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Regional powers going abroad:

Extra-regional geoeconomic strategies of India, Türkiye, and the EU in the Horn of Africa

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List of Abbreviations

AKP	Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (Justice and Development Party)
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BRI	Belt and Road Initiative
BRICS	Grouping of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CPEC	China Pakistan Economic Corridor
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy
DEIK	Dış Ekonomik İlişkiler Kurulu (Foreign Economic Relations Board)
EAC	East African Community
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EEAS	European External Action Service
EU	European Union
EUBFE	European Business Forum in Ethiopia
EUCAP	European Union Capacity Building Mission
EUNAVFOR	European Union Naval Force
EUTM	European Training Mission
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
HR/VP	High Representative / Vice President
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISA	International Solar Initiative
LDC	Least-Developed Country
LOC	Line of Control
PRC	People’s Republic of China
SAGAR	Security and Growth for All in the Region
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNPKO	United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organisation

1 Introduction

In an era of multipolarity, weaponisation of interdependence, and strategic autonomy, the traditional definitions, scopes, and frameworks used to understand international relations are increasingly struggling to capture the complex dynamics that have been shaping the international system since the end of the Cold War. However, there exist endeavours within international relations scholarship and other disciplines to identify, analyse, and theorise emerging phenomena to provide a better understanding of these issues.

'Geoeconomics' is one of them. After the end of the cold war, many expected the role of the military to wane in light of increasing globalisation, leading to the weaponization of economic power, as well as the increased sub-summation of geopolitics to economic considerations (Luttwak 1990). While the war in Ukraine has painfully demonstrated the continuing importance of the military, an ever-growing body of research on geoeconomics has underscored its relevance in current affairs. Yet it has remained conceptually diffuse, lacking a clear definition and a strong theoretic foundation, with continuing academic debates on the ends, ways, and means of geoeconomics. However, the conception of geoeconomics has become an important aspect of statecraft not only of great powers but also a group of emerging "middle" powers that are gaining a growing stake in regional and global politics

Ever since the seminal theory on Regional Security Complexes by Buzan and Wæver (2003), regions, as well as regional powers, have become important referent objects in analysing international power structures and dynamics. As countries such as Brazil, India, Türkiye, or South Africa are increasingly active on the international stage, there continues to be a limited conceptual understanding of their role from a Western academic perspective, which tends to swing between "emerging global power" and "developing country". As these countries' economies have grown and industrialised, their foreign policy toolboxes expanded to incorporate economic statecraft in their engagement with their regions and beyond. Moreover, with a "geopolitical commission" and a more unified foreign policy, the European Union (EU) has emerged as a "sui generis" regional and, to a lesser extent, global actor, especially in the economic domain. The active geoeconomic engagement of regional powers beyond their region is thus a recent phenomenon, which has hitherto received limited analytical attention.

Recognising the relevance of regional powers' geoeconomic engagement, especially in areas beyond their immediate neighbourhood, this thesis seeks to contribute to the conceptual and theoretical understanding of this phenomenon. Although various frameworks exist to identify and analyse the behaviour of regional powers in their respective regions, their extra-regional engagement is less conceptualised. To fill this gap, this thesis proposes the use of a framework by Wigell (2016) for regional powers' geoeconomic strategies to also apply to their extra-regional engagement. This framework provides four different strategies based on the use of economic power, which can either be a means or an ends, as well as the strategic frame of the country, which can be either cooperative or competitive. The framework by Wigell (2016) concerning regional powers' geoeconomic strategies within their region has the potential to be applied for extra-regional engagement as well, not least due to its broad definition of geoeconomic strategy, including different ends, means, as well as strategic frames, which form a useful basis for the analysis of complex and multidimensional engagement.

To answer

Q1: To what extent can Wigell's (2016) framework for regional power's geoeconomic strategies be applied to the analysis of their extra-regional geoeconomic engagement?

this thesis will thus assess the applicability of a pre-existing conceptual framework for the analysis and characterisation of regional power's extra-regional geoeconomic strategies. This assessment will be informed by a practical application of the framework in a plausibility probe case study (Levy 2008). In this case study, the extra-regional geoeconomic engagement of three different regional powers will be assessed according to the proposed framework. This thesis has identified the Horn of Africa (focusing on the core countries including Somalia, Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Eritrea) as a valuable region to study extra-regional geoeconomic engagement. Due to its geostrategic importance, lack of a regional hegemon, and availability of natural resources, it is a key area of interest for global and, increasingly, regional powers. To capture a broad range of different regional powers for the plausibility probe, this thesis will examine the recent economic engagement of Türkiye, India, and the EU in the Horn of Africa. In different ways, Türkiye, India, and the EU have been characterised as regional powers. Although they encompass significantly varying conceptions, with

Türkiye's and India's roles as regional powers being different not least due to their size and geography, the EU is an outlier as it is a supranational organisation rather than a state. However, the fact that for all three actors, geoeconomics is a key part of their foreign policies makes them useful objects of study in the context of extra-regional geoeconomic statecraft. All three actors are neither geographically nor politically close to the Horn of Africa, making their engagement there "extra-regional" and thus valuable for the analysis of this thesis.

This plausibility probe will be guided by the research question:

Q2: How congruent is the recent economic engagement of Türkiye, India, and the EU in the Horn of Africa with the geoeconomic strategies of Wigell's (2016) framework?

The results of this research question will, on the one hand, provide a structured and comparative analysis of the economic engagement of Türkiye, India, and the EU, and, on the other, allow for an ex-post evaluation of the research and analysis process using the framework from Q1. Answering the second research question by using the proposed framework tests its applicability and utility, identifying conceptual strengths and weaknesses. For this the Horn of Africa is especially useful as an area of study as all three actors are active in the region, allowing for within-case comparison. Although the presence of external actors in the Horn of Africa has been widely studied, attention has mainly been paid to major powers such as the US and China, with a focus on military issues. Shedding light on the geoeconomic engagement of smaller powers thus also provides an underrepresented perspective.

This thesis will demonstrate that a conceptual framework with a broad definition of geoeconomics provides a useful template for analysing regional powers' extra-regional geoeconomic strategies, as it allows for a multidimensional understanding of geoeconomic statecraft. In its application to the extra-regional geoeconomic engagement of Türkiye, India, and the EU in the Horn of Africa, it found that all three actors, despite some similarities, tend towards diverging types of geoeconomic engagement. Türkiye's increasing utilisation of economic power for geopolitical gain, therefore, contrasts with India's more trade-focused approach, although both tend towards competition rather than cooperation. The EU, on the other hand, distinguishes itself with a more cooperative approach, with economic power nonetheless representing a means rather than an end.

This thesis' aims thus are threefold. For one, it seeks to contribute to the academic debate on the theory of geoeconomics, and secondly, add to the development of concepts and frameworks on regional powers' geoeconomic foreign policies. Third, it will apply a geoeconomic lens to a group of actors' engagement in the Horn of Africa that is less well understood than that of greater powers such as the US or China.

This thesis will proceed as follows. After a literature review, which will discuss trends and development in scholarship on geoeconomics, regional powers, as well as external engagement in the Horn of Africa and highlight previous studies that match this thesis' focus. The section after that will outline the methodological approach, discuss the data used, and present the proposed conceptual framework. In the analysis section, after providing context on the three actors' roles as regional powers as well as their general policies and strategies towards Africa, the framework will be applied to their geoeconomic engagement in the Horn of Africa. A discussion of the results will follow the analysis, comparing the different actors' approaches and objectives. Based on this, the utility of the proposed framework based on the research and analysis process will be assessed to highlight its strengths and weaknesses. The conclusion will summarize the findings and provide recommendations for further research.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Geoeconomics

Although geoeconomics is not a novel term, having been coined in the 1920s and since then used in various contexts and ways (see Pfeiffer 2022, Ch. 2), its contemporary revival can be traced back to Luttwak (1990). He posited that geo*economics* will replace geo*politics* in a post-Cold War era, as "the relevance of military threats and military alliances wanes" (Luttwak 1990, p. 20). However, this neorealist prediction was disproved by a more liberal and interconnected era that followed the cold war. Therein, the definitions of geoeconomics diverged, being coined as "the use of statecraft for economic ends" (Youngs and Martiningui 2011, p. 14) or as the pursuit of national resources (O'Hara and Heffernan 2006). As this 'liberal' conception became challenged in the last decade, Luttwack's state-centric, geopolitical conception of geoeconomics found itself again informing scholarship. Blackwill and Harris (2016, p. 20) propose geoeconomics as the "use of economic instruments to promote and defend national interests and to produce beneficial geopolitical results" - identifying economic statecraft as a means to achieve political ends. Baru (2012, p. 2) takes a broader perspective, identifying both "geopolitical consequences of economic phenomena, or, as the economic consequences of geopolitical trends and national power". This shows that geoeconomics continues to be a fuzzy term, with no clear epistemological or even ontological consensus (Kim 2021; Scholvin and Wigell 2018). Epistemologically, there is no clear determination on the ends, ways, or means that can be termed as geoeconomic, as it is used in both commercial and geopolitical contexts. On the other, it is used in positivist, constructivist, and analyticist ontologies, being coined by some as a conscious act of statecraft, and by others as merely as a theoretical perspective (see Pfeiffer 2022, p. 184). Recently, efforts have been made to provide theoretical and conceptual depth to geoeconomics. Proposing "geoeconomics" to simply mean the "geostrategic use of economic power", Wigell's (2016) framework seeks to explain regional powers' geoeconomic strategies, through four ideal-type strategies, based on whether economic power is used as an end or a means, and what he calls the "strategic frame" of the country, which can either be competitive or cooperative. The "geostrategic" aspect implies geographic delineation in the use of economic power, requiring "decisive geographical features", such as pipelines, railway lines, or factories, or, in the case of monetary and financial policy, at least a regional focus (Scholvin and Wigell 2018, p. 10). The concept of 'economic

power' is based on previous work by Kappel (2011a). Therein, 'economic power' is relational, meaning that with economic power, such as a strong GDP, an effective industrial base, and an educated workforce, one's economy is superior to that of another's state. This approach distinguishes itself from others since it does not assume a universal "strategic frame", meaning that every state acts in a similar manner, whether according to realist, liberalist, or institutionalist criteria. Although this framework has not been used widely in its full application, it has been referred to in various works to supplement and support analyses of regional powers and their geoeconomic statecraft (Mattheis 2021; Panda 2020). The study of regional powers, however, extends beyond the economic domain, encompassing an important and growing academic field.

2.2 Regional Powers

To capture the historical developments and variety of regional and international actors, Buzan and Wæver's (2003) theory of *regional security complexes* provides a central methodological framework. In their seminal book, they argue for a regional security perspective rather than focusing on the global or national level. While they incorporate the engagement of major powers in a regional security complex, they also emphasise the role of regional powers, local dynamics, and cross-border linkages within a certain region. Since then, however, this conception of regions and powers has been subject to increasing criticism and debate, leading to a growing body of research aimed at studying the rising of regional powers not just in their regions, but in the international system. In this geopolitical trend, which has led to the creation of a "'Regional Power' (RP) research programme, diverging conceptions remain (Fawcett and Jagtiani 2022, p. 2). In an attempt to provide conceptual clarity, Nolte (2010) provides a framework to identify regional powers, outlining their capabilities, roles, and identities in relation to their respective regions as well as the international system. In a similar vein, Destradi (2010) offers an ideal-type typology of the different strategies that regional powers pursue, differentiating between "empire, hegemony, and leadership". Flemes (2016) conceptualises the role of regional powers in international along four indicators, including their claim to leadership, material and ideational capabilities, use of capabilities, and external legitimacy. Despite referring to similar cases, some authors refer instead to 'emerging' powers, highlighting the process of their naissance in the past decade (Fonseca et al. 2016). Yet other scholars use the term use 'middle powers' to describe such states not just according to their own capabilities, but their position in

the international system (Moeini et al. 2022; Cooper 2016). Since this makes the differentiation between old regional powers like Australia or Russia, and newer regional powers like India or Türkiye difficult, Parlar Dal (2016) proposes the concept of “emerging regional powers”.

Another issue with the traditional understanding of regions is the recent dynamic of extra-regional engagement of these emerging powers, as Kardaş (2013) demonstrates with Türkiye’s active foreign policy beyond its immediate region. This ascension of regional powers not only expands the range of actors but also the domains of how foreign policy is conducted. As Mattlin and Wigell (2016) demonstrate, the rise of regional powers can be observed most vividly in the realm of economic foreign policy, recognising geoeconomics to be a more cost-efficient and effective form of statecraft than military power. They advocate for a *geoeconomic* perspective as opposed to a more traditional geo*political* perspective to better understand and capture this development (see Babić et al. 2022).

2.3 Horn of Africa

Scholars also use the Horn of Africa as an example to demonstrate the limitations of Buzan and Wæver’s theory on regional power. In ‘classic’ regional security complexes, regional powers operate mainly in their respective regions (see above), with only major powers extending their reach to other regions. Although at the time of writing, Buzan and Wæver (2003) conceptualise the Horn of Africa as a nascent regional security complex, different scholars have since used their framework, especially to highlight and embed the role of regional powers in this context. Mesfin (2011) demonstrates how the interplay of colonial history, ethnic conflict, alliances, regional proxies and international intervention in the region necessitates a regional perspective. Sabala (2011) uses the example of Somalia to contextualise not just the role of the US or the UN, but the significance of regional actors like Ethiopia. The potential of Ethiopia as a regional power, as well as its limitations, are examined more closely by Le Gouriellec (2018). Using the case of the growing presence of different Gulf states in the Horn, which, according to Buzan and Wæver belong decisively to the Middle East security complex, Huliaras and Kalantzakos (2017) challenge the “mutual exclusivity” of the theory. Others also highlight the ongoing competition between regional powers in the Horn of Africa in lieu of great powers specifically in the security domain (Amour 2020; Donelli and Gonzalez-Levaggi 2021).

Many emphasise its unique geographic position linking Sub-Saharan Africa to the Arab peninsula (Telci 2022, p. 83), its natural resources (Banerjee 2021, p. 161), and, most significantly, its potential chokehold on international trade in the form of the Bab el-Mandeb strait (Alexandre 2020, p. 48). These attributes are accorded significant geostrategic relevance, and form the basis of a large number of studies on the engagement of external actors in the Horn of Africa, both within the security and economic domain (Donelli and Cannon 2021; Mehari and Tassinari 2021; Cannon and Donelli 2020; Rondos 2016). Some scholars focus on international involvement in regional and local conflicts, be it in the form of supporting local actors in a proxy conflict (Abbink 2003), as part of peacekeeping missions (Bah 2009), or in the fight against terrorism (Kagwanja 2006). However, many studies also centre on maritime security (Fantaye 2014; Potgieter 2009), where international anti-piracy missions (Onuoha 2009; Jarrett Jr; Bellais 2013; Lin-Greenberg 2010; Chalk 2010; Willett 2011) and the establishment and maintenance of naval bases (Styan 2018; Sullivan 2010) are the main forms of external engagement. A significant proportion of this research on the Horn of Africa focuses on major powers, such as the US (Negash and Salih 2022; Negatu 2022; Burgess 2015), China (Ylönen 2020; Gresh 2017), as well as Russia (Mathew and Moolakkattu 2022; Generoso 2022), framing their engagement in the context of a recently intensifying geopolitical great-power competition. However, this focus is both historically and geopolitically limited. As Ylönen (2022) illustrates, the presence and engagement of major powers in the Horn of Africa is a century-old phenomenon. Especially during the Cold War, it was a flashpoint of US-USSR competition (Woodroofe 2013; Lefebvre 1992). However, it is not just great powers that were and continue to be engaged in this region of geostrategic relevance.

