# The Legacies of Ethiopia's Foreign Relations from Tewodros II to the end of the Derg Regime (1855-1991)

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*Ethiopia's foreign relations have fluctuated over time due to internal political stifles, geopolitical forces, and shifting global power configurations. This article analyzes insights from these peaks and troughs. The study employed a qualitative research approach, collecting primary data from key informants through interviews and triangulating this data with secondary data gathered from relevant literature and archival documents. The study identified both progressive and regressive legacies left from Ethiopia's pre-1991 foreign relations. On the progressive aspects, the period left lasting statehood traditions, a commitment to multilateralism, a focus on collective security, a foundation for peacekeeping, and Pan-Africanism, which continue as vibrant elements of Ethiopia's foreign relations. Nonetheless, the period also left regressive legacies, including limited negotiating traditions, personalized diplomacy, underdeveloped institutions, a lack of professional development, the prioritization of military and security aid, and tensions between regime, state, and societal interests. Moreover, the period's foreign relations were characterized by a defensive approach, reactive orientation, siege mentality, and securitized policy priorities. These inheritances continue to shape Ethiopia's foreign relations since 1991, and tracing these legacies as the country navigates its diplomatic environment in the contemporary world is essential.*

**Keywords**: *Diplomatic Legacies, Multilateralism, Pan-Africanism, Personalized Diplomacy, reactive approach, Securitized Foreign Policy*

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## Introduction

While the exact era remains a matter of controversy, historical accounts suggest that Ethiopia's foreign relations have roots in ancient Egypt and the Israelites, dating back over 3,000 years (Aklilu, 2022). Since then, Ethiopia has maintained longstanding diplomatic ties with the Roman, Greek, and Egyptian civilizations during the Axumite kingdom (Broich 2017; Phillips, 2019). The Axumite kingdom sustained religious and commercial ties with these empires (Phillips, 2019). During the medieval period, too, Ethiopia's foreign relations continued with fluctuations between engagement and isolation, which were driven by political, economic, and religious factors (Yimer & Chekole, 2022). The Crusade War and Nile water politics were the major factors that shaped Ethiopia's foreign engagement and isolation during this period (Krebs, 2021).

Ethiopia has consistently maintained its state-to-state relations and independence in the modern era. It upholds African independence, even during the European "scramble for Africa," as demonstrated by defeating Italian attempts to colonize Ethiopia at Adwa in 1896 (Getachew, 2009) and the subsequent end of Italian occupation after five years in 1941. Nevertheless, modern Ethiopia's foreign relations started under Emperor Tewodros II (Crummey, 1969), and the emperors who followed him made efforts to advance Ethiopia's diplomatic standing abroad. This paper is dedicated to unpacking the legacies of Ethiopia's foreign relations from 1855 to 1991.

## Statement of the Problem

The period from the reign of Emperor Tewodros II to the end of the *Derg* regime was a complex and vital era in Ethiopian history. During this period, Ethiopia navigated complex domestic politics, regional geopolitical dynamics, and global challenges while fiercely guarding its independence and sovereignty. Ethiopia has experienced various domestic and regional socio-political and economic dynamics. Domestically, the state formation process, resistance and struggle for peace, democracy, and development, as well as the incomplete state-building process (characterized by a lack of internal socio-political cohesion), are the leading causes of internal war and conflict (Bahru, 2002). At the same time, regional artificial boundaries, irredentism, and the proxies of regional and extra-regional powers are also contributing factors to the disputes. During this period, Ethiopia was involved in huge proxy and conventional wars with both regional and extra-regional states (Broich, 2017; Clapham, 1990; Crummey, 1969). Globally, the country has

been significantly influenced by imperialism, colonialism, socialism, and the global geopolitical rivalries of the Cold War era (Makki, 2011). The consecutive Ethiopian governments were involved in proxy wars, conventional wars, and colonial agreements with imperial and colonial powers (Bahru, 2002; Belete, 2014; Both, 2004). Furthermore, this period was marked by the country's strategic partnerships with numerous global powers, as it sought to diversify its relationships and establish a presence on the international stage to secure its interests abroad. It was also a period when Ethiopia actively engaged in multilateral forums, such as the League of Nations, the United Nations, the Non-Aligned Movement, and the Organization of African Unity (Interview with KII-19, 19 July 2024).

Furthermore, Ethiopia's unwavering commitment to Pan-Africanism remained a defining feature of its foreign relations. Because the country played a crucial role in transforming pan-African ideology into institutions, such as the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and championed the cause of African unity and self-determination (Interview with KII-5, 12 January 2024). Thus, the multifaceted legacies of this period have had an enduring impact on the country's current strategic positioning, diplomatic engagement, and regional influence in the global arena. While much scholarship exists on specific periods and aspects of Ethiopian diplomatic history (Aklilu, 2022; Arka, 2002; Bahru, 2002; Belete, 2014; Berouk, 2004; Both, 2004; Broich, 2017; Clapham, 1990; Crummey, 1969; Finaldi, 2011; Marcus, 1966), this article makes a new contribution by systematically synthesizing the aggregate of the lasting legacies across different Ethiopian regimes from 1855 to 1991. The aggregate legacies of Ethiopia’s foreign relations have not been exhaustively scrutinized and coherently documented. By employing a multi-level analytical approach (the three levels of foreign policy analysis) and incorporating new interview data, this study effectively links past practices to contemporary challenges in ways that existing literature has not. This article, therefore, elucidates these legacies to draw lessons for Ethiopia's current and future foreign relations.

## Research Methodology

In terms of methodology, the study used a qualitative research approach. The study examined the legacies of Ethiopia's diplomatic relations going back more than a century. It examined Ethiopia's diplomatic practices, historical developments, legacies, and contrasts, highlighting the similarities and differences among various regimes as they pursued diplomatic relations. Since the study required diverse ideas and multiple sources of data, the qualitative research approach is

appropriate. The qualitative research approach enables researchers to consult various data sources and employ triangulation. Primary data for this study were gathered from 20 purposively selected key informants through interviews. Due to the complex nature of foreign policy and diplomatic history, which involves both analytical and experiential aspects, the researcher purposively selected informants who have direct experience with Ethiopia's foreign policy and diplomacy, either as policymakers, implementers, or researchers. Thus, the key informants for this article included ambassadors, career diplomats, veteran diplomats, academics, and researchers with experience in Ethiopia's foreign policy decision-making, implementation, and studies. This article is extracted from a PhD thesis, and the primary data were generated in two phases: the first phase, from January 1, 2024, to February 28, 2024, and the second phase, conducted from July 1 to October 31, 2024. Secondary data were gathered from books, journal articles, policy documents, archives, and reports from government and non-governmental organizations. Finally, the collected data were triangulated and analyzed using *the three levels of foreign policy analysis*, which can synthesize the legacies of Ethiopia's foreign policy across regimes from 1855 to 1991.

