Rwanda and Ethiopia: Developmental Authoritarianism and the New Politics of African Strong Men

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Abstract: Current classification systems create typologies of authoritarian regimes that may overlook the importance of national policies. Rwanda and Ethiopia in particular are perplexing case studies of post-1990s governance. Both nations are characterized by high growth economies with significant state involvement and the formal institutions of democracy, but deeply troubling patterns of domestic governance. This article proposes a new category of authoritarianism called "developmental authoritarianism," which refers to nominally democratic governments that provide significant public works and services while exerting control over nearly every facet of society. The article then reflects upon the durability and implications of this form of governance.

Résumé: Les systèmes de classification actuels créent des typologies de régimes autoritaires qui ne tiennent pas toujours compte de l'importance des politiques nationales. Le Rwanda et l'Ethiopie en particulier sont de troublantes études de cas sur la gouvernance des années post 1990. Ces deux nations sont caractérisées par des économies à croissance élevée avec un engagement significatif de l'État et des institutions officielles de la démocratie, mais qui présentent toutefois des modèles de gouvernance nationaux profondément troublants. Cet article propose une nouvelle catégorie d'autoritarisme, appelé "autoritarisme du développement" qui se réfère à des gouvernements qui se disent démocratiques. Ils fournissent d'importants travaux publics et des services tout en exerçant cependant un contrôle sur presque toutes les facettes de la société. L'article se penche ensuite sur la durabilité et les implications de cette forme de gouvernance.

Keywords: Authoritarianism; democracy; governance; development; sub-Saharan Africa; Rwanda; Ethiopia

The historical prevalence of "strong-man" rule in Africa is a well-documented phenomenon. With the wave of democratization that swept across the continent in the 1990s, however, came a sense of optimism that the era of cult-of-personality, strong-man rule had come to a close (Diamond & Plattner 2010). Yet two decades after this wave, few consolidated democracies have been established, and scholars and policymakers are left with a sense of confusion as to the character of governance in modern Africa. Some observers have suggested that African democracies remain "in transition," while others argue that the sorts of regimes being established are durable forms of rule. It is clear that the existing analytical frameworks for understanding governance in Africa are inadequate.

Rwanda and Ethiopia in particular have proven to be perplexing case studies of post-1990s African governance. Both nations are characterized by high growth economies and an uneasy marriage of free-market ideology and significant state intervention. Additionally, both countries have the formal institutions of democracy but a stunted civil society. Both Rwanda and Ethiopia are also involved in an uncomfortable relationship with the international community, in which foreign investment and military partnerships are cultivated while democratization and human-rights initiatives are underdeveloped or eschewed. This article argues that the paradox characterizing governance in modern Rwanda and Ethiopia is best described as "developmental authoritarianism," referring to nominally democratic governments that provide significant public works and services while exerting control over nearly every facet of society.[1]

Such a regime structure can be described in terms of five primary characteristics. Domestically, developmental authoritarian regimes are typically characterized, first, by an ascent to power following a major social rupture. This history legitimizes efforts to unify the country through party-based initiatives and an embedding of the regime in society. Second, like other authoritarian governments these regimes also typically impose legal restrictions on association, speech, and identity. In this case they manipulate the perceived risk of social rupture and prolonged conflict to justify harsh restrictions and the persecution of opposition. Third, they are characterized by government interventions into the economy. These interventions are undertaken to promote economic and human development, and typically are coupled uneasily with a rhetorical commitment to the free market. Fourth, these regimes are characterized by party-organized, militaristic mobilization of the population for developmental efforts. They use the threats of regional or domestic instability to justify quasi-mandatory participation in party initiatives and trainings. Fourth, developmental authoritarian regimes are characterized by their uneasy relationship with foreigners. They cultivate relationships with Western countries on the basis of regional security issues, often in exchange for aid programs, and work to attract foreign investment for private sector development. However, they also resist Western norms in regard to human rights and democratic legitimacy (Prendergast & Thomas-Fensen 2007).

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Any examination of the Rwandan and Ethiopian regimes needs to be placed in the context of the literature on autocratic regimes and regime change, especially the failure of the so-called "third wave" of democratization; while this literature is robust, it cannot explain the rise of developmental authoritarianism in these two countries. The early work on authoritarianism was centered on defining a narrow subset of such governance patterns—namely, totalitarianism. Perhaps one of the most important touchstones is Brzezinski and Friedrich's 1956 *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy,* which identifies six characteristics of totalitarian dictatorships: an ideology, a single party (typically led by one person), a terroristic police, a communications monopoly, a weapons monopoly, and a centrally directed economy. Brzezinski and Friedrich waded into the morass of attempting to distinguish between fascist totalitarian and communist totalitarian regimes, presenting their classification as a contrast to Hannah Arendt's (1973[1951]) earlier homogenous characterization. They posit that even established regimes are subject to transformation, suggesting a dynamic quality of autocratic rule that has been underexplored in subsequent efforts to classify such regimes. The proliferation of forms of autocratic rule in recent years requires that scholars follow Brzenzinski and Friedrich's example and examine more closely not just the forms of rule, but also its aims and the evolving means by which such aims are achieved.

In 2000 Juan Linz outlined a three-pronged characterization of totalitarian states, echoing and updating Brzenzinski and Friedrich's approach. Linz's theory posits that within totalitarian regimes

> There is a monistic but not monolithic center of power, and whatever pluralism of institutions or groups exists derives its legitimacy from that center, is largely mediated by it, and is mostly a political creation rather than an outgrowth of the dynamics of the preexisting society. . . . There is an exclusive, autonomous, and more or less intellectually elaborate ideology with which the ruling group or leader and the party serving the leaders, identify with and which they use as a basis for policies or manipulate to legitimize them. . . . The ideology goes beyond a particular program or definition of the boundaries of legitimate political action to provide, presumably, some ultimate meaning, sense of historical purpose, and interpretation of social reality. . . . Citizen participation in and active mobilization for political and collective social tasks are encouraged, demanded, rewarded, and channeled through a single party and many monopolistic secondary groups. Passive obedience and apathy, retreat into the role of "parochials" and "subjects," characteristic of many authoritarian regimes, are considered undesirable by the rulers. (2000:70)

This article's description of the policies of Rwanda and Ethiopia fit well within Brzezinski and Friedrich's and Linz's frameworks. However, the

regimes' commitments to a developmental economic agenda and their adoption of nominal democracy differentiate these states from those typically characterized as totalitarian. Guillermo O'Donnell's (1979) exploration of "bureaucratic authoritarianism" in Latin America, which emphasizes the role of technocrats and industrialization, may be more fitting, although the regimes under consideration here arise from a different economic context than O'Donnell's since they do not show the signs of "isolation" and internal fracturing that O'Donnell suggests are likely to occur.