2.4 Actors

The developments in the conceptualisation of geoeconomics, as well as the role of economic foreign policymaking of rising regional powers, have informed the research and analysis of specific actors. In the following, literature on the actors relevant to this thesis – Türkiye, India, and the EU - will be reviewed.

2.4.1 Türkiye

In the scholarship on regional powers, Türkiye features prominently. Based on Fleme's conception, Parlar Dal (2016) identifies and analyses Türkiye as an emerging regional power according to its material, institutional, and discursive foreign policy, while

Stergiou and Kollias (2022) use economic and defence data to contextualise Türkiye's position. Others focus more on its economic foreign policy as a means to attain regional influence (Köstem 2018), especially in the realm of drone sales (Hwang and Song 2022). Going further, Kardaş (2013), highlights Türkiye's increased engagement beyond its immediate region, arguing that this demonstrates the international foreign policy capabilities of emerging regional powers, in a rebuttal of Buzan's regional security complex theory. Mesquita and Chien (2021, p. 1553), using diplomatic visits as a proxy, empirically highlight Türkiye's increased engagement outside its region, particularly in Africa. Türkiye's relations with Africa have also received scholarly attention. Tepeciklioğlu and Tepeciklioğlu (2021, p. 257) recount the current developments and historic background of Türkiye's engagement on the African continent, positing the country as an "emerging African power". Akca (2019) and Dahir (2021) dig deeper into the key themes and drivers of Türkiye's Africa strategy, highlighting the role of President Erdogan and his inspiration from "Neo-Ottomanism". Ozkan (2012) highlights the duality of economic considerations and geopolitical ambition that informs Türkiye's Africa policy. In a similar vein, Donelli (2017) proposes Türkiye as a "hybrid" actor in Africa and uses its engagement in the Horn of Africa, specifically in Somalia as an example to illustrate Türkiye's dual foreign policy. In contrast, Antonopoulos et al. (2017a), also use Somalia as an example, focusing on geopolitical competition rather than financial gain. This highlights an ongoing academic debate on the ends and means of Türkiye's role in Africa, particularly in the Horn of Africa (see also Korkut and Civelekoglu 2013).

2.4.2 India

India's role as a rising regional power is often based on its increasing ability to leverage its material capabilities, geographic size, and economic development (Baru 2013). Its relationships with Pakistan, as well as China, highlight its contested position in the region, informing the "extended neighbourhood" approach it uses to establish itself in the region, in which economic policy plays an important role (Scott 2009). Fawcett and Jagtiani (2022) go beyond India's regional position and underscore India's global ambitions as a regional power, attempted through economic means, among others. Chacko (2015b) links India's geoeconomic foreign policy to the transformation of the Indian state that took place in the 1970s, tracing the transition from geopolitical to geoeconomic foreign policy. Looking closer at India's style of regional power geoeconomics, Hakala (2019) highlights its cooperative strategy based on cooperation

with other actors based on mutual gain. Contrasting this interpretation, Nel and Stephen (2016) instead identify a “defensive and distributive” economic foreign policy based on protectionism and balancing against other actors. At least in its engagement in Africa, the cooperative approach is dominant in India's geoeconomic foreign policy (Brookings India 2015). However, this engagement is also traced to India’s geopolitical competition with China, suggesting a more deliberate approach (Wagner 2019). This perspective is also visible when it comes to India’s presence in the Horn of Africa, in which India acts as a security actor seeking to balance China (Gujjar 2022; Melvin 2019).

2.4.3 European Union

The European Union’s role as an emerging regional power is more contested than others (Raik 2006). Although many highlight Europe’s emerging role in an increasingly multipolar international system, in its neighbourhood, and beyond, they refrain from conceptualising this position (Kappel 2011b; Haine and Salloum 2021). Giessmann (2016) explains the difficulties of defining the EU as a regional power according to usual criteria due to its unique institutional characteristics. Instead, he describes the EU as a *hybrid* regional power, highlighting its endowment with material capabilities but limited external and internal acceptance, and noting the discrepancy between economic and military competence. When it comes to the EU’s role as a regional power, its economic foreign policy is a key theme and extends to its engagement beyond its immediate neighbourhood (Meissner 2019). Different studies examine sanctions as a key part of EU economic foreign policy, which sets it apart from previously evaluated actors (Helwig et al. 2020; Olsen 2020). Economic policy, whether in the form of trade policy or development cooperation, is also the defining characteristic of the EU’s engagement with African countries (Bello and Manrique 2011). This is also reflected in its engagement in the Horn of Africa, which has an emphasis on development and humanitarian assistance (Joseph 2014). Some scholars, however, also note the EU’s geostrategic role in Africa. Using the Horn of Africa as an example, Czerep (2018) analyses the EU’s role in the competition of regional powers, noting the potential risks to its influence.

2.5 Summary – Research Gap

This literature review has highlighted some key trends and developments in the scholarship on the Horn of Africa, regional powers, and geoeconomics. For one, it

showed the tension between the “regionality” of regional powers and the increasing relevance of their foreign policy beyond their immediate region This has been noted in the Horn of Africa but was also part of the discussion when it came to the general foreign policies of regional powers. Türkiye is a case in point, as it is often conceptualised as a regional power, without clearly accounting for its activity in areas beyond its region (Kardaş 2013, p. 693). Although the Horn of Africa has been studied widely on issues related to conflict and great power competition, the role of regional powers and their geoeconomics is still understudied. Narbone and Widdershoven (2021) call for attention specifically to “outside powers” in the Horn, especially vis-à-vis their geoeconomic “projections”. Moreover, geoeconomics continues to be a concept under development, with everlasting debates on the means, objectives, and framing of the concept. Especially for regional powers, where economic policy plays a big part in their foreign policies in their own regions, and beyond, the geoeconomic lens in scholarship is blurry, preventing coherence and comparability. With his conceptual framework, Wigell (2016) provides a useful first step in the theorising of regional powers’ geoeconomic strategies within their own regions, although not for their extra-regional engagement. This is the gap in the literature that this thesis seeks to address.

3 Methodology

To address the aforementioned gaps and debates in literature research gap, this thesis will answer a set of self-reinforcing research questions:

Q1: To what extent can Wigell's (2016) framework for regional power's geoeconomic strategies be applied to the analysis of their extra-regional geoeconomic engagement?

Q2: How congruent is the recent economic engagement of Türkiye, India, and the EU in the Horn of Africa with the geoeconomic strategies of Wigell's (2016) framework?

While the first question on the applicability of the framework for regional engagement to extra-regional engagement is the more conceptual and theoretical layer, the second research question focuses on a specific region and specific actors, thus acting as a plausibility probe for the first question. To answer Q1, this thesis will put forward a typological framework for the extra-regional geoeconomic engagement of regional powers as a potential way to conceptualise their strategies, based on a framework for their engagement in their own region. The proposed framework is adapted from Wigell's (2016) conceptualisation of regional powers' strategies and will be outlined below. To determine the qualification of the proposed framework as a suitable model for extra-regional engagement, it will then be used in a plausibility probe case study analysing regional power's extra-regional geoeconomic engagement in the Horn of Africa, answering Q2. Applying the proposed framework in the analysis of the Horn of Africa will not only allow for a structured analysis of external geoeconomic engagement in the region but, in the next step, provide insight into the utility of the conceptual framework and thus inform the answering of Q1.

3.1 Approach

This thesis will use geoeconomics as an analytical framework and thus base it on an 'analyticist' as opposed to a 'positivist' ontology, which would presume explicit and conscious conduct of geoeconomic statecraft (see Jackson 2016). This thesis will not try to claim that India for instance is consciously pursuing a "neo-imperialist" strategy in the Horn of Africa. An analyticist approach instead uses geoeconomics as an analytical tool to better assess, structure, and organise empiric reality. As the proposed framework uses "ideal types", it allows for a comparison to empiric reality without the

goal of falsification or verification, i.e., determining whether this is a case of geoeconomics or not. It aims instead to “calibrate” the model, in this case the conceptual framework through “empirical application” (Jackson 2016, p. 147). Using a case study in the context of the theory development is a valuable and recognised approach under the name of a “plausibility probe”, in which a previously untested framework is put to practice to determine its suitability (Levy 2008).

The different strategies hold different conceptions of geoeconomics, which may, to an extent, be useful to explain the different strategies of actors. To assess how the framework’s conceptualisation of regional powers’ geoeconomic strategies can explain the recent extra-regional engagement of different regional actors, this thesis will use the congruence method, which is useful “to elucidate and to compare the explanatory merits of competing or complementary theories”, or, in this case, the different strategies (rather than theories) within the framework (Blatter 2012, p. 24). The congruence method is a methodology used, among others, in IR research for black box decisions and strategic interaction between states, and therefore applicable to this research design (George and Bennett 2005). It is important to note that the strategies in the framework represent “ideal type” strategies, making complete alignment unlikely, as well as allowing for a strategy to be partially congruent with different types. During the analysis, the use of economic power by each actor in the Horn of Africa will be tested against each of the four strategies to determine congruence. At the end of each section, based on the results of this comparison, the degree of congruence will be assessed on an ordinal scale starting from zero congruence, followed by weak, medium, strong, and finally, complete congruence. In the final assessment, the “prevailing” strategy will be identified, as well as potential temporal shifts. This process of triangulation allows for a more nuanced, balanced, and reflective analysis.

3.2 Proposed Framework

Wigell’s (2016) framework differentiates between four “ideal type” strategies that the geo-economic strategies of regional powers can resemble. This thesis will use Wigell’s definition of geoeconomics as the “geostrategic use of economic power”, as this allows for an agnostic assessment of the role of economic policies. ‘Economic power’ is relational, meaning that with economic power, such as a strong GDP, an effective industrial base, and an educated workforce, one’s economy is superior to that of another’s state. This gives Türkiye economic power vis-à-vis Somalia, for example.

Since this relationship is relative, it provides a valuable perspective on regional powers, whose economic power in a global economy is still seen as comparatively weak (except for the EU), and thus less discussed in the context of a strategy (Kappel). Importantly, increasing one's economic power can therefore be a means or an end in the strategy of a (regional) power.

The orientation of the strategic frame on the other hand is based on the distinction between relative and absolute gains as perceived by the actor. In this framework, regional powers can either pursue a cooperative or a competitive strategy. In a competitive setting, a state is mindful of gaining a relative advantage over other actors, limiting multilateral cooperation and partnership, while a cooperative state will focus on its absolute gains while tolerating the presence and progress of other actors. As these two factors have two values each, a total of four different strategies are possible. Based on these characteristics, Wigell (2016) coins the strategies as "neo-mercantilism", "neo-imperialism", "liberal institutionalism", and "hegemony" (See Figure 1).

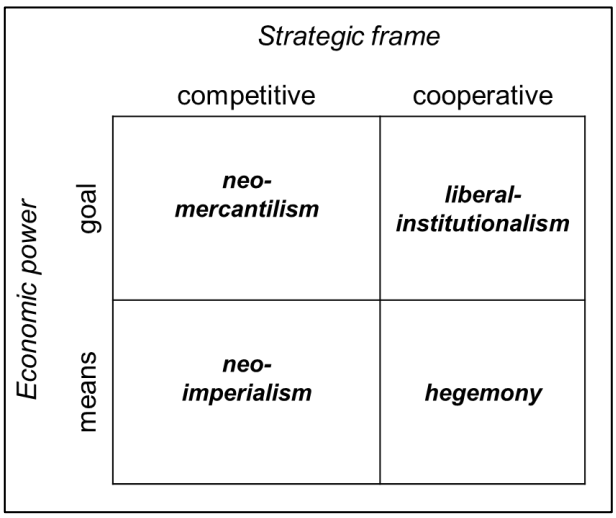

Figure 1: Methodological Framework

As outlined in the literature review, these four ideal-type strategies are based on two factors, one being the use of economic power, and the other being the strategic frame. Although designed for regional engagement, Wigell does not exclude the framework's relevance for its global engagement, rather calling for more research into the matter. So far, its application to extra-regional projection of power has been alluded to and used selectively by other authors, but not explicitly tested and adapted as such (Mattheis 2021; Hakala 2019). This thesis will therefore examine its applicability to extra-regional engagement.

3.2.1 Neo-Mercantilism

If actors pursue a competitive strategy with the goal of economic power, this is coined as "neo-mercantilist", reflected in protectionist policies and selective multilateralism. Acting as essentially "trading states", their primary interest is economic gain, increasing market shares, maintaining an export surplus, securing access to resources, and

dominating key industries. This is reflected in the trade, investment, as well as development cooperation policies of the actor. As a consequence, a “neo-mercantilist” regional power refrains from taking a proactive political role in the region if this does not directly support its economic agenda. Examples of neo-mercantilism can be found in Japan and Brazil.

3.2.2 Neo-Imperialism

However, if economic power is merely a means to an end, having a competitive strategic frame makes the strategy “neo-imperialist”. A “neo-imperial” power seeks both economic gain and regional dominance, leveraging its economic power to make weaker states in the region dependent on it, establishing a quasi-empire not necessarily in the sense of territorial control, but economic influence to impose its will on the region. To achieve this, neo-imperialist regional powers use coercion, economic force, imposition of terms, or even bribery to further their political interests. Whilst taking a pro-active political role in the region, this approach is predominantly unilateral, avoiding multilateral partnership, and focusing on relative as opposed to absolute gains through its policies. For example, the weaponization of energy by the Russian federation bears hallmarks of such a strategy.

3.2.3 Liberal Institutionalism

If a regional power pursues a cooperative strategy with economic power as the goal, it is termed as “liberal-institutionalist”. As the name suggests, this strategy is based on multilateralism and economic integration and seeks absolute rather than relative gains in its foreign economic policy, including economic stability and growth. A “liberal-institutionalist” strategy includes multilateral trade agreements, development cooperation, or economic partnership projects. As a “civilian” power, it closely cooperates with other actors but refrains from taking a broad responsibility in the region that goes beyond economic consideration. Germany is a classic example of a liberal-institutionalist regional power, as its foreign policy is deeply multilateral and, particularly in the late 20th century, focused on economic growth.

3.2.4 Hegemony

A regional power’s strategy is “hegemonic” if the economic power is used as a means to establish political influence in a region. However, similar to the “liberal-institutionalist” strategy, this influence is not exclusive and allows for the presence of other actors, as well as cooperation with them. A “hegemonic” power provides public and private goods

in the region, which other actors can inadvertently profit from, such as roads, electricity grids, or even regional stability. Importantly, regional leadership is achieved an upheld through institutional frameworks rather than coercive economic instruments and is marked by general self-restraint. One example of hegemony is the EU, which successfully uses economic power in its neighbourhood to strengthen its regional influence.

3.2.5 Conceptual considerations

Importantly, as Wigell (2016) underscores, these types of strategies are an “ideal-type taxonomy”, which means that they cannot perfectly describe a regional power’s strategy in all its complexity and diversity. This is especially the case when differentiating between different domains of policy. Nonetheless, while a regional power may bear hallmarks of different strategies, one of the strategies tends to “prevail”, especially as some policy areas are more important than others. Moreover, as external, and domestic factors change over time, so can a regional power’s strategies, meaning that, for example, the dominant strategy may shift from “hegemonic” to “neo-imperialist”.

