crisis into a full-blown military confrontation.¹¹³ If the TPLF/EPRDF had widely opened the democratic space, instability was

¹¹². Christopher Clapham, *Horn of Africa: State Formation and Decay* (London: Hurst, 2017).

¹¹³. Moses Tofa, Alagaw Ababu, and Hubert Kinkoh, "Political and Media Analysis on the Tigray Conflict" 2022, https://www.eip.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/POLITICAL-AND-MEDIA-ANALYSIS-ON-THE-TIGRAY-CONFLICT-IN-ETHIOPIA_-finalised.pdf.

a likely scenario, invariably reversing or significantly slowing down the rate of economic growth. Hence, the EPRDF had to choose either a liberalized political economy regardless of its immediate security and developmental ramifications; or pursue an authoritarian developmental approach regardless of its ramifications for democracy and long-term stability. Thus, as an actor that securitised democracy and development, the best EPRDF can do, given its nature, was to choose one approach, while also devising mechanisms through which the adverse security effects of this choice would have been prevented. The EPRDF, indeed, chose the authoritarian developmental model though this was not coupled with measures targeted at ameliorating the adverse effects of this choice.

The EPRDF chose the authoritarian developmental approach not necessarily after careful consideration of the alternative scenarios, but because of its leftist ideology. With a leftist background and its belief in a vanguardist order, the EPRDF was not sympathetic to a liberal-leaning political order. Rather, it believed that the liberal approach, in which open political competition would primarily be between political parties, would neither bring democracy nor peace and development.¹¹⁴ Therefore, even when it opened the political space, as was the case in the 2005 experiment in a democratic election, it did so expecting to win the election.¹¹⁵ When it realised that this experiment failed to comfortably secure its power, the EPRDF ignored the democratic agenda. Hence, to an extent, the EPRDF managed the threats discussed earlier in this study in an undemocratic way because the measures needed it to reconcile peace, democracy and development conflict with each other. However, the tensions between the various measures needed to realise peace, democracy and development should not be taken as the sole explanation for the EPRDF's undemocratic management of threats and enemies. Its prioritization of political survival over other goals was also a factor. This practice was evident from its failure to undertake two key measures.

First, had the EPRDF's concern been solely for democracy and development, it would have pursued an economic development model that ensures sustainable growth and fair distribution of development benefits. Second, it would have taken measures that address the conflict generating potential of authoritarian developmentalism. The EPRDF took none of these measures. Its economic growth was largely the result of expansion in government investment while durable growth would only be secured through a robust private sector engagement. Far

¹¹⁴. EPRDF, *ልማት ዲሞክራሲ እና አብዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ (Development, democracy and revolutionary democracy)*.

¹¹⁵. ኢህዲድ ከምስረታ (EPRDF from establishment).

from being an engine of growth, the private sector was severely undermined and administratively harassed by the EPRDF for fear of its political influence. The EPRDF was also afflicted with pervasive rent-seeking and, therefore, those members who benefitted from the growth process were largely those connected with the EPRDF. As noted earlier, the EPRDF believed that the fight against chauvinism/narrow-ism and radicalism would not succeed without successfully fighting rent-seeking, antidemocracy and corruption. Hence, had its utmost concern been democracy and development, the EPRDF would have hinged its measures against these threats on the progress of its fight against issues such as rent-seeking and corruption. The EPRDF did not do so and, therefore, its utmost concern cannot be claimed to be democracy and development.

Moreover, the EPRDF also failed to take measures that would address the conflict generating potential of authoritarian developmentalism. As it claimed (a matter also supported by the reviewed literature) an authoritarian developmental approach would lead to violence and instability through the exclusion, marginalization and repression of rival ethnic or religious groups.¹¹⁶ Authoritarian developmentalism would establish a “limited access order” whereby access to political and economic opportunities would rather be limited to some elites, thereby generating grievances.¹¹⁷ Though, on occasion, the EPRDF would ensure stability based mostly upon the repression of potential contenders, this approach would not be long lasting. This practice applies more so for countries such as Ethiopia that have a large and diverse population with, at times, divergent interests and contradictory narratives of statehood.¹¹⁸ The prospect of peace in this system, therefore, was contingent on the measures that the EPRDF would have taken to ameliorate the conflict generating potential of its authoritarian model of governance. A key measure in this regard would have been devising some mechanisms of power-sharing. Though the constitution has such a mechanism, it was not implemented by the EPRDF mainly because doing so was against the hegemony of the TPLF. Power-sharing would have required the TPLF leaders to give the Oromo and the Amhara wing of the EPRDF greater power, measures that are antithetical to its hegemony. Many of the ethnic slurs directed at those individuals tortured by the TPLF fraction of the EPRDF, its suspicion of other member parties

¹¹⁶. Stefan Lindemann, "Do Inclusive Elite Bargains Matter? A Research Framework for Understanding the Causes of Civil War in Sub-Saharan Africa," (*Cisis Research Discussion Paper 15*, 2008), <https://www.lse.ac.uk/international-development/Assets/Documents/PDFs/csdc-discussion-papers/dp15-Do-Inclusive-Elite-Bargains-Matter.pdf>.

¹¹⁷. C. North Douglass, Joseph John, Walis, and R. Weingast Barry, *Violence and Social Order: A Conceptual Framework for Interpreting Recorded Human History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

¹¹⁸. Tadesse, Kifle, and Desta, "Evolving State Building Conversations."

of the EPRDF, and its dominance of Ethiopia's security apparatus are all indicative of the TPLF elite's prioritization of its political survival.