## Conceptual Framework: Levels of Foreign Policy Analysis

Studying foreign policy is complex and involves untangling the intricacies of studying policy-making from three perspectives. These included an individual-level perspective which deals with the impact of people as individuals on foreign policy (Crichlow, 2001; Mintz & DeRouen, 2010); a state-level perspective which deals with how the government system, sub-state institutions, and societal organizations influences foreign policy process (Hudson, 2014); and system-level perspective which deals with the external realities that impacts a country's foreign policy (Mearsheimer, 2001; Waltz, 1979).

The foundation of individual-level analysis is that people are the ones who ultimately decide what policies are made. The foreign policy decision-making process is greatly influenced by human nature and the personal characteristics of leaders (Crichlow, 2001). Though it is expected that foreign policy decision making process would be rational and based on a rational assessment of national interests, in reality, individual leaders' human nature and personal traits expressed through perceptions, emotions, egos, experiences, and health shape foreign policy decisions making process (Breuning, 2007; Mintz & DeRouen, 2010; Pious & George, 1980).

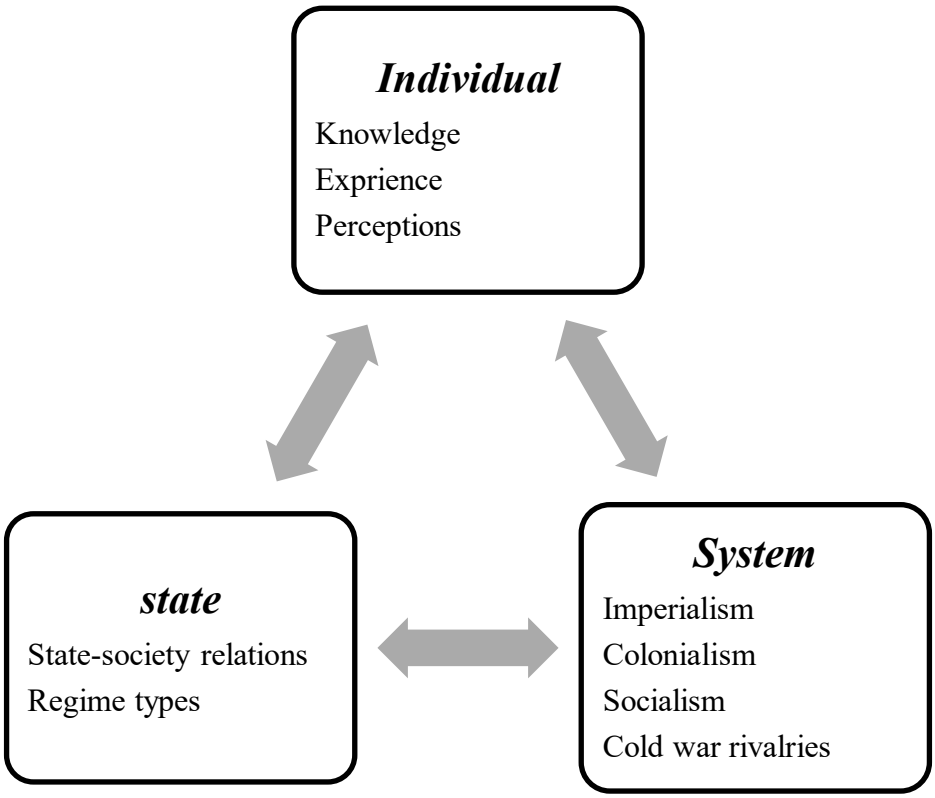
State-level factors and analysis constitute the second stage of foreign policy determinants and analysis. State-level determinants and analyses place a strong emphasis on identifying and examining state features, regime type, how states choose and implement foreign policy, and how societal organizations and the general public influence these processes (Alden & Aran, 2017; Kaarbo et al., 2012). However, the techniques employed and the actors in the foreign policy decision-making process vary greatly depending on the type of political system (Hudson, 2014). More players are active in democratic political systems because decision-making power is shared among democratic institutions (Bueno de Mesquita et al, 2003). On the other hand, Authoritarian leaders often decide alone, with the help of their advisors or party circles (Hudson, 2014). Democratic leaders are expected to counterfeit consensus on foreign policy because they are directly answerable to the public and political parties (Bueno de Mesquita et al, 2003; Hudson, 2014) whereas authoritarian leaders have a great deal of discretion when determining their foreign policy (Bueno de Mesquita et al, 2003; Kaarbo, et al., 2012). Thus, the more authoritarian a government is, the more likely foreign policy decision-making will be centralized in a small segment of the government (Bueno de Mesquita et al, 2003; Hudson, 2014; Kaarbo et al., 2012).

System-level analysis is the third level of determinants and analysis used in foreign policy research. To be effective in foreign policy, countries must often make policy decisions in light of the reality of the international system and balancing national interests with global dynamism (Waltz, 1979). Thus, system-level analysis investigates how the realities of the international system influence foreign policy (Mearsheimer, 2001; Waltz, 1979). For instance, from 1855 to 1991, global political dynamics, including imperialism, colonialism, socialism, and Cold War rivalries, directly shaped the fates and foreign policies of third-world countries, such as Ethiopia.

Summarizing the discussions on the three levels of analysis and determinants, each specific foreign policy analytical method has limitations in thoroughly examining the legacies of Ethiopia's foreign policy. For instance, system-level analysis overestimated the system's impacts, relegating the effect of other actors on the system, and assuming high degrees of homogeneity among states' foreign policy actors. Similarly, an extreme focus on individual and state-level analysis risks magnifying distinctions among sub-system actors, becoming ethnocentric, and failing to concretize modern interdependence (Hudson, 2014).

Instead of dichotomization of the determinants, this study applied by combining the three levels of analysis (combining the three levels: individual, state, and system level). This approach allows a comprehensive examination of the complex factors that shaped Ethiopia's foreign policy during this period (1855-1991). Ethiopia's foreign policy process is always determined by the coincidences of three layers of factors: leaders' idiosyncrasies, domestic maneuverings, and global leverage. During the study period (1855-1991), the personal idiosyncrasies of Tewodros II, Yohannes IV, Menelik II, Haile Silassie I, and Mengistu Haile Mariam were determinant. Similarly, regime types and state-society relations in Ethiopia from 1855 to 1991 were also major domestic factors continuously shaping Ethiopia's foreign policy. Similarly, imperialism, colonialism, socialism, and the Cold War, as global-level factors, highly shaped Ethiopia's foreign policy process from 1855 to 1991. Thus, Ethiopia's foreign policy was shaped by the coinciding and diverging factors at the individual, state, and system levels.