3.3 Case Selection

Testing this framework on extra-regional geoeconomic engagement in the Horn of Africa has merit for two reasons. For one, the literature review has already highlighted the Horn of Africa’s international geostrategic as well as commercial importance, making it a key region for geoeconomic competition. On the other hand, its relative political instability and sluggish economic development make it a region much more open to geoeconomic engagement than other, economically more established regions, where it is more difficult, especially for smaller actors, to establish a presence. This makes it a more likely arena for extra-regional engagement of regional powers and thus provides a better opportunity to test the utility of the proposed framework Due to practical considerations, this thesis limited its analysis to the four core countries in the Horn of Africa. Including countries like Sudan, Uganda, or Kenya would not only have exceeded the word limit of this study but also changed the geo-strategic reasoning behind focusing on the Horn of Africa, namely its importance for international shipping and natural resources.

3.4 Data

The data that Wigell's model to be applied to will consist of open-source qualitative as well as quantitative data on the economic engagement of Türkiye, India, and the EU with countries in the Horn of Africa. The qualitative data will be taken from academic articles, 'grey' literature such as policy briefs and analyses by independent research institutions and think tanks, official documents by governments and international organisations such as press releases, strategic documents, and reports, as well as newspaper articles. Starting with general information about bilateral relations between the actors and the individual Horn of African states, information about trade agreements, development projects, loans, investments, and concessions will provide an overview of their economic engagement. Strategic documents, speeches, or publicly available policies give insight into the declared aims and strategic frames of the three actors under examination. Quantitative data will consist of trade and investment statistics provided by the respective countries as well as other sources, thus allowing for a more complete comparison.

4 Analysis

To fully understand and analyse the respective actors' strategies in the Horn of Africa requires context and background of their status as regional powers, as well as their overall (geoeconomic) foreign policies. The analysis will thus be structured along these points, first establishing the actor as a regional power, then outlining their foreign and geoeconomic policies and strategies, and then presenting their activities in the Horn of Africa. This information will then be assessed withing the conceptual framework.

4.1 Türkiye

4.1.1 Türkiye as a regional power

Since the establishment of the republic in 1923, Türkiye's role in regional and international politics has undergone different iterations. After being neutral during the Second World War, it became a member of NATO, as well as an applicant to the European Union. Throughout the Cold War, the country was visibly oriented towards partnership with the political West, becoming a "frontier state against communism" (Günay 2019, p. 463). In their theory on regional security complexes and regional powers Buzan and Wæver (2003, p. 391) highlight Türkiye's unique position as an "insulator state" between two regions, Europe, and Central Asia. Although they note its attempt to "challenge" this role, seeking to "handle its complicated situation through active policy", they doubted its emergence as a regional power in the near future. However, they assessed Türkiye at a time when it was still adapting to the changing global order.

With the end of the Cold War and the corresponding ending of communism, Türkiye's strategic role had transformed, as it was no longer a "frontier state". Nonetheless, its policies continued to align with the West throughout the 1990s, for instance through participating in the First Gulf War against Iraq or officially becoming a candidate to join the EU in 1999 (Mesquita and Chien 2021, p. 1548). However, due to slow progress in accession, tensions over the Cyprus conflict, as well as the rise of the Justice and Development Party the country switched to a more independent, multi-dimensional foreign policy that sought to strengthen Türkiye's position, particularly in the Middle East (Öniş and Kutlay 2013). Oğuzlu (2008) observes a "Middle Easternization" of foreign policy during the 2000s, based on a more pronounced, Islam-based national

identity. This identity, however, goes beyond mere religion, as it refers to the Ottoman empire, legitimising Türkiye as a historic leader in the Middle East not just for the sake of domestic politics but also its regional recognition (Sandal 2014; Hoffmann 2019).

During the first decade of the 21st century, Türkiye engaged in a “softer” regional foreign policy manifested in diplomatic, economic, and cultural engagement with the Middle East whilst continuing to pursue EU candidate status. During this era, Türkiye acted as a “trading state”, pursuing free trade agreements and economic integration of the region (Kirişçi 2009). In the subsequent decade however, its regional power projection became increasingly “security-focused” coinciding with the rise of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who became President in 2014 (Haugom 2019, p. 210; Mesquita and Chien 2021, p. 1552). As a result of the failed coup in 2016, control over the military was concentrated in the presidency, which eased its use as a tool for statecraft. For one, this resulted in a more assertive rather than cooperative foreign policy, focused on securing Turkish energy and resource interests, and backed by increased military spending (Stergiou and Kollias 2022). Under Erdoğan rule, Öniş and Kutlay (2021) chart a transition from a regional foreign policy marked by “interdependence” to one based on “strategic autonomy”. This meant increasing military interventions in neighbouring countries, more transactional relationships in the region, as well as deepening ties with Russia and China, both of which became significant actors in the Middle East. This points towards a balancing of priorities and thus emancipation of Türkiye as a regional actor cognisant of a changing structure of the international system (Dalay 2022).

These developments are reflected in the findings of Parlar Dal (2016), who tests Türkiye’s regional power credentials with a conceptual framework by Daniel Flemes. He highlights Türkiye’s significant material as well as ideational capabilities and foreign policy instruments not only in the Middle East but also in the Balkans and Black Sea region. However, he notes merely implicit claims to regional leadership and increasingly hesitant regional acceptance. Despite a strong military presence in the region, or even because of it, this lack of overall legitimacy results in weaker ties and integration thus undercutting Türkiye’s claim to regional leadership. Türkiye’s role during the Arab Spring, supporting regime change in some countries while bolstering incumbents in others, proved counterproductive, and slowed its regional economic integration and political influence (Kutlay and Karaoğuz 2020).

Türkiye's role as a regional power has thus undergone significant transformations in the past two decades, resulting from internal and external shifts. Caught between disengagement with the West and isolation from the Middle East, its role as an internationally relevant actor, coupled with a historic claim to influence based on its Ottoman past is thus an increasing source of internal and external legitimacy (Donelli 2022). One major area of its international engagement is the African continent.

4.1.2 Türkiye's Africa policy

Türkiye's engagement in Africa was formalised in the late 1990s which saw the acceptance of an Africa Action Plan in 1998. However, its actual engagement only intensified in the mid-2000s, coinciding with the AKP entering government. With 2005 hailed as the "year of Africa", this is understood as the start of Türkiye's intensified engagement on the African continent. At this point, it is important to differentiate between North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa. While North Africa, not least due to its Muslim heritage and its Ottoman past has long been perceived as part of Türkiye's greater regional sphere of influence, Sub-Saharan Africa played a much lesser role. In the late 2000s, however, as Türkiye's foreign policy branched out, this differentiation was replaced by a more continental conception of Africa, with Türkiye as a partner for the whole of, rather than merely Northern Africa (Ozkan 2012).

Türkiye's Africa policy is marked by its self-reinforcing multi-dimensionality (Donelli 2022). Diplomatically, it has opened new embassies in various African countries and joined different multilateral regional organisations such as the African Union, the African Development Bank, as well as the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (of which many African countries are a member) (Dahir 2021; Korkut and Civelekoglu 2013). Mesquita and Chien (2021, p. 1553) also note a significant increase in diplomatic visits to Sub-Saharan Africa with each AKP government. Major Türkiye-Africa summits also played a major role in this regard (Özkan and Orakçı 2022). This diplomatic engagement is carried by a narrative of "South-South" cooperation, anti-colonial rhetoric, as well as a shared religion (with some states). However, especially during the 2010s, military and security issues became increasingly important in its engagement on the continent, through peacekeeping, training, and arms sales (Cannon 2021).

Notwithstanding, it is economic ties, trade, and development cooperation that define Türkiye's engagement on the African continent. The country's significant economic

boom during the 2000s allowed it to become a donor for humanitarian and development assistance projects, supporting infrastructure projects, and encouraging trade and investment. This economic engagement is notably state-driven through state-run development agencies, public contracts and companies, as well as a Turkish business community with close links to the government (Tepeciklioğlu 2021). Overall, however, a trend similar to Türkiye's regional foreign policy can be observed in Africa. Having started out as a "trading state" focused on economic development and "win-win" partnerships, the Africa policy in the 2010s became increasingly informed by security, strategic, and geopolitical issues based on neo-Ottomanism, while continuing to be intertwined with economic policies (Langan 2017). This can also be observed in the Horn of Africa.

4.1.3 Türkiye's geoeconomic statecraft in the Horn of Africa

4.1.3.1 Somalia

Somalia is Türkiye's most important partner in the Horn of Africa. Having strengthened diplomatic ties with the transitional government during the civil war, Erdoğan's visit to Somalia at the peak of Somalia's famine in 2011 as the first non-African leader to visit the country for 20 years solidified Türkiye's relationship with the country (International Crisis Group 2012). Starting with mainly humanitarian assistance and development aid during the famine, Türkiye's role in Somalia's reconstruction quickly expanded. Soon after Erdoğan's visit, Turkish companies won contracts to renovate Mogadishu Airport, and Turkish Airlines, Türkiye's partly state-owned national carrier, started flying to Somalia. Since then, Turkish companies were involved in other large projects including, roads, shopping malls, as well as the port (AA 2020). TIKA, the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency, has supported the construction of the Somali parliament, as well as the "Recep Tayyip Erdoğan Education and Research Hospital" (TIKA 2020). Recently however, Turkish companies have been accused of corruption, embezzlement, and unfair trade practices, especially the ones administrating Mogadishu's port and airport (Middle East Institute 2021). A state-owned Turkish bank was granted a license to operate in Somalia in 2021 (Balkiz 2022). In the same year, Türkiye announced plans to construct a spaceport in Somalia, due to the benefit of launching rockets close to the equator (Middle East Eye 2021). There have been recent talks between both governments regarding oil exploration and extraction in Somali waters and its northern regions (Daily Sabah 2022b). In 2016, the two countries signed an economic partnership agreement, Somalia's first, aimed at enabling investment,

particularly in energy and infrastructure (AA 2016). Since 2010, the total value of trade between Türkiye and Somalia increased from ca. 6 million USD to ca. 350 million USD in 2021 (Gaulier and Zignago 2023). Türkiye has provided budget support to the Somali government, as well as debt relief through the IMF(Arabnews 2021; Hurriyet 2020). Its development cooperation also includes education, although it successfully lobbied the Somali government to close down schools supported by the Gulen movement, a group that Erdoğan holds responsible for the attempted coup (NYT 2016). Beyond the economy, Türkiye's embassy in Somalia is the largest in Africa and has intensified its activity in the security domain. In 2017 Türkiye established a large military base, on which it trains the Somali army (Rossiter and Cannon 2019). In 2021, Türkiye was alleged to have sold its Bayraktar TB2 drones to Somalia in breach of an arms embargo (Middle East Eye 2022).

4.1.3.2 Djibouti

Relations between Türkiye and Djibouti intensified after Türkiye established a diplomatic presence in the country in 2012. Since then, multiple agreements have been signed between the two countries. One of these was the creation of a special economic zone for Turkish companies, meant to attract manufacturing companies and boost regional trade (Deik 2017). In 2015, Turkish Airlines started offering direct flights to the country. In 2021, trade between the two countries was worth ca 305 million USD up from 88 million in 2012, making Türkiye the 6th largest source of imports for Djibouti (Gaulier and Zignago 2023). The Turkish government has supported two large construction projects in the country, funding and building the construction of Djibouti's largest mosque and the "Ambouli Friendship Dam", with the dam costing 20 million EUR (TRT 2019; Daily Sabah 2019). Built for agricultural irrigation, it supports other Turkish development projects in Djibouti tied to farming (TİKA 2019). It also runs educational initiatives and offers scholarships (Kırıkçıoğlu 2019). Türkiye has also provided humanitarian support to Djibouti, as well as to Yemeni refugees based in the country. Djibouti, which already houses various other states' military bases, proposed the construction of a Turkish military base on its territory in 2017, although it has not been built (Sevinç 2017).

4.1.3.3 Ethiopia

Diplomatic ties between Ethiopia and Türkiye date back to the 19th century (Donelli 2018). However, especially since 2000, when Türkiye re-opened its embassy there, trade between the two countries has significantly increased from 40 to 400 million USD

in 2021 (Gaulier and Zignago 2023). Since negotiating an investment agreement with Türkiye in 2020 Ethiopia has attracted over 2.5 billion USD in investment from Türkiye, making it one of its biggest investment partners (UNCTAD 2000; Getachew 2021). Over 350 Turkish companies are active in Ethiopia's textile, agriculture, and health sectors. Turkish Airlines maintain a direct flight connection to the country. Apart from the private sector, the Turkish government is also economically active in the country. Ziraat Bank, a state-owned lender, has operated in Ethiopia since 2015 (AA 2015b). More crucially, through the Türkiye Exim Bank, it is funding a critical railway project meant to link landlocked Ethiopia to Djibouti, of which one section is being constructed by a Turkish company (Michele Molinari 2015; AA 2023). In 2020, Ethiopia and Türkiye agreed to cooperate on the exploration and extraction of oil and gas, as well as other natural resources (Nordic Monitor 2020). Beyond trade and investment, development cooperation has mainly focused on education, as well as the renovation of mosques (Daily Sabah 2021). This has also manifested in the closure or overtaking of schools in Ethiopia funded by the Gulen movement (AA 2021). However, the relationship between Türkiye and Ethiopia goes beyond economics. The two signed a military cooperation agreement, which has been interpreted within the context of Türkiye's competition with Egypt, a rival of Ethiopia due to water conflicts (Nordic Monitor 2023). Moreover, Türkiye supported the Ethiopian government politically during the conflict in Tigray (Daily Sabah 2022a). Türkiye also sold drones to Ethiopia, which the government used in the fight against rebels (Nordic Monitor 2023)

4.1.3.4 Eritrea

Although Türkiye sought to intensify its engagement with Eritrea by opening an embassy there in 2013, its economic and political engagement remains limited. While Turkish Airlines maintain a direct flight to Asmara, and TIKA is active, their overall trade remains low, amounting to mere 35 million USD in 2021 (Gaulier and Zignago 2023; World Bulletin 2014). Recently, relations between the two have become strained as Eritrea accused Türkiye of obstructing the peace agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea, which was negotiated by the UAE and Saudi Arabia, with whom Türkiye competes in the Middle East (Arabnews 2021).