In a nutshell, the EPRDF managed threats in an undemocratic manner due to the challenges of the simultaneous pursuit of peace, democracy and development and its prioritization of concerns other than democracy and development. This other concern had to do with the political survival of a government dominated by the TPLF. Due to these factors, when suggested measures appeared to entrench the EPRDF's ability to hold onto power, they were unfailingly implemented whereas when they were perceived as undermining its power, they were ignored. As indicated earlier in this study, for instance, the identification of enemies based upon broad definitions of chauvinism, narrow-ism and religious radicalism was unfailingly followed whereas the democratic handling of these threats was ignored. Hence, the logic of securitisation whereby democracy and development were to be pursued as an existential concern was relegated to secondary importance. This practice poses a number of implications for the securitisation literature.

First, in translating securitisation discourses into practice, the central issue was the concern of the dominant actor within the coalition (the securitising actor) and, to a lesser degree, the nature of the issue securitised. As pointed out previously in this study, securitisation inspired measures that undermine the interest of the dominant coalition (TPLF/EPRDF) (the securitising actor) would not be implemented, whereas those that advance it were enacted even using securitisation as a pretext. The nature of the threat was also important because it mediates whether the securitising actor pursues it without compromising other goals. In the case examined in this study, the securitisation of democracy and development by an exclusionary coalition means that measures needed to herald peace, democracy and development were in tension. These goals can only be simultaneously pursued when the ruling coalition is fairly broad enough (which was not the case in TPLF dominated EPRDF). Hence, the best the coalition could do was to compromise one over the other and yet take measures that ameliorated the conflict generating potential of the aspect not pursued. Though the EPRDF aspired for the authoritarian and yet developmental alternative, it neither pursued measures that sustain development nor those that address the conflict generating potential of the lack of democracy. This situation occurred because the above measures were perceived by the TPLF to undermine its hegemony and control over the politics and economy of Ethiopia. Hence, the centrality of the concern of the securitising actor and, to a lesser degree, the kind of threat securitised.

Contrary to this finding, the securitisation literature dominantly emphasises the security speech acts/discourses, and audiences and its acceptance. However, security speech acts and audience acceptance has limited utility in discriminating between issues that will be pursued in an extraordinary way over those that are not pursued in a similar manner

Second, the idea that the reason an actor securitizes an issue would mediate what consequences follow from such securitisation emerged as a valid argument. Owing to the fact the concern in defining threats and identifying enemies was dominantly the survival of a party (the EPRDF) dominated by the TPLF, the concern animating the conduct of the EPRDF in handling these threats remained its survival rather than ensuring democratic and developmental outcomes. Because of this concern, when the issue definition tends to victimize the EPRDF's opponent, it was unflinchingly implemented whereas when it required the EPRDF to act democratically it was ignored. This observation directly leads to a third key point that the normative utility of securitisation is strongly mediated by the concerns of the ruling TPLF/EPRDF coalition and, hence, the need to go beyond the simplistic argument of whether securitisation is good or bad as the debate between scholars of the Welsh School of Critical Security Studies and the Copenhagen School, alluded to in chapter one of this study, indicates. Finally, neither imbuing an issue with a securitising discourse would necessarily garner utmost attention to the issue nor would the lack of it necessarily deny it such attention. The EPRDF's survival was pursued as a matter of priority though not imbued with security discourses whereas democracy and development imbued with security discourses were not pursued with the utmost attention.

8.7. Conclusions

In order to scrutinise whether the EPRDF acted in a way an actor that securitised democracy and development would have acted, this chapter analyses the concerns underpinning the threat definition and enemy identification of the EPRDF. The findings indicates that the EPRDF was already viewing the threats identified as problems of serious concern long before the securitisation discourse was introduced. What the securitisation discourse changed was the justification as to why these threats and enemies were considered in such a way that they were framed as a threat to the democratic and developmental agenda of the EPRDF. Hence, what the securitisation of democracy and development changed in Ethiopia was the EPRDF's logics of justification rather than its logics of action. Its logics of action was primarily driven by concern for the political survival of an ethnically narrow ruling coalition (TPLF/EPRDF). To

this effect, the broad definition of threats and the identification of enemies based upon that was pursued, whereas the proclaimed democratic ways of handling these threats were ignored.

The findings, as were anticipated in chapter one of this study, had a number of implications for the securitisation perspective. They challenge the securitisation literature's emphasis on security speech acts/discourses and audience, rather suggesting a reinterpretation of the relations between the various components of the securitisation perspective. Security speech acts and the audience have limited utility in discriminating between issues that were pursued in an extraordinary way and those that are pursued with less zeal. Hence, the test of securitisation needs to go beyond the speech act and the audience. While the securitisation perspective mostly recentres the speech act/discourse and the audience, the result rather points to the importance of the securitising actor and the kind of threat securitised. Hence, the potential to enrich the securitisation perspective drawing from different cases and threats is still open, notwithstanding decades of the refinement and extension of the theory of securitisation.

Chapter Nine

Conversations of Theories of Securitisations and Securitising Practices: By Way of Conclusion

9.1. Introduction

This concluding chapter of this thesis summarizes the key findings of the study and articulates the contribution of the study to the securitisation perspective. As stated in chapter one, the study of outcomes of securitisation of development and democracy in Ethiopia (1991-2018) was inspired by the type of issues securitised and the home-grown nature of the process. Because of these factors, the study of the Ethiopian case would require re-centring the securitising actor and its concerns. Since extant approaches to securitisation placed the centre of gravity of their theory either in the speech act or the audience,¹ this re-centring process would shift the relationship between the various elements of the securitisation perspective. The re-centring of the securitising actor and its concerns also helps to fill three other loopholes in the securitisation perspective. First, it helps to account security driven behaviours of actors that are not necessarily justified by or imbued with security speech acts/discourses. A securitisation perspective reliant on the speech act and/or security discourse cannot explain such behaviours. Second, it sheds light on the normative debates on securitisation by expounding upon the prospects and limits of “emancipatory securitisation”, a securitisation that enhances societal welfare.² Third, a framework used to analyse outcomes of securitisation of democracy and development, relying upon actors` concern also helps to connect the bifurcated elements of the theory of securitisation, that is, between the process leading to securitisation and what follows thereafter. Studying outcomes of securitisation of democracy and development by re-centring the securitising actor and its concerns, therefore, constitutes a fruitful addition to the literature on securitisation.