The resilience of the Rwandan and Ethiopian regimes also complicate the already contentious debate concerning the effect of economic growth on democratization. Seymour M. Lipset (1959) famously hypothesized that economic growth increases the odds of authoritarian governments giving way to democracies. But economic growth in Rwanda and Ethiopia has not strengthened democratic forces in these countries. Though Rwandan and Ethiopian GDP per capita remain a far cry from Lipset's "turning point" of affluence, the correlation between the economies' growth and the resilience of these authoritarian governments is a troubling one for those seeking to promote democracy.

Other scholars, in attempting to explain cases such as Rwanda and Ethiopia, have moved beyond the dubious economic signposts of democratization and have attempted to describe the political systems of these states as unique blends of democracy and authoritarianism. Andreas Schedler (2009), elaborating upon the phenomenon of elections in generally non-democratic states, calls such systems "electoral authoritarianism." Schedler's work builds off of the "competitive authoritarian" models developed in 2002 by Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way. Both of these categories focus on the ability of a ruling party to provide a façade of democratic competition while preventing any serious challenges to power. However, such categories ignore the potential sources of domestic legitimacy for these regimes and pay insufficient attention to the policies adopted by the ruling parties. These models, as well as Larry Diamond's (2002) conceptualization of "hybrid regimes," invest inordinate energy in the examination of elections in autocratic regimes, resulting in an incomplete understanding of the dynamics of authoritarian rule beyond the ballot box. Similarly, Michael Wahman, Jan Teorell, and Axel Hadenius's (2014) classification of authoritarian regimes overlooks their policies and characteristics, focusing instead on the processes of coming to and remaining in power, through either hereditary succession, military force, or popular elections. While classification along such lines is necessary, it is insufficient for understanding the varieties of governance under authoritarian regimes, since categorization according to the means of obtaining power overlooks what is done by a regime once it is in power.

The Ethiopian and Rwandan cases also need to be considered in the context of the scholarly literature on the "developmental state," which actually predated the revival of the literature on autocratic regimes; the poster children for developmental states are the East Asian countries in which

governments took an active role in directing their nations' productive forces. These states were able to revolutionize their economies and upgrade their production by forming coalitions with the private sector and enacting carefully targeted economic reforms. Robert Wade, paraphrasing Vivek Chibber's *Locked in Place* (2006), describes the organizational structure of the developmental state as being composed of

> a pilot agency located in the very heartland of the state[;] . . . an operational agency that does the "nuts and bolts" of industrial policy[;] . . . industry associations by sector, membership of which is obligatory, whose secretary is semi-appointed by the government and is responsible for two-way interaction between the member firms and the government (and hence not likely to let the association become a center of political resistance to the government); [and] public R&D laboratories. (1990:22–33)

Through this structure, the government prioritizes the development of national firms, limits foreign involvement, and cultivates "spillovers" from the constrained foreign investment. An implicit theme of the literature on the developmental state is that such regimes are necessarily authoritarian. However, this is not necessarily the case. Linda Low agrees that "neither an industrial policy nor the developmental state rests easily with democracy as some social engineering and authoritarianism is implicit," although she calls the connection between authoritarianism and development an "elective affinity" as opposed to an inevitable organic connection (2001:413). But while economic interventions similar to those described by Wade are evident in both Rwanda and Ethiopia, the African examples are much less clearly linked to the state in general and less confined to particular economic policies. Rather, economic policies in Rwanda and Ethiopia are directly affiliated with specific political regimes and are also a part of larger state intervention in the social sphere.

Meles Zenawi's much discussed 2012 paper "States and Markets: Neoliberal Limitations and the Case for a Developmental State" also has limited applicability to the two regimes considered here, though it does shed light on the ideological underpinnings of the model. Zenawi identifies two dimensions of the developmental state: the "ideological" and the "structural."

> At the ideological level, accelerated development is the mission, its source of legitimacy. Moreover, the development project is a hegemonic project in the Gramscian sense—the key actors voluntarily adhere to its objectives and principles. Structurally it has the capacity to implement policy effectively, which is the result of various political, institutional, and technical factors, which in turn are based on the autonomy of the state. This autonomy enables the state to pursue its development project without succumbing to myopic interests. (2012:167)

Implied in Zenawi's analysis is the role of the state as a hegemonic force establishing "mutually beneficial horizontal networks" linking millions of individuals.

The state, according to this model, develops and nurtures the social capital that is underproduced by the market. Zenawi's developmental state goes beyond the economic sphere in its interventions; it has a role in guiding "appropriate" citizen behavior and constructing useful social networks to facilitate the developmental agenda. But while the state, according to this model, intervenes in the sociopolitical sphere, it is also isolated from it— autonomous not only in its policy deliberations (an attribute found in other models as well), but also in its "political, institutional, and technical" attributes (2012:167). Implicit in this model is the notion of the state as autonomous from both domestic and international influences.

Thus none of these models—neither the "developmental state, nor Linz's totalitarianism, nor O'Donnell's bureaucratic authoritarianism, nor Schedler's electoral authoritarianism, nor Diamond's hybrid regimes— appropriately captures the dynamics that gave rise to and sustain the regimes in Rwanda and Ethiopia. While these regimes share many of the characteristics of totalitarian states, these classifications do not capture the legitimacy they garner from their developmental orientation. This orientation cannot be characterized as an "ideology," since the implemented policies have not been guided by a coherent political or economy philosophy. In light of the breadth, and at times contradictory nature, of their policies, the term "developmental" in this article describes not only GDP growth, but also broader national development, demonstrated through the provision of public goods such as health services and education initiatives.