4.1.4 Assessment

4.1.4.1 Neo-Mercantilism

Pursuant to a neo-mercantilist strategy, economic power is an objective for the regional power as it seeks to gain an advantage over other actors. For Türkiye, this strategy is most visible in Somalia and Ethiopia, where numerous Turkish companies and investors are present. The active support from the Turkish government to enable its companies, through for instance through business councils, “Türkiye Help Centers”, or investment fora (DEIK 2016). Investment and trade, as in other Sub-Saharan countries, are reinforced or preceded by humanitarian support or development assistance indicating the use of geoeconomic tools for economic benefit (Eyrice et al. 2017). Cannon (2016) highlights the presence of the “Anatolian tigers” in Somalia, which entails companies that benefited from Türkiye’s economic liberalisation, which required new markets for their goods. Based on the favourable trade balance, Türkiye is profiting from this strategy. Moreover, the accusations of preferential treatment of Turkish companies in tendering processes for public contracts in Somalia underscores the competitive frame (Middle East Institute 2021). This is supported by the fact that most aid or financial support is disbursed bilaterally, rather than in cooperation with other donors (Mehmetcik 2018). Part of the competitive economic frame is also the aim of market dominance, even at the expense of profits (Wigell 2016, p. 143). Having Turkish Airlines, which is state-owned, fly directly to all countries in the Horn of Africa not only facilitated closer cooperation but also established Turkish Airlines as the premier carrier in the region (Selçuk 2021). The special economic zone for Turkish companies in Djibouti, as well as agreements on hydrocarbons and mineral extraction, are cases in point for a competitive frame aimed at securing access and dominating markets (AA 2015a; Nordic Monitor 2020). However, Türkiye’s engagement in the Horn of Africa mainly bore similarity to that of a “trading state” during the late 2000s and early 2010s Dal and Dipama (2020). Since the Arab Spring, Türkiye’s strategy has started to focus more on security in addition to the economy, both in its own region and beyond, a focus that deepened especially after the coup attempt (Ozkan 2016). The establishment of military bases, training and supply of weapons and drones underscore a broader, more ambitious, and geopolitical strategy. Supporting the Ethiopian and Somali governments in their campaigns against insurgents, as well as being involved in peace negotiations between Eritrea and Ethiopia, or Somalia and Somaliland contrast the “avoidance of costly political commitments or a proactive

regional political role" that a Neo-Mercantilism prescribes (Antonopoulos et al. 2017b). Moreover, through its infrastructure projects focusing on transport, it provides public goods which other actors benefit from, contrary to the competitive mindset.

In summary, Türkiye exhibits key characteristics of a neo-mercantilist actor in the Horn of Africa. However, due to the notable shift towards a more active political and security role in the region, its congruence with the strategy is **medium.**

4.1.4.2 Liberal Institutionalism

A liberal-institutionalist strategy would entail a cooperative and economy-focused approach to the Horn of Africa. As outlined above, the focus on enabling Turkish investment and companies, complemented by humanitarian assistance underscores Türkiye's focus on economic benefits and material gains. Moreover, the provision of public goods such as roads, air links, and ports, as well as the construction of a railway section, highlight the integrative role of Türkiye's geoeconomic instruments. Moreover, its focus on capacity building and education suggests a strategy aimed at mutual benefit. Although most aid is disbursed bilaterally, Türkiye's development and humanitarian assistance is also channelled through different multilateral organisations such as the WHO, WFP, or the IMF (Korkut and Civelekoglu 2013). From a normative perspective, the anti-colonial, anti-coercive, and cooperative agenda of Türkiye is often highlighted, in order to present the state as a viable alternative to Western partners (Dal and Dipama 2023; Langan 2017). However, the liberal-institutionalist strategy falls short in several ways in describing Türkiye's approach to the Horn of Africa. For one, its observed and professed aims in the region go beyond mutual economic gain. By establishing a military presence and describing the region in the context of a historic sphere of influence as part of the Ottoman Empire, Türkiye exhibits clear geopolitical ambition (Hoffmann 2019). Moreover, requiring the closure of schools supported by the Gulen movement, highlighting the coercive aspects of Türkiye's geoeconomic approach. Its focus on bilateral ties rather than regional integration stands in contrast to the interdependent and multilateral approach of Liberal Institutionalism. This is underscored by the tension between Türkiye and Gulf states like the UAE or Saudi Arabia, which also manifests in the Horn of Africa (Donelli and Gonzalez-Levaggi 2021)

In summary, the predominantly autonomous and increasingly geopolitically minded approach of Türkiye suggests a **weak** congruence to the liberal-institutionalist ideal type strategy.

4.1.4.3 Hegemony

An actor pursues a hegemonic strategy if it employs economic power to attain regional leadership without coercion while being open to cooperation and multilateralism. Türkiye's aspiration for regional hegemony can be found in the rhetoric of its neo-Ottoman heritage, on which it bases this claim (Akca 2019). It thus uses development cooperation, trade and investment agreements, and other "market-enhancing" measures to strengthen ties with countries in the Horn of Africa, albeit to only a limited extent in Eritrea (Wigell 2016, p. 145). However, Türkiye seldomly resorts to "coercive" geoeconomic instruments to achieve influence. In terms of providing public goods as a regional hegemon, its contribution to regional security in the form of training or participation in peacekeeping operations highlights its regional responsibilities (Erdoğan 2021). However, Türkiye's military engagement in the region is also framed as opportunistic rather than "benevolent", as it does not provide region-wide support, focusing on engagement with the potentially highest benefit. highlighting the limits of regional power responsibility and multilateral engagement (Cannon 2021). This is also visible in other domains, as Türkiye prefers bilateral arrangements over multilateral institutions with other actors. As noted above, the competition with Gulf states, as well as with Egypt, actors with their own stakes in the Horn of Africa, appears to drive Türkiye's actions in the region and weakens the applicability of the hegemonic strategy.

Although Türkiye presents itself as a cooperative hegemon, with effective and beneficial economic instruments, its pivot away from "soft" towards "hard" power, manifested in its military presence and competition with Gulf states allows for only **medium** congruence with the Hegemony strategy.

4.1.4.4 Neo-Imperialism

In a normative sense, Türkiye's strategy in the Horn of Africa bears certain hallmarks of neo-Imperialism. Under the motto of neo-Ottomanism, the expansion of its sphere of influence through geoeconomic means has been clearly stated (Antonopoulos et al. 2017b). Through support to Somalia's budget, loans to different states through its Exim Bank, as well as the supply of drones to Somalia and Ethiopia, it has created dependencies, which strengthen its dominance of the economically weaker states in the region. Being in control of ports, airports, and, potentially, oilfields, also weaken Somalia's sovereignty and economic agency vis-à-vis Türkiye. Due to Somalia's fragility, particularly in the early 2010s, Türkiye was able to establish its dominant role in the country through economic imposition (Wigell 2016, p. 142). Allegations about the

preferential treatment of Turkish companies in tender processes suggest bribery to institutions or individuals as a tool to gain influence. The closure of Gulen schools following close engagement with Türkiye shows the attempt to limit the influence of other rivalling actors (Donelli and Gonzalez Levaggi 2018). The framing of competition is particularly relevant regarding actors from the Gulf states, as well as Egypt. Türkiye's geoeconomic policies are thus aimed at balancing these powers and achieving dominance, at least extra-regionally (Akca 2019). This is reinforced by its significant military presence in the region. The lack of significant ties with Eritrea supports this framing, as they can be traced back to Eritrea's strong relationship with the UAE. If Türkiye had mere trade or development ambitions, its relationship with Eritrea would likely be more cordial. However, there are limits to framing Türkiye as a neo-imperialist regional power in the Horn of Africa. For one, there are no instances of Türkiye imposing or threatening sanctions against any country in the Horn of Africa, as it mainly uses positive incentives such as aid or loans. Furthermore, its development work, including a focus on education and capacity building and is aimed at mutual benefit, suggests a strategy of empowerment rather than creating dependencies. Moreover, Türkiye's contribution is a fraction of Western aid, lessening its overall impact.

Nonetheless, the use of geoeconomic tools to establish Türkiye's influence and power in the Horn of Africa, in competition, particularly with the Gulf States, suggests a **strong** congruence with the Neo-Imperialism strategy.

4.1.5 Conclusion

This section explored Türkiye as a geoeconomic extra-regional power in the Horn of Africa. It provided a background on the development of Türkiye's role as a regional player in its region, where it shifted from being an "insulator" state to becoming a more assertive actor in its region and beyond. Testing Türkiye's strategy in the Horn of Africa against the conceptual framework yielded the following results: Türkiye's strategy had **strong** congruence with Neo-Imperialism,

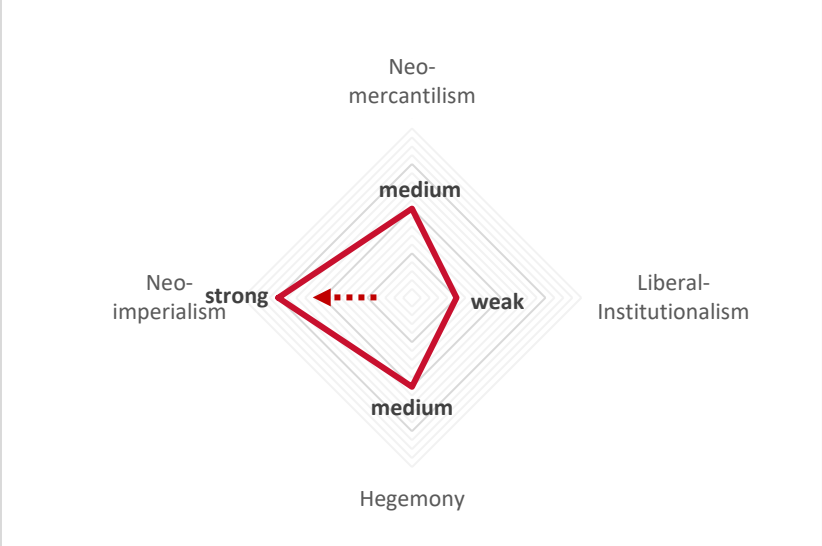

Figure 2: Conceptualising Türkiye's extra-regional geoeconomic strategy

medium congruence with Neo-Mercantilism and Hegemony respectively, and only **weak** congruence with Liberal-Institutionalism. This is supported by its normative framing of Neo-Ottomanism (Donelli and Gonzalez Levaggi 2018). It is also notable that the more “geopolitical” approach of Türkiye to the Horn developed in the second half of the 2010s, having hitherto been more economy and development focused.

4.2 India

4.2.1 India as a regional power

India's role as a regional power is shaped both by history and geography. Despite its size, or because of it, its position in South Asia has been subject to contention since independence in 1947. Notwithstanding various military interventions or wars with its neighbours in the course of the Cold War, India's focus on its region was limited, instead being active on the global stage in the Non-Aligned Movement and supporting decolonisation in other countries (Basrur 2010). As the Cold War ended, however, India reacted to the changes in the global balance of power that stabilised the South Asia region by focusing more on its immediate neighbourhood (Ganguly 2018)

However, throughout its history, India's role as a regional power has been significantly challenged by two of its immediate neighbours – Pakistan and China. Having fought three wars since partition, being continuously engaged in a territorial dispute, and, since the late 1990s, achieving nuclear parity, Pakistan and India have been locked in opposition. Despite India's significant material advantages, both militarily and economically, as well as in political stability, India's western neighbour represents a major impediment to its regional power. Through their nuclear parity, competition between the two countries has shifted to the economic realm, particularly regarding West and Central Asia (Chacko 2015a). India's significant investments in Afghanistan, part of a larger strategy to strengthen links to energy-rich Central Asian countries, were carried out to sideline Pakistan, diversify India's sources of energy, as well as expand its regional power through geoeconomics means (Pattanaik 2018). More recently, Pakistan has emerged as a key partner for the People's Republic of China (PRC), strengthening its regional power in South Asia in rivalry with India.

Despite being separated from South Asia through a significant geographic boundary formed by the Himalayas, China's role as a regional power and thus competitor is significant. Whilst Tibet acted originally as an insulator, its annexation by China increased China's proximity to South Asia (Buzan and Wæver 2003, p. 103). China's "One Belt One Road" initiative (BRI), involving significant infrastructure investments in South Asia represents a significant geoeconomic challenge to India, which has repeatedly sought to counter it both in diplomatic and in economic terms. One important aspect of the BRI in South Asia is the China–Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) connecting China with the Indian Ocean, as well as deepening political-

economic ties with Pakistan. CPEC has strained Sino-Indian relations in multiple ways, as it passes through territory claimed by India (but held by Pakistan), and strengthens Pakistan (Yoshimatsu 2022).

To balance China, India has intensified its regional engagement as well as rallied international support. This included a reframing of its positioning within its region. Instead of focusing on the eastern part of South Asia, the regional frame was expanded to the “Indo-Pacific” (see Liow and Rozman 2018). While the understanding of the Indo-Pacific as a large area that includes actors like Japan, Korea, or even Australia, serves to “dilute” the impact of individual countries on the strategic order, it increases the value of bi-, mini-, or multilateral partnerships for India, such as with the US or Japan (Medcalf 2018, p. 23). The “Indo” in Indo-Pacific also meant a reinvigorated engagement with the littoral states to the Indian Ocean, including Middle Eastern states (Suri 2023). However, seeking to maintain autonomy as well as neutrality, India’s Indo-Pacific strategy is based on hedging, and balancing, rather than overt confrontation (Yoshimatsu 2022).

This careful and pragmatic approach in competition with China has been a continuity of Indian foreign policy, including under Prime Minister Modi, who has been in power since 2014. Although Modi campaigned and continued to base his politics, on a Hindu-nationalist (“Hindutva”) platform, this has not translated into more substantively activist, or assertive foreign policies (Basrur 2017). Nonetheless, religion and normative ideas have informed the philosophy of India’s foreign policy, for example through "Panchamrit", which represents five guiding principles based on “dignity and honour, “greater engagement and dialogue”, “shared prosperity”, “regional and global security”, and “cultural and civilizational linkages”. These principles replace the previous set of principles which had been in existence for over six decades, and had put a stronger emphasis on “territorial integrity and sovereignty, mutual non-aggression, mutual non-interference”, suggesting a paradigm shift in its strategic outlook, if not in its future policies (Jacob 2022). However, Basrur (2017), also highlights the domestic aspect of “Hindutva” statecraft, which presents India, and by extension, her current government, as a strong, independent, and globally recognized power. This highlights the importance of ideational aspects for India’s regional, as well as global role. Notwithstanding, India’s role as a both regional and global actor has been hampered by internal and external factors. Slowing economic growth, the pandemic, as well as

domestic grievances resulting from Modi's policies limit India's capability to act and exert influence, both regionally and abroad (Hall 2022).

In summary, India's role as a regional power has been in a state of flux, owing to geography, historic, developments, as well as normative shifts. Competition with Pakistan and China has limited the development of regional influence and first led to a foreign policy orientation towards the East. Responding to the geopolitical shifts of the 2010s, India repositioned itself as an "Indo-Pacific" power. Under Prime Minister Modi, it has continued a strategy of balancing and neutrality, whilst strengthening ties with the US and its allies, legitimising its regional as well as global position. Since achieving nuclear status, geoeconomic statecraft has been a major part of India's foreign policy toolbox, whether in integrating itself with East Asian economies or trying to secure new energy supplies in the Middle East and Central Asia (Ahuja and Kapur 2018). Due to the diminishing returns in building its regional influence, blocked by Pakistan to the West and competing with China in the East, India is reinventing itself as a maritime power in the "Indo-Pacific", allowing it to branch out beyond its immediate neighbourhood, form alliances and act free from regional disputes. In 2015, PM Modi first proposed the "Security and Growth for All in the Region" (SAGAR) doctrine meant to guide maritime cooperation in security and commerce (Government of India 2015). SAGAR thus represents a decisive commitment to strengthening India's standing and influence in the Indo-Pacific region (Schöttli 2019). By this logic, India has also increased its engagement on the African continent, including the Horn of Africa.