With the above aims being the focus of this study, a framework that examines the logics of actions of the EPRDF is developed. The EPRDF` logics of action is then analysed both in introducing the securitisation of democracy and development and the subsequent pursuit of programmes and policies devised to realise these existential goals. Logics of actions is conceptualized as concerns that underpin the EPRDF`s definition of problem situations and/or

¹. Stritzel Holger, *Security in Translation*, (, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014); Stritzel, "Towards Theory of Securitisation."

². Booth, *Theory of World Security*.

policies, and the implementation of measures required by the policy. An approach on how these concerns can be identified and analysed, both at the stage of issue definition and policy implementation is elaborated in chapter two of this study. This approach is then applied to analyse the origin and outcomes of securitisation of democracy and development in Ethiopia. The outcome of securitisation is analysed in the three themes of fighting rent-seeking, intra-party governance and mobilization, and threat definition and enemy identification of the EPRDF. These themes are chosen because the securitisation of democracy and development is expected to dominantly influence the way the EPRDF operates in these three areas. In the coming sections, the result analysed so far is summarized and the contribution to the literature on securitisation is explored.

9.2. Summary of Key Findings

The results of the findings of this study, in general, can be summarized in the following four major points. First, the issue definition in the aforementioned areas was characterized by conflicting concerns in which ushering in democratic and developmental outcomes was just one. Democratic and developmental concerns compete with entrenching the EPRDF's ability to hold onto power through delegitimising and demonizing the oppositions. The only exception to this was the concern inspiring the framing of intra-party governance and mobilization wherein the sole concern was instituting a democratic and developmental EPRDF (see section 6.4. above). Though the EPRDF argued that its survival was complementary to the existential pursuit of democracy and development, this was not necessarily the case. When the two goals conflict, the leaders of the EPRDF were inclined to an instinctive prioritization of the party's survival over democratic and developmental ends. This approach, in a sense, was the result of the EPRDF's failure to appreciate the balance between individuals and collective interests. As a result, the EPRDF would best pursue its enlightened self-interest by pursuing democracy and development as a matter of urgency. However, loss of power and position was also, as the EPRDF later grudgingly acknowledged, existential for many of the leaders throughout all levels of the EPRDF. Hence, this self-interest resulted in conflict between democratic and developmental concerns and concerns relating to the EPRDF's survival. The fact that this conflict of logics was reflected at the very outset of issue definition would, by necessity, imply a conflict of logics at the stage of implementation. The reason why an issue is securitised was, therefore, bound to shape the outcome of such securitisation.

Second, concerns that underpinned the implementation of policies and programmes significantly diverged from the democratic and developmental concerns articulated in the issue definition/policy. Though the EPRDF frequently expressed its commitment to fight rent-seeking, it simultaneously was immersed in corruption and unproductive relations with Ethiopia's business community. The label "rent-seeker" was grossly misapplied against the opponents of the EPRDF. Likewise, the commitment to establish and maintain a democratic and developmental organisation was not followed in almost all the elements identified to be relevant to this practice—be it the issue of intra-party democracy, evaluation, criticism and self-criticism or the recruitment and development of leaders – all were not undertaken as per the issue definition. Similarly, though the EPRDF proclaimed that it would fight rent-seekers, chauvinists, narrow nationalists, religious radicals and neoliberals in a way that respects the democratic rights of these forces, in practice a repressive approach that violated basic rights was followed. It is interesting to note that this deviation from the policy in the process of implementation was observed both in cases in which the problem definition did not justify such measures and in those that were justified by the issue definition. The implication of this deviation could be interpreted in two ways. First, it could mean that an issue definition and a framing of problem, including speech acts, has little influence on the subsequent practices. Second, and more plausibly, it could mean democratic and developmental issue definition was not sufficient for a single-handed pursuit of democracy and development.

Issue definition alone is not sufficient for such a process because human actions are as much inspired by needs and concerns, as by what is inter-subjectively agreed to. The insufficiency of inter-subjective agreement for subsequent practices became apparent with regard to the manner in which the EPRDF acted according to the issue definition which was usually in areas that either helped it suffocate the opposition or would not pose a challenge to the EPRDF's hold on power. The broad definition of chauvinism, narrow-ism, radicalism and the identification of enemies based upon these definitions was, for instance, unfailingly implemented because such an action would help the EPRDF muffle dissenting voices. Similarly, measures aimed at improving the lives of the rural population through expanding health coverage, education, rural infrastructure, agricultural extension and electricity expansion was combined with those necessary to entrench the EPRDF's control through these economic dividends.

Third, in almost all cases where the EPRDF had to frame actors outside the party, it ensured that these actors were at very least delegitimised as undemocratic and un-developmental in their vision and character. The EPRDF's undemocratic and un-developmental behaviours were, on the other hand, presented as having emanated from "implementation problems" and "errors of our incipient democracy".³ Hence, the same behaviour by an EPRDF party member and by a member of an opposition party would have a different meaning. However, the framing did not overtly suggest repressing the opposition parties, without, of course, overlooking the very thin line between delegitimising them and justifying their repression.

Finally, prioritization of the political survival of the TPLF dominated EPRDF was the core reason why there was a disjuncture between issue definition and practice. As a result of this incompatibility, state institutions, the economy and, above all, the security apparatus was dominated by the TPLF members within the EPRDF. This dominance, in turn, was used to exclude, marginalize and even arrest and torture any dissenting voices both within and outside the EPRDF. This practice also deinstitutionalized the government and the EPRDF whereby certain key personalities of member parties within the EPRDF were co-opted and others coerced. The result of such action has been pervasive rent-seeking, undemocratic governance and the repression of the opposition parties and any other form of dissent. Though other member parties and structural factors had some role in this practice, the core factor remained this hegemonic aspiration of the TPLF and key personalities within it.