Of note are the similarities between the regimes' respective histories; though their forms of rule are recent, in both cases they have deep historical and institutional roots. The current ruling parties in both countries— the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) and the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democracy Front (EPRDF)—began as military groups and came to power as part of the resolution of civil war. The most notable political figure in modern Rwanda, Paul Kagame, has been president since 2000 and has had an indelible effect on the political economy of the country. In a recent appearance in the United States, Kagame alluded to the possibility of a third term—despite the constitutional provision limiting the presidency to two terms—suggesting that Kagame will remain a fixture in Rwandan politics for the foreseeable future (Smith 2014). Similarly, the most critical moment in recent Ethiopian history was the termination of the Ethiopian Civil War in 1991, when the Derg was overthrown by the EPRDF, a coalition of four ethnomilitary groups united against the Mengistu government. In aftermath of the civil war, Meles Zenawi was the president of the transitional government (1991–95), before serving as prime minister from 1995 until his death in 2012. The current prime minister, Hailemariam Desalegn, is also a member of the EPRDF.

Currently, both countries are nominally multiparty democracies with regular elections, which lend an aura of legitimacy to their rule within the international sphere. However, assessments by groups such as Freedom House (2014) suggest that nascent democratization of these states is a

procedural veneer for de facto one-party states. It is apparent that, while espousing a commitment to democracy, both governments have taken significant measures to reduce coordinated political activity through legal restrictions on speech, press, and technology and the dissemination of a specific state-sponsored ideology through government-run programs; dissent is simply not tolerated and has frequently been addressed extrajudiciously.

The contexts in which the RPF and the EPRDF came to power have influenced the means by which they have incorporated themselves into their respective societies. The domestic legitimacy that accompanies responsibility for restoring peace and stability is not inexhaustible; in order to prevent challenges to their rule, these regimes have adopted both "carrots" and "sticks" to mobilize domestic support. The "carrots" generally take the form of public goods and services and earn these states the "developmental" aspect of their moniker; relative to other African states, both Rwanda and Ethiopia provide a high level of government services. Additionally, these regimes make use of their party structures to intervene in the economy, developing strong patronage networks while promoting economic growth in critical sectors. The "sticks," which earn these regimes their description as "authoritarian," include the persecution of political opposition, oppressive legal measures, and restrictions on associations or affiliations that are not pro-regime or regime approved.

Within the international community, both countries have become something of aid and investment darlings. They have leveraged their geopolitical importance as stable nations geographically close to failed states into friendly relations with Western governments, though regionally they are frequently viewed with suspicion. Though diplomats and NGOs have expressed reservations about the tactics of the governments, both Rwanda and Ethiopia receive significant amounts of development aid from the United States. Additionally, their pro-growth economic policies have garnered them a significant amount of foreign investment from both traditional Western sources and emerging markets. When pressed about improprieties in their domestic policies, the leaders of both countries make use of rhetoric that portrays criticism as neocolonial, a strategy that largely grants them impunity for human rights abuses.

Thus the ruling parties of both countries have pursued a similar combination of policies in order to consolidate their rule in both domestic and international spheres. Since these policies do not fit easily into existing scholarly models of the authoritarian or the developmental state, this article proposes a new category of "developmental authoritarianism," in which the nominally democratic governments provide significant public works and services while exerting control over nearly every facet of society. This article also hopes to demonstrate, through a review of both nations' domestic and international policies, that these regimes are a durable form of governance that requires a nuanced international response if they are to transition away from autocratic rule toward democracy.

The sections that follow will elaborate upon the idea of "developmental authoritarianism" by reviewing each nation's domestic policies regarding macroeconomic growth, the control of communication technologies, and state-sponsored nationalist mobilization. The article will also discuss the two nations' international policies, including relationships with neighboring countries and the means by which they have successfully courted international aid and investment while largely skirting the sort of reforms upon which such assistance is typically contingent. The larger argument is that this model of governance, both in terms of its rise and durability, has significant implications for Africa as well as the international community.

Domestic Policies

The domestic policies of Rwanda and Ethiopia have allowed the regimes to consolidate their rule, largely through the stunting of civil society and bolstering of state strength. The defining characteristic of developmental authoritarianism in the domestic sphere is the cultivation of a culture of fear within the political realm and a sense of profound hope in the economic sphere. The domestic durability of developmental authoritarianism in Rwanda and Ethiopia stems from the self-policing society created by strict limitations of speech and organizing and the considerable state involvement with economic growth.

Rwanda

In the past two decades, Rwanda has experienced impressive economic growth. Between 1990 and 2012 GDP per capita rose from U.S.$353 to U.S.$620, and the Human Development Index (HDI) score, which includes health and education indicators in addition to economic growth, rose from 0.238 in 1990 to 0.506 in 2013. The country has also benefited from a steep increase in foreign direct investment (FDI) since the mid-1990s, climbing from U.S.$7,660,000 to over U.S.$110,000 since 2004 (World Bank 2014). Rwanda has frequently been cited as an example of economic reform. In 2014 The Heritage Foundation praised Rwanda's significant improvement in its annual "Index of Economic Freedom," ranking it as the fourth most economically free sub-Saharan African country. In particular, the country made significant gains in the categories of "business freedom," and "investment freedom," rising from the rank of "repressed" to "moderately free," and it is now considered to have "mostly free" trade policies. Paul Kagame, in particular, has been praised for the opening of Rwandan markets and the liberalization of the economy. Indeed, Kagame's speeches and official statements often make him sound like a veritable Chicago Boy.[2]