By employing the three levels of foreign policy analysis altogether, this article examines how the interplay of these three layers of factors drives Ethiopia's foreign policy and the legacies it leaves for future generations. The level of foreign policy analytical framework enables researchers to integrate various theoretical frameworks, methodologies, issues, disciplines, and analytical tools, thereby assessing the influence of multiple factors on a nation's foreign policy (Kaarbo, Theis & Cameron, 2024; Theis & Breuning, 2012). This comprehensive approach helps to capture the legacies of Ethiopia's foreign policy across different regimes from 1855 to 1991. It provides a deeper understanding of the multifaceted factors that shaped Ethiopia's foreign policy from 1855 to 1991 and helps to infer legacies.




Levels of Analysis: Conceptual map to analyze the legacies of Ethiopia's foreign relations from 1855 to 1991

## Legacies of Ethiopia's Foreign Relations from 1855 to 1991

The period spanning the reign of Emperor Tewodros II to the fall of the Derg regime in Ethiopia was a critical era during which the country navigated complex domestic, regional, geopolitical, and global dynamics while steadfastly maintaining its independence. The legacy of this era is multi-layered, and understanding the complexities of this foundational period is crucial for examining the continuities and evolutions in Ethiopia's foreign relations over time. The period left with enduring progressive and regressive legacies for present and future Ethiopia's foreign relations. The following consecutive sub-sections deal with these enduring legacies.

### The Legacies of Enduring Statehood Traditions

Although there are continuous political debates, the historical roots of Modern Ethiopia's state trace back to pre-Axumite and Axumite civilizations (Broich, 2017; Getachew, 2009; Phillips, 2019), a history that positively supports modern Ethiopia's foreign relations. Ethiopia is also a non-colonized African country, except for a brief five-year Italian occupation. Silberman (1960)

argued that, unlike other Africans who joined the modern state with non-African ideas and information, Ethiopia grapples with modern influences in its indigenous manner.

The modern Ethiopian rulers from Tewodros II to Mengistu Hailemariam played significant roles in maintaining modern Ethiopian statehood. Ethiopia's modern diplomatic history could be associated with the reign of Emperor Tewodros II in the mid-nineteenth century, who sought to build strong diplomatic relations with the outside world (Crummey, 1969). He was the first modern Ethiopian emperor who tried to employ sovereign equality in state-to-state diplomatic ties. In his letter to European powers, he insisted that Ethiopia is a sovereign state equal to European states and seeks their support as equals based on religious solidarity. He also put the cornerstone in Ethiopian diplomatic relations, which was based on the urge for 'modernization (Caulk, 1972), and spread the seed of the desire for military weapons to control domestic political contenders (Interview with KII-1, 12 July 2024). This guiding interest in Ethiopia's diplomatic relations continues to this day, and it is the main factor that has made Ethiopia a continuous ally of the Western world (Keller, 2015; Seifuddin, 1997), with military aid being the top priority in Ethiopia's foreign policy (Interview with KII-1, 12 July 2024).

Tewodros II envisioned a developed and prosperous Ethiopia with the national motto of 'catching up with Europe,' but his unrealistic strategies put him against many enemies and created a need to acquire the best scientific and technical expertise from what he believed were the most advanced nations of the day (Broich, 2017; Keller, 2015). However, his foreign policy, grounded in principles of state equality and independence, was continued by Emperor Yohannes IV (1872-1889). Yohannes was also aware of the importance of maintaining good international relations, although he faced challenges from the Mahdi of Sudan, Egypt, and Italian encroachments into northern Ethiopia. Yohannes IV was crowned emperor at a time when Ethiopia's borders were highly vulnerable to external threats, and his main foreign policy goal was to defend Ethiopia's boundaries and territorial integrity. His reign coincided with the height of European imperialism and the scramble for Africa. During this period, he fought Egypt, Italy, Turkey, and the Mahdist Sudan (Aklilu, 2022). In these conflicts, Yohannes IV defeated the Egyptians at Gundet (1875) and Gura (1876), marking significant victories for Ethiopia. These battles caused a shift in Egypt's

foreign policy toward Ethiopia, changing from ambitions of colonization to a strategy of destabilization (MOFA, 2021; Seifuddin, 1997).

Emperor Menelik II succeeded Emperor Yohannes IV in 1889, and his regime saw increased diplomatic activities with Ethiopia reaching out to more European capitals than ever before. The inception of the so-called scramble for Africa was a major factor that necessitated intense diplomatic activities by Ethiopia, as it had to wrestle with the colonial ambitions of various European nations. Noteworthy among the diplomatic developments involving Emperor Menelik II were different agreements and treaties he signed with Italy and other colonial powers in the Horn of Africa. Among others, the 1883 friendship and cooperation agreement signed with Italy, the 1887 neutrality agreement signed with Italy*, the treaty of Wuchale signed with Italy in 1889, the Addis Ababa peace treaty in the aftermath of Adwa in 1896, and boundary agreements with colonial power in the horn of Africa were the major diplomatic activities he conducted at a time (Broich, 2017; Muzeyen, 2015). Especially, the neutrality agreement he signed with Italy in 1887, the Ethio-Eritrea boundary agreement he signed in 1908, and the Ethio-Djibouti boundary agreement he signed in 1897 were still controversial and debatable agreements concerning Ethiopia's sovereignty and sovereign right to access to the Red Sea (Belete, 2013).

Menelik II followed the suit of his predecessors. It was a period of modern state formation and an essential turning point in modern Ethiopian history. Among others, Adwa's victory, recognition of Ethiopia as a modern state, boundary agreements with adjacent colonial powers, the commencement of modern government institutions (council of ministers, including the ministry of commerce and Foreign Affairs), and the introduction of modern innovations to Ethiopia were all done at the same time. For instance, the construction of a railway line linking Addis Ababa to the port of Djibouti (1897-1917), the introduction of the telephone-telegraph system, postal services, establishment of formal modern education (1907), Bank system (1909), tap water, electric services (1894), automobile, detergent factory, cinema, gramophone, Hospital (1910), and hotel (1907)

MOFA, 2024), all were ingredient of modern statehood. Paradoxically, Menelik II failed to secure a slight corridor for his 'window on the world' along the sea coast (Bahru, 2013).

Adwa, as a force of making, unmaking, and remaking Ethiopia, was the outcome of fearless military and shrewd diplomacy conducted during the reign of Menelik II. The Adwa victory was the victory of black people, served as a fountain of inspiration for black people's emancipation from the yoke of colonialism (Getachew, 2009), and was the symbol of independence. For Ethiopia, the Adwa victory is the cornerstone of modern Ethiopian state formation and survival (Robenson, 1970).