Before concluding this summary of the main findings of this study, two objections challenging the argument that the EPRDF's survival was prioritised over the democratization and development of Ethiopia has to be addressed. First, a potential critique might argue that the EPRDF's behaviour emanated from its revolutionary democratic ideology, which considers any other actor outside the EPRDF as a force of destruction. Ideological explanation, however, is unsatisfactory. The basic precepts of this ideology (for instance, the need to refrain from rent-seeking) were blatantly violated when the interests of the EPRDF or its key personalities were threatened. Hence, political and economic interests dominated ideological commitments. The ideology simply furnished relevant conceptual tools that set the context for the pursuit of the EPRDF's interests. The EPRDF used the ideology to selectively draw from its tenets to justify its self-serving behaviours. The inner-debates within the EPRDF concur with this

³. EPRDF, *ዲሞክራሲ እና ዲሞክራሲያዊ አንድነት* (Democracy and democratic unity).

statement because these indicate the EPRDF's acknowledgement of its deviation from the party/s ideology.

Second, inferring from Ethiopia's broad-based and robust growth, registered scholars argue that developmentalism was the dominant concern of the EPRDF.⁴ This assertion, however, is misplaced. To begin with, the EPRDF claimed that it became developmental only when it effectively fought rent-seeking. The biggest hindrance against democratizing and developing the Ethiopian state, the EPRDF presumed, was rent-seeking.⁵ Without eliminating rent-seeking and its sources, the EPRDF believed, development could not be realised and democracy could not be sustained.⁶ The pervasiveness of rent-seeking, as admitted by the EPRDF, indicates that EPRDF did not act in a manner that prioritised developmentalism. The fact that rapid growth was realised does not necessarily mean the issue of development was securitised. The key issue to look at rather is whether the EPRDF had acted considering developmentalism as a matter of urgency which, as it admitted, was not the case. The study informants also largely concur with this view. They argue that the EPRDF did not pursue economic development as an existential concern, which they evidenced from the lack of commitment for the sustainability of the growth process and its fair distribution. The distribution process, these study informants argue, was largely unfair, benefiting those who cannot compete in free competition. Moreover, the process of growth was not sustainable because it was not benefiting the Ethiopian people at large who, therefore, reacted by burning factories and expelling investors from their areas. Hence, measured in relation to how the EPRDF claimed it would have acted and the views of the study informants, the EPRDF's main concern in the managing the economy had not even been ensuring developmentalism. Development was primarily sought for the EPRDF's survival which, therefore, was compromised when aspects of this practice went against the EPRDF's political agenda.

In general, when the EPRDF's logics of action is assessed by the three-fold distinction introduced in chapter two (section 2.3.2.2.3. above), they oscillate between fragmented, coherent and yet insincere logics. Aspects of the issue definition in these three areas were insincerely used to delegitimise opponents and silence dissent within the EPRDF's party-state. Other aspects with the potential for democratizing and developing Ethiopia were left

⁴. Gebresenbet, "Securitisation of Development"; Fiseha, "Federalism, Development."

⁵. EPRDF, *ልማት ዲሞክራሲ እና አብዮታዊ ዲሞክራሲ (Development, democracy and revolutionary democracy)*.

⁶. Ibid.

unimplemented or half-heartedly enacted, creating a fragmented logics of issue definition and policy implementation.

9.3. Contributions of the Study

Developing a framework that recentres the securitising actor and its concerns, the study makes four contributions to the study of securitisation by re-centring the concern of the securitising actor. First, it indicates that securitisation study needs to go beyond its reliance on the speech act and audience acceptance. Second, the study makes a justifiable case for bridging the securitisation`s literature divide between the trigger and outcomes of securitisation. Third, the study indicates the need to nuance the normative debate on securitisation in general and whether there can be “emancipatory” securitisation in particular. Finally, the empirical application of the framework also underscores the need to conceptualize security and securitisation in a way that is less reliant on the speech act and the audience. These contributions are revisited in the subsequent sections.

9.3.1. The Centrality of the Concern of the Securitising actors/ruling coalitions and its Concerns

The centre of gravity of the securitisation perspective, as noted earlier in this study, is either the speech act or the audience. However, this study demonstrates that speech acts and the audience acceptance cannot tell whether an issue would be handled in an extraordinary way or not. Issues that were not imbued with security speech acts were pursued as a matter of urgency, whereas those that were imbued with security speech acts and command audience acceptance were not pursued as such. Hence, the criteria of securitisation need to go beyond the speech act and the audience acceptance theories. Relying on the logics of action approach, the study rather indicates that the securitising actor and its concern (whether couched in security terms or otherwise) should be at the centre of any approach to securitisation if the latter is to have real-world political consequences. Before expounding on this point, however, it is important to comment that the term “securitising actor” is understood in the sense that a human agent making a security speech act has inadequacies. When actors of a certain organisational position attempt to securitize, they are speaking not as an individual but on behalf of the organisation. Moreover, once a security issue is incorporated into policy, there will be multiple actors speaking security and, therefore, multiple securitising actors. In such situations, the idea of a ruling coalition would rather be preferable because it treats the coalition as a composite entity. The idea of “securitising actor” is highly agent-centric, thus, dissociating the context within

which actors act, on behalf of whom they are acting, and as part of which groups they articulate security discourses.