4.2.2 India's Africa Policy

India holds historic ties with the African continent, having existed already in pre-colonial ties through trade with East Africa. Colonial Africa saw the establishment of large Indian communities in several African countries, many of which exist until today (Dubey and Biswas 2016). India's independence in 1947 was closely tied to African liberation movements, as Mahatma Gandhi had previously studied in South Africa. In the following decades, India, as a non-aligned state, continued to support anti-colonial movements in Africa and on a global stage, pursuing closer "south-south" cooperation already at an early stage, as well as seeking to establish itself as a "representative and spokesman" for developing countries around the globe (Wagner 2019, p. 10). However, it would be the end of the Cold War, as well as India's market liberalisation reforms, which enabled and encouraged international trade and investment, that served as a turning point in India's engagement with Africa. The "Focus Africa",

launched in 2002, sought to stimulate and boost trade with a select group of African countries (Saint-Mézard). Since then, engagement has intensified, with numerous diplomatic visits, initiatives, and large India-Africa summits (Brookings India 2015, p. 5). In 2022, trade between India and Sub-Saharan Africa amounted to 75 billion USD compared to mere 2 billion USD in 2001, however still less than half of China's trade with the subcontinent (Government of India 2023; Dixit et al. 2018).

The reasons behind India's increased engagement with Africa are manifold. Trading and economic gain are key factors in the relationship. Investment, access to resources, as well as new markets for its exports, have benefited the Indian side (Dixit et al. 2018). However, since independence, India's engagement with other developing countries, including on the African continent, has been seen as a part of its aspirations for global power status, especially pertaining to a permanent seat at the UNSC, for which the votes of African states at the UN would be crucial (Cheru and Obi 2011). Energy also plays an important role in India's engagement with Africa. Seeking to diversify its dependence on the Middle East for oil and gas, its energy imports from African states have steadily increased, highlighting their importance for India (Taylor 2012). Notwithstanding, its increasing rivalry with China is also understood as a key driver of its engagement on the African continent, although China's engagement on the African continent is far larger. Asmus et al. (2022) find that Indian development financing is more likely to occur in areas where China has previously invested, suggesting competition between India and China. Nonetheless, Indian and Chinese companies also work together, such as on oil projects in Sudan, suggesting a degree of moderation and pragmatism (Cheru and Obi 2011). Despite India's material inferiority when it comes to competition with China in Africa, it is nonetheless seen as a significant partner by African nations that seek to limit their dependency on China for aid, money, and diplomatic support (Bodomo 2017). Finally, as Berger and Eickhoff (2022) contend, it is also the normative and ideational role and understanding of India as a historical partner of Africa that is shaping its Africa policy, with the Indian diaspora playing a key role.

In a landmark speech, PM Modi set out the guiding principles of India's engagement with Africa, highlighting its priority, its focus on African empowerment, free trade, digitalisation, agriculture, climate change, security cooperation, free and open oceans, prevention of great power competition, and democracy (Government of India 2018). These principles highlight the unique nature of India's Africa policy, in which

development, trade, and security cooperation are not distinctly separated, representing an alternative approach to how Western countries tend to engage with African partners (Wagner 2019, p. 15). Its overall approach has thus been to enable private Indian companies to invest, establish themselves, or trade in Africa, unlike the Chinese approach which relies more on state enterprises (Taylor 2012, p. 796). This is reinforced by its focus on local capacity building, training, and education in its development cooperation efforts, an area less prominent in Chinese engagement. Nonetheless, state-backed loans through the Exim Bank of India have contributed financially to various projects implemented by Indian companies throughout the continent (Dubey and Biswas 2016; Dixit et al. 2018). The “Pan-African e-Network” project is an important example of South-South cooperation in which India is able to leverage its strengths and capabilities in the IT sector to support Pan-African e-learning, telemedicine, and communication (Government of India 2013). These government-supported lines of credit are disbursed under the condition that 75% of goods and services required from projects are sourced from India (India Exim Bank 2015). Another notable endeavour is the “International Solar Alliance”, an international organisation launched by PM Modi in 2015, supported by France. Headquartered in India, it has partnered with several African countries seeking to establish India as a “solar power”, building its legitimacy and exerting influence (Shidore and Busby 2019). This underlines the various ways and means with which India has increased its geoeconomic engagement on the African continent, which is also evident in the Horn of Africa.

4.2.3 India’s geoeconomic statecraft in the Horn of Africa

From a regional perspective, India’s geoeconomic approach to the Horn of Africa is deeply embedded in its role as a maritime power in the Indo-Pacific, which encompasses the littoral states of the Horn of Africa. SAGAR thus plays an important role in India’s presence in the region. While initially focused on anti-piracy during the late 2000s, it expanded, for instance, with India delivering humanitarian relief to various countries in the Horn in 2020 (Kesnur and Mishra 2022). Over the years, India’s awareness of the geostrategic relevance of the Horn of Africa has sharpened (Banerjee 2021). Therein, its bilateral engagement with individual states in the region also intensified (Jha 2012).

4.2.3.1 Somalia

India has ancient commercial ties with Somalia, with Indian traders based and active in historic port cities like Mogadishu (Galaal 1980). In 2021, their total trade amounted to 714 million USD of which 699 million USD were Indian exports, mainly sugar and rice. Following the UAE and China, India is the third largest exporter to Somalia (Gaulier and Zignago 2023). Since 2010, Somalia has benefited from India's Duty-Free Tariff Preference Scheme for LDCs, which removes tariffs on most Somali exports to India (UNCTAD 2017). The two countries also signed a Memorandum of Understanding on investment in 2022 (Ftl Somalia 2022). India has provided financial support to different aid funds for Somalia, mainly in support of peacekeeping (Government of India 2021). Somalia is also part of the Indian-run Pan African e-Network and a member of India's International Solar Alliance (ISA 2023; African Union 2018). Somalis can apply for Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme scholarships that support education in India (Government of India 2021). This form of diplomacy through education was highlighted by the presidential election of Hassan Mohamud, who went to university in India, leading to closer ties and more calls for cooperation between the two countries, marked by increased diplomatic visits (Financial Express 2023).

4.2.3.2 Djibouti

Ties between Djibouti only significantly increased in the mid-2010s, growing out of Djibouti's support in evacuating Indian citizens from Yemen, leading to the establishment of an Indian embassy in Djibouti City in 2019 (Embassy of India in Djibouti 2022). Its engagement with the country is often examined in the context of India's competition with China, which maintains its only foreign military base in Djibouti (Ahmad 2017). Trade in 2021 amounted to 678 million USD, 94% of which are Indian exports. India is the fourth largest exporter to Djibouti after China, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE (Gaulier and Zignago 2023). Indian companies are increasingly active in the country, mainly in the hospitality sector (Jha 2012). Djibouti is also a member of the Pan African e-Network as well as the International Solar Alliance (ISA 2023; African Union 2018). Apart from food and medical aid, India has built centres for vocational training and entrepreneurship (Embassy of India in Djibouti 2022). Through its Exim Bank, India has financed the construction of cement plants in Djibouti with loans worth 50 million USD (India Exim Bank 2023). India's cooperation with Djibouti, exemplified in leaders' statements is closely linked to regional and maritime security (Indian

Express 2017). To enable a stronger naval and air force presence, India thus negotiated base access agreements with Japan and France, both of which maintain bases in Djibouti (DH News Service 2018; Times Of India 2018). The partnership with Japan is especially relevant, as both are powers in the Indo-Pacific region competing against China.

4.2.3.3 Ethiopia

Trade and diplomatic relations between India and Ethiopia picked up in the early 2000s after the two signed a cooperation agreement in 1997. Ethiopia was one of the first countries to benefit from India's Tariff Preference Scheme for LDCs (Belayneh and Belayneh 2017). In 2017, they agreed on an updated framework for cooperation, which also covers investment. India belongs to the top three sources of FDI funding to Ethiopia, with more than 600 Indian firms active in the country, focusing on manufacturing (EIU 2017). Recently, various Indian companies have leased land for large agricultural ventures (Viswanathan and Mishra 2019). Yearly trade between the two countries amounted to ca. 1,2 billion USD in 2021, of which 82% were Indian exports. While Ethiopia mainly exports agricultural products to India, it mainly imports medical products, vehicles, and food items from India (Gaulier and Zignago 2023). The Indian Exim Bank has provided loans amounting to 704 million USD to develop the Ethiopian sugar industry and energy grid (India Exim Bank 2023). It also pledged a loan for the construction of a section of the Ethio-Djibouti Railway line, as contributing to the building of an expressway (Bloomberg 2013; India Exim Bank 2022). This makes Ethiopia one of the largest recipients of concessional loans in Africa (Times Of India 2017) The support for the trade route connecting Ethiopia to the sea is also relevant for India's involvement in oil refining in South Sudan, which neighbours Ethiopia (Jha 2012). Ethiopia is part of the Pan African e-Network and has joined the International Solar Alliance (International Solar Alliance 2023; African Union 2018). India has donated medical equipment, food aid to the country, as well as offered a large vocational training programme (Government of India 2020). A large amount of trade, investment, and diplomatic engagement suggests a long-running interest and close relationship between Ethiopia and India. This was visible during the Tigray war, where India supported the Ethiopian government (Bhattacharya 2022).

4.2.3.4 Eritrea

Just like in Somalia, Eritrea holds a historic significance for India, as the historic port of Adulis was a major hub (Reade 2015). Although Eritrea is also part of the Tariff

Preference Scheme for LDCs, trading in modern times is very low, amounting to just 9 million USD in 2021. This is especially low compared to China, whose total trade with Eritrea was 420 million USD, mainly consisting of ores exported to China (Gaulier and Zignago 2023). Economic relations with Eritrea are thus more focused on aid and development. The India Exim Bank provide a loan worth 20 million USD for agricultural and educational projects in 2010 (India Exim Bank 2023). Agricultural development is a key aspect of India's development cooperation, with over 100 advisors being deployed to Eritrea as part of a trilateral agreement with the FAO (Government of India 2016). Eritrea is also a member of the Pan African e-Network (African Union 2018). India has provided food aid and offers scholarships, and vocational training (Government of India 2016). India's relationship with Eritrea, as well as recent attempts to strengthen ties, are often assessed in light of Eritrea's geostrategic location, as well as in the context of competition with China, which maintains a significantly larger economic and diplomatic relationship with Eritrea (Ghebreyesus and Woldu 2016; ANI 2021).

4.2.4 Assessment

4.2.4.1 Neo-Mercantilism

India's strategy in the Horn of Africa exhibits similarities to the neo-mercantilist ideal-type strategy, which contends a competitive strategic frame aimed at maximising economic gain. This profit-focused foreign policy fits the overall assessment of India's role in Africa as an "enabler" for private companies (Taylor 2012, p. 796). Particularly its engagement with Ethiopia, which also consisted of significant lines of credit, has been aimed at improving the business opportunities for Indian companies and investors, for instance through an updated and more beneficial trade partnership agreement. In all trading relationships with Horn of African countries, the trade deficit is in India's favour. Moreover, the lines of credit mandate 75% of the procurement of goods and services from India, further employed for the benefit of Indian companies. Similarly, the disbursement of aid and development assistance is often tied to improving economic relations, unlike Western donors' conditionalities for political reform. And instead of contributing to multilateral efforts, most Indian aid is disbursed bilaterally (Mehmetcik 2018). Similarly, India has refrained from cooperating with other actors in the region, which is congruent with the selective application of multilateralism limited to economic concerns prescribed by the neo-mercantilist strategy (Wigell 2016, p. 143; Schöttli 2019). India's engagement in the Horn of Africa is also overshadowed

by its competition with China over resources, especially energy, as well as transport infrastructure (Jha 2012). Finally, India has refrained from playing a “costly regional political” role in the Horn of Africa. It has remained neutral in the Tigray crisis, maintains cordial relations with the autocratic government of Eritrea, and does not play a decisive role in the stabilisation of Somalia. However, the investment into maritime security and the cooperation with countries like France or Japan on naval bases suggests a more cooperative instead of competitive strategic frame that is not merely aimed at maximising profit. ISA, as well as the Pan African e-Network, important projects for countries in the Horn of Africa, are multilateral and not only beneficial to India. In fact, ISA has been understood as a tool to improve India’s geopolitical influence, especially due to its limited economic capabilities (Shidore and Busby 2019). Moreover, Neo-Mercantilism contradicts the core principles of India’s foreign policy, which is based on “shared prosperity”, as well as the aim of SAGAR, which is “shared growth”.

Based on India’s marked “business-first” foreign policy that is closely linked to development support and mostly devoid of political conditionalities, as well as its bilateral approach in the context of competition with China, its strategy shows significant parallels to Neo-Mercantilism. However, with its involvement in different multilateral and mutually beneficial frameworks, the congruence of its strategy with neo-Mercantilism is only **strong.**

4.2.4.2 Liberal Institutionalism

Pursuing a liberal-institutionalist strategy also considers economic power as an end but is based on a cooperative strategic frame. This “idealism” corresponds to the principles of Indian foreign policy, namely “greater engagement and dialogue”, “shared prosperity”, as well as “cultural and civilizational linkages”. India’s business-driven engagement with countries in the Horn of Africa supports the focus on economic gains. Through trade agreements, industrial development, as well as education, India is creating interdependences, a core tenet of Liberal Institutionalism. Its multilateral economic initiatives such as ISA or Pan African e-Network provide mutual benefit. By supporting regional transport corridors it is not only enabling its own trade but contributing to regional integration (Schöttli 2019). More significantly, India’s cooperation on maritime security and support for anti-piracy measures provides a public good that is not only to India’s economic benefit, as trade is uninterrupted. Its reluctance for shouldering significant regional responsibility, such as through mediation or political support, however, underscores its limited political ambition.

Notwithstanding, liberal institutionalism is not fully aligned with India's engagement in the Horn of Africa. Its multilateral engagement, whether for maritime security or economic development, goes beyond economic ends, and highlights a clear intent to gain political influence, particularly in competition with China. Although it cooperates with regional and international actors, it rarely partners with China on projects in the region. India's scholarship programmes and support for education also have the declared aim of creating favourable relations with future leaders (Brookings India 2015).

Despite the Indian focus on economic development irrespective of local politics, the relevance of geopolitical considerations in its multilateral cooperation suggests a **medium** congruence with the liberal-institutionalism ideal-type strategy.

4.2.4.3 Hegemony

In acting in accordance with the Hegemony strategy, a state deploys economic power to gain regional leadership, whilst tolerating other powers. India's efforts to establish itself as a maritime power, which has been marked by partnership and multilateralism, underscore this (Schöttli 2019). India's regional role has thus been achieved without economic coercion. Moreover, India's economic engagement with countries in the Horn of Africa also holds political goals, especially gaining support at the United Nations General Assembly on issues such as Kashmir (Bhattacharya 2022). However, its support for broader regional political and economic integration in the region has been limited, as it prefers bilateral engagement. Its limited financial resources disallow it from providing too many public or private goods to gain regional power, visible in its limited aid disbursement, preference for material donations, and emphasis on loans. Moreover, its rivalry with China contradicts the "tolerance" regarding other regional actors that this strategy specifies.

Notwithstanding India's benign maritime and regional power ambitions, its limited provision of public goods as well as its competition with China indicates a **medium** congruence to the Hegemony ideal-type strategy.

4.2.4.4 Neo-imperialism

A neo-imperialist strategy aspires to regional dominance through the deployment of economic power. India's strategy in the Horn of Africa bears certain hallmarks of neo-imperialism. For one, its development finance has been found to be deployed to compete with pre-existing Chinese presence, underscoring the competitive use of

economic power for geostrategic benefit (Asmus et al. 2022). Beyond regional power, India also seeks to translate its development and trade partnerships into political influence at the UN, as well as strengthen its standing as global power overall. The projection of Indian power is also based on a normative perception of India as an historic, rich, and, strong, that has been espoused particularly under PM Modi. In addition, the active role of India in the health sector of various countries in the Horn of Africa has created significant dependencies on Indian companies and suppliers (Saint-Mézard). Overall, however, India's neo-imperialism in the Horn of Africa is limited. Notwithstanding dependencies in the health sector, India's development support is overarchingly aimed at building human and industrial capacity, making countries in the region stronger, not weaker. One example of this is Ethiopia, which imports large amounts of sugar from India, while India has funded the establishment of an Ethiopian sugar industry through lines of credit (India Exim Bank 2023). Moreover, India has not used any coercive economic tools to achieve political goals, having never levied embargoes on any country in the Horn of Africa, nor imposed, or threatened to impose sanctions, despite its significant economic leverage.