When Menelik II became ill in 1913, his grandson Lij Iyasu inherited the Ethiopian throne under the regency of Tesemma Nadew. Though Lij Iyasu was relatively young and had pursued a foreign policy that differed notably from both his predecessor, Menelik II, and his successors, his foreign policy on state sovereignty and independence was as solid as that of other Ethiopian leaders (Mersiehazen, 2016). He identified two foreign policy goals: breaking Ethiopia's colonial encirclements and bringing back Eritrea, and opening Ethiopia's access to the sea. For these purposes, he introduced revolutionary but unrealistic strategies such as aligning with allied powers- Germany, Ottoman Turkey, and Somali nationalists (Hassen & Ersahin, 2018). These unrealistic strategies paved the way for the global Rome-Paris-London and Domestically Orthodox Church and Shewa Aristocracy alliance to create a palace coup (Hassen & Ersahin, 2018; Mersiehazen, 2016) in which Zewditu and Ras Teferi were crowned as Empress and regent respectively.

Haile Selassie I began to dictate Ethiopia's foreign policy and relations immediately after Lij Iyasu was deposed from power in 1916. During the first period of regency, he appointed himself as the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and dominated the whole diplomatic activities (Arka, 2002). Despite the personalization of Ethiopia's foreign relations, he conducted two important diplomatic works when he was a regent. The first was skillful diplomatic work to accede Ethiopia to a member of the League of Nations in 1923 (Negussay, 1977). The second important diplomatic work was Ras Tafari's European grand tour, which lasted from April 16 to September 4, 1924. In 1924, Ras Tafari undertook an extensive journey to Europe to see European civilization with his own eyes and, on returning, to initiate some aspect of it in his country. Although the tour was generally

evaluated as a failure, he came back from the tour with his and the country's international stature increased. Also, he went with a commitment to introduce a European way of administration in the country (Arka, 2002; Negussay, 1977).

By 1930, Ras Tafari became Emperor of Ethiopia by the crown name Haile Selassie I. He was educated, and his foreign policy courses were more complex than those of his predecessors. His early period of foreign policy was focused more on allying with the League of Nations, the defense of the country from external invasion (Italy), international peace and security, and Diplomacy. However, the fascist occupation of the country aborted the peaceful development of Ethiopia's Foreign Policy (Negussay, 1977). It was in post-1941 that Ethiopia's foreign relations expanded and started taking better shape (Both, 2004).

Thus, during Haile Silassie's regime, Ethiopians' diplomatic visibility increased both at regional and extra-regional levels (KII-20, 20 July 2024). Ethiopians' role as a founding member of the UN, Ethiopia's commitment to international peace and security via contributing to the peacekeeping force, Ethiopia's neutrality role in establishing OAU, and Haile Silassie's diplomatic and political support for the decolonization of Africa were significant contributing factors for the visibility of Ethiopian diplomacy at a time (Interview with KII-18, 15 July 2024).

The legacy of Haile Silassie I in strengthening Ethiopia's statehood tradition was therefore far-reaching and enduring. The significant legacies are the introduction of collective security, multilateralism, Pan-Africanism, and peacekeeping as Ethiopia's foreign policy principles. Also, Ethiopia's accession to the League of Nations (1923) and founding member of the UN (1945)-an enduring legacy for multilateralism and collective security, the European tour-the policy of diversification (1924), federating Eritrea with Ethiopia and securing access to the sea for Ethiopia (1952), the establishment of OAU (1963) and securing its seat in Addis Ababa (1964), and introduction of modern state institutions such as first written constitution (1931), first bicameral parliament, expansion of social infrastructures (schools, roads, hospitals, university and colleges), modern bureaucracy, modern army, Ethiopia Airline, modern media (printing Media-Berhanenna Selam printing press, Ethiopia television, and Ethiopia radio) and modern communication Centre, all are the enduring statehood legacies of Haile Selassie I (Interview with KII-7, 27 January 2024; Interview with KII-13, 28 January 2024).

In the beginning, the *Derg* regime also continued with the Western-centric and highly securitized foreign policy approach of the Imperial regime. Later, it shifted from West to East (the Soviet Union and its satellites) due to the reduction of US support to Ethiopia (Tsypkin, 2022). The Ethiopian foreign policy during the military regime was also based on an outward-looking approach that externalized almost all the country's problems by focusing on building military defense capabilities against what the regime condemns as the 'historical enemies of Ethiopia' (Seifuddin, 1997) and used a 'siege mentality' approach (Fantu & Zinabu, 2019). Additionally, the formulation and conduct of Ethiopian foreign policy and diplomacy were significantly influenced by Cold War rivalries and shaped by Marxist-Leninist ideology and Marxist concepts of society and the alignment of forces. Unlike its predecessors, the military regime's foreign policy depended on the Soviet Union since the military regime considered the USSR as the natural ally of Ethiopia (Belete, 2021). The *Derg* regime characterized Ethiopian neighbors as a historical enemy of the country, and employed a siege mentality foreign policy approach. Also, during the *Derg* regime, personal diplomacy remained the main characteristic of the country's foreign policy (Interview with KII-1, 12 July 2024). However, the Derg regime continued with the policy centered on maintaining Ethiopia's statehood traditions. Thus, despite internal political differences, Ethiopian regimes from Tewodros II to Mangistu Hailemariam managed to preserve Ethiopia's independence and long-term statehood traditions.

This independence and long-term statehood tradition is the result of two commitments. The first commitment was Ethiopian forefathers' heartfelt diplomatic works (admitting Ethiopia to the League of Nations and making Ethiopia a founding member of the United Nations), and following a strong diplomatic capacity to play one superpower against the others. The second commitment was military fearlessness (Gundet (1875), Gura (1876), Dogali (1887), Segnaiti (1888), and Adwa (1896)). This independence is a source of pride and strength for the current and future Ethiopian foreign relations. For instance, Ethiopia was recognized as a modern sovereign state in the aftermath of Adwa's victory (Interview with KII-20, 20 July 2024). Following the Adwa victory, France, Russia, Belgium, and the United States recognized Ethiopia's sovereignty and refused to accept its designation as a "tribal" African jurisdiction (Marcus, 1966).

Furthermore, the pre-1991 Ethiopian foreign relations decision-makers maintained the continuity of Ethiopian state independence and sovereignty by confronting Ottoman Turkey, Egyptian expansionists, Darbush, and European colonial powers (Britain, France, and Italy). The Ethiopian forefathers also played pivotal roles in demarcating Ethiopia's borders and the struggle for freedom and state sovereignty at the Battle of Adwa, which was depicted as the longstanding symbol of black freedom (FDRE Foreign Policy, 1996). Additionally, as discussed above, the introduction of modern state institutions and bureaucracies, as well as modern education, hospitals, telecommunication, and railways (Broich, 2017; Getachew, 2009), were notable achievements in Ethiopia's foreign relations in the early 20th century, which built upon statehood traditions.