Regardless of the above comments, the concern of this ruling TPLF/EPRDF coalition or, at least, a dominant force within it, is the very key in translating security discourses into practices. In the case under study, the logics underpinning the action of the EPRDF party-state remained other than democracy and development because the dominant coalition of the EPRDF (or at least key personalities within it) pursued narrow political and economic interests. The EPRDF's failure to uproot pervasive rent-seeking, establish and maintain a democratic and developmental EPRDF, and democratically manage dissent were all, in the main, due to this factor. This fact points to the centrality of the concerns of the securitising actor(s) in translating threat articulations into practical measures. This aspect notwithstanding, the securitisation literature does not give sufficient attention to the securitising actor and its concerns, due to the scholars' presumption that the motive of the actor cannot be satisfactorily pinned down.⁷ Alluding to other writers, Balzacq argues that identifying intention is notoriously difficult because it is hard to tell whether actors mean what they say.⁸ Moreover, these scholars reliance on discourse analysis whereby language is taken to be almost everything precluded attention to the intention of the actor. With regard to this belief, Wæver, for instance, argues that "if one stretches discourse analysis to telling us what people think, and why they do what they do... numerous problems and unjustified inferences emerge."⁹ Hence, when this literature deals with the securitising actor, it focuses mainly on its power position rather than on its concern and that its effect is mainly on whether an issue will be securitised or not. Whether the securitising act will have an effect afterwards is left vague. Even if one can potentially extend the effect of this event even to the implementation of measures, this extension does not adequately explain the outcome of securitisation.

To take an example from this case, the securitised issues of democracy and development were not given the urgency given for regime survival, an issue that was not discursively securitised. The securitisation framework explains this state of affairs in terms of the power position of the securitising actor, the acceptance or otherwise of the audience, and the contextual elements associated with the threat. These elements, however, do not sufficiently and appropriately

⁷ Floyd, *Security and the Environment*.

⁸ Balzacq, "Enquiries into Methods."

⁹ Ole Waever, "Identity, Communities and Foreign Policy: Discourse Analysis as Foreign Policy Theory," in *European Integration and National Identity: The Challenge of the Nordic State*, ed. Lene Hansen and Ole Waever (London: Routledge, 2002), p.27.

explain the fact that democracy and development were not pursued by the EPRDF as matters of urgency. To begin with, the actor securitising democracy and development was at the apex of the EPRDF and Ethiopia's security organisation. Because of this, it had substantial control over the economic, political and security apparatus of Ethiopia. Hence, the EPRDF did not necessarily fail to pursue democracy and development as a top priority because it lacked the power to materialize its discursive actions. Similarly, the contestations both within and outside the EPRDF indicate that the existential challenge posed by the lack of development and democracy was accepted by all actors of influence. This fact rules out the lack of audience acceptance as an explanation for the above conundrum. Though context has some explanatory merit, it was peripheral compared to the other factors.

The core explanation for this conundrum rather rests in the concerns and goals of the securitising actor, a factor that was overlooked by the reviewed securitisation literature. What undermined the pursuit of democracy and development was the conflict between the EPRDF's concern to survive in power with its desire to spearhead democratic developmentalism. At the core of the ruling coalition was a powerful ethnically organised group, the TPLF, that would not trust the other coalition member parties. At the same time, it needed them to administer the areas populated by the Amhara and the Oromo peoples. It reconciled these two demands by side-lining independent thinkers within each of the two member-parties of the EPRDF. At the same time, it sought to create a strongly controlled and monitored party that was democratically governed and developmentally oriented but hostile to the opposition parties. This aim, however, was not pursued in practice. While remaining hostile to the opposition parties and their constituencies, it remained bereft of democratic and developmental orientations. Hence, the measures needed to ensure this specific nature of the TPLF/EPRDF coalition intact were not compatible with the measures that should be taken to democratize and develop the country. The result was a coalition that, in practice, securitizes regime survival rather than democracy and development.

The mainstream approach to securitisation cannot explain situations whereby the security driven behaviours of actor are camouflaged under a non-security discourse. While this approach acknowledges that the securitising actor uses security discourse for self-serving ends, it does not anticipate the converse of this action where non-security discourses and other embodied practices are used to pursue a security agenda. However, accounting for the latter is essential if the concept of securitisation is to have real-world political consequences, which the

notion logics of action seeks to capture. The logics of action approach to securitisation indicates that the consequentiality of security discourses depends upon the balances of goals and concerns that the securitising actor might have—not in the speech act nor even in the audience response. Developing a framework that re-centres the concerns of the securitising actor to account for both open and hidden security agenda of the securitising actor, therefore, is a key contribution of this study.

9.3.2. Logics of Actions, the “Why” of Securitisation and its Outcomes

The logics of action approach’s focusing on the securitising actors’ concerns also helps to successfully integrate the effect of why an actor securitizes an issue on what outcomes follow it. From the securitisation theorists’ perspective, these were disjointed issues because the centre of gravity of their theory lies either in the speech act or the audience. When the key factors are these two elements, why an actor securitised an issue is rendered irrelevant for what follows on from the securitisation of that issue. Whatever the intention of the securitising actor, nothing will follow unless the speech act is successfully completed or if the audience does not accept it. As a result of this misplaced centre of gravity in the prevailing approach to securitisation, theorists were not able to develop a perspective that connects why an issue is securitised with what effect such an action would have, items which rather are separately theorized. For example, in theorizing “power” in the securitisation process, Langenohl, developed two conceptions of power in securitisation; one dealing with the power to securitize and the other dealing with the power of securitisation.¹⁰ Moreover, these approaches to securitisation take for granted that once an issue is securitised, the issue is bound to be taken outside the realm of normal politics. Hence, they did not see the need to theorize outcomes of securitisation as they were also not interested in what gives rise to securitisation.