> Competition is good for everybody. . . . Competition helps bring out everybody's potential . . . [and the ability] to move forward. And it doesn't matter what level of society; even the poor people have that energy, deserve

that freedom where they can be able to compete with the rest and do the best they can, and be able to move forward on that. (Poverty Cure 2013)

But despite such rhetoric, the RPF (and by extension, the Rwandan government) exercises firm control over the country's economy. In the international sphere there is an uneasy and often incoherent attitude toward foreigners, and investors are not incorporated fully into the regime's policy deliberations. Domestically, as Booth and Golooba-Mutebi (2012) point out, the RPF intervenes in the country's most critical sectors through a private holding company, Tri-Star Investments/CVL, which the RPF owns entirely. By the end of the 1990s Tri-Star had invested in "metals trading, road construction, housing estates, building materials, fruit processing, mobile telephony, and printing, as well as furniture imports and security services," before eventually expanding into riskier investments such as mobile communications (2012:10). Booth and Golooba-Mutebi conclude that "the willingness of Tri-Star/CVL to use its financial clout to fund investments with high expected social benefits and/or positive economic externalities, including those associated with venture capitalism, is a significant aspect of Rwandan political economy. The extent of the Rwandan government's involvement in the economy has been shrouded by the use of Tri-Star and the lack of a vocal, ideological commitment to state intervention. Undoubtedly, another factor in its favor is the lack of opposition, since the development of these sectors has provided employment opportunities for Rwandan youth and instilled pride among Rwandans.

Accompanying the RPF's economic interventions has been the exercise of control in the sociopolitical sphere, as illustrated by the events surrounding the 2010 elections. Opposition parties such as the Democratic Green Party and the FDU-Inkingi party were prevented from registering in the months leading up to the election; further, organizers of the FDU-Inkingi party were subjected to physical violence when they attempted to register voters, with police officers looking on. The party's presidential candidate, Victoria Ingabire, was accused of violating the laws against "genocidal ideology" and placed under arrest following a speech at a genocide memorial site in which she called for the reconciliation of the Hutu and Tutsi. Ingabire was also accused of funneling money to the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda, FDLR), a Hutu militia based in Eastern Congo, and portrayed as an example of the internal threats that Rwanda faces (Wadhams 2010). Such strategic uses of "antigenocide laws" and extrajudicial violence represent significant interventions into the country's sociopolitical arena.

State-run mass mobilization efforts such the *ingando* reeducation camps and the *gacaca* court system represent another intervention. *Ingando* camps, ranging from three to eight weeks in length, have alternatively been known as "'solidarity camps,' 're-education' camps, 'civic education' camps, 'political awareness' camps, 'reorientation' camps, and 'reintegration' courses" (Purdeková 2008). Though the camps have at various points targeted

different segments of the population, including former militants and local government leaders, the most significant and wide-scope application of *ingando* has been the compulsory student attendance prior to university enrollment. In a series of interviews with government administrators in January 2014, a number of officials stated that part of the government's vision for 2020 is that all citizens will have attended *ingando*.

The camps themselves are modeled after the military training camps that the RPF established while based in Uganda. According to most reports from participants, days in the camps are strictly scheduled, with early morning exercise followed by lectures from government officials, then more exercise or military drills, and finally the singing of "patriotic" songs at night. Across the range of experiences with *ingando*, the most frequent refrain is that the camps "taught us how to be soldiers" (personal interviews, January 2014). While government officials insist that the camps are a necessary aspect of "creating a national identity," one former participant told me that "some outsiders say *ingando* is a way of attracting the youth to the Rwandan Patriotic Front. . . . But if you feel that way in this country, you must keep silent." The government justifies both the antigenocide laws and *ingando* by arguing that the threat stemming from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and amorphous domestic forces aligned with the DRC and violent rebel movements necessitate a strong state response. While the instability along its western border is undoubtedly a threat to Rwanda, the RPF frequently uses the regional instability to justify authoritarian and oppressive tactics.

Similarly, the *gacaca* court system attempts to establish a national identity under the RPF's terms. The court system is modeled after the "traditional" Rwandan courts in which community leaders review and adjudicate disputes. Gacaca was revived in light of the inability of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and the Rwandan legal system to handle the large number of cases related to the 1994 genocide. The remodeling of gacaca to fit modern needs and standards was promoted as a "Rwandan solution to a Rwandan problem"; the claim was that "that large numbers of foreign jurists were not what was required, and that justice in Rwanda would be done by Rwandans, with assistance from abroad playing only a secondary role" (Schabas 2005:5). The gacaca trials encouraged admissions of guilt, leading to significantly reduced sentences for those who admitted to wrongdoing. One of the results of gacaca has been the development of an approved official narrative of the genocide. A government official from southwestern Rwanda involved with unification and sensitization activities stated that "the goal is to make people have the same opinions. It is very important that people in Rwanda think the same way because we need unity in this country. What we hope to achieve is that after a meeting, 75 percent of the people leave with the same mindset. Those people will also talk about what they have heard with other people, so that we reach almost the entire population" (personal interview, January 2014). Deviating from the official narrative, which stresses national unity to the point of obscuring continued

inequality and tensions between Hutu and Tutsi, can result in imprisonment. The violation of laws against "divisionism," which can consist merely of referring to oneself as a Hutu or Tutsi, can result in the death penalty.

In 2014 the Freedom House report classified Rwanda as "not free," and persecution in the country has not been limited to political actors. Reporters Without Borders (2014) has raised concerns about the persecution of journalists by the RPF, with abuse ranging from condemnations to kidnappings to assassination. During that 2010 election cycle, two newspapers critical of the government were banned on the grounds of defamation and posing a threat to national security. In general, government persecution of critics and condemnation of opponents have contributed to a culture of fear in Rwanda. Criticism of the government or the assertion of a non-state-sponsored identity is akin to threatening the survival of the state. Such opinions are met with animosity by an increasingly self-policing society and are rarely voiced.