This longstanding tradition of statehood has had several bearings on Ethiopia's foreign relations. The first legacy is that it leads the country to aspire to assertive and independent foreign relations. Ethiopia is often reluctant to submit too closely with external powers, preferring to chart its course on regional and international issues (Interview with KII-1, 12 July 2024; KII-7, 27 January 2024). Second, it leads the country to pursue regional power projections. Ethiopia has sought to maintain its central position in the Horn of Africa, often competing with regional and extra-regional powers. Third, it provided leverage to emphasize national sovereignty (Interview with KII-5, January 12, 2024). Overall, Ethiopia's longstanding statehood history has a far-reaching positive legacy for present-day Ethiopia’s foreign relations.

**The Legacies of the quest for security and military patronage and tensions**

Ethiopia’s long-standing tradition of statehood is not translated into a strong state-building process. Rather, consecutive Ethiopian regimes instrumentalized foreign policy to secure their regime and consolidate political power. In Ethiopia, foreign relations have prioritized security and military assistance to contain local political opposition. In modern Ethiopia, from Tewodros II to the end of the *Derg* regime, Ethiopia's foreign relations, particularly in terms of foreign aid and accompanying ties, had been primarily focused on military aid rather than development projects (Broichi, 2017; Finaldi, 2011; Getachew, 2009; Manickam, 2020). For instance, Tewodros II's foreign relations priority was military reform, including the acquisition of military technology and weapons through purchasing, confiscation, and domestic production (Abera, 2023; Crummey, 1969). Almost all his letters circulated to European countries were about military weapons and technology. Menelik II’s agreements with the Italians were about military weapons (Finaldi, 2011).

During his extended tenure in power, Haile Selassie received significant foreign aid, primarily in the form of military and security assistance (Interview with KII-1, July 12, 2024; KII-18, July 15, 2024). The *Derg* government also took massive military and security aid from the USSR and other socialist states (Broich, 2017).

Therefore, Ethiopian regimes utilized foreign relations as an instrument to defeat their domestic political opponents without undermining the tools they employed against invaders. This is why military aid has been a top priority for consecutive Ethiopian regimes. Ethiopia allied with superpower states to obtain this critical military aid (Abera, 2023; Crummey, 1969; Finaldi, 2011), regardless of any ideological or political differences between the countries (Interview with KII-18, 15 July 2024). For example, Emperor Tewodros II attempted to ally with Britain (Abera, 2023), Yohannes IV allied with Britain (Zewde, 1975), and Emperor Menelik II allied with Italy (Finaldi, 2011), despite their divergent political systems (Interview with KII-1, 12 July 2024). Similarly, during the Haile Selassie era, Ethiopia signed the Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG) agreement with the United States, despite the significant differences in political ideologies between the two countries (*Ibid*).

This strategic use of foreign relations to control domestic political dissension had been a consistent feature of successive Ethiopian regimes. A veteran ambassador in the FDRE Ministry of Foreign Affairs (KII-1, 12 July 2024) reasoned that the primary objective of seeking military and security aid across all regimes of Ethiopia had been to leverage foreign assistance to suppress internal opposition and consolidate their power. Menelik II leveraged European weapons to crush his opponents, and Haile Selassie I did the same. For instance, in the 1970s, two-thirds of US military aid to Africa was allotted to Ethiopia (Getachew, 2009), and from 1953 to 1970, Ethiopia received 162.5 million dollars in military aid. From 1945 to 1961, it received 84.5 million dollars for development aid, which was half of military assistance (Broichi, 2017).

Ethiopia received significant security and military aid from various countries before 1991, particularly during the Cold War era (Broich, 2017). The United States was a key provider of military aid to Ethiopia during Emperor Haile Selassie's regime (1930-1974) (Interview with KII-1, 12 July 2024). This assistance included military equipment, weapons, and financial support for the Ethiopian military (Broich, 2017). The U.S. also provided military training and advisory

support to the Ethiopian armed forces (Interview with KII-27, 15 July 2024). Haile Selassie I utilized military and security forces to suppress domestic political dissent and opposition.

*Derg* too leveraged the USSR and Cuban military and security aid, advisors, and training support to survive for seventeen years in the widespread insurgent movements (Broich, 2017). The Ethiopian senior military officer (colonel) (KII-27, 15 July 2024) reasoned that the Soviet Union was a major supplier of military equipment and training to Ethiopia during the *Derg* regime (1974-1991). This included the provision of tanks, aircraft, artillery, small arms, and other military hardware. The Soviet Union also provided military advisors and supported the development of the Ethiopian military's capabilities (*Ibid)*. *Derg* utilized the USSR and other socialist allies' military and security aid to suppress domestic political opponents.

Thus, consecutive regimes in Ethiopia have prioritized security and military aid to counter domestic political opponents. Despite the theoretical aspiration of prioritizing national interest, regimes in Ethiopia practice foreign relations centered on regime survival (interview with KII-19, July 19, 2024). This is because regime type determines the nature of the foreign policy process; democratic regimes are forced to go in line with societal interests, while authoritarian regimes prioritize their regime security. Consecutive Ethiopian regimes' authoritarian natures help them to prioritize regime security and military aid above others (Interview with KII-28, September 25, 2024; Interview with KII-30, October 1, 2024). Manickam (2020) claimed that in the Ethiopian foreign relations regime security and survival have been considered a priority, and successive Ethiopian regimes have prioritized obtaining military assistance over other development aspects. Due to the highly securitized nature of the country's foreign relations, most areas of cooperation focused on providing military equipment and training (Broich 2017; Manickam 2020). This seriously undermines the contribution of foreign relations towards domestic development endeavors (Broich, 2017; Muzeyen, 2015). Prioritizing military and security alliances to stifle domestic political dissent was one of the legacies of Ethiopia's foreign relations.

This securitized foreign policy tradition in Ethiopia resulted in tension among regime, state, and society on the one hand and the formation of patron-client relationships between Ethiopian regimes and global powers on the other. The tension among the regime, the state, and society has been an enduring cyclical legacy in the history of modern Ethiopia's foreign relations (Interview with KII-28, September 25, 2024). This dynamic has shaped the country's interactions with the international

community and influenced its foreign relations over time. Ethiopia had experienced two political systems until 1991 (feudalism and socialism), each with its approach to foreign relations. For instance, the imperial era under the Solomonic dynasty and the *Derg* military regime had distinct foreign relations agendas, often reflecting the priorities and ideological leanings of the ruling elite, which in some areas conflict with state and societal interests and capacity.