What the securitising actor intends to achieve by securitising an issue and the influence of this intention on the subsequent process was thus overlooked. This omission is regrettable for the reason that securitisation is, by and large, a wilful, deliberate and strategic action made with the intention of achieving a certain declared or hidden goal(s). As an intentional act, what the securitising actor aims to achieve by securitising an issue shapes the ramifications of securitisation. Hence, this wilful action and its outcome have to be the centre of analysis

¹⁰. Andreas Langenohl, "Dynamics of Power in Securitisation: Towards a Relational Understanding," in *Conceptualizing Power in Dynamics of Securitisation: Beyond State and International System*, ed. Regina Kreide and Andreas Langenohl (Germany: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft 2019) 25-66.

deploying an approach suited to this end. The logics of action approach developed in this thesis contributes to this understanding by relating the why of securitisation with what securitisation does. By identifying concerns inspiring (in)actions, the logics of action approach also helps to discriminate between the use and abuse of securitisation. This method also would help identify whether the concerns of securitising an issue and the measures taken based on that securitisation was self-regarding or other-regarding.

Relying on the framework, the study identified what the EPRDF sought to achieve by using the security discourse in relation to democracy and development. It indicates that the securitisation of democracy and development was a reaction to division within the TPLF. It also indicates that the emergence of the securitisation of democracy and development was partly due to the need to defend the Prime Minister Meles's decision in the Ethio-Eritrea civil war. Given this origin, the same security discourse, thus, was meant to be used to realise democratic and developmental outcomes, while at the same time being instrumental in delegitimising political opponents and dissents. Consequently, the issue definition was enmeshed with contradictory logics in which the logic of political survival was prioritised over democratic and developmental goals. This dual rationale for the emergence of the discourse contributed to the way policy suggestions needed to democratize and develop Ethiopia were (not)implemented. Why an actor securitised an issue, in the first place, therefore, contributed to the measures taken subsequently.

The exception to the reviewed literature on securitisation that glosses over the need to connect the bifurcated aspect is Floyd's work on the securitisation of the environment discussed in chapter two of this study whereby she underscored the importance of the (in)sincerity of the securitising actor.¹¹ While concurring with Floyd, this study proffers richer and nuanced analysis of the origin and outcomes of securitisation by transcending the binary and potentially simplistic sincere/insincere dichotomy. The study completed this exploration by analysing concerns of actors that inspired action whereby a number of not necessarily complementary concerns were identified. These concerns drive both the introduction of a securitised approach to democracy and development in Ethiopia and the implementation or the lack thereof of democratic and developmental policies.

¹¹. Floyd, *Security and the Environment*.

9.3.3. Empowering/Emancipatory Securitisation?

Whether securitisation can be deployed for an emancipatory goal is contested. On the one hand, the powerful symbolism and aura of danger and urgency associated with the word “security” can be ostensibly used for transformative ends. Securitisation, therefore, can improve societal welfare and security. At the core of the Welsh School of Critical Security Studies has been this conviction.¹² Securitisation can be used for emancipatory ends when the analyst securitizes on behalf of the voiceless, while also analysing the dynamics of insecurity.¹³ The securitisation of democracy and development in Ethiopia, issues that have wider ramifications to improve the lives of ordinary people, is used as an entry point to empirically engage this assumption. The result points to the need to nuance the argument by shifting the explanatory power from the discourse of security to the concerns of the ruling coalition/securitising actor. The EPRDF survival, which was not discursively imbued with the word “security”, was pursued with a degree of attention surpassing that given for institutionalizing democracy and realizing development. Hence, the social welfare and security benefit that can be gained through the “magical” use of language should not be exaggerated. More than securitisation *per se* what mattered most was the concern underpinning the securitisation processes and the subsequent measures (not)taken to secure the threatened entity.

In, and of itself, the securitisation of democracy and development did not shape the conduct of the EPRDF. Although the EPRDF time and again, expressed commitment for these two goals, which were taken as existential issues, the balances of concern informing its conduct prioritise regime survival. Regime survival was pursued even when this action tended to undermine the democratization and developmental goals of the EPRDF. The securitisation discourse was also abused to undermine Ethiopia’s democratic governance goals by castigating political opponents and dissenting voices as antidemocratic and rent-seekers. Hence, the securitisation of an issue that potentially empowers the disadvantaged and voiceless does not necessarily lead to an empowering outcome.

However, the above claim should not be taken to mean that securitisation is normatively undesirable, which requires prognosticating what would have happened in Ethiopia without the EPRDF’s securitisation of development and democracy. Deploying such counter-factual

¹². "Towards a Consequentialist Evaluation of Security: Bringing Together the Copenhagen and the Welsh Schools of Security Studies," *Review of International Studies* 33, no. 2 (2007).

¹³. "Human Security and the Copenhagen School’s Securitisation Approach: Conceptualizing Human Security as a Securitising Move," *Human Security Journal* 5 (2007).

thinking, one would argue, at least on issues and areas that would not undermine the TPLF/EPRDF ruling coalition's power, developmental and democratizing measures were taken. Some of these measures would not have been undertaken with the level of vigour they were executed without the securitisation of development and democracy. The massive investment and concern for the agricultural extension system might not have been possible without the securitisation of development. Likewise, the massive investment in pro-poor sectors and infrastructure probably would not have been this high without the securitised way of approaching development. As noted in chapter four of this study, the pro-poor sector accounted for up to 70% of government expenditure, a significant part of which was on capital expenditure necessary to push forward the growth processes.¹⁴The introduction of the EPRDF's leadership succession programme would also probably not be part of the equation without a securitised way of understanding development and democracy.

Hence, securitisation of democracy and development was Janus faced: even as it was abused, it also produced some welfare-enhancing outcomes for Ethiopia, depending upon the threat securitised. If there is no conflict of concerns and goals, securitisation of empowering issues would be a force for good. However, if the securitising actor has other concerns that must be prioritised, it could hijack the securitisation discourse for a self-serving agenda. This result necessitates a political economy analysis of who loses and who gains from the securitisation processes. So long as those who gains are the least well off, securitisation could be normatively desirable even as the securitising actors abuse it for entrenching its power. The normativity of securitisation practices, therefore, should not be restricted to asking a blunt question of whether securitisation is good or bad in general. It should do a fine-grained analysis of who losses, who gains and in what ways.