Ethiopia

As in Rwanda, GDP per capita has risen in Ethiopia, from U.S.$251 in 1990 to U.S.$470 in 2012—although, as we will see below, there are some indications that this progress may have been manipulated somewhat (Mariam 2010a). Ethiopia's HDI rose from 0.284 in 2000 to 0.435 in 2013, and since 2004 its FDI rose from U.S.$545,100,000 to U.S.$952,959,700. While the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front lacks the sort of free-market credentials that Kagame's Rwanda has garnered, the regime has been remarkably friendly to investors for a left-wing party. In fact, the EPRDF's 2013 statement of "Major Policies and Programs" notes that after the fall of the Derg, the party prioritized economic liberalization to encourage development. The economic reforms and policies adopted by the EPRDF purport to advance the ideology of "Revolutionary Democracy," which is often interpreted as state directed, cautiously liberalized development. In practice, Revolutionary Democracy has amounted to a precarious balance between free-market growth and government intervention, ethnic federalism and central state control, and democratic participation and EPRDF hegemony.

One means by which the state has pursued economic reforms under Revolutionary Democracy has been through endowment-funded companies. These companies, while engaging in capitalist investment, are closely linked to the EPRDF and are frequently owned by political parties that make up the EPRDF alliance, mirroring the RPF's involvement with Tri-Star. The political capture of endowment-funded companies has allowed the EPRDF to exert significant control over investment in the private sector. Given their proximity to the political class, these companies have both privileged access to credit and a better sense than other private sector actors of the government's priorities. Of particular note is the company EFFORT (Endowment Fund for the Rehabilitation of Tigray), which is run by the Tigray People's Liberation Front, one of the key political actors in the

EPRDF alliance. According to a review of EFFORT, the company is characterized by a "high degree of vertical and horizontal integration of its companies," which means that in practice the company's investments in strategically critical sectors such as "transport, logistics, engineering, construction and import–export" have bolstered investments in other realms, in addition to creating a vast patronage network linking citizens, the endowment-owned companies, traditional private sector actors, and the government (Vaughan & Gebremichael 2011).

Though the EPRDF has encouraged industrialization through the endowment-funded companies, its prioritization of economic development comes with the recognition of both the country's deep reliance upon agriculture and its capital scarcity. While an examination of all of the economic programs pursued by the EPRDF in the past two decades is beyond the scope of this article, a review of the promotion of large-scale agriculture in the country provides a valuable case study of the tensions inherent to Revolutionary Democracy.

The principle Ethiopian development program, the "Growth and Transformation Plan" (see MoFED 2010; U.S. Department of State 2015), asserts that, since 80 percent of the country is involved with agriculture, economic development must stem from an improvement in this sector. In documents and speeches, party officials attempt to highlight the party's connection to and solidarity with the country's large peasant population. In an interview with Robert Dowden, Meles Zenawi stated that "there is no village that I know of in the rural areas that did not vote for us," and boasted that "unlike all previous governments, our writ runs in every village. That has never happened in the history of Ethiopia" (Dowden 2012).

However, frustrated by small-shareholder agriculture's failure to produce sufficient surplus, the government began courting investors to fund larger-scale, often export-oriented agricultural projects over the past decade, and eight million acres have been earmarked for large-scale commercial agriculture. Though domestic investors have been responsible for the bulk of the funding, the majority of the land that has been distributed has gone to foreign investors. In the process of leasing out the land, certain populations have been forcibly removed. It is important to note that the government of Ethiopia owns all of the land; such government control of a critical resource is characteristic of Ethiopia's political economy, in which the state takes a prominent role, purportedly to provide support where the private sector fails to deliver.

The displacement of people in Gambella and other southern provinces has aggravated longstanding tensions between citizens in the country's periphery and Addis Ababa. Though much of the land that has been leased to foreign investors is considered "underutilized" or "uninhabited," such terms are highly political and reflect the common misconceptions of agricultural processes in the southern provinces (Human Rights Watch 2012b:4). Frustration has extended beyond the agricultural revitalization programs to the EPRDF's Integrated Master Plan (IMP) for enlarging the capital city,

Addis Ababa, into the Oromo region, at the expense of surrounding farmers (Getachew 2014). Protests in these regions have highlighted the violation of their rights as well as the programs' failure to provide employment (see Human Rights Watch 2010b; Aalen & Tronvoll 2009; Lavers 2011). These protests have also revealed the heavy-handedness of the state; at least thirty-four students were shot and killed by Ethiopian security forces for protesting the IMP (O'Keefe 2014). In light of the violence and discontent that have accompanied the program, the EPRDF's (2013) statement that "to provide strong support for the private sector capital in development, we must do away with all bottlenecks that challenge its ventures into development" seems about as authoritarian as it is developmental—evidence, once again, for the proposed category of developmental authoritarianism.

Since the 2005 elections, in which opposition candidates garnered an unprecedented number of seats, the authoritarian aspects of the government have been intensified. For the delayed ward (*kebele*) and district (*woreda*) elections, scheduled for 2005 but held in 2008, the EPRDF manipulated the electoral system, changing the structure of kebele councils from fifteen seats to around three hundred. This change required opposition parties to enter a total of roughly 3.6 million candidates if they intended to run in all constituencies. To ensure that the EPRDF would be the only party with such backing, the party mobilized support through a mixture of coercion and incentives for party membership, resulting in an explosion in party members from 760,000 in 2005 to 4 million in 2008.

Government intervention into civil society is also evident in media censorship. As in Rwanda, freedom of the press in Ethiopia, as measured by Freedom House (2014), has declined dramatically, in this case an astounding twenty points on a scale of one hundred since 2002. Like Rwanda, Ethiopia was also classified in the Freedom House report as "not free." In 2009 the activist and repressive roles of the government were codified and reinforced with the adoption of the "Charities and Societies Proclamation no. 621/2009" (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia 2009a). Though the government argues that the law enshrines the right of Ethiopians to associate freely, in practice it drastically curtails the purview of civil society. Under the law, any nongovernmental organization that receives more than 10 percent of its funding from outside the country's borders is considered "foreign." Any foreign NGO is banned from engaging in work pertaining to human rights, women's rights, children's rights, disability rights, citizenship rights, conflict resolution, or democratic governance. Given the funding patterns of Ethiopian NGOs, the law has effectively stifled civil society and builds upon the tradition of government harassment of NGOs.