In developing countries like Ethiopia, the regimes' pursuit of their own political and ideological goals did not coincide with the broader national interests, leading to tensions and compromises in foreign policy decision-making (Manickam, 2020). Therefore, the tension between national interests and regime interests was one of the enduring tensions in Ethiopia's foreign relations. Also, the diverse ethnic, cultural, and religious compositions of Ethiopian society, combined with the lack of a diversity management policy, have often led to divergent perspectives on foreign relations, as the Ethiopian regimes were unable to accommodate these diversities. This born tension was further exacerbated by the incomplete nature of the state-building process (Interview with KII-22, 24 July 2024). Thus, the diverging aspirations and demands of the public, coupled with the contradicting interests of the regimes and the incomplete state-building process, challenged state-foreign relations. These had resulted in regime, state, and societal tensions (Interview with KII-9, 22 January 2024).

Thus, modern Ethiopia's foreign policy has been shaped by a complex interplay among the regime on power, the state, and various societal groups' interests (Interview with KII-10, 23 January 2024). Influential societal groups, such as the Orthodox Christian Church and regional power brokers, had long exerted pressure on the regime's foreign policy decisions (Rupprecht, 2018), while at the same time non-Christian, sidelined ethnic groups, minority ethnic groups, and political opponents have often felt marginalized by the centralized and authoritarian approach to foreign relations taken by consecutive regimes (Interview with KII-11, 23 January 2024; Interview with KII-10, 23 January 2024; Seifuddin, 1997). This has contributed to domestic instability and challenged Ethiopia's international standing. The complex and tensional relationship among the regime, the state, and different elements of Ethiopian society has been a defining feature of the country's foreign relations. This complex interplay among regime-state and society is a legacy that continues to shape Ethiopia's foreign relations

These regimes, state, and societal tensions lead the regimes to seek external support to maintain their power. As Ethiopia is a strategic state in the Horn of Africa, its foreign relation is directly linked with global power configurations. Since antiquity, global power configurations have shaped Ethiopia's domestic and foreign policy (Interview with KII-15, 17 January 2024). For instance, during the medieval period, Ethiopia's political chemistry was shaped by the involvement of Portugal, Ottoman Turkey, and Egypt (Yimer & Chekole, 2022), while the modern Ethiopian state's foreign relations were shaped by imperialism, colonialism, and Cold War global power rivalries (Makki, 2011).

In the modern period from 1855 to 1991, imperialism, colonialism, the decolonization movement, and Cold War great power political rivalries were the major determining factors in Ethiopia's foreign relations. For instance, the colonial powers' control over surrounding territories checked Ethiopia's ability to access the sea and established fragile boundaries between the Horn countries, which complicated their future relations. These global political episodes, alongside domestic regime, state, and societal tensions in the country, fragmented the region and made Ethiopia's border unstable, posing ongoing challenges for Ethiopia's foreign relations. The major episodes were the Paris-London-Rome tripartite treaty (1906) to partition Ethiopia (MOFA, 2024) following the political power debates in Ethiopia as Menelik II faced illness; Italy's occupation of Ethiopia from 1935 to 1941, Britain's attempted control of Ethiopia from 1941 to 1944, the Nile water treaties (1929 and 1959), and artificial boundaries in the Horn were the results of imperial and colonial influences on Ethiopia exploiting Ethiopia's internal weaknesses.

On the other continuum, these external challenges were interlinked with internal weaknesses (Interview with KII-2, 24 January 2024). Since the Ethiopian regimes were unable to complete the state-building process, the country has prevailed with incomplete socio-political cohesion and struggled with regime, state, and societal tensions. This, in turn, paved the way for regimes to employ either the leaders' dominant foreign policy model or the externalization model. All the regimes in power need external patronage when they lack domestic political backing. Thus, the legacies of modern Ethiopia's foreign policy were characterized by a pattern of patron-client relationships, primarily driven by the convergence of external pressures and internal weaknesses (Interview with KII-33, 02 October 2024). While foreign policy is expected to reflect domestic realities, the historical trajectory of Ethiopia's foreign relations revealed a consistent focus on

external factors and circumstances by successive regimes, primarily due to a lack of internal socio-political cohesion.

Due to these regimes, state and societal tensions, and lack of domestic political backing, consecutive Ethiopian governments adopted an outward-looking, regional siege mentality and a distance-state foreign policy approach (FDRE Foreign Policy, 1996). This external focus caused successive Ethiopian leaders to adopt a leadership-dominant model in foreign policy decision-making processes. Although Ethiopian ancestors succeeded in maintaining the country's independent statehood, they also created a legacy of patron-client relationships with superpowers. This is why major political changes in Ethiopia have consistently aligned with significant international power shifts. This pattern is evident in key historical events, such as the 1916 coup against Lij Iyasu, which happened alongside the outbreak of the First World War; the 1974 revolution, which occurred during the Suez Canal crisis and the global oil crisis; and the 1991 regime change, which coincided with the fall of the Soviet Union.

**The Legacies of Personalized Diplomacy and Weak Institutions**

The balanced interplay of leaders' idiosyncrasies, foreign policy institutions, and professional diplomats is a crucial factor in the success or failure of a country's foreign relations. In Ethiopia, foreign relations institutions were established after the Adwa War in 1907. Emperor Menelik II established the first council of ministers composed of nine Ministries, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by the name of the Ministry of Commerce and Foreign Affairs (MOFA, 2024). Until the introduction of the Ministry of Commerce and Foreign Affairs in 1907, foreign relations in Ethiopian history were openly the prerogative of the emperors. The tradition of Ethiopia's foreign policy decision-making process is therefore highly personalized, less institutionalized, and less professionalized (Amare & Mohammed, 2023). Due to this, the role of leaders and their personality matters in Ethiopia's foreign policy decision-making process (Interview with KII-9, 22 January 2024).

For instance, Haile Selassie I was praised for his contribution to internationalizing Ethiopia. He initiated Ethiopia's modern permanent diplomatic relations with the outside world; however, he did little to institutionalize these efforts. Instead, he implanted cultures of leaders' dominance in Ethiopia's foreign relations (Interview with KII-29, 01 October 2024). The 1931 and 1955

constitutions empowered the emperor to unilaterally negotiate, sign and approve agreements on behave of the country while institutions of foreign policy decision-making like parliament, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Council of Ministers, and security institutions were disempowered (Ethiopia Constitution, 1931, Art.14 and Ethiopia Constitution, 1955, Art.30). The decree on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was introduced to institutionalize the minister nonetheless it provided the ministry inconsequential power (Arka, 2002). These implanted the seed of leaders' dominance in Ethiopia's foreign relations. This personal diplomacy at the expense of institutionalization continued during the *Derg* regime too.