9.3.4. Conceptualizing Securitisation: Inter-Subjectivity, Modality of Handling Threats, and Actor-Threat Interface

Though the study started deploying a modified definition of securitisation drawn from the reviewed literature, the result points to the need for reconceptualizing securitisation. As the review in chapter two (section 2.2. above) indicates, two ideal conceptualizations of securitisation would be identified from the extant work, each with its own strengths and shortcomings. This study suggests a third notion drawing from the results of the study and synthesizing this information with these two definitions. The first way of conceptualizing

¹⁴. OECD/PSI, *Rural Development Strategy*.

securitisation is by focusing on a discursively established inter-subjective agreement on what constitutes a threat. This discursive approach, in emphasising inter-subjectivity, argues that securitisation is an inter-subjective agreement that an issue/actor constituted a threat. The approach, thus, analyses “how security problems emerge and dissolve”¹⁵ by relying on security discourses/speech acts, and the associated inter-subjective process. The strength of this approach would be the acceptance that threats are socially constructed and, therefore, can be envisioned differently. It helps explicate how some issues come to acquire the policy relevance concerns of some actors, while others do not lead to such an eventuality. However, it also has a drawback. Security can only be a relevant frame of analysis different from other frames if its ramifications are different from a non-security way of approaching an issue. If securitisation is restricted to this inter-subjective agreement, the label “security” would be unable to exclude those practices without having any meaningful effect on the way issues are handled. In other words, security can be as inconsequential as it could be powerful, thus incorporating contradictory features.

In the case under scrutiny in this study, for instance, the securitisation of the EPRDF’s survival was not discursively securitised. The EPRDF rather claimed that it viewed political power as a means to serve the people of Ethiopia, and was ready to leave power if and when they failed to serve the people.¹⁶ However, when one examines why the EPRDF was immersed in rent-seeking and undemocratic governance, including repression of dissent, one cannot help but conclude that these behaviours would only emerge from an actor that securitizes the government’s survival. This opinion can be reflected in the repression of any form of dissent, contravening even the EPRDF’s ideology. To ensure its survival, every conceivable norm and rule was violated, issues of long-term development were ignored, human rights violated, repressive laws introduced and even innocent citizens disappeared or were tortured and killed. Since these measures were targeted at the EPRDF’s critics and dissidents, nothing other than a perception of risk to the party/government’s survival would be the rationale for implementing them. Moreover, the measures were no less than an extraordinary way of approaching dissent. They contravened even values and goals the EPRDF declared to be sacrosanct. Hence, the party/government’s survival was practically securitised although what was discursively securitised was democracy and development.

¹⁵. Sarah and Christian, "Reconceptualizing the Audience."

¹⁶. EPRDF, "የአመራር መተካካት በኢሃዲግ (Leadership succession in EPRDF)," *አዲስ ራዲዮ (New Vision)* 2, no. 6 (2001 EC).

A focus on securitisation as discourse missed these extra-discursive securitisation practices. The EPRDF did not undertake its extraordinary measures against dissidents in the name of ensuring its survival because it could not reasonably defend its legitimate right to exist while claiming to be democratic. At the same time, it could not ignore the goal of political survival, not only because without this aim, the privileges associated with political dominance would be lost, but also the prospect of being liable for past abuses could not be ruled out. The EPRDF's survival was thus existential, not just for the political system but also for its leader as individuals. Hence, to ensure the EPRDF's political survival another justifiable reason had to be chosen. This process entailed framing its repression and criminalization of dissent as measures aimed at ensuring the rule of law and not as the introduction of extraordinary measure to ensure the EPRDF's survival.

The second conceptualization of security would have at its core, the mode of handling an issue/force. From this perspective, a distinctive aspect of security issues is the way issues so labelled are handled. More specifically, it is the sense of urgency and the extent to which the government's legal, political and economic resources are mobilized to handle such issues. According to this approach, there is securitisation when extraordinary measures that otherwise would not have been possible were introduced. Whether the threat was imbued with a discursive articulation of security languages would not be a matter of concern, what one has to consider is if an issue is handled in such a way that only an issue/actor deemed threat is handled in that specific way. This approach captures the way the EPRDF acted towards those parties/people who endangered its survival whereby it ostensibly managed them as threats, deploying what would amount to extraordinary ways of handling such issues. Hence, one can infer that dissent was securitised for the EPRDF's survival. The manner in which the Paris School's security professionals identify, securitize and manage threats partly falls in line with this approach.¹⁷

The difficulty of the above approach has been how to differentiate practices and behaviours that signal a threat orientation to an issue/actor from those that do not. The Paris School's approach to securitisation sought to overcome this dilemma by focusing on the practices of security professionals. This practice, however, is not a satisfactory answer when viewed in light of the case under study. The range of extraordinary measures introduced by the EPRDF to secure the party/government's survival were not simply those that were undertaken by security

¹⁷. Bigo, "The (in)Securitisation Practices."

actors. Those involved in such practices included other actors such as the government/party's media, the legislature and the court system. It is these widespread measures transcending a single institution that gave the EPRDF's action its extraordinary character and hence the assertion of securitisation of the party/government's survival. Hence, partly to overcome the drawbacks of this conceptualization in relation to the case under study, a third conceptualization is suggested, which potentially amalgamates the other two approaches.