While India's geoeconomic engagement in the Horn of Africa exhibits minor neo-imperialist tendencies, its overall cooperative engagement focused on mutual benefit implies **weak** congruence.

4.2.5 Conclusion

This section analysed India's role as a geoeconomic regional actor in the Horn of Africa. It traced India's shifting regional priorities in the context of domestic and international developments. Focusing on its Africa policy, it highlighted the intensification of relations in the early 2000s, the motifs of South-South cooperation, and the increasing rivalry with China. Zeroing in on the Horn of Africa, it presented India's role as a maritime power, its trade relations, and its unique form of development cooperation. Testing India's engagement against the proposed

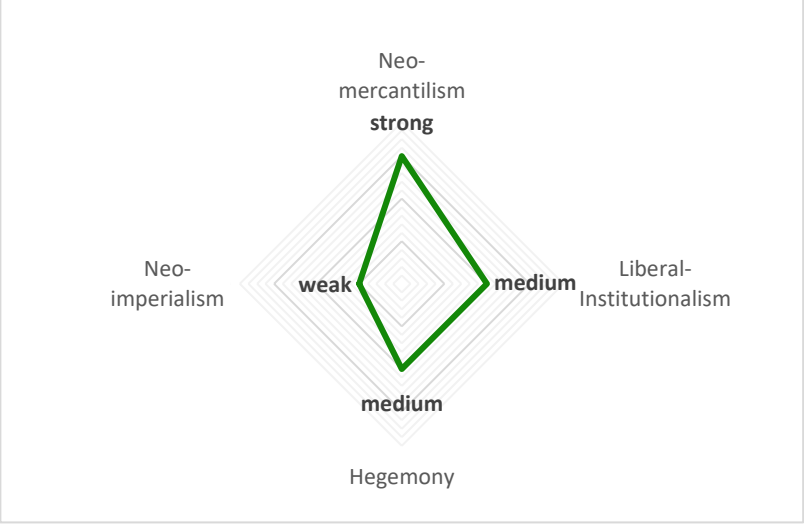

Figure 3: Conceptualising India's extra-regional geoeconomic strategy

conceptual framework led to the assessment of **medium** congruence with both the Hegemonic and the Liberal-Institutionalist type, **strong** congruence with Neo-Mercantilism and **weak** congruence with the Neo-Imperialist type.

4.3 European Union

4.3.1 The European Union as a regional power

Being a “sui generis” supranational organisation, rather than a traditional nation-state, conceptualising the EU as a regional power is significantly less straightforward than with ‘classic’ regional powers such as Türkiye or India. Buzan and Wæver (2003, pp. 27–39) discuss in-depth the role and understanding of the EU in the context of regional power, identifying it as a “post-modern state”, having consolidated to become an actor in its own right. As the EU does not encompass the whole of Europe, it can be identified as a regional actor with significant capability and legitimacy. The authors however identify two major shortcomings in the conceptualisation of the EU as a power (Buzan and Wæver 2003, p. 344). For one, major EU member states such as France or Germany are often identified as regional powers themselves (Mattheis 2021; Kundnani 2018). This creates an “ambiguous relationship” of regional power structures where interests and policies are often not fully aligned and thus weaken the position of the EU as a ‘post-modern’ regional power (Nolte 2010, p. 897). Moreover, the continuous presence of the US in Europe since the end of WW2, particularly in terms of military power, sidelines the EU as a regional power in the security domain. This was evident during the crises in the Western Balkans in the 1990s, where the US rather than the EU was the main intervening power. Moreover, the EU’s regional power is also affected by the Russian Federation, which is seeking influence in East and Southeast Europe, to the extent of invading Georgia in 2008, and Ukraine in 2022.

However, not least since the Lisbon Treaty of 2008, the EU has become more consolidated and active in its foreign, and especially regional policies through policies and polities. The treaty stipulated that “the Union shall develop a special relationship with neighbouring countries, aiming to establish an area of prosperity and good neighbourliness”, for which “the Union may conclude specific agreements with the countries” (European Union 2007b, 10). It also set up increased institutional capabilities such as the EEAS, as well as the position of the HR/VP, an important foundation for the coherence of EU foreign policy (Maurer and Simão 2013). The formulation of a Common Foreign and Security Policy, as well as a Common Security and Defence Policy, underscores this integration. And while the ambition of EU foreign and security policy has increased in the decade following the Lisbon Treaty as is visible in its successive strategy documents, including a debate on “strategic autonomy”, and the proclamation of a “geopolitical commission” many eschew ascribing the EU classic

regional, or even global power. This hesitation is mainly based on its lack of own military capability, as that continues to be within the remit of member states (Giessmann 2016) Even if an EU military mission is deployed, it is limited to peacekeeping and state-building, allowing it, at best “soft power” status (Haine and Salloum 2021), or “small power” status (Toje 2010). This inconsistency was observed by Buzan and Wæver (2003, p. 374), who note the EU’s global presence strongest in economic domains such as trade, finance, and the environment. The EU was thus theorised as a “trade power”, seeking regional and international political power (Meunier and Nicolaïdis 2006). As the concept of geoeconomics has received increased recognition in academia and policy analysis, so has its applicability to EU foreign policy (Helwig 2019). And while the EU has hitherto acted as a geoeconomic power more defensively than offensively, implicitly rather than explicitly, it has proven a useful framework to conceptualise the EU’s regional and global (Gehrke 2020).

As a regional economic power, its enlargement, as well as its neighbourhood policy represent key forms of regional geoeconomic engagement (Raik 2006). The end of the Cold War, which saw an end to Europe being the arena, marks the beginning of a more geoeconomic enlargement process, especially towards the East, as former Warsaw Pact members became eligible to join. With accession, the EU held a powerful incentive, with which it was able to impose political as well as economic reforms in candidate countries. This made it a “regional hegemon” with the ability to set norms as rules, which were widely accepted and viewed as legitimate (Hettne and Söderbaum 2005). Moreover, accession had a significant role in stabilisation, which was crucial, especially in Europe’s East and Southeast. In the first EU Security Strategy, integration is identified as a means to “increase our security”, underscoring the geopolitics of accession (European Union 2003, p. 35). Notably, this dual process of integration and stabilization echoes the key characteristics of ‘classical’ regional powers (Missiroli 2004). With enlargement slowing down in the late 2010s, it became a less useful instrument for the EU to project regional power and influence. Instead, it relied increasingly on the EU Neighbourhood Policy, which seeks to engage with neighbouring countries and regions without the explicit aim of accession, instead coupling incentives like aid, market access, and travel freedoms to encourage reform, although strategic considerations like transport links and energy play an important role as well (Meunier and Nicolaïdis 2006). Like accession, the ENP is presented as an instrument to build state and societal resilience in neighbouring regions, acting as a

political stabiliser through economic means (European Union 2016, p. 9). Therein, the EU has implemented strategies for the Black Sea, as well as the Mediterranean, highlighting its expanding regional reach and broad portfolio (European Union 2021a, 2021c). However, there exist limits to the EU's regional geoeconomic power. While many credit the success of accession, the Neighbourhood policy has proven less effective in establishing the EU as a regional power. For one, the reduced incentives did not match the ambition and demands of the policy (Haukkala 2008). Moreover, as the regional reach extended, the policy came into friction with other regional actors such as Russia, and thus had less "structural pull" (Bechev 2011, p. 427).

However, the EU's geoeconomic foreign policy is not limited to its neighbourhood. Through trade agreements, investment regulation, and, more recently, sanctions, its economic tools represent important aspects of its international role (Olsen 2022). In terms of trade, this is manifested in the inclusion of most-favoured nation clauses in trade agreements with other countries to keep EU countries competitive, or in the screening and prevention of external investments on security grounds (see Weinhardt et al. 2022). The recently launched "Global Gateway", an investment and development initiative amounting to 300 billion EUR, has been widely understood as a geostrategic counter to China's BRI (Furness and Keijzer 2022). More implicitly, EU regulations and standards such as the GDPR have been implemented around the world as part of the so-called "Brussels effect", highlighting the EU's sphere of influence in strategic domains such as data (Gehrke 2020). More recently, economic sanctions have emerged as an important part of the EU's geoeconomic toolbox. Starting in the early 2010s, sanctions became a key instrument to address security challenges in the EU neighbourhood as well as beyond, used for instance against Russia, Syria, or Myanmar (Helwig et al. 2020).

Nonetheless, there exist limitations to the EU's geoeconomic power projection. For one, in the context of accession and neighbourhood policy, Meunier and Nicolaïdis (2006) point out out trade and economics are not guarantors of political legitimacy. Despite representing a necessary basis for partnership, it is not sufficient for regional, or global power or acceptance thereof. Moreover, geoeconomic statecraft has limited utility in liberal market economies like the EU (Stanzel 2018). China and Russia, whose geoeconomic power projection is more explicit and cohesive, have centralised and state-controlled economies. The EU, on the other hand, consists of various member

states and large, independent private sectors that are less easily mobilised and channelled (Olsen 2022).

In summary, the EU does not completely fulfil either conceptual or material criteria for a classical understanding of a regional power, due to its structure, lack of military capability, and coherence of foreign policy. However, its status as a *geoeconomic* regional power has emerged as an acceptable framework of analysis, despite weaknesses in its effectiveness in empiric reality. Since this is the aspect of regional power's foreign policy that this thesis examines, it makes the EU a valuable actor to study in the context of the Horn of Africa.

4.3.2 EU's Africa Policy

Starting with "association" with the colonies of some member states, EU-African ties date back to the 1950s. With decolonisation, relations with the now independent African states were formalised mainly in terms of trade agreements, such as the Lomé Convention. The turn of the century however saw a broadening of this partnership in the form of the Cotonou Agreement (Babarinde 2019). Since 2000 EU relations and engagement with Africa have intensified, through joint summits, strategies, partnerships, and substantial economic support (Duggan et al. 2020). Since the first EU-Africa Summit in 2000, there have been six subsequent summits, the last one being held in 2022. At the second summit, held in 2007, the Joint Africa-EU Strategy was adopted (European Union 2007a). This strategy sought to shift the relationship between the EU and Africa from a "donor-recipient relationship" to a "partnership of equals", whilst broadening the focus of issues beyond Africa, improving coherence and coordination and finally enabling stronger inclusion of non-governmental actors (Mangala 2013b). An important tool for building closer trade relationships with African countries is the Economic Partnership Agreement (Adetula and Osegbue 2020). They represent an attempt to shift from "aid to trade" and provision better access to the markets of African countries for EU goods while also providing free access to the EU market (European Union 2023a). Nonetheless, the differentiation and independence from individual members state's interests, particularly those of former colonial powers are often called into question when examining the EU's policies in Africa. However, starting in the 2000s, the EU has actively sought to take a more active role in coordinating and steering aid, development, and economic cooperation between member states and partners. Initially, this push for coordination was primarily aimed at aid effectiveness but later changed to greater coherence with the overall goals of EU

external action (Delputte and Orbie 2020). This not only highlights the EU as a central and independent actor but also its increasingly geoeconomic strategic frame.

EU strategic documents provide an insight into the key ideas and motivation driving its engagement with Africa. Economic interests are a key factor - Africa as a continent of fast-growing economies, as well as a source of natural resources, labour, and energy represents a significant economic area, especially in light of slowing EU economies, changing demographics, and a green transition (Bach 2011). Mitigating and adapting to climate change play an important and finance-intensive part in this (Sicurelli 2013). At the same time, as the large majority of African countries continue to be classified as "developing" or "least developed", development cooperation, as well as accompanying institutional and governance reform programmes are based on normative ideas of responsibility, shared values, and a common history (European Union 2007a; Mangala 2013a). Development, especially in fragile African states close to the Sahara, is also closely tied to migration. The issue of migration, which represents a major internal challenge for the EU, thus informs its Africa policy far beyond the Mediterranean (Leite, et al. 2020). Increasingly, the engagement of the EU with Africa is understood in the context of geopolitical competition, mainly with China, but, more recently also with Russia (Hodzi 2020). This diverse set of drivers behind EU-Africa relations underscores its complexity and breadth and is also reflected in policy documents identifying "nexuses" between security and development, or energy and security (Staeger and Gwatiwa 2020). One region of particular geo-strategic importance to the EU is the Horn of Africa (Council of the EU 2011)

4.3.3 EU's geoeconomic statecraft in the Horn of Africa

The EU's geoeconomic approach to the Horn of Africa is structurally similar to its approach in other parts of Africa. With an "interregional" foreign policy, the EU is engaged on a regional level, with projects and partnerships across regions usually coordinated through a regional body such as the EAC or ECOWAS. Encouraging regional integration, similar to the European project, reflects a preference for multilateral cooperation (Mattheis 2020). The EU supported the creation of the "Horn of Africa Initiative", mainly aimed at energy and trade infrastructure as well as water management (Council of the EU 2011, p. 10). Nonetheless, the EU also engages with individual countries in the Horn of Africa. At this point, it is important to note that the EU's conceptualisation of the Horn of Africa also includes Kenya, Sudan, South Sudan, and Uganda.

4.3.3.1 Somalia

Due to its long-running conflicts, droughts, and internal displacement, humanitarian aid and development cooperation represent represents the majority of the EU's economic engagement in the country. Since 2000, it has disbursed more than 2.3 billion EUR in aid funding to Somalia (European Commission 2023). In contrast trade between the two is low, amounting to 185 million USD in 2021, accounting for about 3% of Somalia's total trade (Gaulier and Zignago 2023). However, the EU's economic engagement in the country is complemented by three CSDP missions, which is unique. These include EUTM Somalia, a military training mission, EUCAP Somalia a civilian crisis management mission for developing maritime security and training the Somalia police force, as well as EUNAVFOR Somalia, a counter-piracy naval force (EEAS 2023b). The substantial financial and military engagement of the EU in Somalia is a testament not only to the EU's commitment to humanitarian and development support but of its strategic interest.

4.3.3.2 Djibouti

Being the most stable state in the region, Djibouti, despite its size, is a key partner for the EU, although the EU parliament has criticised the lack of free speech, electoral fairness, and violation of human rights (European Parliament). Unlike Somalia, aid disbursement since 2007 only amounted to 262 million EUR and is mainly focused on infrastructure and education (European Commission 2023). The EU has for instance contributed to the development and improvement of trade corridors, energy connectivity, as well as digitalisation and water management (Horn of Africa Initiative 2023; European Commission 2023)Total trade between EU countries and Djibouti added up to 259 million USD, again only 3% of Djibouti's total trade (Gaulier and Zignago 2023). Until 2016, Djibouti also hosted a CSDP mission, EUCAP Nestor, the predecessor mission of EUCAP Somalia which was aimed at building capacity maritime security (EEAS 2023a). Beyond the EU, France and Italy, former colonial powers in the Horn maintain a military presence in Djibouti. Their bases also serve as hubs for other European and NATO contingents, underscoring the EU's, albeit indirect, strategic military presence in Djibouti, reinforced by financial aid (Yimer 2021).