The other point was that the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs archives (MOFA 1966 & 1987) showed that Ethiopian diplomats lack the professional qualities and training that modern diplomacy requires. Many diplomats in Ethiopia have limited education and work experience in diplomatic missions and foreign relations (Interview with KII-2, 24 January 2024; Interview with KII-11, 23 January 2024). In addition, they use the diplomatic post as a means to protect their regimes or party survival (Alemayehu, 2010; Berouk, 2004). These aspects of the politicization of foreign relations resulted in the resignation of three Ministers of Foreign Affairs during the *Derg* regime (Belete, 2021). These exacerbated the lack of professional and career diplomats. There were also no prominent foreign affairs think tanks (Interview with KII-2, 24 January 2024; Belete, 2021). There was no career diplomat training and a formal diplomatic recruitment platform in Ethiopia's foreign relations process before 1991 (Interview with KII-2, 24 January 2024).

Thus, the pre-1991 Ethiopian foreign relations were marked by a predominantly tensional interaction between leaders' idiosyncrasies, institutions, and professionalism, in which the former dominated the latter (Both 2004; Berouk 2004). This period was characterized by highly personalized diplomacy, weak institutional frameworks, and a lack of professional standards in diplomatic practice (Interview with KII-2, January 24, 2024; Interview with KII-11, January 23, 2024). As a result, Ethiopia's foreign relations remained reflective of leaders' political maneuvering rather than strategic international engagement.

**The Progressive Legacies of Pan-Africanism and Multilateralism**

Early modern Ethiopian emperors promoted Ethiopia's exceptionalism and portrayed the country as a non-black and non-African state. However, since the 1960s, Ethiopia's exceptionalism has faced challenges from both internal and external forces (Amsale, 2022). Internally, the

exclusionary, glorious, and exceptional Ethiopian narrative is refuted and replaced by a mosaic of nations, while externally, Pan-Africanism emerges as the dominant collective identity (Interview with KII-1, 12 January 2024). Ethiopian exceptionalism discourse has declined, and African collective identity with Ethiopia's specificities (longstanding statehood, civilization, and regional power status) has prevailed as the defining feature of Ethiopia's socio-cultural domains (Interview with KII-2, January 24, 2024). Since then, Ethiopia has been a champion for Africa in global bilateral and multilateral engagements (Teshale, 1996). Among others, Ethiopia champions Pan-Africanism in three ways (Yeshitla, 2023); being a role model of resistance to colonialism (Adwa), bringing African causes to global litigation, and supporting African decolonization in all aspects (training, material, and diplomatic support).

Since the 1896 Adwa victory, Ethiopia has become a symbol of independence and inspiration for pan-African movements. Thus, symbolically, Ethiopia is considered by other Africans as a beacon of independence and a symbol of resistance. As a result of this symbolization, many African countries have modeled their flags after Ethiopia and have copied many Ethiopian traditions (Yeshitla, 2023). These helped Ethiopia to occupy a prominent position in the Pan-Africanism movement and made Pan-Africanism one of Ethiopia's foreign policy principles (Interview with KII-1, 12 January 2024). Ethiopia also played a decisive leadership and supportive role in enhancing the pan-African movement. It significantly boosted the political, military, diplomatic, and financial backing for the African liberation movement (Interview with KII-27, 15 July 2024), including offering military training, material, and diplomatic support to liberation movements for South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Namibia, and deploying peace-keeping missions to Congo (Interview with KII-27, 15 July 2024; Kaleab, 2018). In 1960, Ethiopia joined Liberia in charging South Africa's apartheid government at the International Court of Justice for its continued occupation of Namibia. This is why the former South African president, Nelson Mandela, depicted '*Ethiopia as having been a seedbed for the pan-African solidarity movement*' (MOFA, 2024).

These circumstances led to the foundation of the OAU in 1963 (Yeshitla, 2023), with Ethiopia serving as a neutral and leading member, with its headquarter in Addis Ababa. Ethiopia had played a pivotal role in the institutionalization process of Pan-Africanism. It contributed four core activities during the foundation of OAU in 1963 (Interview with KII-5, 12 January 2024): (1)

persuading African heads of state to hold their meeting in Addis Ababa, (2) persuading African head of state to approve OAU charter, (3) Persuading African head of states to make OAU headquarter in Addis Ababa and (4) persuading African head of states to sign Cairo declaration, OAU principle which made colonial border inviolable (*Ibid*). Since then, Ethiopia has served and symbolized Africa's torchbearer, promoter of African unity, African diplomatic hub, and representative of Africa at regional and international forums (Interview with KII-7, 27 January 2024). These pan-African championships remained intact despite changes in regimes. Thus, the pre-1991 Ethiopian foreign policy leaders reserved Pan-Africanism a good legacy for Ethiopian foreign relations.

Additionally, the pre-1991 Ethiopian regimes regarded multilateralism as a progressive and enduring foreign policy principle. These legacies of pre-1991 Ethiopian regimes in multilateralism are characterized in multiple ways, including multilateral diplomacy, collective security, and peacekeeping. Ethiopia is the oldest independent country in Africa (Broich, 2017), the seat of the UN Economic Commission for Africa, and the seat of the OAU (African diplomatic hubs) (Interview with KII-13, 28 January 2024). Ethiopia has been a member of various multilateral organizations since 1907. Since then, Ethiopia has joined dozens of multilateral organizations and played a significant role there. Ethiopia's entrance to the League of Nations, founding membership in the United Nations, and founding father of the OAU/AU showed that, irrespective of regime changes and political system differences, multilateral diplomacy has remained one of Ethiopia's foreign policy principles in the last century (Interview with KII-21, 22 July 2024).

Ethiopia's commitment to collective security is another established policy tradition that remains unchanged despite changes in government or political system (Interview with KII-27, 15 July 2024). Ethiopia fulfilled these commitments through UN, OAU/AU, and IGAD-authorized peacekeeping operations and bilateral mediation efforts involving conflicting parties (Kaleab, 2018). Ethiopia is a consistent and early provider of peacekeepers to UN missions (UN Peacekeeping, 2024). From 1950 to the present, Ethiopia has participated in various peacekeeping missions, including those in Congo, Rwanda, Burundi, Liberia, Sudan, South Sudan, and Somalia. A senior researcher at the Institute of Foreign Affairs claimed that Ethiopia's participation in regional and global peacekeeping missions helped build its reputation as a reliable regional security provider (Interview with KII-21, 22 July 2024). These persistent peacekeeping

contributions reinforced Ethiopia's regional influence and its reputation as a reliable security provider (Kaleab, 2018).



*Ethiopian troops in Bishoftu, ready for departure to the Congo peacekeeping mission, 1960*

***Source: UN Peacekeeping Mission Website (2024)***

Thus, Ethiopia's commitment to multilateral diplomacy, collective security, and peacekeeping missions is a diplomatic practice that has spread a respectable legacy and is intact in Ethiopia's foreign relations.