9.3.4.1. Alternative Conceptualization

The suggested alternative conceptualization that is drawn from the scrutiny of the case under study, entails a two-step process. First, an issue is securitised when an actor (organisational or not) approaches an issue as a threat, either through language or action. Hence, the focus is on the interface between actor and threat. Securitisation involves agents developing a cognitive and emotional orientation to an issue or actor deemed a danger and, hence, the need to zoom in on that actor. It is also about threat (not any other inter-subjective agreement on what security is) because the word "security" acquired its power due to its association with danger to existence. Corroborating this fact is the received wisdom from psychology which argues that humans are more inspired to action by the prospect of losing what they have rather than the prospect of gaining what they do not possess.¹⁸ This argument points to the fact that securitisation that speaks to the aspiration of those for whom the securitising speech acts are made (as in the case of security as emancipation) might be less successful than securitisation that rather speaks to the fears of those for whom the securitisation speech acts are made. Hence, this view implies the need to associate securitisation with a definition of threats. This definition is the minimum and all-inclusive definition of securitisation, which needs to be complemented by a second stage process of bringing back the concern/goal of why one needs to analyse this actor-threat interface.

Hence, the second step in the above practice involves a decision by the analyst regarding whose orientation to threat counts or should not count in studying security. The decision on this action would be based upon the goals of the analyst. For example, if the goal is to examine securitisation with a "real-world" political effect, the concept has to be contextualized by selectively identifying which actors' orientation to threat matters and which ones' views do not. In this study's case, the context is the nature of political order and the main actor to

¹⁸. Daniel Kahneman, *Thinking, Fast and Slow* (New York: Farrar, 2011).

consider, therefore, should, in the main, be the TPLF/EPRDF ruling coalition and the excluded ones. This approach is taken because, in a typical African situation, political settlements are not open access,¹⁹ meaning that access to political and economic opportunities is not based on free competition. Therefore, some other agreement regarding the lines of inclusion and exclusion has to be crafted. The use of violence is usually restrained by some form of agreement, tacit or explicit, among coalition members. This pact, at the same time, restricts access to and control over economic and political resources for individuals/parties that are outside the ruling coalition. In this sense, though not always, and whether security languages were used or not, coalition members tend to securitize those excluded from the said agreement and vice-versa. Hence, a securitisation practice significant enough to have real-world political ramifications has to be connected with the concerns of both the ruling coalition and excluded members/parties. Even when the issue securitised is external to the state, the dynamics of these interactions between the ruling coalition and the excluded members/parties will have a bearing on the practice of securitisation. These concerns can be expressed both by security languages but also inferred from behaviours of actors displayed in the course of interacting with or handling a “would be” threat.

Accordingly, in such settings and with the aims noted above, security and securitisation should be defined based upon how the ruling coalition and its opponents define and identify threats and what ramifications these might have for overall societal wellbeing and peace. The focus of the analysis needs to be upon how members of the ruling coalition and their opponents define and identify threats, and how that process impacts the safety and survival of individuals and social groups. Securitisation should also be concerned with the (linguistic and extra-linguistic) orientations of the ruling coalition (such as the TPLF/EPRDF coalition) and its opponents. This approach is necessary because how these actors securitize and how they propose to handle a threat has a significant effect on the welfare and the overall stability of the society concerned. In situations where access to office is mediated through the democratic processes that command wider and deeper acceptance, the ruling coalition and its opponents would not pose an existential danger for each other. However, in many other situations, such as in this case relating to the political situation within Ethiopia, where commitment for democracy is limited and the ever-presence of violence foreseeable, the chance is high that the various political groupings securitised each other. The question, in such a situation, therefore, is how some

¹⁹. Douglass, John, and Barry, *Violence and Social Order*.

securitisation attempts link the security of the political party/government with the security of the wider section of the society, and how other groups fail to do so and, therefore, shorten their tenure.

Before closing this thesis, a final reflection on the relevance of its results to other cases has to be made. Although the findings of this study are drawn from a single case, they could be potentially relevant for contexts in which governments with weak institutions securitised empowering issues. When an empowering issue is securitised in the absence of a strong institution that would monitor the implementation of measures suggested by the securitising discourse, similar results to those discussed in this thesis would emerge. As pointed out in chapter two, for instance, the securitisation of the environment in Australia (the institution for governing climate change is weak) and audience acceptance of it did not result in emergence measures. Countries such as Sierra Leone also have poverty reduction-oriented security policies and, hence, the results of this study would have relevance for such cases.

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List of interviewees

1. Getachew Jembere, current Amhara National Regional State Vice President;
2. Alemu Jember, Amhara National Regional State, Sekota Declaration coordinator;
3. Wendosen Getaneh, Amhara Regional State, office of the vice-president;
4. Anonymous informant, extension expert;
5. Anonymous informant, former member of the executive committee of the EPRDF;
6. Zigale Gebeyehu, Amhara National Regional State Anti-Corruption Commission Commissioner;
7. Anonymous informant, former high level regional officer of the Southern People Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region;
8. Teshome Hailegebriel, Ministry of Agriculture Extension Expert;
9. Yaykob Tadesse, Oromia Regional State Civil Service Commission Vice Head and Civil Service chief;

10. Anonymous informant, Ministry of Agriculture Expert;
11. Alemayehu Gemechu, Ministry of Agriculture Extension Expert;
12. Tesfaye Shamebo, Ethiopian Anti-Corruption Commission Training and Research Directorate Director;
13. Anonymous informant, occupied various leadership positions in Oromia regional state;
14. Birhanu Feyisa, Ethiopian Civil Service Commission Vice Commissioner;
15. Anonymous informant, worked from Woreda to Regional level as a member of the leadership;
16. Anonymous informant, Agricultural extension Expert, Oromia Regional State;
17. Anonymous informant, Agricultural Extension Expert, Amhara region;
18. Teshome Girma, Oromia anticorruption Commission vice Commissioner;
19. Commander Walelign Embibil, worked at various level of the civil and security leadership ladder of the Amhara Region;