Other legislative measures adopted under the guise of protecting Ethiopian citizens have also been used to crack down on domestic opposition. The country's 2009 anti-terrorism law, "Anti-Terrorism Proclamation no. 652/2009" (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia 2009b) has been deployed by the administration to persecute critical members of the press and political opponents. As of July 2012 thirty-four people had been

convicted of violating the anti-terrorism law; of those, eleven were journalists and at least four were political opponents. The law's vague definition of actions that constitute "support for terrorism" has allowed the government to accuse domestic opponents of encouraging terrorism in acts ranging from peaceful dissent to publishing the names of terrorists and terrorist groups. The deputy director of the Human Rights Watch's Africa division, Leslie Lefkow, asserts that the wording and application of the anti-terrorism law "shows that Ethiopia's government will not tolerate even the mildest criticism," and asserts that the regime's use of such legislation undermines the country's rule of law (Human Rights Watch 2012a).

Such laws are particularly troubling given the impressive scope and depth of Ethiopian surveillance. The Ethiopian government's capacity to monitor citizens' activities lies at an interesting intersection of the economic control and political repression in the country. In contrast to global and regional ownership patterns, the only telecommunications operator in Ethiopia is the state-owned Ethio Telecom. According to a 2014 Human Rights Watch report, "the government of Ethiopia has the technical capacity to access virtually every single phone call and SMS message in Ethiopia," including "mobile phones, landlines, and VSAT communications, and . . . all local phone calls made within the country and long distance calls to and from local phones." Similarly, Ethio Telecom "controls access to the Internet backbone that connects Ethiopia to the international Internet," through service provision and regulation of Internet cafes. Terje Skjerdal (2011:94) details how the limited provision of Internet services in Ethiopia curtails journalists' capacity, suggesting that both the poor quality of the Internet and the "frequent blocking of critical sites" prevents Ethiopian journalists from effectively reporting on current events.

The EPRDF has used its control over these resources to suppress political dissent and persecute opponents. Firsthand accounts of being denied SIM cards based on political activism and the government's habit of limiting network access during politically sensitive periods (personal interviews, January 2014) corroborate Human Rights Watch's (2014) conclusion that "while the Ethiopian government has legitimate national security concerns, government's use of surveillance puts a significant focus on individuals deemed to be a political, rather than a security, threat." The blocking of politically sensitive websites began in 2006, although the authorities deny responsibility, blaming "technical problems with the national Internet service provider" (Skjerdal 2011:94). Four years later, Prime Minister Meles Zenawi virtually admitted to government intervention in the communication technologies when he stated that the regime was prepared to block foreign radio broadcasts that brought "destabilizing propaganda" (Voice of America 2010a). Political activists and human rights advocates in Ethiopia often use multiple online personas, pseudonyms, and a variety of mobile numbers, and arrange local meetings through members of the diaspora (personal interviews, 2014). Though the EPRDF is under pressure from the World Bank and the World Trade Organization to liberalize the

telecommunications sector, the political dividends from state ownership and the willingness of multinational corporations and certain donors to facilitate the expansion of the state-run telecommunications system suggest that such reforms are unlikely in the short and medium term. By controlling the telecommunications infrastructure and using it against dissenters, the EPRDF has hamstrung the opposition and consolidated its power. The much anticipated liberalizing effects of the communications revolution are unlikely to be realized in Ethiopia.

In addition to preventing the dissemination of narratives critical of the government, the Ethiopian government has adopted a program of government-led conferences that serve to further embed the EPRDF within society. A Human Rights Watch report found that civil servants across the country "are subject to propaganda meetings ostensibly to learn about government policy, but in reality this is part and parcel of a process of indoctrination and ultimately a request or threat to join the EPRDF" (Human Rights Watch 2010a:28). In particular, the government has gone to great lengths to bring teachers into the party fold. With such programs come accusations that public schools and universities serve as forums for government propaganda; Alemayehu Mariam alleges that "it is a well-established fact that the regime has used teachers, particularly in the rural areas, extensively as party recruiters, enforcers and representatives by providing them financial and other incentives" (2010a). There is significant pressure for teachers to attend conferences and serve as good party members, and some teachers report having party dues automatically deducted from their paychecks (Human Rights Watch 2010a). The use of such indoctrination and punishment to encourage teachers to act as loyal party members transforms not only the relationship between regional and federal governments, but also the purpose of educational spaces.

This pressure is also applied directly to students. According to Human Rights Watch, "all high school students above grade ten, around the age of fourteen and older, have been required to participate in the [propaganda] meetings too. Every school in every region visited by Human Rights Watch . . . had at some point during 2009 held a conference on the same topic of 'awareness of government policy and strategy'" (Human Rights Watch 2010b:31). One student recalled that party forms were distributed following the conference, and that everyone present completed them. He stated, "we were not forced but we are not free" (Human Rights Watch 2010b:31). Identification as a party member is also associated with educational and occupational opportunity; one teacher recalled that when she asked students to display a form of identification, every student in the class produced a party membership card rather than their national identification card. A college-educated activist told me that activists refer to a party membership as having "a green card," "because that is the only way to get work" (personal interview, January 2014). The government's attempt to ban "distance learning" programs also reflects its emphasis upon controlling the country's educational space in order to legitimize the ruling party (Voice of America 2010b).

As in Rwanda, officials in Ethiopia argue that such deep integration of the government in society is necessary because of the country's geopolitical position. One example is the supposed threat posed by Somali militants, which has justified increased surveillance in the south and east of the country and heightened security provisions in the Ogaden region. One commentator (Frazer 2013) called the government's declarations about the Somali threat "theatrics," and argues that they were "intended to camouflage the massive campaign of detentions and harassment it is conducting against the civilian population" in the Ogaden region, an ethnopolitically problematic area for the EPRDF. Thus the "threat" of Somali militants has been manipulated by the EPRDF in order to further consolidate its power while avoiding international rebuke for human rights violations.