4.3.3.3 Ethiopia

Ethiopia, as the largest and most developed country in the region, has been identified by the EU as the "key strategic partner (…) in the Horn of Africa" (European Union 2023b). In 2016, both signed a "Joint Declaration towards an EU-Ethiopia Strategic

Engagement", promising annual ministerial and sectoral exchanges (EEAS 2019). Since 2007, the EU has spent 3,15 billion EUR in aid in the country (European Commission 2023). A significant part of this money was used for humanitarian purposes, although it was also used for education, institutions, and infrastructure. Overall trade between the EU and Ethiopia reached 2,5 billion USD in 2021 (15% of Ethiopia's total trade), 28% of which consisted of Ethiopian exports, mainly coffee and flowers (Gaulier and Zignago 2023). The EU also supports the "EU Business Forum for Ethiopia" (EUBFE), a chamber of commerce for the ca. 300 European companies active in the country (EEAS 2019). A leaked internal "non-paper" from the EU Commission in 2016 suggested that support for the EUBFE, as well as progress on negotiations on the EU-Ethiopia "Strategic Engagement" should be linked to Ethiopia's willingness to cooperate on migration flow reduction and repatriation (Statewatch 2016). In response to the conflict in Tigray, the EU suspended its budget support to the Ethiopian government, while humanitarian aid continued Since the ceasefire, the EU has been in negotiations with the Ethiopian government over a resumption and intensification of economic relations, tied to conditions such humanitarian access or accountability (Chadwick 2022). Nonetheless, recent visits by EU member states' foreign ministers suggest a willingness by the EU and its members to reengage with the country, partly because of fears of losing influence to China, who supported the Ethiopian government during the conflict, against highlighted the continued geopolitical and geoeconomic interest in the country (Hoffmann and Lanfranchi 2023).

4.3.3.4 Eritrea

EU engagement with Eritrea dates to its independence from Ethiopia in 1991, mainly manifesting in humanitarian aid during the war. Since then, with the country increasingly turning into a dictatorship under Isaias Afwerki, relations have been limited. Throughout the 2000s and 2010s, the EU repeatedly attempted to improve relations. Pursuing a "dual track" approach, it sought to encourage democratic reform through humanitarian and development assistance, also aimed at reducing migration (Chadwick 2020). From 2007 to 2023, the EU spent around 197 million EUR on projects in Eritrea (European Commission 2023). This included a road project connecting Eritrea to Ethiopia meant to improve regional economic integration. Trade between Eritrea and European countries amounted to 35 million USD in 2021 (Gaulier and Zignago 2023). However, a lack of interest in the project and the unwillingness of the Eritrean government to institutional reform led the EU to "de-commit" nearly 100

million EUR of planned funds in 2021 (Chadwick 2021). In response to Eritrean troops becoming involved in human rights abuses in the Tigray conflict, the EU imposed sanctions in 2021 (European Union 2021b).

4.3.4 Assessment

4.3.4.1 Neo-Mercantilism

Comparing the EU's strategy in the Horn of Africa to the Neo-Mercantilist ideal-type strategy, which posits economic power in the region as the main objective of the actor, yields the following result. In the past, the EU has been understood as a "trade power", with the economic interest of its member states as the sole driver of its (geoeconomic) foreign policy (Meunier and Nicolaïdis 2006). Its economic partnership agreements with African countries have been criticised of over over-proportionally benefiting the EU (Farrell 2005). Additionally, trade agreements with included "most-favoured nations statuses" promise relative gains to EU companies by maintaining an edge over potential competitors (Adetula and Osegbue 2020; Weinhardt et al. 2022). The balance of trade is strongly skewed towards the EU in all four countries underscores this economic advantage and supports a neo-mercantilist strategy. The EU, through its size and global reach, is thus able to "deploy economic power as (.) leverage to extract concessions and pressure conditions". (Wigell 2016, p. 141). Moreover, the substantial amount of economic aid that the EU has contributed to the Horn of Africa could be seen in the context of maritime security, to prevent negative impacts on trade, as well as stabilize a region containing natural and energy resources (Mehari and Tassinari 2021). Overall, though, both the conduct and the results of the EU's geoeconomic engagement in the Horn of Africa suggest merely limited congruence with this framework. For one, its engagement and financial support for regional integration, democracy, as well as human and economic development, contradict a utility-maximising, profit-focused mercantilist actor, especially regarding the significant imbalance between aid and trade in Somalia. Moreover, the "de-committing" of funds, as well as the suspension of budget support for political reasons does not support a strategic frame aimed at market dominance, especially as actors like China or Russia stood to benefit from this withdrawal economically. Whereas the EU's support for the EUBFE in Ethiopia does highlight its support for EU companies and thus a certain objective of maximising economic interests, it is referred to as a tool to incentivise the Ethiopian government to cooperate more on migration highlights this as a means rather than an end (Statewatch 2016).

Despite the overall framing of the EU as a neo-mercantilist actor and the economic importance of the Horn of Africa, the form and function of the EU's geoeconomic instruments do not suggest a strong profit-mindset aimed at market dominance. As a result, the congruence of the EU's extra-regional strategy to the neo-mercantile framework is **weak.**

4.3.4.2 Liberal-Institutionalism

Like with the neo-mercantilist strategy, economic power would be a strategic objective rather than a means if the EU were to pursue a liberal-institutionalist strategy. However, this strategy encompasses a strategic frame that is cooperative instead of competitive, allowing for other dominant trading and economic powers, multilateralism, and economic integration. It carries the "belief that extending interdependence and economic integration is a crucial imperative for all levels of security and prosperity" (Wigell 2016, p. 146). This corresponds to the EU's approach to Africa overall, as well as to the Horn region. For one, it corresponds to the strategy of market liberalisation that the EU has promoted in its cooperation with African countries, aimed at encouraging development through economic growth, trading and investment. Moreover, "interdependence" is identified as a core principle of the JAES, which overall was meant as a platform for equal partnership and benefit (European Union 2007a, p. 2). Second, it is supported by the common conceptualisation of the EU as a "civilian power", exporting norms such as market economy through dialogue and cooperation in an explicitly multilateral and unanimous manner (Hettne and Söderbaum 2005). Moreover, the principle of economic integration is a core driver of the EU's interregional approach. Engaging with other regional bodies, or encouraging the strengthening and empowerment thereof not only strengthens regional integration but establishes the EU as a key partner and interlocutor, as it has done with the Horn of Africa Initiative (Horn of Africa Initiative 2023). However, Liberal-Institutionalism's congruence with the EU's Horn of Africa strategy has its limits. For one, it prescribes the "unwillingness of shouldering the broader burden and responsibility" (Wigell 2016, p. 145). By being a major aid donor, and by supporting regional peace and security initiatives financially, with personnel, and with materiel, it has distinguished itself as a pro-active and engaged regional power. Moreover, its use of sanctions, conditionality-based financial aid, and focus on human rights and governance suggest other-than-profit motives. Although one could argue again that achieving or maintaining regional stability has an

economic objective, as it secures maritime and land trading routes, providing access to resources and new markets.

Although the EU has traditionally acted as a “trading power”, an increased use of economic power for political ends, suggests a **medium** compatibility of the EU’s strategy in the Horn of Africa with the liberal-institutionalist ideal-type.

4.3.4.3 Hegemonic

The Hegemonic ideal-type strategy is also conducted under a cooperative strategic frame, although economic power is a means to an end, rather than an end in itself. Notably, Wigell (2016, p. 145) himself posits the EU as a classic example of a Hegemonic geoeconomic strategy, demonstrating its cooperative yet power-focused approach to its neighbourhood. As demonstrated above, the EU’s neighbourhood policy bears numerous parallels to its approach to African countries, some of which are already part of its immediate neighbourhood, suggesting that this strategy is valid for its approach in the Horn of Africa as well. A hegemonic approach thus employs economic power deployed for political purposes, in this case, establishing the EU as a regional power through “soft forms of domination by way of cooperative institutional arrangements” (Wigell 2016, p. 144). By providing significant funding to regional organisations such as the Horn of Africa Initiative or IGAD, as well as earmarking funds for various projects, it has significant input into the strategic direction of these organisations. The same applies to conditionality-based budget support, its use for political messaging exemplified through the EU suspending support to Ethiopia in response to the Tigray conflict. The fact that the EU’s substantial aid and development contributions in the region are often justified in public statements and documents due to the “geo-strategic” relevance of the region underscores the (geo-)political objectives of its engagement (Council of the EU 2011). Nonetheless, this does not preclude the presence or trade partnership of other, potentially competing, regional actors, as the provision of public goods is a key aspect of hegemonic regional power (Wigell 2016, p. 144). Strengthening maritime security, either through naval patrols or capacity building is beneficial to all actors present in the region, including rivals to the EU’s regional power. This is also visible in the support for open trade corridors, water management, and education, confirming the cooperative frame of the EU’s strategic approach to the Horn of Africa. However, the EU’s tolerance for “free-riding” is limited (Wigell 2016, p. 145). With increasing geo-political competition, Chinese engagement is perceived in more threatening than economically beneficial terms (Mehari and

Tassinari 2021). Re-engagement with Ethiopia after the Tigray conflict is also motivated by geopolitical competition rather than cooperation among regional actors (Hoffmann and Lanfranchi 2023).

In summary, the Hegemonic ideal-type strategy provides a useful frame to an approach to the EU's approach to the Horn that is based on regional integration, cooperation, and tolerance of other powers, whilst pursuing regional power, mirroring its approach to its own neighbourhood. This suggests a **strong** congruence with the Hegemonic strategy.

4.3.4.4 Neo-Imperialism

The Neo-Imperialist strategy prescribes the use of economic power in pursuit of an informal regional "empire", with the actor as the only power, limiting the sovereignty of the other regional countries to its own interest. The EU's strategy in the Horn of Africa overlaps this framework in the use of geoeconomic instruments. According to Wigell (2016, p. 142), a neo-imperialist regional power uses sanctions, imposition, and bribery. Similarity, the EU has used sanctions, or suspended budget support to "inflict (..) economic pain and make (.) states acquiesce with the preferences of the regional power" in the Horn (Wigell 2016, p. 142). Moreover, the conditionalities attached to its partnership agreements, aid, and development projects highlight the asymmetric power relationship and the ability of the EU to impose "acquiescence" on other countries in the region. Pre-paid rewards and incentives ("bribery") correspond to the "dual track" approach to its engagement with Eritrea, as well as its re-engagement with Ethiopia. The competitive strategic frame also informs the increasing rhetoric on geopolitical competition with China. Nonetheless, the EU's strategy diverges from the neo-imperialist one in a number of ways. For one, the declared aim of its development strategies is to decrease rather than increase the dependence on foreign support, and build economic and societal resilience in the region (Joseph 2014). Despite employing sanctions, economic force is used defensively, in reaction to events, rather than offensively, to enforce cooperation. Moreover, instead of limited sovereignty, the EU's actions have been directed at defending the principle of sovereignty, such as through sanctioning Eritrea for becoming involved in the conflict in Ethiopia.

Concluding that despite similarities in the use of economic power, as well as increasing tenets on geopolitical competition, the EU's liberal, cooperative, and sovereignty-respecting approach has only **weak** congruence with the neo-imperialist strategy.

4.3.5 Conclusion

This section explored the EU as a geoeconomic extra-regional power in the Horn of Africa. After providing the conceptual basis for framing the EU, a supranational organisation rather than a traditional nation-state, as a regional power, it highlighted the importance of its geoeconomic foreign policy, both in its neighbourhood and abroad. After charting the development of its relationship with and policy towards Africa, it zeroed in on the Horn of Africa, briefly outlining the EU's engagement in the four countries of that region. When comparing the EU strategy's congruence with the proposed conceptual framework, it found **strong** congruence with the Hegemonic type, **medium** congruence with the Liberal-Institutionalist type, and **weak** congruence with the Neo-Mercantilist and Neo-Imperialist types respectively. The analysis highlighted a historical shift from a more cooperative, Liberal-Institutionalist strategy to a more competitive, Hegemonic strategy with increasing rhetoric and framing of geopolitical rivalry.

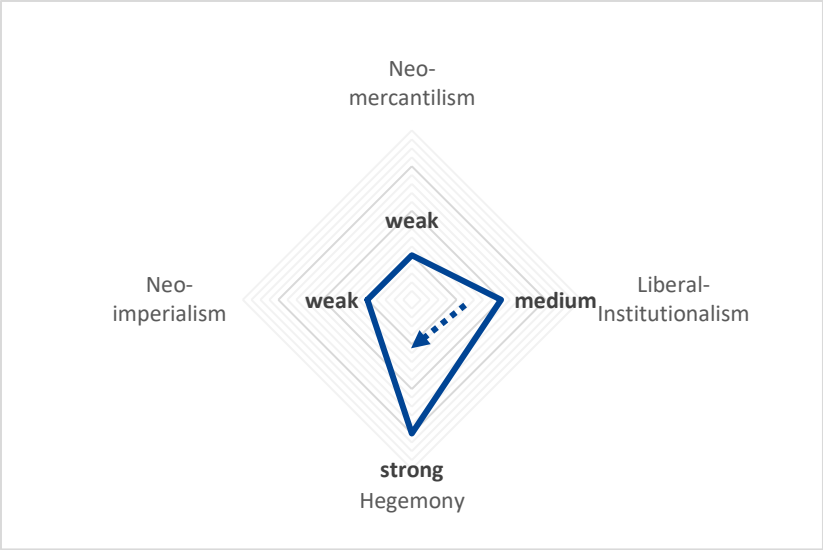

Figure 4: Conceptualising the EU's extra-regional geoeconomic strategy

5 Discussion

5.1 Comparison

The previous section described, contextualised, and analysed the individual extra-regional geoeconomic strategies of India, Türkiye, and the EU in the Horn of Africa, providing an answer to the research question:

Q2: How congruent is the recent economic engagement of Türkiye, India, and the EU in the Horn of Africa with the geoeconomic strategies of Wigell's (2016) framework?

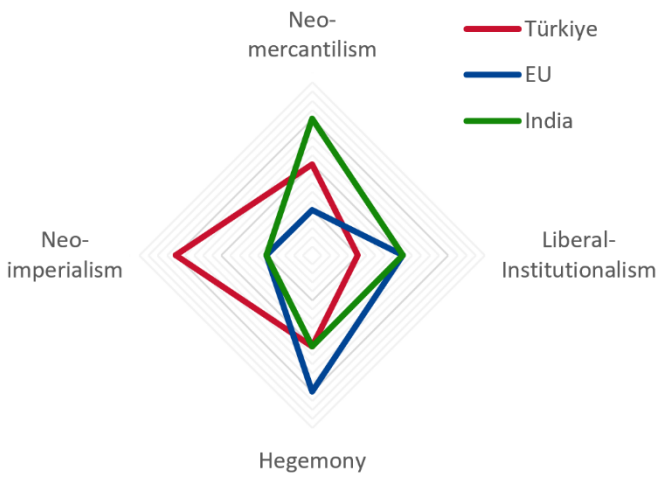

Figure 5: Comparison of congruence

It found that using the perspective of extra-regional geoeconomic statecraft is useful in analysing the respective strategies. However, as is accounted for in the model, the role of economic power, as well as their strategic frame diverge across the different cases. To capture this variance, as well as provide a basis for assessing the utility of the methodological framework, this section will briefly summarise the results and highlight key trends. It will compare the use of geoeconomic power, as well as the strategic frame of the three actors.