**Re-evaluating the Politics of Negotiations: From the Hewett Treaty to the Aftermath of Adwa**

Ethiopia's successive rulers had registered victories over imperialists or foreign aggressors at battlefields, but in the words of Clapham (1990), "snatched defeat from the jaws of victory." Yohannes IV defeated Egyptian expansionists at Gundat (1875) and Gura (1876), but the post-war peace agreement did not advance Ethiopia's interests. Yohannes IV signed the Adwa/Hewett peace treaty with Egypt, in which the two groups agreed on multiple issues. Egypt promised to hand over Bogas to Ethiopia, Britain promised to give Yohannes IV free passage via Massawa, and Yohannes IV promised to help the Egyptians besieged in Sudan to evacuate via Ethiopia. Both Britain and Egypt remained silent while Yohannes IV discharged his promises. As a result, Yohannes IV traded one weak enemy for two giant enemies. In this way, Yohannes IV lost the war he had won

on the field. Therefore, the Hewett Treaty has been portrayed by many diplomats as the treaty that put Ethiopia's national interests at risk (Interview with KII-30, 01 October 2024; Aklilu, 2022).

Emperor Menelik II succeeded Emperor Yohannes IV in 1889, and his rule saw increased diplomatic efforts as Ethiopia reached out to more European capitals than ever before. The beginning of the so-called scramble for Africa was a major factor that required intense diplomatic activity from Ethiopia, as it had to contend with the colonial ambitions of various European nations. Notable among the diplomatic developments involving Emperor Menelik II were different agreements and treaties he signed with Italy and other colonial powers in the Horn of Africa. These included the 1883 friendship and cooperation agreement with Italy, the 1887 neutrality agreement with Italy, the Treaty of Wuchale signed with Italy in 1889, the Addis Ababa peace treaty following the Battle of Adwa in 1896, and boundary agreements with colonial powers in the Horn of Africa such as the Ethio-Eritrea boundary agreement of 1908, and the Ethio-Djibouti boundary agreement of 1897 (Broich, 2017; Muzeyen, 2013).

To be more specific, Menelik II registered a landslide victory over Italy at the Adwa battlefield, the victory which symbolized the fountain of black triumph. But Adwa's victory was not followed up diplomatically. Menelik II signed the Addis Ababa peace treaty on 26 October 1896, in which both parties agreed on the following major issues: cancellation of the Wuchale treaty, Italy's unconditional recognition of Ethiopia’s sovereignty, and Menelik II's recognition of Eritrea as an Italian colony in return. These agreements were followed by consecutive boundary treaties, including the 1900, 1902, and 1908, which finally delineated the boundaries between Ethiopia and the Italian colony of Eritrea. Consequently, the Adwa victory on the field failed to achieve the enduring objective of Menelik II, an urge for access to the sea (Yohannes, 2017).

Not only the Addis Ababa peace treaty, but most of the treaties Menelik II signed with Italy in one or another way had articles or at least phrases that compromised far-reaching Ethiopian national interests (Interview with KII-33, 02 October 2024; Interview with KII-8, 19 January 2024). Especially, the neutrality agreement signed with Italy in 1887, the 1889 Wuchale treaty, the Ethio-Eritrea boundary agreement signed in 1908, and the Ethio-Djibouti boundary agreement signed in 1897 were still controversial and debatable agreements concerning Ethiopia’s sovereignty and sovereign right to access to the Red Sea (Belete, 2013).

For instance, the 1889 Wuchale treaty had two major impediments to Ethiopia's sovereignty and territorial integrity. The first is delineating the boundary between Ethiopia and Italian-occupied parts of Eritrea, which served as the first birth certificate for Eritrea. Secondly, the conflicting interpretation of Article 17 of the treaty over which Italy claimed Ethiopia as its protectorate refers to the 1884/5 Berlin conference (Yohannes, 2017). These examples illustrate the historical parallels between different regimes in Ethiopia and the lack of learning from past mistakes. The consecutive Ethiopian rulers failed to resolve the country's age-old quest for access to the sea by translating their military victories into diplomatic victories. Therefore, limitations on the politics of negotiation are one of the enduring legacies in Ethiopia's foreign relations.

## Conclusion and Recommendation

The pre-1991 Ethiopian foreign relations left both positive and negative legacies for its successors, which continue to influence the country's diplomacy. On the positive side, it laid a foundation for long-standing statehood traditions, a commitment to multilateralism, recognition of collective security, support for peacekeeping, and Pan-Africanism that remain active in Ethiopia's foreign relations. However, this period also left behind negative legacies, including limited negotiation skills, personalized diplomacy, underdeveloped institutions, a lack of professional growth, a focus on military and security issues, and tensions between the regime, the state, and society, all of which reflect an incomplete state-building process. Additionally, Ethiopia's foreign policy before 1991 was characterized by a defensive, reactive approach, a distant stance in partnerships, a siege mentality, an outward-looking perspective, and securitized priorities. These legacies and characteristics continue to shape Ethiopia's foreign relations since 1991, making it vital to understand these historical influences as the country navigates today's diplomatic landscape.

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**Appendex1: Lists of Key Informants**

| No. | Code | Position | Place | Date of interview |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | KII-1 | Veteran Ambassador | Addis Ababa | 12 July 2024 |
| 2 | KII-2 | Veteran Ambassador | Addis Ababa | 24 January 2024 |
| 3 | KII-5 | Veteran Ambassador | Addis Ababa | 12 January 2024 |
| 4 | KII-7 | Senior Ambassador | Addis Ababa | 27 January 2024 |
| 5 | KII-8 | Senior Ambassador | Addis Ababa | 19 January 2024 |
| 6 | KII-9 | Senior Ambassador | Addis Ababa | 22 January 2024 |
| 7 | KII-10 | Senior Ambassador | Addis Ababa | 23 January 2024 |
| 8 | KII-11 | Senior Ambassador | Addis Ababa | 23 January 2024 |
| 9 | KII-13 | Career Diplomat | Addis Ababa | 28 January 2024 |
| 10 | KII-15 | Career Diplomat | Addis Ababa | 17 January 2024 |
| 11 | KII-18 | Researcher at the think tank | Addis Ababa | 15 July 2024 |
| 12 | KII-19 | Researcher at the think tank | Addis Ababa | 19 July 2024 |
| 13 | KII-20 | Senior Politician | Addis Ababa | 20 July 2024 |
| 14 | KII-21 | Researcher at the think tank | Addis Ababa | 22 July 2024 |
| 15 | KII-22 | Senior Ambassador | Addis Ababa | 24 July 2024 |
| 16 | KII-27 | Senior Military Officer | Addis Ababa | 15 July 2024 |
| 17 | KII-28 | Academia | Addis Ababa | 25 Sept. 2024 |
| 18 | KII-29 | Veteran Ambassador | Addis Ababa | 01 October 2024 |
| 19 | KII-30 | Veteran diplomat | Addis Ababa | 01 October 2024 |
| 20 | KII-33 | Researcher at the think tank | Addis Ababa | 02 October 2024 |