Foreign Policy

The foreign policy programs of both Rwanda and Ethiopia work to exploit the willingness of the international community to invest in counterterrorism partnerships and development programs while largely avoiding the sorts of reforms typically contingent upon aid and partnerships. Both Rwanda and Ethiopia receive significant amounts of foreign assistance from the United States and other Western donors, despite the donors' misgivings about the oppressive domestic policies within these countries. The international community's relationship with Rwanda and Ethiopia thus calls into question some of the assumptions about norm diffusion and enforcement that liberal internationalists have promoted.

Most characteristic of these nations' foreign policy is the leveraging of their geographic proximity to a failed state in order to maintain friendly relations with the United States and other Western governments. Rwanda has used the international community's concern for the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo as a means of emphasizing its relative stability, its status as the voice of "new Africa," and its identity as an African partner in international intervention. Ethiopia has used its proximity to Somalia to become America's most important ally in the War against Terror in the Horn of Africa.

When confronted about their oppressive practices by the international community, these countries often make use of "Africanist" rhetoric in order to deflect criticism and discourage Western governments from intervening or levying more critical demands. Previous Western policy failures in the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes Region are wielded by the regimes as a means of checking Western ambition and establishing themselves as regional powerbrokers. Criticisms of Rwandan policy are frequently met with accusations that the West does not understand Rwandan society and is not in a position to criticize the government because of the international community's failure to respond appropriately to the genocide in 1994. In Ethiopia, the memory of the widespread famine in the 1950s–'70s and the West's willingness to cooperate with the dictatorial Haile Selassie are

deployed to curtail criticism of the current administration. Unsurprisingly, such rhetoric is effective. These regimes came to power following intense periods of conflict that were ignored or exacerbated by the international community's response; both domestic and international critics are in compromised positions when they call into question the regimes' roles in establishing stability. Further, the stirring of nationalism in response to criticism bolsters their domestic legitimacy. In sum, their leveraging of their geopolitical location and role as a unifying force has consolidated their power in their respective countries and has made international criticism politically and strategically difficult.

Rwanda

More so than in other regimes, image management is a crucial aspect of the Kagame regime's strategy. Rwanda has been heralded as a success story; the nation's transformation from a war-torn state into an economic dynamo is all the more striking when the instability of its surroundings are taken into account. For a number of years Rwanda was undoubtedly seen as the most valuable partner of the United States in the Great Lakes Region and sought to cultivate an image as a reliable, pro-Western government through a variety of means. In addition to adopting rhetoric and policies modeled after those of the U.S., the Rwandan government hired a public relations firm to bolster its image abroad; according to the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, Rwanda has "excellent public relations machinery" which they have used to convince "the key members of the international community that it has an exemplary constitution emphasizing democracy, power-sharing, and human rights which it fully respects" (Booth 2010). However, as previously discussed, the political reality in Rwanda is a far cry from a liberal democracy.

Rwanda lost a significant degree of credibility as a cooperative regional actor when the country withdraw from MONUC, the U.N. peacekeeping operation in the DRC, in 2002 (Dagne & Farrel 2003). Recently, Rwanda's image has been tarnished even more by its involvement in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and in 2013 the U.S., frustrated that its regional ally was funneling money to rebel groups in the DRC, levied economic sanctions against Kagame's government. In particular, Rwandan support for the M23 rebel group was cited as unacceptable. The Kagame administration vehemently denied supporting the group, although soon after the sanctions were levied the M23 signed a ceasefire agreement with the Congolese government. However, in reality the Rwandan involvement in the region had been quietly problematic for years. M23 was merely the latest iteration of the RPF's financing of rebel groups, though such funding was largely ignored by Rwanda's international partners. According to René Lemarchand, the RPF is willing to sacrifice a certain amount of international legitimacy in the pursuit of domestic security against Hutu challenges, since "for Rwanda there is no alternative to ethnic exclusion as

long as the Hutu opposition appears to condone or become complicit in the crimes of the *interhamwe.* Externally there is no other choice but to exterminate the exterminators operating from foreign bases, even if this approach involves collateral damage among innocent civilians" (2001:91).

And yet despite the aspersions cast upon Rwanda, it remains an American ally in the region. The relationship between the two countries began with President Bill Clinton's 1998 visit to Kigali, in which he lamented the international paralysis during the 1994 genocide, solidified the bilateral relationship between Rwanda and the United States, and laid the groundwork for a regional security policy centered on Rwandan cooperation. This relationship intensified in 2001 following Kagame's placing of Kabila in power in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. At this point in the conflict in the DRC, the United States was reluctant to engage in the sort of multilateral action proposed by France to "create safe havens for refugees to avoid yet another human tragedy" in the country's troubled East; Rwandan sources reported that "700,000 Hutu refugees had voluntarily returned to their homeland," making such international intervention unnecessary and allowing the United States to disengage (Lemarchand 2001:97).

This partnership has made the United States hesitant to criticize the Kagame administration too forcefully. Part of this caution is based on the lack of a suitable alternative ally in the Great Lakes Region. Burundi cannot match Rwanda's stability, while Uganda is politically problematic and insufficiently stable. Rwanda has also managed to avoid overt criticism by capitalizing upon the international community's failure to respond to the genocide in 1994. According to Desrosiers and Thomson (2011), this strategy is a way of garnering international sympathy and development and military assistance. But despite the significant amount of development assistance the United States gives to Rwanda, U.S. influence over Rwandan policy is constrained by strategic considerations and Rwandan rhetoric.

Ethiopia

The success of Ethiopian foreign policy centers upon the nation's status as a development partner and also, according to the United States Agency for International Development, as "the linchpin to stability in the Horn of Africa and the Global War on Terrorism" (Prendergast & Thomas-Fensen 2007). The United States' prioritization of the War on Terror, which has been likened to the anticommunist fervor of the Cold War era, necessitates stable and friendly governments within striking distance of terrorist centers.