5.1.1 Use of economic power

In each of the actors' engagements, economic power was used as a means to a political end. In the fragile context of the Horn of Africa, aid and development cooperation with political goals made up a substantial part of this engagement, although the EU distinguished itself as the largest donor to the region. Türkiye and India's aid, however small in comparison, tended to receive more legitimacy as part of a more equitable "South-South" cooperation. Türkiye's support for the construction of mosques, for instance, allows it to leverage a common religion in its economic support, something that the EU would be unable to do. Another difference is that, unlike Türkiye or India, the EU's aid is explicitly tied to conditionalities for political reforms, showing geoeconomic value for coercion, but also highlighting the different ways in which it can be employed. It is also important to note that the engagement of the three actors was

not limited to geoeconomics. With a large Turkish military base in Somalia, various EU missions and allied bases in Djibouti, and India increasing its naval power in the region, military power continues to play an important role in the region. Importantly, as was visible with Türkiye, this role seems to have increased in importance in recent years.

Domestic politics also play a role. Reducing refugee flows to Europe is a key driver for the EU's approach to its geoeconomic engagement with Africa, as well as the Horn of Africa. For Türkiye as well as India, successful and performative engagement in the Horn bolsters their governments' popularity by highlighting its global reach. Moreover, Türkiye was able to reduce the influence of the Gulen movement in the Horn of Africa through its geoeconomic engagement, thus further strengthening the AKP's position at home. Intensifying engagement in other regions could also represent the attempt to compensate for limited progress in the home region, something that both India and Türkiye grapple with. It is notable that both Türkiye and India are being led by "strong-men" with a religious-nationalist agenda that have been in power for a longer time.

Nonetheless, economic power, and the economic benefit this entails, was also found to be an end in itself. Economic considerations have been shown to play important roles for all actors. Whether in pursuit of new markets, supporting the domestic construction sector through infrastructure loans, or seeking to secure access to energy or resource deposits, many of the geoeconomic tools employed have facilitated trade and investment, which has significantly grown in the last 20 years. Additionally, owing to the strategic location of the Horn of Africa, development and stabilisation efforts help mitigate piracy and thus secure international trade routes. Another geographic relevance of the Horn of Africa is its proximity to the equator, making it a viable location for space ports, as the announced projects of Türkiye and, more recently, China, have indicated (Quartz 2023). For Türkiye and India, development and aid often act as a precursor to closer diplomatic ties, trade agreements, and an increase in trade and investment. Rather than trying to improve human rights or democratic institutions, they are facilitating smoother trade. For these reasons, aid is mainly disbursed bilaterally, unlike the coordinated and multilateral approach by the EU.

5.1.2 Strategic Frame

While the use of economic power was more ambiguous during the analysis, the strategic frames of the individual actors were discernible more clearly. The EU distinguished itself as predominantly cooperative, seeking partnerships with

multilateral international organisations, as well as fostering regional integration. Türkiye and India, on the other, exhibited at best selective multilateralism, preferring engagement outside of traditional development structures, highlighting the special nature of South-South cooperation.

Nonetheless, particularly in the second half of the 2010s, the geostrategic location of the Horn of Africa has also informed the increasingly geopolitical economic strategies of the actors under examination. All three actors' foreign policies have been discussed in the context of "strategic autonomy", moving away from an interdependent and multilateral global system. The "geopolitical" EU has sought to reengage diplomatically and economically with Ethiopia despite humanitarian concerns to prevent losing its influence on China or other actors. Türkiye and India are externalising competition from their own region, with Gulf Arab states and China respectively, to the Horn of Africa. All this occurs in the context of the increasing military presence and interest of the actors.

The normative framing of the engagement of three actors in the Horn of Africa also emerged as an important aspect. Economic engagement, in the case of India and Türkiye, was narrated in the context of historic ties, trading routes, or cultural similarities, emphasising their South-South partnership. The EU, on the other hand, is rather seeking to downplay its historic (colonial) ties to the region, emphasising humanitarian and democratic values instead. More importantly, part of this framing is the inclusion of the Horn of Africa into the region of the respective actor. While the Horn of Africa is not part of the immediate European neighbourhood, the "region is not far from Europe" (EEAS 2023c). For India, especially the littoral states of the Horn of Africa are understood to be part of the Indo-Pacific region, in which India understands itself as a key regional power. This is tied to its emphasis on maritime security in the region, as well as its efforts to negotiate base access with Japan and France. Türkiye, is the most explicit about the extension of its region, basing its claim to influence and regional power on its Ottoman heritage. Rather than extra-regional engagement, this narrative implies a regional expansion. This suggests a shift in the hitherto more rigid understanding of regions and regional powers.

5.2 Assessment of conceptual framework.

In order to fill the research gap identified in the literature review, which highlighted a lack of conceptual framing of the recent phenomenon of regional powers' extra-regional engagement, particularly in the geoeconomic realm, this thesis proposed the

utilisation of a framework by Wigell (2016) used to analyse regional powers' strategies in their own region to conceptualise this "going abroad". To answer

Q1: To what extent can Wigell's (2016) framework for regional power's geoeconomic strategies be applied to the analysis of their extra-regional geoeconomic engagement?

the utility of using the framework in such a context required testing. It was thus applied to three actors, which qualify as regional powers, and their extra-regional geoeconomic engagement in the Horn of Africa. In the analysis and comparison section, the results of this research were presented, assessed, and compared. Based on the outcome of this process, this section will now assess the utility and limitations of the framework.

5.2.1 Utility

Overall, the framework proved to be applicable and valuable to the context of the extra-regional geoeconomic statecraft. Every parameter for the ideal-type strategies informed the assessment of congruence, there were seldom factors which did not apply at all. Moreover, the framework was able to capture the complexities of the multidimensional engagement of the three countries, which ranged from purely economic interests to hard, geopolitical objectives. Importantly, it was even possible to capture the EU has a regional/extra-regional power, albeit with certain caveats, such as the engagement of individual member states affecting the analysis. The "ideal-type" design of the framework thus enabled a balanced assessment as it allowed for different perspectives. By weighing the congruence of the different ideal-type strategies against each other, a realistic assessment, framing, as well as the identification of a "dominant" strategy were made possible. More monolithic conceptualisations, which double down on only economic or only power competition, would thus fall short in analysing and framing the engagement of these actors. Moreover, as the analysis showed, strategic frames and priorities can shift over time, influenced by domestic, regional, and international events. It was possible to reflect these shifts in the analysis, thus adding value to the conclusions by being able to highlight key drivers and trends. This showed that a broad conceptualisation of geoeconomics, particularly in the context of regional powers, is valuable and important to understand novel phenomena and dynamics.

This applicability has various implications. For one, it underscores the increasingly global reach of regional powers. Through their increasing economic heft, they can mobilize geoeconomic tools to project power beyond their immediate region. Moreover,

if a framework designed for regional powers' regional strategies is applicable to their extra-regional engagement, it speaks to their approach to international politics. Instead of a globalised and interdependent international system, it implies a multipolar approach based on regions and regional influence, dependencies, or partnerships, depending on the strategic frame. This inter- or extra-regional approach to international politics is also visible in the externalised competition between actors. Rather than global dominance, hegemony, or partnership, competition is carried out on a regional level. Another reason why their approach to other regions might be similar to an approach in their own region can be found in the framing of their approach to their engagement. Rather than "going abroad", as initially conceptualised, the regions of the three actors, have been ideationally "expanded" to encompass the Horn Africa, which could account for the "regional" approach and thus applicability to the framework.

5.2.2 Limitations

Nonetheless, there are limits to the utility of using an adapted version of a framework originally meant for regional power's strategies within their region. For one, as the contextualisation of the individual actors has demonstrated, the concept of "regional powers" remains fuzzy. Despite some similarities, the EU, Türkiye, and India have significant differences in structure and size. In addition, the definition of the extent of their region, as well as their influence remain contested. Moreover, their regional conceptualisation of the Horn of Africa did not match the one set for the analysis. For instance, Türkiye sees Sudan as a key part of its Horn of Africa strategy, having built up strong ties with its erstwhile leader, Omar Al-Bashir, as well as leasing an island in the Red Sea (Akca 2019). For India, the Horn of Africa is understood as part of East Africa, thus including Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda in its regional engagement (Berger and Eickhoff 2022). For the EU, the Horn of Africa also includes Kenya, South Sudan, Sudan, and Uganda (Council of the EU 2011).

Another issue is that the framework does not account for the significant military engagement of the actors, although it is tied closely to the geoeconomic engagement. This highlights that geoeconomic has not replaced military power in international relations, and should be assessed alongside, rather than instead of it. Moreover, it does not include ideational/normative frames in its assessment of foreign policy, which, as the analysis has shown, are crucial in assessing the drivers, goals, and scale of the respective strategies.

The claim of this thesis, being that regional powers pursue extra-regional geoeconomic strategies that can be captured using Wigell's framework, is based on the study of one region, which, despite the analysis of different actors, is not sufficient for full generalisability. The Horn of Africa's unique geography, politics, as well as history, make it a region of special interest. This could explain why regional powers such a Türkiye or India would engage there while limiting their geoeconomic statecraft in other regions. This "opportunistic" rather than global approach requires stronger emphasis and deeper exploration. The significant presence of extra-regional actors in the Horn could also be explained by the absence of a strong local regional power, able to stabilise and exert influence over other countries. Although Ethiopia is economically most developed, its land-locked status and its historically hostile relations with neighbouring countries have limited its ability to capitalise on this, opening up the region to foreign powers. A more careful conclusion would thus be that regional powers are more likely to engage extra-regionally in regions without another strong local regional actor, and which are more fragile and underdeveloped than their own. To prevent this case bias, other regions, preferably with other regional powers should be assessed in a similar manner. Nonetheless, the overall applicability of the framework to extra-regional geoeconomic statecraft was demonstrated, paving the way for analyses in other regions and with other actors.

6 Conclusion

Having identified a gap in the literature on the conceptualisation of regional power's extra-regional geoeconomic statecraft, as well as a skewed focus on geopolitics and great power competition in the context of external action in the Horn of Africa, this thesis set out to answer two self-reinforcing research questions.

The first research question: *To what extent can Wigell's (2016) framework for regional power's geoeconomic strategies be applied to the analysis of their extra-regional geoeconomic engagement?* sought to fill a conceptual gap in regional powers' extra-regional geoeconomic statecraft by assessing the applicability of a framework devised by. Wigell (2016). This framework uses four ideal-type strategies to classify a state's behaviour, based on their conception of an actor of economic power as either a means or an end, and the strategic frame of the strategy, being either competitive or cooperative. This framework aims to bring together varying and sometimes even contradictory definitions of geoeconomics and geoeconomic statecraft under the concept of "geostrategic use of economic power" and represents a novel way to conceptualise the actions and strategies of regional powers. By applying the framework to a region in which external regional powers are active, this thesis tested the applicability of the framework. It found that overall, the broad categorisation and "ideal typology" of the different strategies were applicable to the approaches of the respective actors and provided a solid foundation for triangulating a basic characterisation of their policies. The examination of different actors underscored the conceptual breadth of the framework. Through the process of triangulation, key differences and commonalities between the strategies of the different actors could be identified, which attests to the complexity and diversity of policies that can be understood in a 'geoeconomic' context. However, the favourable results towards the applicability could also be traced back to the unique case chosen for this study, which limits the generalisability of the conceptual development in this thesis. Moreover, since it does not cover relevant areas such as military engagement or normative framing, it is not sufficient when examining a regional power's comprehensive strategy. Nonetheless, as regional powers play an increasingly important role in international politics, this framework is set to provide a useful template for evaluation and classification.

To test the utility of the proposed framework, as well as provide a nuanced and in-depth analysis of the extra-regional engagement of regional powers in the Horn of Africa, the analysis section was guided by the research question *Q2: How congruent is the recent economic engagement of Türkiye, India, and the EU in the Horn of Africa with the geoeconomic strategies of Wigell's (2016) framework?* After explaining the role of the three actors as regional powers, outlining their general approach to foreign policy, as well as the development of their engagement with Africa in general, it zeroed in on their geoeconomic engagement in the Horn of Africa. It found that all three actors intensified their engagement in the Horn of Africa in the mid-2000s, and employed geoeconomic instruments ranging from humanitarian aid, and development assistance to trade agreements, state-backed loans, and the building of critical infrastructure. While it showed that economic power was both means and an end to all three actors, the weighting of priorities differed, as did the strategic frame with which they operated. This meant that despite medium congruence with neo-mercantilist and hegemonic strategies Türkiye's strategy was most congruent with the neo-imperial type, supported by its increasingly geopolitical and competitive approach. India, on the other hand, exhibited strong congruence to the neo-mercantilist strategy, although also, to a lesser extent, to the liberal-institutionalist strategy, mainly based on its aspiration for maritime power and in its competition with China. The EU strategy's congruence with hegemony was strong, while only showing medium congruence with liberal institutionalism. This is based on the EU's general preference for multilateralism which is increasingly understood in the context of geopolitical competition and strategic autonomy. This in-depth research and classification based on the available data provided a contextualised overview and comparison of the engagement of Türkiye, India, and the EU in the Horn of Africa.

The research process highlighted a number of weaknesses and shortcomings of this approach. For one, despite cursory mention, this thesis did not present the significant role that China, the, US, the Gulf states, and, to a lesser extent, Russia play. Leaving them out risks creating the impression of the three actors under examination being the only actors in the region. Moreover, the availability and reliability of the information, particularly regarding India and Türkiye, were often difficult to ascertain. Most announcements and statistics come from state-backed media outlets, which sometimes tended to 'sugarcoat' the size and extent of their government's engagement. Although this was overcome through cross-checking and critical

analysis, it contrasted with the more transparent and organized source of information on EU action.

The research contributed to three major, interconnected fields of research namely geoeconomics, regional powers, and the Horn of Africa. For one, it approached geoeconomics from an 'analyticist' perspective to assess and analyse economic statecraft. Rather than identifying and prescribing a narrow single definition of what is and is not geoeconomic statecraft, it demonstrated that an open and inclusive conceptualisation is useful and necessary to capture and analyse geoeconomic strategies. It also proposed a conceptual framework in the still underdeveloped field of regional powers' extra-regional engagement, albeit only for their geoeconomic statecraft. Finally, it provided a current assessment of the role of a group of actors in the Horn of Africa that tend to receive less analytical and scholarly attention.

Building on this thesis, further research could evaluate the effectiveness of extra-regional geoeconomic engagement, as this thesis merely examined actions and strategies, without assessing their translation into actual power and influence. In this context, the relations between global powers and regional powers in extra-regional contexts would be another important avenue of research. Moreover, it would be valuable to compare the dominant strategy of a regional power within their region with their dominant extra-regional strategy. To test the generalisability of the proposed framework, it should be applied to other actors in other regions, thus overcoming the case bias that the generalisability from this thesis suffers from. Finally, any further theoretical development of regional powers' extra-regional engagement should include normative aspects, which, while addressed in this thesis, are not firmly embedded within the proposed framework.

In conclusion, this thesis has characterised hitherto under-appreciated dynamics in international relations. The trend that regional powers are increasingly active in other regions, "going abroad" has important consequences for understanding and responding to international developments. While this thesis has demonstrated the importance of geoeconomics as well as their multidimensionality, it also found the prevailing relevance of complementary military power in an international system that is increasingly driven by geopolitics rather than economic gain.

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