Ethiopia and the U.S. have partnered to train Ethiopian defense forces and policemen in counterterrorism strategies and have collaborated on intelligence, security, and military initiatives. Ethiopia has been incorporated into U.S. defense innovations; it is one of the countries on the continent that has a fully operational American drone base. Ethiopia also has taken the lead in a variety of regional initiatives aimed at stabilizing the situation in Somalia, acting as a driving force behind the African Union. Additionally,

Ethiopia is a crucial player in the Partnership for Regional East Africa Counterterrorism (PREACT), an American-funded multiyear program focused on developing counterterrorism capacity in the region through military training and improved governance programs. The crux of the program lies in improving states' abilities to address both regional and domestic threats by increasing security sector capacity in each country without necessitating the commitment of American troops. Even seemingly unilateral Ethiopian action is often conducted with American approval and military support; the most obvious example is Ethiopia's 2006 invasion of Somali, in which it is suspected that the U.S. provided logistical support, arms, and fuel (see Whitlock 2011; U.S. Department of State 2014; Bruton & Williams 2013; Rice & Goldenberg 2007). Ethiopia's commitment to combating terrorism has also been telegraphed through its domestic efforts, notably through the previously discussed anti-terrorism legislation. The U.S. State Department, while acknowledging the criticisms that human rights groups have levied against the law, still listed Ethiopia's forty-six convictions under the law as a sign of the country's commitment to combating terrorism (Department of State 2013).

In return for its cooperation, Ethiopia receives a significant amount of foreign assistance and is given nearly carte blanche to use the aid as it sees fit. Nearly one-third of the nation's budget comes from donors, making it, in both relative and absolute terms, one of the most aid-dependent countries in the world (Muteshi & Tizazu n.d.). The modern relationship between Ethiopia and the United States is reminiscent of the 1950s, when "American famine-relief assistance provided a context for building a mutually beneficial relationship between Washington and Addis Ababa" (Kissi 2000:131). Though this aid is purportedly directed to development programs, Human Rights Watch (2010b) has reported that the EPRDF has used the funding to support "programs, salaries, and training opportunities as political weapons to control the population, punish dissent, and undermine political opponents." The EPRDF's politicization of aid is currently the subject of a lawsuit against the British Department for International Development agency (DFID). An Ethiopian farmer, with British legal assistance, alleges that the EPRDF has used foreign aid in projects that force people from their land without compensation in the name of "development" (Smith 2014). According to the plaintiff, politically well-connected northerners are engaging in brutal human rights violations (including rape, torture, and murder), while resettling southerners, particularly those who live in areas known for political dissent. This lawsuit corroborates previous reports of the EPRDF's using foreign aid to bolster domestic support. According to Human Rights Watch (2010a) and the Oakland Institute policy think tank (Flores 2013), those who do not toe the party line are frequently denied agricultural land, food assistance, seeds, fertilizer, credit, and other government resources, and it is not unusual for patronage networks to sprout up in instances in which the government is responsible for resource distribution. The international community's financing of such patronage—which has been estimated to be

in the range of U.S.$3 billion—along with the "muddled paper trail" (Flores 2013:11) that accompanies assistance—is problematic.

There is little incentive for donor countries, in particular the United States, to demand a higher standard of conduct from the Ethiopian government. Sandwiched between Somalia, the Gulf of Aden, and the conflict in the Sudans, Ethiopia, with its relative stability, is a valuable partner in political and financial pursuits in the Horn of Africa. In order to serve donor interests, that stability does not need to be generated by a liberal democratic regime.

Whither These Regimes?

Much time, thought, and ink has been dedicated to the fragility or durability of authoritarian regimes. In particular, the notion of countries "transitioning" to democracy has become popular in discussions among American policymakers. Ethiopia and Rwanda have both been portrayed as such "transitioning" countries, as they are both nominally multiparty democracies that hold regular elections. Inherent in the characterization of these countries as "in transition" is the idea that their current methods of government will inevitably give way to democracy.

However, what this article has defined as Rwanda's and Ethiopia's "developmental authoritarianism" shows signs of being durable. Rwanda and Ethiopia are not alone in their authoritarian resilience during political transition; Hadenius and Teorell found that between 1972 and 2003, 77 percent of authoritarian governments that underwent political reforms "resulted in another authoritarian regime" (2007:152). That being said, these authors also point out that the form of authoritarianism with the least likelihood of surviving was the "limited multiparty" government. But whether Rwanda and Ethiopia are likely to join this latter trend seems dubious. In these countries, what looks like fledgling multipartyism is more a donor-pleasing veneer than the first steps toward democratic transition.

In fact, the opposite prediction seems warranted: that the rise and durability of developmental authoritarianism in Rwanda and Ethiopia will encourage African strongmen to modify their ruling patterns toward this style of rule. Regimes that simultaneously cultivate economic development through foreign investment and government intervention, enact strict limitations on civil society while promoting a veneer of democratization, and adjust their foreign policies in order to deflect demands for governance reform can be said to be moving toward developmental authoritarianism. Indeed, the spread of this form of governance could lead to a reversal of the democratic gains made by the continent in the 1990s. Promoting democracy and preventing the spread of authoritarianism therefore requires, at the least, a new approach to the typologies of authoritarian regimes: one that takes account of both the regime's ascent to power and its programmatic characteristics once in power.

Acknowledgments

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Notes

1. This review of the characteristics of developmental authoritarian regimes in Ethiopia and Rwanda was compiled following interview-based fieldwork conducted in Rwanda and Ethiopia in 2014. Interviews in Rwanda were conducted in Kigali, Musanze, and Gisenye in December 2013–January 2014. Interviews in Ethiopia were conducted in Addis Ababa, Lay Gayint, Tach Gayint, Smada, and Bahir Dar in May–August 2014. In both studies, the confidential interviews were conducted with students, government officials, and aid workers.

2. The "Chicago Boys" refers to a group of neoliberal economic advisors trained at the University of Chicago who designed and implemented sweeping and controversial programs in Chile in the 1970s.